

## **Going South: Exploration of the French Caribbean with Romare Bearden**

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### **Introduction and Objective**

Charlotte-born artist, Romare Bearden, was certainly a product of his environment. This environment spanned thousands of miles, across several continents, and greatly influenced the subject, tone, and genre of his artwork. From a francophone perspective, Bearden's art and way of life were affected by his travels to Paris, France and later residence in St. Maarten, in the Caribbean. Bearden's artwork was influenced by his cultural immersion in these francophone destinations; however, he never lost sight of his roots in Charlotte, North Carolina and Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. Using this as a guide, I want to create a simulated Caribbean experience for my students and give them the opportunity to use their language abilities to discover and communicatively navigate this unique aspect of French culture. This experience will enable students to make the connections between daily life in the Caribbean and life in Charlotte, NC and their own culture. Through this discovery, the result will be a classroom of students who can adapt to and proficiently communicate in French with the backdrop of the Caribbean francophone.

### **Background Information**

I am a French teacher who teaches at two middle schools in a very large urban school district in North Carolina. Both schools consist of similar student populations. At both schools, students receive rigorous, differentiated academic instruction in the core areas and in cultural and fine arts' courses. Both schools also have received satisfactory scores on state-wide assessments and continuously meet Adequate Yearly Progress as designated by No Child Left Behind legislation. In addition to the strong academic curricula offered, students benefit from a diverse group of clubs and organizations: Odyssey of the Mind, Chess Club, Science Olympiad, Math Counts, and other organizations. This successful academic environment is hugely supported by the surrounding communities, helping to bridge the gap between school and home.<sup>1</sup>

This curriculum unit will be instructed in my two eighth grade French IB classes. Students at this level have previously completed one school year of French IA (World Languages' courses at the middle school level are divided into a year in seventh grade

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and a year in eighth grade) or have previously acquired at least 135 hours of instruction in French. At the conclusion of French IA and IB, students take an End-of-Year exam that evaluates students' comprehension in French. Students are assessed on their aural and reading comprehension skills, as well as in grammar. Of the 44 eighth graders enrolled in French IB, nearly all students achieved satisfactory scores on the End-of-Year exam and are now eligible for further study in the eighth grade year. Students are motivated in their French studies and take their academic courses seriously. More, these students have elected to take French as their elective course in their coursework. At the end of the French IB course, students will take the French I exam for high school credit. With successful marks on the French I exam, students will be able to receive credit on their high school transcript. This credit will allow students to continue their linguistic coursework, starting in ninth grade, by making them eligible for French II. This advanced track in languages enables students to take more accelerated courses in French over their high school career.

The students in my eighth grade classes come from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. In my classes alone, I have some students who were born and raised locally in North Carolina, and others who have moved here from other states. Several of my students come from countries outside of the United States: Poland, The Czech Republic, and India. The reasons for my students desire to learn French are just as varied as they are. Many students find learning French and about the French culture to just be something different that they want to try. Others of my students have or will have the opportunity to visit France or a French-speaking country, whether it is for vacation purposes, or as a part of a missions' trip. One student has resolved that she wants to use her French to help her in her prospective field as a professional soccer player in France. I have also found that those who have previously visited France or have lived in another country yearn to learn the language because they have a first-hand account of why it is critical to know another language. In many of the aforementioned countries, language learning is an important aspect of the country's national educational system. Further, the geographic locations of these countries advocate for the learning of the languages of surrounding countries.

### Proficiency Levels

Students in the French IB course have received more than 135 hours of instruction in French and are considered Novice Low to Novice Mid learners. Students' proficiency levels are indicative of how they are able to function in the target language. Since majority of instructional time is done in the target language, students have developed quite an ear for simple commands and basic structures in French. As for actual language output, students are able to satisfactorily do the following tasks:

- Respond to simple questions on the most common features of daily life (e.g.— “What is your name?”; “How old are you?”; “What do you like/dislike to do?”)
- Convey minimal meaning by using:
  - Words
  - Lists of words
  - Memorized phrases
  - Some personalized combinations of words or phrases
  - An occasional short sentence
- Satisfy a limited number of immediate needs<sup>2</sup>

The tasks that students will be involved in during the Romare Bearden and the Caribbean Unit will call for them to be able to ask and answer various questions and use their language to participate in various real-world scenarios. In assessing students’ proficiency levels, those who are able to sustain themselves more in French by connecting their thoughts into comprehensible and fluid sentence structures, will receive the designation of Novice Mid proficiency. At the conclusion of this unit and the school year, the overall goal is to have all students performing at the Novice Mid level.

This instructional unit will be taught at the beginning of the fourth quarter and will last for two weeks or five instructional periods. The World Languages’ curriculum in the district has been divided into four overarching units for Levels I for all languages offered. In the middle school eighth grade curricular scope and sequence, students will have previously been instructed in and will have shown their level of proficiency through various assessment tasks in Units 1-3. In Unit 4: Getting Around, students will be able to use their French to navigate a Francophone destination or any place where they will need to know French. The backdrop for this unit is in Martinique and employs different, realistic language scenarios that students may encounter if visiting the island. The Romare Bearden and Caribbean instructional unit will complement properly the mandated instruction that students will receive in the fourth quarter. In fact, at the culmination of Unit 3, students will be able to use the vocabulary that they have learned to segue into Unit 4 material and learn about Romare Bearden and the Caribbean.

## **Rationale**

The rationale for creating this unit is twofold: to create instruction that is engaging and communicative in nature for middle school students and to provide an instructional means that supports the building of French programs in the district. Specifically, through researching second-language acquisition and through my own classroom reflections, I have noticed what keeps students wanting to learn French is that students are mostly motivated by being able to use their French in various real-world scenarios, amongst friends and family, and with other French speakers. The essential factor of learning a

language is that students want to use what they learn. When language learning becomes vocational, students are stakeholders of their learning environment and are able to take responsibility of and use their learning. Especially for middle school students, being able to talk for a grade is a bonus. In addition, the specialty of French allows students to adopt a cultural identity and experience places that they naturally would not explore in other classes. According to *Languages and Children—Making the Match*, students learn languages best when, “learning occurs in meaningful, communicative contexts that carry significance for the student. These contexts include social and cultural situations, and subject content instruction, as well storytelling, music, games, rituals, drama and celebrations.”<sup>3</sup> The Romare Bearden and the Caribbean Curriculum Unit capitalizes on giving students the language that they want and need to communicate with others through a structured set of real-world tasks. Furthermore, the unique landscape of the Caribbean will provide the basis for students to discover a facet of francophone culture that has been left unexplored in elementary and middle school curricula. By providing an environment in which students use their language in tasks that are authentic, students have the means to serve as autonomous producers of language. The result is an engaged classroom where students become proficient in their language abilities.

This notion of motivation in foreign language instruction is rooted in R.C. Gardner’s Motivation Theory. According to Gardner, “Motivation is the most influential factor in learning a second language.”<sup>4</sup> Students’ learning is directly dependent on their desire to want to learn a language. Further research suggests that students’ motivation can be divided into two categories: integrative and instrumental. For some students, learning a language is useful so that they can acquire a job or use it to do better on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT). This type of motivation is considered integrative. However, most students are motivated by knowing that they can actually use the language that they are learning in practical situations. This is considered instrumental motivation. In doctoral research by Maria Nuzzo, she asserts that a majority of students take a second language so that they can use it [speak it]<sup>5</sup>. In fact, studies show that if students are not satisfied with what they learn in second language classes, 75% of them cease language learning after satisfying language coursework requirements and choose to move to another subject.<sup>6</sup> The ideal of second language learning is to prepare students to be successful producers of language. If students cannot produce language, they suffer intrinsically. The basis of this unit stems from this fact. I want to make language learning about my students and their functioning within it. This sets the stage for this unit’s focus—giving students what they want and guiding them to increased levels of proficiency.

### The Building and Preservation of French Programs

In my years as a French teacher, I have had the opportunity to help grow a French program that is thriving and relevant for students. The work behind strengthening the French programs at the schools at which I teach has taken several years and collaboration with many peers and mentors in the district. This work still continues today. However,

there is a valid concern for French teachers who have the task to increase numbers in their classes and maintain their French programs. In the 2010-2011 school year, my district experienced Reduction in Force (RIF) measures that removed many teachers from instructional positions. Specifically, French programs at various schools took a significant hit. In several schools, French programs were completely removed. This left some schools that previously had a full-time French teacher with either no teacher or a half-time instructional position shared between two schools. Students who were in French in 2010-2011, were now in jeopardy of no longer having the choice to continue in their French studies.

Another issue that challenges French programs is the perceived relevancy of the language in the United States of America. In my first year as a middle school teacher, a student confessed to me that her parents had urged her to cease taking French when she enters high school and to begin taking Spanish, because she would use it more in the future. Although the parents' thought may come to fruition, the truth is that learning any language is beneficial for all children. In an online posting by the French Language Initiative, the listing affirms reasons why French is deemed a viable language in the world. Such reasons include that by knowing French, language speakers have an advantage in the international industries of business, aviation, law, transportation technologies, etc. Also, French is the third most commonly used language on the internet and allows for worldwide communication. A third reason gives that French is spoken in "55 countries across five continents and by over 200 million people."<sup>7</sup> This list makes the point that French is conclusively a world language. When talking with the student who was to begin Spanish studies, I gave a couple of these reasons, to try to urge her back into taking French. Were my reasons persuasive enough? Apparently yes, since she is now taking French II in high school. However, this intrigued me to really find out why students take and stay in a language. As stated previously, language learning is influenced by students' motivation to learn the language. No matter what language students decide, it is how they go about learning the language that positively impacts their continuance in their language studies. In fact, school districts that are experiencing astronomical growth in their language programs have overcrowded classrooms in their Level III and IV classes. Such a *problem* is conducive to preserving jobs and maintaining French departments. The growth of language programs can be fostered by setting proficiency targets that inform students' abilities in the various language levels and by "designing instructional pathways to reach those targets."<sup>8</sup> If teachers create programs based from planned and engaging instruction, attrition rates will decrease; thus sustaining programs. In particular, this method of planning for success in the French classroom will motivate students to continue in their studies. As a result, stakeholders in education will see the relevancy of language learning in students' lives and its importance to the overall school curriculum.

Romare Bearden

The integration of the life and works of Romare Bearden into the unit will link students' knowledge and usage of French to the French Caribbean where Bearden spent his latter years. Romare Bearden, a respected artist of the twentieth century was born in Charlotte, North Carolina. He often traveled between Charlotte and Pittsburgh as a child, visiting various family and friends between the two cities. In Bearden's adult life, he settled in New York City, where he worked as a case worker for the New York City Department of Welfare. It is in New York where Bearden was surrounded by many of the greats of the Harlem Renaissance: Richard Wright, Langston Hughes, Ralph Ellison, and Cab Callaway. It was also at this time where Bearden began taking classes on painting and preparing for his first solo exhibition in 1945<sup>9</sup>.

Bearden's experience overseas began in 1950, when he moved to Paris, France under the GI Bill legislation. A dear friend urged Bearden to join the likes of other black artists, such as Sidney Bechet, Alfred Murray, Richard Wright and Langston Hughes, in Paris, stating that this was the prime time to step outside of American black culture and look at society from a new perspective. This move would remove Bearden from issues of racial tension commonly experienced by black artists in America, and bring him to a scene where an artist's ethnicity was less of a question. During this period, Bearden did not spend considerable time painting. In fact, his time was spent socializing with the great minds of the time in Parisian cafés, visiting museums, jazz clubs, walking through parks, and taking in the French lifestyle. He began studying the works of Charles Baudelaire, a French poet extraordinaire, and the writings of Marcel Proust. In fact, Bearden would quote lines from both writers, despite his lack of knowledge of the French language. Specifically, it was in his studies of Proust that Bearden heard about the idea of *le souvenir involontaire*, or involuntary memory, where a particular memory is evoked after one has heard, seen, touched, tasted or smelled something. It was from this idea that Bearden later created his art. One such moment occurred upon Bearden's return to the United States when Bearden passed a woman making a watermelon cake--a distinct memory of his childhood in the South. It was from this memory storage, that Bearden remembered the South and how to portray it.<sup>10</sup> From this point forward, this experience in France would impact the perspective in which Bearden created his artwork.<sup>11</sup>

After a nine-month stint in France, Bearden returned to the New York City. In 1954, Bearden married Nanette Rohan, a daughter of immigrants from St. Maartin in the Caribbean. The two met coincidentally at a hurricane relief fundraiser for the French Indies. In New York City, he resumed painting and joined a group of socially conscious artists known as Spiral. Bearden started his career as a collagist, cutting and pasting scenes of life that depicted his southern upbringing in Charlotte, North Carolina. Other paintings and collages detailed his life in New York and in Pittsburgh. Over the next four decades, Bearden contributed greatly to the art world with his collages, paintings, and sketches of his life.<sup>12</sup>

*The Franco-Caribbean*

Starting in 1970, Bearden and his wife took trips back and forth from New York to St. Martin. The two had plans drawn to build a house on the island, where they spent months at a time. It was in St. Martin that Bearden focused heavily on the landscape of the island through his dedication to the art medium of watercolor. When speaking about using water colors to paint scenes from the Caribbean, he explained, “it’s watercolor country. It would be very different in painting down here for me than if I were in New York.”<sup>13</sup> The Beardens’ escape to the island allowed for Romare to experience an aspect of francophone culture that sparked his interest to even take up a new way of creating art. It was also in St. Martin where he formed friendships and collaborations with writer and mayor of Fort-de-France, Martinique, Aimé Césaire, and writer Derek Walcott. The former, Aimé Césaire, championed the notion of *négritude*, (which translates to “blackness”) that he explained in a 1987 speech at a cultural convention in Miami, Florida:

I think one can generally say that, historically, Négritude has been a form of revolt, mainly against the global cultural system as it had been constituted during the last several centuries, a system characterised by a certain number of prejudices, of assumptions which generate a very strict hierarchy. In other words, Négritude has been a revolt against what I shall call European reductionism.

I am referring to the system of thought, or rather the instinctive tendency of an eminent and prestigious civilization, to abuse its very prestige to isolate itself, as Léopold Sédar Senghor would say, by reducing the concept of universality to its own dimensions; in other words, through its own categories.<sup>14</sup>

The premise of this idea sought to challenge the worldly identity of what it meant to be black, outside of the parameters set by those countries that formerly had a cultural implication on its black citizens. Through the mixed mediums of water color and collage, Bearden was able to capture the identity of the Caribbean and its inhabitants. He spent much time in his art studio producing such illustrations that depicted the beauty of this land and also the rituals that were involved in the identity of the French Caribbean.

The purpose of identity in the Caribbean allowed Bearden to create based off of his own perspective of the island. Many of his paintings showed roosters, scenes of the locals at the market, or daily fishing excursions where fishermen assessed their catch. These island scenes were comparable to scenes from paintings of Mecklenburg County. Distinctively, the image of the rooster was an entity that was as much a part of the Caribbean landscape as it was in Charlotte. In *Romare Bearden: The Caribbean Dimension*, Bearden expressed the similarities between the landscape of the Caribbean

and Mecklenburg County in his writing to friend June Kelly: “Yard is filled with stray cats [and] the fowl community.<sup>15</sup>” More, the chosen palette of colors that Bearden was using in his Caribbean scenes began to mirror the same vibrancy and lush quality of his Mecklenburg paintings done while living in St. Maartin. This suggested Bearden’s change in his perspective of his memories. It was in the Caribbean that Bearden may have seen his childhood in the South with new eyes—eyes that saw his past and its landscape in new colors and reminded him of what it meant to grow up in Mecklenburg County. Further, the historical point that the Caribbean at one point was going to be annexed to the American South and be a part of the Confederacy could have been an underlying factor in aiding Bearden to see the Caribbean as an expanded version of the familiar South.<sup>16</sup>

After settling in St. Maartin in 1973, Bearden further explored the Caribbean by visiting the French-speaking islands of Martinique, Haiti, and Guadeloupe. Specifically in Martinique, Bearden was once more inspired by the lush Caribbean scenes and decided to create a series under the title of *Prevalence of Ritual—Martinique*. These works were doubly titled in English and in French, as a connection between the two worlds from which he came. In his Martiniquais works, Bearden chose collage to convey the landscape and daily life on the island. The scenes that he created portrayed the natural environment of the Martiniquais rain forest in which the viewer usually found one or more nude women by the river or participating in some function of daily life. The scenes were “edenic” with lush foliage and light emitted by the rising or setting sun, and the tropical animals that inhabited the region. Others of Bearden’s works were inspired by similar Caribbean landscapes. He never painted Haiti, but did express that he was merely a “visitor” of the region and did not produce any works of the island.<sup>17</sup>

Bearden’s life serves as a model of Francophone cultural exploration. Although he learned only a little French, he used his talents to display his knowledge and culture of the region. His paintings and collages were indicative of his perspective of *la vie quotidienne* in the Caribbean. Additionally, his southern upbringing also plays a pivotal role in linking the Caribbean with Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. This parallels the objective of the unit for students. Students will be able to use their French to discover and express their personal perspective on what life in the Caribbean may be like.

## **Strategies**

The core of this unit stems from the fact that students want to be able to communicate in the target language in real-world contexts. The evolution of language acquisition over the twentieth century has moved towards this notion through various strategies that help instructors and their students achieve the desired result. Such a strategy that has been proven successful in the early language classroom is called Total Physical Response (TPR). This method for language teaching undergirds language development by the



means of The Natural Approach, which was conceived by Tracy Terrell and Stephen Krashen.

### The Natural Approach and Total Physical Response

The Natural Approach identifies the difference between language acquisition and language learning. According to Terrell and Krashen, language acquisition is “an unconscious process developed through using language meaningfully”; whereas language learning is “consciously learning or discovering rules about a language.”<sup>18</sup> Research stresses that in order for students to become proficient in the target language, strategies for language acquisition must be employed. Total Physical Response is such a facet of language acquisition. In this method, developed by psychologist James Asher, “[teachers] find it to be an especially engaging and effective way of introducing new vocabulary and making it meaningful.”<sup>19</sup> In the Going South Unit, students will first learn about various activities that can be done in the islands. Vocabulary will be taught through the use of gestures, pictures and repetitions. To aid students in inputting the new vocabulary, the teacher will use pictures to show students what the activities look like. Next, the teacher will demonstrate an example of the activity and students will follow his/her lead. This will continue as the teacher prepares students for memorization of the words by having them close their eyes and do the movements while the teacher calls out the vocabulary. Other activities such as doing the motions and having students call out to the teacher what they see can be used to emphasize the new vocabulary. After engaging the students interpretively, the teacher will begin to ask questions to gauge each student’s level of comprehension. This interpersonal exchange is initiated by the teacher who asks students about the vocabulary in ways that elicit a “yes or no response.” The teacher continues with other activities where students respond with single or two-word answers and continues to the point of open-ended sentence-level responses. At this time in the school year, it may be expected that students produce more than single words, and begin to form more cohesive sentences. Students have prior knowledge of similar verb forms and can string words together to create sentences.

### Classroom Activities

The arrangement of this unit is modeled after the sequence of Backwards Design. Stephen R. Covey in *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* states the case for the value in planning with the end in mind: “To begin with the end in mind means to start with a clear understanding of your destination. It means you know where you are going...”<sup>20</sup> Likewise, the organization of instruction should lead students to a deliberate and expected outcome so that students can truly take ownership of their learning and can be prepared to create their own success. In this process of Backwards Design, the instruction is divided into three stages: Stage 1--Goals and Objectives (See Appendix A), Stage 2—Assessments and Activities, and Stage 3—Lesson Planning.

## Prior Knowledge

At this point in the curriculum, students will have shown proficiency in French through the evaluation of various assessments. Students will be expected to speak at least a Novice Mid proficiency level, according to the ACTFL Language Proficiency Guidelines.<sup>21</sup> Students' proficiency will be based upon their ability to express basic information about themselves and others (e.g. names, birthdates, telephone number, address, physical descriptions, and descriptions of personality). In addition, students will be able to discuss their likes and dislikes; activities in which they are involved; and their daily schedule. Further, students will be able to conjugate all regular –ER verbs, the verbs *faire*, *vouloir*, *être*, and *avoir* (Taken from CMS Level I Unit Structure).<sup>22</sup> It is vital that students use these structures and communicate on the Novice Mid level, as this unit is supported by this prior knowledge.

## Summative Assessment

Throughout the duration of the unit, instruction will be facilitated in a manner that will lead students to creating and presenting their own electronic book (e-book) or e-comic. In this story, students will create a character that stays in Martinique for a week vacation with his family. The scenario for the assessment is as follows:

Les Vacances en Martinique—It has been a long school year and quite a while since the family took their last vacation together. With this being the case, your mom and dad announce to your family that you will be taking a family vacation to Martinique for five days! This is the biggest vacation that the family has taken. Of course, everyone wants to enjoy themselves; however, to keep costs minimal, they have decided not to go through a traveling agency. Instead, your mom and dad were hoping that you, their son/daughter who has been taking French and recently learned about the French Caribbean, can help them choose activities to do for the week. You are feeling confident about this vacation and have decided to take on this role as tour guide.

Task: Create an e-book through [www.zooburst.com](http://www.zooburst.com)<sup>23</sup> or an e-comic strip at <http://www.makebeliefscomix.com/><sup>24</sup> to show what you and your family did on your vacation.

- First, describe each member of your family (at least 4 members)
- Write about 2 activities that your family does *each day* (5-day vacation)
  - Each day, there must be at least 1 activity that is done specifically in Martinique
- Create illustrations that show what you all did during your excursion

In evaluating this task, the teacher can use the PALS Rubrics from Fairfax County, Virginia.<sup>25</sup>

## Formative Assessments

### *Activity One*

Caribbean Experts--The unit will commence with students learning about the islands that make up the French Caribbean. Students will be asked to list as many countries as they can that are French-speaking in two minutes. The teacher can choose to do this activity in student groups of 2-4 where students write on a sheet of butcher paper and collaborate to come up with as many answers as they can; or, this can be done individually as a Warm-Up Activity (The success of this activity mainly depends on students' previous knowledge about French-speaking countries. The more knowledgeable students are of French-speaking countries, the more that they will feel successful to do this activity individually, and perhaps, as a competition against their other classmates.). After revealing the French-speaking countries to the class, the teacher will ask the students to pick from the list of French-speaking countries, the six countries that are Caribbean islands. Once again, after students discuss and make their decisions, the teacher will show them which Caribbean islands they will be exploring (See Appendix A for the listing of French-speaking countries and those in the French West Indies). After this, the teacher will lead students into the goal of this mini unit of the French Caribbean with a famous artist from Charlotte, North Carolina, Romare Bearden.

After the warm-up activity, students will watch a short film from *Discovery Education* about what comprises the Caribbean and where it is. This video will provide some historical background information in English about the peoples of the Caribbean and its geographic features.<sup>26</sup>

This activity will segue into an inquiry-based project where students will work collaboratively to discover more about the French Caribbean. The teacher will divide students into groups of 3-4 students and give each group a French West Indies' country to research (See Appendix B). Students will take the information gathered and present it to the class.

### *Activity Two*

After giving class presentations about the various parts of the Caribbean, students will take what they have learned about the Caribbean and compare the Caribbean to the United States. The teacher will begin this by having students do a Think-Pair-Share. With a sheet of paper to jot down ideas, students will list all of the words that come to mind when thinking about the French Caribbean. The teacher can help activate thoughts by having them discuss the colors that they think about, the climate, the people that have

inhabited the islands, the foods, and other prior knowledge. Next, students will write down as much as they can about the United States. Students will pair up with a classmate to discuss their thoughts and further compare and contrast the two. Finally, students will report what they have jotted down to the class. The result will be a whole class Venn Diagram that students will complete.

### *Activity Three*

Oui ou Non—The teacher should attain various pictures created by Romare Bearden (These pictures can be attained in *Romare Bearden: The Caribbean Dimension*. See Notes). In this activity, students will pull from their prior knowledge and conceptions about the Caribbean, to try to determine which of Romare Bearden’s works are “Caribbean” and which ones are of scenes of the United States.

The teacher will begin by informing students that they will continue their discovery of the Franco-Caribbean through the works of American artist Romare Bearden who was born in Charlotte, North Carolina and who painted and made collages of scenes in the Caribbean and of the United States. Following this introduction, students will raise their hand if they agree that the work shown is from the Caribbean. By keeping their hands down, they will show that they do think that the work is a scene from the United States. At this point, students will not be expected to know which pieces are from the Caribbean or from the United States. This activity will allow students to make connections between art and geography by using educated guesses about the works. After students have made their decisions about each slide, show which pictures are from the Caribbean and which depict scenes of the United States. The teacher can ask what made some pictures look “Caribbean”; and others, “American.”

### *Activity Four*

Museum Walk—Students will learn about Romare Bearden and his artistic contributions to the United States’ and Caribbean art scene. In this segment of students’ learning, the teacher will present various pictures of Romare Bearden. These pictures can be found in the book, *The Art of Romare Bearden*. The teacher will also explain that Mr. Bearden was born in Charlotte, North Carolina--his home being beside what is now the Carolina Panther’s Stadium. The teacher can also give biographical information about his rearing in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Canada, and New York City. Following the biographical information, the teacher will pass out examples of Romare Bearden’s collages made from his memories of his childhood. As a class, prompt discussion by asking the following questions: “What kind of images do you see in these pictures?”; “What makes these pictures ‘Southern?’”; “Does this look like the South or Charlotte today?” This inquiry will prepare students for a “Museum Walk,” in which they will peruse examples of collages and watercolors of the American South and the French Caribbean.” To prepare for this, the teacher will have collected a variety of Bearden’s work for students to peruse

(10-15 of the teacher's choosing of examples from his works). The teacher will hang the pictures up around the room as to resemble the setting of a museum. As students walk around the room, they should take notice to and inquire about the following (This activity can be done in English, as students do not have all of the vocabulary for the images that they will see; however, some vocabulary can be translated into French like bird, train, sun, moon, tree, building, etc) :

- What is going on in the pictures?
- What types of images do you see in the pictures?
- What images are re-occurring in his works?
- What kind of colors does Mr. Bearden use? How do the colors make you feel? Why do you think he chose these colors?
- What kinds of differences did you notice between the pictures of the Caribbean, Charlotte, and other places?

#### *Activity Five*

Total Physical Response--On the board, the teacher will have the following vocabulary words listed: 1) *Je fais de la planche à voile*; 2) *Je mange de la canne à sucre*; 3) *je vais à la pêche* ; 4) *je regarde le volcan de la Montagne Pelée*; 5) *je fais de la plongée sous-marine* ; 6) *je fais une randonnée pedestre sur l'île* ; et 7) *Je fais de la deltaplane*. These are all some activities that can be done in Martinique. Supplementary vocabulary can include: *Je bronze, Je fais du foot; Je joue du tam-tam, etc.*

The teacher can introduce the vocabulary by showing pictures of the above vocabulary and asking students, « Vous aimez (*faire de la planche à voile*)? In the parentheses, the teacher will insert the infinitive of the vocabulary that he/she will want to employ. Students will then either show a) a thumbs up to show that they like the activity; b) hold their thumb sideways to show that they are indifferent about the activity; or c) show a thumbs down to show that they do not like the activity. Students' actions can be modified, depending on how the teacher wants them to show their comprehension and their feelings about the activity. At the conclusion of the activity, write the vocabulary for students to see in the *Je* form (first-person form) so that students can later use the vocabulary to talk about what they do in their summative assessment.

#### *Activity Six*

Illustrations--Students will next practice the vocabulary by illustrating various examples of the vocabulary on their paper (See Appendix C).

#### *Activity Seven*

Lévy visite La Martinique—After students finish their illustrations of the various activities that they can do in Martinique, the teacher will tell them a story about a teenager named Lévy who visits Martinique. In Martinique, Lévy seeks to do as much fun stuff as he possibly can. As the teacher tells the story, the students will place a check mark in the boxes where it shows which activity Lévy does (See Appendix D for the script). To extend the story, ask students, “*Qu’est-ce que Lévy fait au début? Son deuxième activité? Son troisième activité? Son quatrième activité? Et au futur, que pensez-vous que Lévy va faire pour sa prochaine activité?*”

Next, have students write their own sequence of 5-7 events that Lévy does on their paper. Upon completion of their version of Lévy’s trip, they will work with a partner and tell their partner the story. The partner will mark the boxes that he/she hears and then, they exchange roles.

### *Activity Eight*

*Occupe-toi de tes oignons (Mind your business)!*—It is almost time for summer and everyone is ready to go on vacation—even your teachers! In fact, your awesome teachers have some pretty awesome plans for the summer—doing things that you would never expect them to do. You and your friend have overheard some teachers talking about their plans and where they will be. You know what some teachers want to do; your friend knows what some other teachers want to do. Talk with each other during French Class to figure out what their plans are (See Appendix D).

### Notes

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5. Greg Duncan, "What Novices Can Do", accessed October 22, 2011.
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9. Sally Price and Richard Price, *Romare Bearden: The Caribbean Dimension* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), 20.
10. Dr. Shaw Smith, "Romare Bearden: The American South through The Eyes of the Caribbean," Lecture presented at The Mint Museum, Charlotte, NC, October 4, 2011.
11. Sally Price and Richard Price, *The Caribbean Dimension*, 111.
12. Ibid, 22 .
13. Ibid, 108.
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16. Shaw Smith, "The American South"
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18. "The Natural Approach," SIL International: Partners in Language Development, accessed October 22, 2011, <http://www.sil.org/lingualinks/languagelearning/waystoapproachlanguagelearning/thenaturalapproach.htm>.
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20. Mara Cobe, Planning for Success.
21. "North Carolina World Language Essential Standards: Classical Languages, Dual & Heritage Languages, Modern Languages." North Carolina State Department of Education, accessed October 22, 2011, [http://seclang.ncwiseowl.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server\\_4507529/File/WorldLanguageEssentialStandards.pdf](http://seclang.ncwiseowl.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_4507529/File/WorldLanguageEssentialStandards.pdf)).

22. <http://worldlanguages.cmswiki.wikispaces.net/>, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, accessed October, 22, 2011.
23. "ZooBurst," ZooBurst, accessed October 22, 2011, <http://www.zooburst.com>.
24. "Makebeliefscomix.com," Makebeliefscomix.com, accessed October 22, 2011, <http://www.makebeliefscomix.com>.
25. "Level I Writing Tasks," Fairfax County Public Schools, accessed October 22, 2011, [www.fcps.edu/is/worldlanguages/pals/documents/Level1WritingTasksAnalyticRubric.pdf](http://www.fcps.edu/is/worldlanguages/pals/documents/Level1WritingTasksAnalyticRubric.pdf).
26. *Geography of the Caribbean*, Full Video From Discovery Education, accessed October 28, 2011, 2004, <http://www.discoveryeducation.com/>.

### Resources for Teachers

Césaire, Aimé. "A speech by Aimé Césaire: Négritude, Africa and Black History (Miami, 1987). Trans. Patrich Bolland, "L'Humanité in English." <http://www.humaniteinenglish.com/spip.php?article898> (accessed October 22, 2011).

This is a speech given by Aimé Césaire in regards to his book *Négritude*. It was later translated into English for this website.

Curtain, Helena Anderson, and Carol Ann Dahlberg. *Languages and children: making the match : new languages for young learners, grades K-8*. 4th ed. Columbus: Pearson, 2010.

This is a great resource for teachers of FLES and Middle School language programs. It includes theories for language learning, best practices, and activities.

Discovery Education. *Geography of the Caribbean*. From Discovery Education. Full Video. 2004. <http://www.discoveryeducation.com/> (accessed October 28, 2011).

This video gives background information about the formation of the Caribbean and the many cultures that comprise it.

Duncan, Greg. "What Novices Can Do." InterPrep.



resourcesfromgreg.wikispaces.com/file/view/What+can+Novices+do.pdf  
(accessed October 22, 2011).

For teachers incorporating the ACTFL standards into their instruction, this webpage gives information into what a novice learner should be able to do in the target language.

Fairfax County Public Schools. "Level I Writing Tasks." Fairfax County Public Schools. [www.fcps.edu/is/worldlanguages/pals/documents/Level1WritingTasksAnalyticRubric.pdf](http://www.fcps.edu/is/worldlanguages/pals/documents/Level1WritingTasksAnalyticRubric.pdf) (accessed October 23, 2011).

This is a rubric for the summative assessment task, *Les Vacances en Martinique*.

Fine, Ruth and Mary Lee Corlett. *The Art of Romare Bearden*. Washington: National Gallery Of Art, 2003.

This text chronicles and gives the biographical and artistic background of Romare Bearden. It is a good resource for going in depth about the life of Romare Bearden and the cadre of his artwork.

French Caribbean International. "French Caribbean International."  
FRENCHCARIBBEAN.ORG. <http://www.frenchcaribbean.org> (accessed October 22, 2011).

This is a web resource for finding information about countries in the French Caribbean.

French Language Initiative. "The World Speaks French > Top Reasons to Take French." The World Speaks French. <http://www.theworldspeaksfrench.org/reasons.html> (accessed October 22, 2011).

This is a website for the promotion of the French language. Reasons for knowing the language are listed here.

John Malyon/Specifica, Inc.. "Artcyclopedia." Romare Bearden Online. [www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/bearden\\_romare.html](http://www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/bearden_romare.html) (accessed October 22, 2011).

This website has many of Bearden's works. This is where you can also find online examples of his works to print.

"Makebeliefscomix.com." makebeliefscomix.com. <http://www.makebeliefscomix.com> (accessed October 22, 2011).

This is the website that students can use to create their e-comic strips.

Price, Sally, Richard Price, and Romare Bearden. *Romare Bearden: The Caribbean Dimension*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006.

A great resource that displays Romare Bearden's Caribbean works as well as how the Caribbean influence changed the way he viewed and portrayed the South in his art.

Public Schools of North Carolina: State Board of Education--Department of Public Instruction. "North Carolina World Language Essential Standards: Classical Languages, Dual & Heritage Languages, Modern Languages. World Language Essential Standards.  
[seclang.ncwiseowl.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server\\_4507529/File/WorldLanguageEssentialStandards.pdf](http://seclang.ncwiseowl.org/UserFiles/Servers/Server_4507529/File/WorldLanguageEssentialStandards.pdf) (accessed October 22, 2011).

This is the complete listing of North Carolina's World Languages' Essential Standards. The standards are divided into student proficiency levels and explain what students should be able to do at each proficiency level.

SIL International. "The Natural Approach." SIL International: Partners in Language Development.  
<http://www.sil.org/lingualinks/languagelearning/waystoapproachlanguagelearning/thenaturalapproach.htm> (accessed October 22, 2011).

The information provided here briefly describes the Natural Approach to Language Acquisition.

<http://worldlanguages.cmswiki.wikispaces.net/>, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, accessed October, 22, 2011.

This website is the official site for teachers in Charlotte-Mecklenburg School system to access curricular resources.

"ZooBurst." ZooBurst. <http://www.zooburst.com> (accessed October 22, 2011).

This is the website that students can use to create their e-books.

### **Resources for Students**

CIA. "Central Intelligence Agency: The World Factbook." Central Intelligence Agency: The World Factbook. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world->

factbook/ (accessed October 22, 2011).

This offers up-to-date census information about countries around the world.

Fairfax County Public Schools. "Level I Writing Tasks." Fairfax County Public Schools. [www.fcps.edu/is/worldlanguages/pals/documents/Level1WritingTasksAnalyticRubric.pdf](http://www.fcps.edu/is/worldlanguages/pals/documents/Level1WritingTasksAnalyticRubric.pdf) (accessed October 23, 2011).

This is a rubric for the summative assessment task, *Les Vacances en Martinique*.

Hartfield, Claire, and Jerome Lagarrigue. *Me and Uncle Romie: A Story Inspired by The Life and Art of Romare Bearden*. New York: Dial Books For Young Readers, 2002.

This is a great resource to help students further understand the life and art of Romare Bearden.

"Makebeliefscomix.com." makebeliefscomix.com. <http://www.makebeliefscomix.com> (accessed October 22, 2011).

This is the website that students can use to create their e-comic strips.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art. "The Metropolitan Museum of Art - Romare Bearden: Let's Walk The Block." The Metropolitan Museum of Art - Home. <http://www.metmuseum.org/metmedia/interactives/art-trek/romare-bearden-lets-walk-the-block?chanID=f5ad087f-b0e4-41c4-9aee-204a15b705d1> (accessed October 22, 2011).

A place to find general information about Romare Bearden and a great place for students to do a "walk through" of his famous collage, "The Block."

"ZooBurst." ZooBurst. <http://www.zooburst.com> (accessed October 22, 2011).

This is the website that students can use to create their e-books.

### **Classroom Materials**

1. Butcher paper or poster boards and markers (enough for each group in Activity One)
2. A class set of computers (e.g.—on-site computer lab or laptop cart) in order to work on Activities One and Four
3. Printed copies of Romare Bearden's works (15-20 copies)--These copies will be used for Activity Four—*Museum Walk*. These copies can be found at

[www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/bearden\\_romare.html](http://www.artcyclopedia.com/artists/bearden_romare.html) (See Teacher's Resources), in *The Art of Romare Bearden* or in *Romare Bearden: The Caribbean Dimension*.

Suggestions for Set-Up of Activity Four—*Museum Walk*:

- a. Take each piece of art and post and laminate them on color construction paper.
  - b. Create a write-up of the title of the piece which includes the date, medium, and its setting (the American South, Caribbean, New York/city landscape, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania).
4. Zooburst Account—In order to make the Zooburst books, there are three pricing structures. The first is free and allows the teacher to create 10 books. The second costs \$9.99 and allows for unlimited books to be created with one individual user (the teacher). The last is another unlimited package for \$29.99 and it allows for use under multiple teachers (good if there are several teachers who want to use the software). Purchasing the \$9.99 subscription is the most recommended course of action.

## **Appendix A—Implementing District Standards**

This list of North Carolina World Languages' Essential Standards is not intended to be exhaustive.

Note on Numbering:

**NM** – Novice Mid Proficiency Level

Note on Strands:

**CLL** - Connections to Language & Literacy

**COD** – Connections to Other Disciplines

**CMT** – Communities

### **NM.CLL.1 Use the language to engage in interpersonal communication.**

NM.CLL.1.1 Use memorized words and phrases to exchange information on familiar topics, such as likes, dislikes, emotions, everyday activities, and immediate surroundings.

### **NM.CLL.2 Understand words and concepts presented in the language.**

NM.CLL.2.1 Understand the meaning of memorized phrases and questions about familiar topics and surroundings.

### **NM.CLL.3 Use the language to present information to an audience.**

NM.CLL.3.3 Use appropriate pronunciation and voice inflection in spoken presentations.

### **NM.COD.3 Use the language to present information to an audience.**

NM.COD.3.3 Use readily available technology tools and digital literacy skills to present academic information in the target language.

### **NM.COD.4 Compare the students' culture and the target culture.**

NM.COD.4.2 Identify information about target culture perspectives and practices.

### **NM.CMT.1 Use the language to engage in interpersonal communication.**

NM.CMT.1.2 Use memorized words and phrases on familiar topics to interact with communities of learners of the same target language.

### **NM.CMT.3 Use the language to present information to an audience.**

NM.CMT.3.1 Use memorized words and phrases to describe arts, sports, games, and media from the target culture.

### **NM.CMT.4 Compare the students' culture and the target culture.**

NM.CMT.4.1 Recognize aspects of the target culture and language in the students' culture and language.

**Appendix B—Activité 1** (*French-speaking Countries*)

\*All countries in the French West Indies are in **bold**.

1. Bénin
2. Burkina Faso
3. Central African Republic
4. Congo (Democratic Republic of)
5. Congo (Republic of)
6. Côte d'Ivoire
7. Gabon
8. Guinea
9. Luxembourg
10. Mali
11. Monaco
12. Niger
13. Sénégal
14. Togo
15. Belgium
16. Burundi
17. Cameroon
18. Canada
19. Chad
20. Channel Islands (Guernsey and Jersey)
21. Comoros
22. Djibouti
23. Equatorial Guinea
- 24. Guadeloupe**
25. **Haiti** (the other official language is French Creole)
26. Madagascar
27. Rwanda
28. Seychelles
- 29. St. Barthélemy**
- 30. St. Martin**
- 31. Les Saintes**
32. Switzerland
33. Vanuatu
34. French Guyana
- 35. Guadeloupe**
- 36. Martinique**
37. La Réunion
38. French Polynesia
39. Mayotte
40. New Caledonia
41. Saint Pierre and Miquelon,
42. Wallis and Futuna,
43. French southern & Antarctic lands

**Appendix C—Activité 1** (*Caribbean Expert Worksheet*)

Task: You are on a French Research Team and have been given the opportunity to explore the Caribbean. **You are in charge of finding various pieces of information about your assigned country and then reporting back to the group about your findings.** Use the most recent information in your data (All findings should be dated no later than 2008.). Don't forget to add where you found your information!

Name of Country	Population of Country	Climate of the Country	Foods That You Can Eat There	5 Activities That You Can Do in That Country
Where did you find your information?	Where did you find your information?	Where did you find your information?	Where did you find your information?	Where did you find your information?

**Appendix D—Activité 7** (Script for *Lévy Visite La Martinique*)

Teacher's Note: This script should be read for students as they place a check mark in the boxes that show the activity that Lévy does during his trip to Martinique.

Lévy est très heureux. Il a de la chance cette semaine ! Il va en Martinique pour visiter la belle île ! D'abord, il décide d'aller à la plage. Il nage et il fait

de la plongée sous-marine ! C'est fantastique ! L'océan est si bleu clair. Ensuite, Lévy marche sur le sable et il regarde le volcan de Montagne St-Pierre. Il fait une randonnée pédestre au sommet de la montagne. La vue c'est très magnifique. Mais, oh la la la ! Lévy a trop faim. C'est nécessaire de retourner. Il voit un petit avion et il fait du deltaplane de la montagne à la plage. Sur la terre, il va au marché et il s'arrête de manger de la canne à sucre. Miam Miam ! Le jour est presque fini. La Martinique est vraiment incroyable.



Appendix E—Activité 8

Occupe-toi de tes oignons !!!  
Élève A



LES PROFESSEURS	Activité	Où ?
Professeur des maths		À la plage Myrtle
Professeur de l'histoire	nage	
Professeur de l'anglais		À la montagne de Grandfather
Professeur des sciences		
Professeur d'EPS	Fait de la randonnée pedestre	En Californie

Student Script

If you get stuck, here are some quick reminders of what you should say:

Q : Qu'est-ce que (nom du professeur) fait ?

R : Mme/M. (the activity).

Q : Où va (nom du professeur) ?

R : Il/Elle va (location).

Occupe-toi de tes oignons!!!  
Élève B



LES PROFESSEURS	Activité	Où ?
Professeur des maths	Fait de la plongée sous-marine	
Professeur de l'histoire		Au lac Norman
Professeur de l'anglais	Fait de la deltaplane	
Professeur des sciences	Regarde la Coupe du Monde	En France
Professeur d'EPS		

Student Script

If you get stuck, here are some quick reminders of what you should say:

Q : Qu'est-ce que (nom du professeur) fait ?

R : Mme/M. (the activity).

Q : Où va (nom du professeur) ?

R : Il/Elle va (location).