

Ages: 7–11yrs




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French Festivals and Traditions

Activities and Teaching Ideas for Primary Schools



Nicolette Hannam and
Michelle Williams

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Published by Brilliant Publications
Unit 10, Sparrow Hall Farm
Edlesborough, Dunstable
Bedfordshire, LU6 2ES, UK

e-mail: brilliant@bebc.co.uk
website: www.brilliantpublications.co.uk

Digital Edition converted and published by
Andrews UK Limited 2010
www.andrewsuk.com

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Illustrated by Sarah Wimperis

Front cover designed by Brilliant Publications

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Introduction

This book was written by a secondary and a primary school teacher to provide information about festivals and traditions in France. The authors were supported by Virginie Mouton, a French student on work experience in England.

Every month has ideas that support the intercultural strand of the *Framework for Modern Foreign Languages*. According to the *Framework* by the end of Year 6, most children should be able to:

- ◆ Demonstrate understanding of and respect for cultural diversity
- ◆ Present information about an aspect of another country.

The ideas in this book can be used to develop discussions about comparisons. The *Framework* suggests comparing attitudes towards aspects of everyday life (IU6.1) and understanding differences between people (IU6.2).

It then suggests children present information about an aspect of culture through a wide variety of media. By regularly using ideas from

this book you are providing your pupils with a wealth of ideas.

Each month has a choice of guided sheets that can be photocopied. There is also a wealth of suggested teaching activities, with vocabulary provided. Extension ideas are provided for more able pupils.

Running a French Day (see Planning a French Day for your School, pages 75–87) will complement your intercultural teaching and provide children with many opportunities to achieve a high standard in this area of French. The French vocabulary provided will support and reinforce your language work alongside this.

There are two analysis grids that show how and where the book covers the intercultural strand. The first (page 5) is split into year groups and shows where you can find work to cover the objectives for your own year group. The second grid (page 6) looks at each strand and shows where it is covered in the book. This will be extremely useful for MFL co-ordinators.

Analysis by year group

Year group	Objective	Covered in book
3	Identify other languages they'd like to learn	Planning a holiday (pages 44–47)
	Learn where French is spoken	Planning a holiday (pages 44–47)
	Know some facts about one country	Throughout book
	Make contact with native speakers	Access contact through your Local Authority or the NACELL or CILT websites
	Compare different cultures	Throughout book: Joyeux anniversaire (pages 35–37) La rentrée (pages 50–54) Comparing pastimes and everyday life (pages 55–56)
	French song/rhyme	Joyeux Noël (pages 70–74)
4	Know about French celebrations	Throughout book
	Identify similarities and differences in how festivals and special days are celebrated	La Chandeleur (pages 12–14) La Saint-Valentin (pages 15–17) Joyeux anniversaire (pages 35–37) Joyeux Noël (pages 70–74)
	Use simple phrases to celebrate	Throughout book
	Compare everyday pastimes to their own	Comparing pastimes and everyday life (pages 55–56)
	Compare traditional stories	Les contes de fées (pages 26–30)
5	Compare particular aspects of everyday life to their own	La rentrée (pages 50–54) Cuisine française (pages 64–68)
	Exchange information with a partner school	Access contact through your Local Authority or the NACELL or CILT websites
	Compare buildings and places in contrasting localities	Cuisine française (pages 64–68)
	Investigate ways of travelling to another country/countries	Planning a holiday (pages 44–47)
	Consider how cultures of different countries are incorporated into everyday life	La rentrée (pages 50–54) Comparing pastimes and everyday life (pages 55–56) How are the cultures of different countries incorporated into everyday life? (pages 48–49)
	Compare symbols and products	Symbols of France (pages 40–43)
6	Understand and respect cultural diversity (different attitudes)	How is French culture incorporated into our everyday life? (pages 48–49) – develop discussion from guided sheet (page 49)
	Recognize and challenge stereotypes	Challenging stereotypes (pages 61–62)
	Present information about an aspect of another country: – perform songs/plays/dramas – use ICT to present information – greater sense of audience	Year 6 pupils can choose one idea/topic from the book and use it to develop a PowerPoint presentation aimed at a given audience. Choose a specific festival from the book, eg Christmas or Easter, or they could do a geography presentation.

Analysis by objective

Learning objective		Covered in book
IU3.1	Learn about the different languages spoken by children in the school	Planning a holiday (pages 44–47). Could be developed from discussions around the French language. Does anyone speak French in our school? Which other languages are spoken? Why?
IU3.2	Locate country/countries where the language is spoken	Planning a holiday (pages 44–47)
IU3.3	Identify social conventions at home and in other cultures	Joyeux anniversaire (pages 35–37) – typical names Social conventions addressed throughout book
IU3.4	Make direct or indirect contact with the country/countries where the language is spoken	We recommend that you approach your Local Authority for advice, or visit the NACELL or CILT websites
IU4.1	Learn about festivals and celebrations in different cultures	Throughout book
IU4.2	Know about some aspects of everyday life and compare them to their own	Throughout book, especially La rentrée (pages 50–54) and Comparing pastimes and everyday life (pages 55–56)
IU4.3	Compare traditional stories	Les contes de fées (pages 26–30)
IU4.4	Learn about ways of travelling to the country/countries	Planning a holiday (pages 44–47)
IU5.1	Look at further aspects of their everyday lives from the perspective of someone from another country	Guided sheet – What I know about France (page 68) See also, French Day evaluation sheet (pages 86–87)
IU5.2	Recognize similarities and differences between places	Throughout book Planning a holiday (pages 44–47) – comparing two localities Cuisine française (pages 64–68)
IU5.3	Compare symbols, objects or products which represent their own culture with those of another country	Symbols of France (pages 40–43) Cuisine française (pages 64–68) Planning a holiday (pages 44–47) – develop from locality discussion
IU6.1	Compare attitudes towards aspects of everyday life	La rentrée (pages 50–54) Comparing pastimes and everyday life (pages 55–56) Role models for children (page 63) Cuisine française (pages 64–68)
IU6.2	Recognize and understand some of the differences between people	Throughout book – comparing how people celebrate How is French culture incorporated into our everyday lives? (pages 48–49) – develop cultural diversity discussion from guided sheet (page 49) Challenging stereotypes (pages 61–62)
IU6.3	Present information about an aspect of culture	Children can be encouraged to develop plays, songs and dances from the information taught about French culture They can use ICT (for example, PowerPoint) to present information for a given audience Can possibly be used for transition information/assessment

Successful teaching Ideas for new vocabulary

There are many ways to help children learn new vocabulary and it is important to use a variety of methods and make it fun. Below are some successful ideas that have been tried and tested:

- ◆ Very simply, hold up flashcards and ask the children to repeat the words after you. They like doing this in different voices.
- ◆ Mime a card. Children have to guess the word, in French.
- ◆ Which flashcard am I holding? Hold flashcard facing you. Ask children to guess which one you are looking at. This tests memory and pronunciation.
- ◆ True or False. Children only repeat the flashcard after you if you are saying the word that matches it.
- ◆ Matching cards. Give out cards to match yours, for example with names of pets. Say a word and children hold up the matching card, if they have it.
- ◆ Children could sequence the words as you call them out.
- ◆ Children could stand in order with flashcards, for example, with names of the months. Or they could stand in alphabetical order.
- ◆ For colours, they could build towers in the order that you call out, using coloured bricks.
- ◆ Children could hold up key words as they hear them in a song.
- ◆ Children could draw what you say, using mini-whiteboards.
- ◆ Slap the flashcard! Or the correct part of a picture (for example, the face). Children come up to the board in pairs (boys versus girls is popular). They use their hands to touch (slap) the flashcard the teacher says. A point is given to the first one to touch the correct flashcard.
- ◆ Teach the children actions to go with the songs you learn.
- ◆ Use puppets or soft toys to ask and answer questions.
- ◆ Give the children cards with words and pictures and use them to play Pelmanism (also known as Pairs).
- ◆ As above, but play Snap.
- ◆ Picture lotto. Cross off pictures as you hear the word called out.
- ◆ Pictionary. The teacher can draw pictures, for example pets, and children call out as soon as they recognize it. Or they can play in small groups, on mini-whiteboards.
- ◆ Hangman (known as Le pendu in French).
- ◆ Jacques dit (Simon says).
- ◆ Chinese Whispers.
- ◆ Kim's Game.

Le Jour de l'An/ La fête des Rois

New Year's Day/ Epiphany

Background information

French people usually spend *Le Jour de l'An* (New Year's Day) '*en famille*', celebrating with their family, wishing each other '*bonne année*' (Happy New Year).

La fête des Rois (Epiphany or King's/Queen's Festival) takes place on the first Sunday in January. It is often celebrated with family. *Une galette* is a round cake which has a small object hidden inside, called *une fève*. *Une fève* means 'a broad bean' and traditionally dried beans were used. Nowadays *la fève* is usually a ceramic charm. The person who finds *la fève* has won and has to wear the crown, becoming King or Queen.

Usually the youngest person in the family, hides under the table and says who is going to have which piece of the cake, so there is no cheating!



One of the origins of *la galette des Rois* dates back to the 11th Century when monks elected their future leader by placing a silver coin in a loaf of bread. This custom then spread to other monasteries.

La fête des Rois commemorates Twelfth Night when the Three Kings arrived in Bethlehem bearing gifts for baby Jesus. In the 1960s ceramic figures started to replace the traditional dried bean, encouraging you to buy and collect more charms. Today, you can collect sets of charms, even Disney-themed ones.

You can buy *galettes* in every *boulangerie* (bakery) throughout the month of January.

The *galette* should be served warm, with a very dry white wine or champagne (for adults only!)



Teaching activities

- ◆ Explain to the children about the tradition of *La fête des Rois*
- ◆ Children mime making a *galette* as you give instructions in French (see recipe on page 10)
- ◆ Make the *galette* (see page 10) and celebrate *La fête des Rois* in class. Use a soft bean or sweet as *la fève*.
- ◆ Design your own recipe cards for making the *galette*.
- ◆ Role play buying a *galette* in a *boulangerie* (a bakery)
- ◆ Have a crown making competition, or design a *fève*.
- ◆ Discuss and compare how New Year is celebrated here and in France.
- ◆ Make *bonne année* cards to take home. Include details of what children will learn in the next two terms, to inform parents. Note: when writing *bonne année* on cards you use capital letters (*Bonne Année*), but normally it isn't capitalized.
- ◆ Children could use the guided sheet on page 11 to record their own experiences of *la galette*.

Vocabulaire

bonne année	Happy New Year
une galette	a special cake
une fève	a broad bean/ charm
un roi	a king
une reine	a queen
une boulangerie	a bakery
une couronne	a crown
en famille	as a family
la pâte feuilletée	puff pastry
la pâte	
d'amande	marzipan
un œuf	an egg