

PROJECT 1

News Media

Note: this project frequently requires the use of Internet-connected computers



Unit Description: while developing their reading and communication skills, the students will -reflect on how the media reports on events. They will analyze authentic press articles from Francophone news websites as well as TV and radio segments from TV5 and *Radio France Internationale*. The students will also familiarize themselves with cultural, social and political phenomena of their countries and of today's world. The ultimate goal of this project is to sharpen students' analytical and critiquing skills. As a result students will become mature readers, as well as alert members of the community. Finally, students will work on expressing themselves in the target language.

Duration: 10 lessons (20 hours)

FINAL PROJECTS:

- Individually: An analysis and critique of three authentic articles
- In groups: A home survey on how French-speaking and other media is used and experienced within the family circle
- Whole class: A small newspaper (3-4 pages)

Lesson Aims and Activities

Lesson 1

Aim: introduction to the news media

Activities:

1. Brainstorming/general discussion: Acquaintance with the news media: TV, Internet, press, radio. Differences between the news seen in the U.S. and in the students' countries of origin.
2. Group work: Why is it important to stay informed (the students use worksheet [A], also displayed on overhead projector). The responses are then shared with the rest of the class.
3. Students will read a short article, listen to a radio emission and watch a TV segment that all report on the same event in the news using the worksheet [B].

Resources:

-Short article from the press or Internet (see our websites list:

www.facecouncil.org/fhlp/resources.html)

-Segment from RFI's "Le Journal en français facile" (direct access

http://www.rfi.fr/lfft/statiques/accueil_apprendre.asp; the segment can be easily downloaded for future offline use).

-Segment from TV5 (see <http://www.tv5.org/TV5Site/info/accueil.php>).

-Worksheets [A] and [B]

>All documents should be related to an event that occurred within or involved the Francophone world.

Lesson 2

Aim: Learn how to read a press article (Article Reading #1)

Activities:

1. Examining the “Guide pour la lecture d’articles de presse” [C]. Students will read the guide aloud and explain it. (reflection on becoming a mature press reader).
2. Group reading of an authentic press article with step-by-step use of the “Guide” (same-level students work together, with the help of the teacher; students within each group read aloud and discuss the article together using the “Guide”).
3. Using the “Grille de lecture” [D], groups pinpoint key ideas and write their opinions about the article. Each group then shares the key ideas and their opinions of the article with the rest of the class.

Resources:

-A choice of three or four appealing articles from the press or the Internet, of different lengths and levels of difficulty. Students choose the article that interests them most among the ones that will better match their language skills. (see our websites list:

www.facecouncil.org/fhlp/resources.html)

-Worksheet [C] “Guide pour la lecture d’articles de presse”

-Worksheet [D] “Grille de lecture d’articles de presse”

Lesson 3

Aim: Prepare for a home survey: “The media in the family”: What are the habits and opinions of my family when it comes to news media?

Activities:

1. The student read an example of a survey on social habits [E]. Discussion: What is a survey? Why conduct one? What kind of document do we need to make to conduct the survey? What aspect of grammar do we need to review?
2. Group work, in French or English: drafting three or more main sections for the survey, and share. Document [F] will give you an idea of what is expected from the students (for teacher use only).
3. Grammar review: present tense, interrogative words and interrogative mode: identification in the example survey, presentation/review, and exercises.

Resources:

-Survey on social habits (see document [E]), featuring questions conjugated in the present tense.

-Document [F]: example survey written by students.

-Document and exercises introducing the present tense.

For advanced students: you may want to use press article in past tense to put in the present tense.

For less advanced students: fill-in the blanks exercises. Also see

<http://www.facecouncil.org/fhlp/resources.html#link22> for websites that feature games or interactive grammar exercises on the present tense.

Lesson 4

Aim: Write the survey

Activities:

1. Quick review of the interrogative words *qui, où, quand, combien, pourquoi*, and the interrogative form *est-ce que*, and exercises.
2. Group work (advanced and less-advanced students work together): writing the surveys, one survey per group. The students brainstorm, and two or more questions will be written under each main section of the survey. It may be useful to give the students example of questions directly related to the “media and family” topic, and show them on the black board or overhead projector how to structure their survey: questions are distributed under main sections. It will be best to use yes/no and multiple-choice questions, so that the students will not have to transcript oral answers. Each group has their survey proof-read by another group, so that questions written by different groups can be shared. Surveys are then turned in to the teacher. Teacher will underline/highlight problems and mistakes for the students to correct during lesson 5.

Resources:

-Document and exercises introducing the interrogative forms.

Lesson 5

Aim: Finalize the surveys

Activities:

1. With the help of the teacher, students correct their surveys.
2. Students type their final corrected surveys on a computer, and print them out to take home (each student of a group can type one part of the survey, then merge their part on one computer using a USB drive, or as e-mail attachments).
3. As a test, students do a mock-survey in groups of two, one reading the questions and possible answers out loud, and one responding to the questions.
4. Extra: Listening to RFI’s “Le Journal en français facile” What dominates the news? What is more important to you? Why?

Resources:

RFI’s website, direct access to the ‘Journal’ (downloadable) at http://www.rfi.fr/lffr/statiques/accueil_apprendre.asp.

Lesson 6

Aim: Introduce different elements of a press article

Activities:

1. Brainstorming over the different elements of a newspaper (title, date, photos, articles...) and of an article (city from which the article is written, dopped initial, columns, name of the journalist...). How is it organized? In what order is the news presented? Which photos are used? To help the students, a few authentic newspapers (in French or English)

will be brought by the teacher. Without actually reading them, the students reproduce the structure of authentic articles on a large sheet of paper, with no actual text (see Document [G] for example of what the students are expected to do. For teacher use only).

2. Article Reading #2: Group reading of two authentic, oppositional press articles with step-by-step use of the “Guide” (same-level students work together, with the help of the teacher). Discussion: What are quotations used for? What do you think is *objectif* and *subjectif* in the article (provide explanation of those two concepts)? Present adjectives such as *merveilleux*, *ingrate*, *généreux*, *regrettable*, *approprié*, *scandaleux*, *juste/injuste*, *légitime*, *incompréhensible...* and any adjective/adverb that illustrates the two concepts, depending on the context in which they are used. Here the students may be given adjectives written on scraps of paper. They are then called on so they can explain why they think their adjective is objective or subjective.
3. Examination and application of the “Grille de lecture d’articles de presse” [D].

Resources:

- Worksheet [C] “Guide pour la lecture d’articles de presse”
- Two articles on the same subject, only from two sources that have different opinions on that subject. The articles should be kept short and simple, and the less advanced students should be allowed to work only on two contradictory paragraphs.
- Worksheet [D] “Grille de lecture d’articles de presse”. Advanced students are expected to develop their ideas more extensively (they can use the back of the worksheet).
- Document [G] “Maquette presse”
- A selection of newspapers

Lesson 7

Aim: Introduction to writing an article.

Activities:

1. The students and the teacher choose a school event that occurred during the year, or an event that was shown in the news. They decide which key facts should appear in the articles. Both serious and fun facts may be used. Since a small newspaper will be created, each student should also be asked to bring a print-out of a digital picture that illustrates the topic on the last day of this project (Lesson 10). The picture can be one that was taken during the school event, or a picture from the internet if the event is picked from the news.
2. “Introduction à l’écriture d’un article de presse” using worksheet [H], also displayed on overhead projector.
3. Review of the *passé composé*: A few students will read aloud a simple text that the other students won’t have. While listening, students will raise their hands every time they hear the *passé composé*. All students will then read the article silently and try to underline the same verbs. The teacher will then teach the *passé composé* to the students, followed by exercises.

Resources:

- Worksheet [H]

-Document introducing the *passé composé*: auxiliaries, past participles, affirmative/negative forms. *Passé composé* exercises (see <http://www.facecouncil.org/fhlp/resources.html#link22> for websites that feature games or interactive grammar exercises).

Lesson 8

Aim: Write an article

Activities:

1. Writing an article. The students split into three mixed groups. Each group will write an article on the same subject, but they will each write from a different perspective. The subject of the articles will be story chosen during Lesson 5, and the students will use the key facts to write their articles. After reviewing the concepts of *objectivity* and *subjectivity*, one group will write the article from a neutral, objective perspective. The second group will write a subjective version that presents the facts from a supportive perspective. The last group will also write a subjective version, but from a critical perspective. Every student in each group will work individually, and all are not expected to turn in the same amount and complexity of work.
2. For Lesson 9, the students will be asked to turn in typed versions of their articles, for the teacher to review. So make sure your students save their work on the computer and/or USB drives.

Resources:

Photos of people performing actions (such as someone sunbathing on a beach, a war picture, a picture of someone helping someone else, a celebration...) that will allow the students to use the adjectives, thus revealing their subjective opinions.

Lesson 9

Aim: Choosing a newspaper title + Article Reading #3

Activities

1. Students turn in their articles for the teacher to review.
2. Group work: Students brainstorm to find a title for their newspaper, then go write their propositions on the board. Students vote to choose the final title.
3. Reading the third authentic article using the “Guide pour la lecture d’articles de presse” (same-level students work together, with the help of the teacher; the students within each group read aloud and discuss the article together). Using the “Grille de lecture” [D], the students pinpoint key ideas and write their opinions about the article. Each group then shares the key ideas of the article and their opinions with the rest of the class. This will be a great opportunity to hold a debate.

Resources:

-A choice of three or four appealing articles from the press or the Internet, of different lengths and levels of difficulty. Students choose the article that interests them most among the ones that will better match their language skills.

-Worksheet [B] “Guide pour la lecture d’articles de presse”

-Worksheet [C] “Grille de lecture d’articles de presse”

Lesson 10

Aim: Create a small “Special Edition” newspaper

Activities:

4. The teacher gives the articles back. On computers, with the help of their teacher and classmates, the students correct their mistakes, format their work (columns) and insert the photos. The final articles are then printed out.
5. Each one of the three groups (see Lesson 7) is assigned to examine the articles and pictures of another group, and pick the best two articles and best two pictures. They will have to justify their choice in front of the class. In the meantime, one or two student(s) will be in charge of collecting and putting together the answers to the survey of their respective groups so as to include them in the newspaper. Next to each question, they will add the number of responses in percentage, or fractions (for example, 3/5).
6. The students choose the layout and glue their articles, photos, title on a larger kraft sheet of paper that will be folded in two. Each page can show two or more articles.

Resources:

-Newspapers, computers, printer, glue, large white sheets of kraft paper.

Comments? Ideas? Suggestions? Please write to David Lasserre at heritageprogram@facecouncil.org