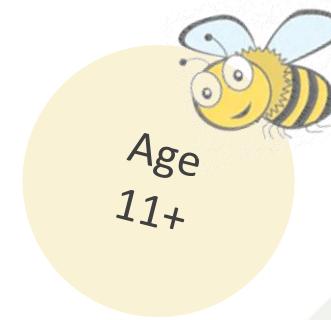


Madame – a story in English using French words



Context:

- A primary school in Dublin, Ireland. English is the language of schooling. The Irish language is a curricular subject that is taught in an integrated manner with English. The official *Primary School Curriculum* allocates 3.5 hours per week for the teaching of the Irish language at this age level. In this school, French is also taught in Fifth and Sixth Class in addition to English and Irish.
- There are 26 children in this Sixth Class (age 11+). 21 of these children speak home languages other than English. Within this group there are 12 different language backgrounds.
- Children write their own individual stories, using the French words they know that are appropriate to the topic (→ meaningful language learning).

Comments:

- The children have the opportunity to use French words in a text that is more complex than they could produce totally in that language.
- They are delighted when they realize how coherent their respective texts are even though they are using two languages in this way.
- This exercise helps to hone their skills in the area of language awareness.

Reason for choosing this activity:

- The teacher wants to encourage children to explore for themselves the French words that are part of everyday use of English.

Description:

- Along with home languages, English, and Irish, French is fully integrated into classroom discourse in Sixth Class. As part of a language awareness exercise, children are encouraged to explore all the French words they know that are regularly used in English (→ relying on linguistic repertoires).
- They are then asked to incorporate these words into a story that they will write in English (→ active language learning).

Observation:

- An exercise such as this does not confuse children. In fact, it allows them to express more complex concepts/thoughts using the language they are in the process of learning (→ language learning is a process). It heightens their level of language awareness and understanding of how language works. It actually helps in developing a greater understanding of the languages being used. In this way, both languages are enhanced.

A Story in English Using French Words!

Madame and her fiancé went to the café. Madame ordered café au lait and a baguette. Her fiancé got creme du lait and a croissant. Madame said, "Bon Appetit!"

After that, another woman gave a brochure about the new manicure shop across the road. Madame was so excited but her fiancé wasn't! So he decided to buy her a bouquet of flowers while Madame was getting her nails done.

When they were both finished, they met at a restaurant. Madame was very happy. She then decided to open her very own boutique. It was called Madame's Boutique. Her store was unique. She gave strangers brochures of her boutique and it was successful. Madame and her fiancé were very happy.

Every Monday Madame went to ballet lessons in a studio. There was a cuisine next to her boutique. The chef was called Alexandre. He was very strict chef.

Example 1: Text written by a speaker of Tagalog

A Story in English Using French Words!

One lovely day in Paris a rich, chic madame went to the haute couture boutique. She bought many chic, colourful new outfits she also bought a bright, pink dress for a wedding that she was going to go to. She did not want to camouflage with the wedding scenery which was white!

She then went to get her manicure, pedicure and hair done. After an hour madame became hungry and went to an expensive, haute cuisine restaurant and she bought a café au lait and a lovely soufflée. After her meal she paid the Chef and took one of the restaurant's brochures.

On the way home she met the bride's fiance. He gave her an invitation and she filled in the RSVP. Madame came home and got changed. She put on her tutu and went to teach her ballet class. She got a new pair of ballet shoes. She really loved ballet. For her dinner she ate an omelette and baguette because she was on a diet. Then she went to sleep in her unique, hotel-like bed. Her dog went to sleep with her in her haute couture pyjamas. She turned off her antique night stand lamp.

And she was ready for another magnificent day ahead of her tomorrow!

Example 2: Text written by a speaker of Lithuanian