

The literature project

OBJECTIVE: As part of a curriculum devoted to differentiated teaching, the scope of this project is to allow for a class composed of students with different language levels to read different books simultaneously. To this end, this project encourages students to collaborate and make regular presentations of their work. Students will also have the opportunity to discover the world of blogging through the creation of a class blog. Finally, a short video-taped skit (*Le journal télévisé de 20h*) is proposed as an activity to finish the project.

GRADES: 9-12

APPROACH: There are two global approaches to the reading portions of this project. The first consists of assigning all readings for homework, which would allow students to read the entire book. The second approach is to conduct all reading inside the classroom, which allows the teacher to select important sections of the book, and ask specific questions in the worksheets. Regardless of the approach, in class individual students will answer questions concerning particular passages within a group, and share their answers. In addition, the teacher should know the levels of each student in order to create groups and assign books. Group size can vary from 4-6. Depending on class size and levels, multiple books can be used for each level.

LENGTH OF PROJECT: This project gives liberty to the teacher to decide how many class periods to devote to the project. However the project should begin with one class period devoted to research and end with a few class periods for the final activity. The amount of class periods in between will depend on the amount of time the teacher would like to spend inside the books. While an entire book can be assigned to read at home, the teacher will have to select the chapters to be covered in class because the different books will have varying lengths.

First Class: RESEARCH

As an introduction to the project allow students one class period to research the authors and books they will read.

Materials: Computer w/ internet; worksheet [A]

Time: 50 minutes

Procedure: Hand out worksheet [A]. Have students answer questions.

Reading classes

Option 1: In-class reading

Materials: worksheets [B1-B6]

Preparation: Choose a specific passage from each book. If the teacher does not want to use the general questions on each worksheet, the teacher can insert specific questions more pertinent to the passage.

Time: 50 minutes

At the beginning of the period students are asked to get into their groups. For 15 minutes students read the selected chapter(s), fairy tales, sections, etc. The teacher then distributes the different roles (worksheets [B1-B6]) and asks each member to choose one and reminds students to switch roles each class. Group members are given 20 minutes to choose one role and fill out the worksheet. At the end of 20 minutes each group chooses a speaker to present one of the roles to the rest of the class. Other students can then ask questions for 15 minutes.

Option 2: Outside-class reading

Time: 60 minutes

Students get into groups. Teacher hands out worksheets [B1-B6]. Each student chooses a role and fills it out—if they had not already done so at home. Students are to take turns presenting their roles to each other once finished. Other group members can disagree or correct the presenter. Meanwhile the teacher floats from group to group facilitating discussions.

BOOKS

These are suggestions for books already used in this project. They respond to three different reading levels : beginner, intermediate and advanced.

I. Beginner level books used: *15 contes sénégalais (Jean MUZI), Leuk-le-lièvre (L. SENGHOR, A SADJI)*

II. Intermediate level : *L'Odeur du café (Dany LAFERIERE)*

III. Advanced level : *L'Aventure ambiguë (Cheik Hamidou KANE) ; Le Monde s'effondre (Chinua ACHEBE), translation of the English original 'The World Falls Apart'*

CLASS BLOG -- OUTLINE

The classroom blog is a very motivating tool that creates an exciting forum for student expression. It is very easy to create and maintain. During each blog period students will respond to a few questions over content and then respond to the "Blog Question". If time permits students can post comments on each others' blogs.

CREATING THE BLOG

This is a very easy, self-guided process for the teacher to create alone. All the students will then be able to log on to the blog and contribute individually to the same blog.

1. Go to www.blogger.com
2. Follow the steps. Depending on their level, have students select French as the language.

** Students will be even more motivated to participate once they see their pictures on the blog! It is suggested that the teacher explore all the different possibilities of personalizing the class blog, e.g. post a group photo as the header!

BLOG PERIOD

Materials: Worksheet [C]

Preparation:

- 1) Choose a passage from each book and write a question that will provoke a response from students. E.G. "Character Joe thinks it's O.K. to steal as long as no one gets hurt. Do you agree with Joe ? "
- 2) Write 2-3 content questions pertinent to the passage that will help students prepare for the Blog Question.

Time: 60 minutes

Procedure:

1. Give students worksheet [C] to fill out. (10-15 minutes.)
2. Have students get a computer and log on to the blog. If possible, choose as simple a username and password as possible. (5 minutes.)
3. Click on "Nouveau Message". In "Title", have each student write the name of the book and his/her name, or initials. E.G. "Leuk-le-lièvre par Clémentine".
4. In the body of the message the student first writes out the question, then writes the answer from worksheet [C]. (15 minutes.)
5. Edit! Each student should trade papers with another student and make corrections accordingly.
6. After finishing, the student can click on the "Publier" button, then "Afficher le blog" to see his/her message.
7. Once finished, have each student read another student's message and comment over it. (Simply have them click on the pencil at the bottom of the message.) (5 min.)

FINAL ACTIVITY: LE JT DE 20H

To conclude this project, students can perform a video-taped skit. The goal is to have students revisit the authors and books. A basic 4-act skit can include four students: a presenter (1) who presents the newscast; a historian (2) who gives the author's biography and a summary of the book; a journalist (3) who conducts an interview with the author or his/her relative (4). Students will also write their own script, following (if needed) specific directions. Finally, students can also create a PowerPoint presentation, with titles and pictures, to project while they present.

Example:

1st Act : Student 1 : Presentation and summary of the *Journal* and discussion of headlines

2nd Act : Student 2 : Biography of Author and Outline of Book.

3rd Act : Student 1 : Thanks student 2 and presents the interview between the interviewee Student 3, and journalist, Student 4.

4th Act: Journalist interviews author

5th Act : Student 1 : concludes the JT

SCRIPT

For each Act students will need to prepare a script (worksheet [D]). Students can follow specific guidelines on Worksheet [E] that will help think of material for the script.

SCRIPT WRITING

Length: 60 min.

Materials: worksheets [D], [E], [F] computer w/internet, index cards

Procedure :

Hand out Worksheet 1 and Directions.

1. As a group, students will follow the steps on worksheet [E] and write answers—the script—on worksheet [D].

2. (Optional PowerPoint activity) Students can look on the internet for three pictures that correspond to their headlines, and copy them to a new PowerPoint presentation. They also can create slides to introduce each segment of the newscast. If needed, students can use worksheet [F] as a guideline. Once finished, the PowerPoint document can be projected during the newscast.
3. In order to prepare for the newscast students can write down their individual lines on note cards to be used during filming.
4. Encourage students to look at their index cards in preparation at home!

FILMING

(If time permits, during one class period students can practice their newscast in front of the camera before the final cut.)

Materials: camcorder; projector, screen, laptop (for PowerPoint); students are highly encouraged to bring costumes, e.g. blazer, tie...

Time: depends on number of sketches.

Procedure: Film!