



Think, Sense and Move: An Exploration of a French Song and Several Francophone Paintings

“We do not “have” a body, rather we “are” bodily.” (Heidegger, 1997)

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:
Language Teachers teaching Fles or Immersion classes in grades 3-8

Keywords: Embodied learning, embodied teaching, Brain Dance, Critical Multimodal Literacies (CML), “*Walking Propositions*”, senses, movement, mindfulness, tableau, la Francophonie, *L’Ours*, Christophe Mae, Youssou N’Dour, lyricstraining.com, Francophone painters, snapshot, global warming, *La liseuse*, *Le champ de coquelicots*.

Teaching Standards: See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

Synopsis: This curriculum unit is divided into two parts. In the first section, the students analyze a French song, *L’Ours*, interpreted by Christophe Mae and Youssou N’Dour. In the second section, the learners discover and explore thirteen Francophone paintings. The pedagogical and philosophical approach adopted throughout this paper is teaching and learning through embodied practices. The intention is to present the students with activities that engage both the mind and the body. In this methodology, these two entities work in harmony. The assignments are varied and challenging. They incite the pupils to move with purpose, to think critically, to interact in French, to imagine, and to create.

I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 20 students in 5th grade French Immersion literacy class.

I give permission for Charlotte Teachers Institute to publish my curriculum unit in print and online. I understand that I will be credited as the author of my work.

Introduction

Rationale

Growing up in Belgium, my experience of learning as a child was very stationary, especially at the secondary level. We sat for long hours and engaged our body very little. This teaching approach was also very compartmentalized. We used our minds in math, science, literacy, foreign language and history classes, and our bodies in the weekly physical education class. We drew in art class, sang in music class, and danced -if we danced at all- in gym class. However, at the elementary school, my experience was more energetic. Teachers incorporated more movement in their lessons.

The more I teach, the more I believe that it is crucial to engage the body in my day-to-day instruction. Yet, I often add motion in my class as a brain break rather than as an integral part of the learning process. Even though I think brain breaks are valuable activities that help students relax and refocus, I would like my lessons to be even more dynamic and energizing. As I plan my units, I would like to make a more conscious effort to create lessons emphasizing all the senses, and seeking to balance the mind and the body as two equally fundamental entities.

This seminar is offering me the opportunity to become more knowledgeable about the research around the philosophies of teaching and learning through embodied practices. This course is also answering my questions: Why should teachers include movement at all stages of the learning process? How do students benefit from using their body, and therefore some of their senses, when discovering new concepts? Does integrating motion help teachers create a community of learners who care about each other? Does planning rigorous lessons taking into account the body and its senses help students better process and, ultimately, better retain key ideas of our lessons?

School /Student Demographics

South Academy of International Languages (SAIL), previously E.E. Waddell Language Academy, is a K-8 urban magnet school in the Charlotte Mecklenburg School District (CMS). With 176 schools, this is one of the largest school districts in the state of North Carolina. SAIL is one of the six dual language/immersion schools in CMS.

In 2021, the student population in our school reaches 1,230 students: 799 students at the elementary level and 431 students in middle school. SAIL offers five languages: French, German, Japanese, Chinese as language immersion in elementary school, and Spanish is added in middle school. Racially, the school's demographics for this year consists of 38% Caucasian (many coming from Europe and America), 26.1% African American, 28% Hispanic, 7.4% Asian, 0.1% American-Indian, and 7.4% mixed race.

In 2012, SAIL was awarded the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) Melba D. Woodruff Prize for an exemplary foreign language program. This prize recognizes schools that align their curricula with the World Readiness Standards for Language Learning and integrate languages with content areas. In addition, SAIL is consistently recognized by Magnet Schools of America as one of its top merit schools; recognized by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction as Prepared Global Ready School, and recently received the international Citizen of the Year Award at the Charlotte Chamber of Commerce Economic Growth Recognition Dinner. Internationally, SAIL is a PASCH school, partner school of the German Foreign Ministry and the German Central Agency for Schools abroad; officially accredited by the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs with the Label FrancEducation; and since the opening of the Confucius Institute at UNC Charlotte in 2017, again identified as a Confucius Classroom School.

The students at the elementary level enter the immersion program in kindergarten or first grade. In the French and German program, most students first learn how to read in the target language, and, eventually, transfer their reading skills in English. Following the total immersion model, formal English instruction is only introduced in 3rd grade when students begin to receive one hour of English instruction daily. By the time they reach fifth grade, most of them are bilingual. They understand, speak, read and write in French or German with varying levels of proficiency.

In my fifth grade French Immersion classroom, I have 20 students: 11 girls and 9 boys. Seven students have been identified, in second grade, as academically gifted either in math or English literacy or in both subjects. Two students are part of the Exceptional Children Program (EC) and have an Individual Educational Plan (IEP). They are both struggling in math and in reading. They will need help with the assignments suggested in this curriculum unit. When working with a partner, I will make sure to pair them up with a student who can help them complete the tasks successfully. Two students have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). One is on medication, but occasionally forgets to take it. Two students are English learners. Ethnically, my class is very diverse: I have nine Caucasians, seven Hispanics and six African American students.

This demographic data gives you a formal facet of my class but does not reveal the real picture. Let me tell you who my students really are. For one thing, they are extremely chatty. The special area teachers complain that they are “chatterboxes”, and yes, sometimes, they drive me crazy! However, the positive flip side of this problem is that their participation is outstanding. They have an opinion on everything. When we have a discussion, I eventually have to stop it, to their great disappointment, or it would never end. No need to say that most of them love to move, to dance, to sing and to exercise. They will benefit from a curriculum whose primary goal is to incorporate movement in creative ways. This curriculum is my gift to them.

Unit Goals

The standards addressed in this unit come from the World Language Essential Standards adopted by Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools for dual and immersion programs, which are based upon the national standards for world language learning ([Appendix 1](#)). By the end of fifth grade French Immersion, students are expected to perform at the Intermediate Mid (IM) level of proficiency.

In the first part of this unit, the students listen, sing, and analyze a French song; learn new vocabulary words and idioms in French; and finally reflect and learn about global warming and one of its most dramatic implications.

In the second part of the unit, they describe orally a piece of art in the target language; look at and, hopefully, come to appreciate Francophone paintings; and at last, write a paragraph to give their opinion on their favorite artist.

Throughout the curriculum unit, the learners also move by performing Brain Dance, by walking, by visiting centers, by drawing, and by creating a dance, a tableau, or a skit to represent a painting.

Finally, the unit objectives not only lead the students to interact with each other by conducting conversations and class discussions in the target language, but also to use their imagination for specific tasks, and to improve their language proficiency skills.

Content

Embodied Teaching and Learning

Traditionally, teachers privilege the mind over the body. Embodied teaching and learning reconcile this dichotomy. In this pedagogical method, the body is placed as much at the center of the learning process as its counterpart, the mind. Furthermore, the body helps the students have a more holistic approach. Emily Klein, Monica Taylor and Rachel Forgasz (2019) cite Freire's definition of embodiment and embodied learning: "Embodiment is defined as a way to construct knowledge through direct engagement in body experiences (...). Simply stated, embodied learning involves being attentive to the body and its experiences as a way of knowing."

Integrating movement in the classroom is a national emergency. Elena Savina, Kristin Garrity, Patrick Kenny and Chad Doerr (2016) point out that: “70% of American youth do not meet the recommended 60 minutes of moderate-vigorous aerobic activity on a daily basis (CDC 2012).” In the same article, these authors cite Patterson (2013) who points out that: “Since the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001, 44% of elementary schools in the USA have reduced physical education and recess time.” As teachers, we have a responsibility to ensure that the children move. The benefits of integrating motion in our daily instruction are immeasurable. Carri Kreider (2019) lists some of them:

- Stress reduction
- Increase of academic achievement
- Improvement of peer’s relationships.
- Enhancement of self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Teaching of goal setting

Bringing movement in the classroom also helps with classroom management. Learners with ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) get a chance to get up and move, and therefore get less in trouble in a classroom in which the teacher clearly values motion. “Movement in the classroom helps to refocus attention and gives the brain a break necessary to consolidate information. (Howie et al. 2014, Jansen et al. 2014, Kuczala and Iengel 2010 as cited in Savina, Garrity, Kenny and Doerr)

As mentioned above, physical activity reinforces cognitive skills: “Physical activity enhances brain functioning through increased oxygen and neuronal firing that facilitates better cognitive and academic functioning (Ratey and Sattelmair 2012; Ratey Hagerman 2008 as cited in Savina, Garrity, Kenny and Doerr)

Based on my teaching experience (26 years in CMS), I can attest that my students focus and enjoy the lesson better when I bring movement in every part of the instruction, not as an add-on, but as one of its essential components. Therefore, there is no doubt that we, teachers, should strive to design lessons that stimulate students both intellectually and physically.

In this unit, I also adopt Mindi Rhoades’ approach to Critical Multimodal Literacies (CML) which exemplify embodied teaching and learning, and which “(...) promote the development of informed, active, literate, and autonomous citizens ready to participate fully in our society.” (Rhoades, 2015). The texts at the core of this paper are unconventional: A song and various paintings. The overall intention is not to simplify the complexity of these texts but to embrace it. The children are at the center of these lessons. They explore the multiple meanings of these texts from different perspectives, all grounded in the body, its senses, and the arts. They bring their experiences into this magical process of discovering new texts, that we call reading. All the activities presented in this curriculum unit seek to expand the students’ minds and lead them to think critically and creatively.

Theatre, one of the avenues experimented in the instructional implementation of this paper “brings purpose to the reading process by providing ground for intentionality,” (Grumet, 1985). Regarding the method teachers should approach literacy, I completely share this idea that Madeleine Grumet articulates so well in her chapter *Bodyreading*: “the important thing is not the words but what we do with these words, what gives life to the inanimate words of the text, what transforms them into the Word.” (Grumet, 1985)

Walking Propositions

In Dr. Nesbit’s seminar, we have explored many ways to shift the attention on the body and the now. One of them is simply to go for a walk. Nicole Lee, Ken Morimoto, Marzieh Mosavarzadeh and Rita L. Irwin (2019) define walking as “a mode of inquiry” and a means to mindfulness, to being present in the moment. They suggest three prompts easily adaptable in the classroom:

1. “Go for a walk, find an object and do something with it.”
2. “Walk around your neighborhood with another. When you find unfamiliar ground, pause and ground yourself.”
3. “Follow one another in a line without stopping or speaking.” (Lee, Nicole, Ken Morimoto, Marzieh Mosavarzadeh, and Rita L. Irwin, 2019)

These activities can be done in the classroom or outside on the playground. They can lead to conversations and can help classmates get to know each other. Following are a few ideas on how to bring them in the classroom. I would use the first prompt at the beginning of the year, by asking students to go outside on the playground to find an object significant to them or to their life, and to share its meaning with the class.

With the second prompt, I would ask the students to go outside to notice three things (an object, a noise and/or an odor), and then to share them with a partner. At the beginning of the year again, I could also ask them to walk with a fellow classmate they don’t know so well and just have a conversation about who they are, or to share with their partner five very important things they would like him/her to know about them. These impromptu dialogues could potentially lead to new friendships. What about inviting students to walk in the classroom for a few minutes while reflecting on a difficult question, with the option to consult a friend? The possibilities around walking are limitless.

Regarding the third proposition, students at the elementary level walk in line all the time. Now, the challenge resides in the end of the proposition: “without speaking”! Quite a feat for a ten-or eleven-year-old!

Brain Dance

Anne Green Gilbert created Brain Dance in 2000; a series of exercises that replicate the movements a baby goes through during the first year of his life. Brain Dance consists of nine patterns. I plan to integrate them into my daily routine before activities that require an intense focus such as a long assessment, a long presentation, or the analysis of a text. In her book, *Brain Compatible Dance Education*, Anne Green Gilbert (2006) points out its benefits: “The Brain Dance helps students become focused, energized and ready to learn.” She adds that: “The Brain Dance is a supportive series of exercises that keep the brain and the body strong and healthy throughout the lifespan!”

Here is an overview of the nine key movements as explained by Gilbert, Bronwen, and Rossano, (2006):

1. Breath Oneness
The first exercise focuses on deep breathing. This increase of oxygen to the brain helps reduce stress.
2. Tactile Sensing
The second exercise focuses on the touch. The teacher invites the students to massage each part of their body from top to bottom. You can also tap gently or rub these parts to warm up the nerves.
3. Core Distal Twoness
This pattern helps you: “gain a strong sense of self and an awareness of others.” (BrainDance Youtube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UH2xNx2t6Xw>)
4. Head Tail
This pattern warms the spine by bending, stretching, and rotating it, in order for the nervous system to function properly, and in order to strengthen the back, the neck and the shoulders.
5. Upper Lower
In this exercise, you move your upper body parts while lower parts stay still and then you reverse. This pattern seeks to reach “emotional stability as well as physical stability”.
6. Body Side Polarities or Body Half
In this exercise, you move the left side of the body while the other side remains still and then you reverse. You can turn it in and out, twist it, stretch it, bend it, or swing it. This pattern “(...) may help clarify issues and make choices (right/left, yes/no, work/play, can/can’t).”
7. Eye Tracking
In this exercise, your eyes follow your thumb horizontally first from left to right and from right to left, then vertically up and down, down, and up.
8. Cross Lateral
In this exercise, you reach across your body high and low. You can also bring the opposite hand or elbow to the knee. This technique helps connect both sides of the brain.
9. Vestibular
The word “vestibular” means balance. In this exercise, you can spin, stop, jump, and stare at an object in order to find your balance. Or you can spin, stop, and jump up and down. This pattern “strengthens the hearing, balance, coordination and emotional stability.”

The teacher can conclude with a session of deep breathing. Anne Green Gilbert advises to go through these movements in sequence daily. You can perform this dance anywhere, inside the classroom or outside on the playground, standing up or seated on a chair, when space is an issue. While performing these patterns with your students, you can add soothing music to create a relaxing atmosphere, however music is not necessary. In our seminar, Dr. Nesbit suggested completing the dance in a circle to build a sense of togetherness and community. She also recommended using index cards labeled with the names of the patterns and with illustrations representing each move, in order to facilitate the memorization of the steps when leading the dance ([Appendix 2](#)).

Instructional implementation

In the French immersion program at SAIL, every year in March we celebrate “La Semaine de la Francophonie” (the Week of La Francophonie). According to the European and Foreign Affairs Ministry, French is “shared by 274 million people worldwide, the fifth most spoken language on the planet, (...) French is along with English the only language spoken on all five continents”. During this special week, we celebrate with an array of activities the diversity of the 54 French language countries listing French as an official language. I plan to teach this curriculum unit in French during this period of the school year. This year, my French class lasts for 40 minutes, which is the reason why the two main lessons presented in this curriculum unit are divided into short segments of 40 minutes.

First part of the instructional implementation: L'Ours.

In my class, on Fridays we sing. Integrating songs in a foreign language program is a fun way to enrich students' vocabulary, enhance their proficiency, learn about the target culture, and even teach grammar. Incorporating music and singing in the classroom is also a simple way to bring joy in the classroom. The research emphasizes the numerous benefits of using music at school: “Music reduces stress and enhances the function of the immune system, it also affects the heart rate and the blood pressure while improving blood flow” (Jensen 2001). “Music can be mood altering.” (Shin, 2017)

While this citation points out to the somatic advantages of adding music to a lesson, Andrew Mobbs and Melinda Cuyul (2018) stress its benefits when learning a second language: “(...) it (1) reinforces the prosody (e.g., rhythm, stress, and intonation) of the target language, (2) authentically educates learners about the target culture and other cultures, and (3) encourages learners to express themselves.”

At the beginning of the week of La Francophonie, I will introduce to my class the song [*L'Ours*](#). Christophe Mae, a French pop singer, and Youssou N'Dour, a famous Senegalese singer, song writer, composer, businessman and politician perform this song that tells the story of global warming through the eyes of a polar bear. Kids love this upbeat song, even though they may not quite comprehend its message at first. The whole lesson is conducted entirely in French.

Day 1/Lesson 1: Discovering the song

The objective of this first activity (40 minutes long) is to get the students moving and to place the emphasis on their emotions. Andrew Mobbs and Melinda Cuyul mention the “corner game” that I will use to introduce the song. Play the song for about 30 seconds and invite the students to go stand in a classroom corner labeled with the following words: *Energetic, happy, upset, and calm*. Afterwards, invite the students to explain to the group why the song makes them feel that way.

The second activity of this introduction helps you assess the level of understanding among your learners. First, invite the students to listen to the whole song without watching the video. Place large sheets of paper on the floor and ask the participants, placed in groups of 3 or 4, to jot down words that they hear in the song or to draw pictures that come to mind. Then, ask the groups to talk about what they wrote. Finally, show the video on mute, and instruct them to add comments to their posters. Conclude the session by encouraging the students to visit and to read the other groups' posters and conduct a short class discussion.

Day 2/Lesson 2: Listening comprehension

The objective for this part of the lesson is to listen attentively to a French song and to complete blanks with accuracy. It will last about 40 minutes.

The website Lyricstraining.com allows students to fill in the blanks of a song online. It also allows you to quickly remove words in a song, and to print the worksheet. Distribute the lyrics with blanks ([Appendix 3](#)) to your learners and ask them to listen to the song in order to complete the worksheet individually. Since the song is quite challenging vocabulary wise, let the students listen to it twice. Then, in groups of 3 or 4, let them share their findings and help each other. End the session by completing the blanks ([Appendix 3](#)) with the whole class, and by singing the lyrics karaoke style, another nice feature of Lyricstraining.com. If one of your students is brave enough, give him/her a fake playful microphone to come in front of the class to lead the group. Several of my students would enjoy being the star.

Day 3/Lesson 3: Vocabulary and analysis of the song

My experience with this song is that, even though kids love it, they do not comprehend it. For instance, they do not understand who the narrator is, and why images of Africa appear in the middle of it. The objective of this section of the lesson is to enrich the students' vocabulary and to analyze the song in order to discover its true meaning. You should plan for two sessions of at least 40 minutes each to cover this part of the lesson.

First, focus on ten key words or expressions ([Appendix 4](#)). For each one, play the game that I call “Google it and draw it”. In this activity, you google the word under images (make sure to check each word prior to the lesson to avoid unpleasant and inappropriate surprises) and you give the learners one minute to draw it. The kids have the option to either copy one of the images or create their own picture. Students love this activity. Invite a student to make the drawing on the board. Afterwards, agree on a definition and ask the students to write it in their French notebook.

Second, evaluate whether the students have well understood the meaning of these ten key words, with a game similar to the game boards *Pictionary* and *Cranium*, that will appeal to the kinesthetic learners in the classroom. Place the students in groups of three or four and give two or three boxes of different colors of Play Doh to each group. Let the learners in the group take turns in choosing a word of their choice from their vocabulary list and represent it with the modeling clay, while the others guess the word. Encourage the groups to count the number of words they can represent in 10 minutes.

Third, assess one last time the students' understanding of these ten words/idioms ([Appendix 4](#)) by playing “snapshots”. In Dr. Nesbit’s seminar, we played this game at the beginning of one of our sessions. She invited us to walk in the room at the sound of an energizing piece of music. Then, she instructed us to represent with our body abstract words such as “evoke”, “obscure”, “generate”, “capture”, and to freeze in our position. I loved the activity. It was challenging but also a lot of fun to adopt these poses and to watch the other fellows embody these words. I decided to incorporate this activity in my bag of tricks. When we study new vocabulary words in French, we play “snapshots” at some point in the lesson. It is hilarious to look at the different expressive ways with which the students represent the words.

Day 4/Lesson 3: Vocabulary and analysis of the song (Continuation)

At this point of the lesson, the students are ready to focus on the analysis of the song. Place them in groups of three or four to answer the following questions:

1. Who is the main character in the song? How does he feel? How do you know? Prove your answer by referencing the text.
2. Find information about the polar bear (this part of the lesson will integrate science concepts that we study in 5th grade science in the ecosystem chapter):
 - What is his habitat? Where on Earth does he live?
 - What does he eat? What is his prey? What is his niche?
 - What are his predators?
 - Is he an endangered species? Why? How many polar bears are left on the planet?
3. Who is the narrator (who tells the story) in the song? How do you know?
4. What is the problem of the bear in the story? Research about it.
5. Why do African images pop up in the middle of the song?

In order to bring movement in this part of the lesson, place the questions in centers and give to the students the following directions:

- Visit all five centers and answer each question.
- You have five minutes per center and three minutes per transition.
- Rotate when you hear music.
- You are required to visit all five centers.
- Create new groups at each center.

End the session by going over each question and by generating a whole class discussion around global warming and its devastating impact on our planet.

Day 5/Lesson 4: Culminating project

End this lesson with an individual project that will also serve as an assessment. Best practice advises us to give choices to our students. Therefore, for this final activity, give your students three alternatives. Dedicate one session of 40 minutes for the creation of the product.

Option 1

- Give students a piece of construction paper (18" by 24"). Let the participants choose the color.
- Instruct them to draw the bear on the ice and to imagine what he says in a bubble. Request a minimum of 5 sentences.
- Invite the learners to read the polar bear speech to the class.

Option 2

- Give students a big piece of construction paper. Let the participants choose the color.
- Give them a meterstick to create a sign.
- Invite the learners to create a sign to save the polar bears.
- Organize a march with the students holding the signs on the playground.
- Display the final artifacts on a bulletin board titled "Save the polar bears".

Option 3

Most kids love to create slide decks.

- Invite students to research in French more about global warming and to create a Google slide or a PowerPoint about this issue.
- Give them French websites to help them in their exploration (Student Resources).
- Let them present their picture slide to your class and/or to younger grades classes who would welcome their visits.

Second part of the instructional implementation: Francophone paintings

At the end of the lesson on [L'Ours](#), I will happily extend La Semaine de la Francophonie to another week, for the students to discover thirteen paintings composed by Francophone painters. Several of these painters are extremely famous like: Monet, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Picasso. Some are not as well-known on the international stage like: Pehouet, Diedhiou, Charaf ([Appendix: 5](#)). The similarities between these paintings, other than their aesthetic beauty, are that the artists are from Francophone countries. The age of the students (ten or eleven years old) was another criterion taken into consideration for this selection. This second lesson is divided into three sessions of 40 minutes and is conducted entirely in French.

The first objective of the lesson is to expose the youngsters to an important aspect of Francophone visual arts culture, through the presentation of an eclectic selection of paintings, with the hope that they will come to appreciate it. The intention is also to offer them an experience that engages the senses and invites them to move in a creative fashion.

The second objective of this lesson is to create an opportunity for the students to interact in French with each other; and to develop their speaking and writing skills in the second language. Anne Rovers (2017) in her thesis writes: “Visual arts, dance, music, and drama interwoven into the core French program might help the students to make language learning more meaningful.”

She also alludes to the many benefits of incorporating the arts in the foreign language curriculum:

These four studies lend weight to the argument that the visual arts add value to what and how students learn beyond specific subject matter attainment. Thus, visual arts can be seen as an aid in communicating, organizing, reading and reasoning, all of which are essential skills in learning a second language. (Rovers, 2007)

Day 1/Lesson 1: Warm up activity

Start this session with the Brain Dance with the intention to prepare the students for the high-level thinking tasks ahead, but also in order to create a relaxing and calming atmosphere. At this point in the year, the students are familiar with the Brain Dance routine, therefore they can perform the patterns in groups of two, one student leading the other, switching roles in the middle. Then, give the students five minutes to reflect and write these three questions on an index card:

- Have you visited a museum before? If so, which one?
- Do you know the name of a painter? Do you know the name of a Francophone painter?
- Do you have a favorite painting or painter? If so, which one? Why is he/she/it your favorite?

After this short reflection, instruct the learners to wander around the room and to ask one of these questions to a different classmate each time (five minutes). At the end, gather your students in a circle and invite them to report to the whole class for a brief discussion. Katherine Mills Hernandez (2018) encourages teachers to get students moving and thinking at the beginning of each class for these reasons:

Starting a class with movement and talk accomplishes this and more. Not only are we setting the tone for focus and productivity by orchestrating an activity that pulls students in the content of the class by engaging their prior knowledge, experience, and thoughts on the topic that will be addressed in the lesson, but we're also providing the oxygenation -(...)-their brains need to function at optimal levels.

Day 1/Lesson 2: Observe, describe and draw

To ease into this lesson during which your students engage in a “follow the leader assignment”, they first explore three dancing activities (for about 20 minutes): The “shadow”, the “mirror” and the “echo” (Cone, 2012). For all three, they work with a partner, as you play soft music. In “Shadow”, one student, the leader, performs a movement, while the other who stands behind him/her repeats the action synchronously. In the “Mirror” activity, the students face each other, and the follower mirrors the leader’s motions. Finally, in “Echo”, the leader performs one or two movements then freezes. The partner repeats the steps. For all three, switch roles to allow both partners to have a chance to be leader and follower. Before starting these three activities, please emphasize that the leader’s primary goal is for his classmate to be successful. In other words, his friend’s success depends on his/her actions. Therefore, it is critical to dance slowly, to be predictable in the motions performed and to present the movements in patterns. You can demonstrate each activity by asking the class to follow you. At the end of this activity, in a whole class brief discussion, ask the students to reflect on these activities:

- What did your partner do that helped you be successful?
- How did you know that your partner was successful? Or that your partner was having difficulty? How did you adjust?

After this dance interlude, launch the lesson “observe, describe and draw”. One student describes a painting, while his partner draws it by following his/her verbal instructions. Before letting students work, model with two paintings: “[*La liseuse*](#)” and “[*Le champ de coquelicots*](#)” by Claude Monet, which offer an example of a portrait versus a landscape. First, show to half the class the first painting, “[*La liseuse*](#)” and invite these students to join you to describe it to the other half ([Appendix 6](#)). This part of the class adopts the role of the artist and attempts to represent the picture. For the second painting, “[*Le champ de coquelicots*](#)”, repeat the procedure but switch roles in the class ([Appendix 6](#)). Advise the class to first give a general overview of the painting, and then to describe it parts by parts paying attention to details, but also to time. Practically for this modeling part of the lesson, project the paintings on the board, ask the observers to face the board, and instruct the artists to turn their backs to the board in order to draw the images on their desk.

Once students understand the activity, place them in pairs with their desks facing each other. Let them decide who will be the artist and who will make the description. Use privacy partitions to ensure that the artist does not see the painting. Give a maximum of fifteen minutes for the class to complete the activity (use a timer). Add music to create a peaceful atmosphere. Students may use gestures as well to describe the painting. At the end of the illustration session, collect all the pictures drawn by the students and the paintings. Post the latter on the board with the students’ drawings underneath, without showing their artifacts yet. Flip them one by one to reveal the children’s work. Invite the class to applaud each one as you present them.

Day 2/Lesson 3: Title the paintings

In this lesson (40 minutes), the students give a title to the paintings. I suggest offering your students several opportunities to give a title to a text prior to this activity. In my French literacy class, the students often must give a title to a piece of literature analyzed in class. Before asking your students to name the paintings, model with the two examples mentioned above, [*La liseuse*](#) and [*Le champ de coquelicots*](#). Prompt the students to give a title to these two masterpieces. Point out and discuss the qualities of a good title by referring to your students’ examples and to the real titles of the paintings:

- A title is usually short but not always.
- A title usually does not reveal too much of the story. In the case of a painting, a title focuses on one aspect of the image ([*La liseuse*](#) focuses on the main character’s action: Reading) or on its overall impression ([*Le champ de coquelicots*](#) focuses on the whole landscape).
- A title is often intriguing to draw in or to capture the observer.
- Sometimes a title gives us more information that is apparent from the image itself.

In French, the rules for the capitalization of titles are complex. In general, there is less capitalization in titles in French than in English. In this domain, there are several schools of thought. In the sake of simplicity, I recommend teaching the students the easiest one which is “sentence capitalization” (ThoughtCo Team, 2019). “In this system, only the first word of the title is capitalized (except proper nouns which are always capitalized).” (ThoughtCo Team, 2019)

After the short practice, post all the pictures on the board, give fifteen minutes to the students to imagine a title. Ask volunteers to share their titles (pick three for each painting) and disclose the real name by writing it under the artwork. Invite the class to applaud the learners who participated.

Afterwards, invite the students to explain by writing which piece of art they prefer (one or two paragraphs, with at least five sentences in each) and why, but first invite them to find a partner and to walk through the classroom as if they were in a museum. Encourage them to have a conversation with their classmates about some of the paintings. Encourage the kids to slow down, to take their time to really look at the paintings, and even to close their eyes to visualize the picture in their mind. The “Walking Propositions” article presented above inspired this part of the lesson. It gets the children moving, but it also should help them write about the topic by letting them talk and brainstorm about it first with a friend. End the lesson with a “microphone session” during which the students read their opinions about the paintings.

Day 3/Lesson 4: Paintings in motion

For this extension of the lesson, place the students in groups of three or four. Instruct them to choose one of the paintings and to make it move by presenting either a tableau, a skit or a dance.

In a tableau, the participants represent a scene by adopting a pose with their bodies. Here, again, I suggest introducing the idea of tableau prior to this exercise. In my French literacy class, I often ask my students to make a tableau to represent a passage in a story. Model this teaching strategy with either *La liseuse* or *Le champ de coquelicots*. In the skit, the students make the characters in the painting talk. Encourage them to first write the dialogue or the monologue that they will present. Model with either *La liseuse* or *Le champ de coquelicots*. For the dance, the students must choreograph steps. Suggest this basic dance structure: Beginning shape, three actions, ending shape. If they want to create a dance with music, offer them 3 pieces that they can choose from. Model with either *La liseuse* or *Le champ de coquelicots*.

Give your students plenty of time, at least forty minutes, to complete this assignment. Request that all students in the group participate. Float between groups to answer questions and to ensure that they are using the target language.

Once ready, allow the groups who wish to present their creation to do so in front of the whole class (ten minutes). Ask the youngsters to guess which painting the group is representing. Applaud generously for each production. End the lesson by projecting the picture of each artist one by one (see Teacher Resources). Solemnly read their names, their country of origin and the titles of the paintings that the students have discovered in this unit.

Conclusion

I would like to thank Dr. Marissa Nesbit for her inspiring seminar, which led me to reflect on my practice and my craft in very powerful ways. Her seminar has encouraged us, teachers, to claim and be proud of our expertise, and to dare bring the body (ours and the students') in the front stage of our classrooms, letting it occupy a place as significant as its counterpart, the mind. At the end of this seminar, I am convinced that embodied teaching and learning can truly transform and empower our classes. It can give our instruction another dimension. As teachers, let's not be afraid to bring to the classroom activities that will make our students move with purpose, that will bring them closer, and that will help them think outside the box.

Appendix 1: Implementing Teaching Standards

The standards targeted in these lessons come from the World Language Essential Standards adopted by Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools for dual and immersion programs, which are based upon the national standards for world language learning. By the end of fifth grade French Immersion, students are expected to perform at the Intermediate Mid (IM) level of proficiency.

IM.COD.2.3 Identify the main idea and some details from texts containing unfamiliar academic vocabulary

All the activities in the first part of the unit are designed to help students discover and understand the message of the song, *L'Ours*: Global warming and its devastating consequences for the arctic wildlife, more specifically the polar bears.

IM.CLL.1.1 Carry out and continue conversations involving personal views on familiar topics with many details and in uncomplicated settings

In both sections of the unit, students engage in dialogues with peers or in class discussions regarding global warming and a few Francophone paintings.

IM.CMT.3.1 Use a series of connected sentences to describe arts, sports, games, and media from the target culture.

In the second part of the unit, students describe orally to a classmate a Francophone painting.

IM.COD.4.2 Understand how practices and perspectives impact the target culture.

The unit addresses this standard by exposing students to a popular song in French culture, and to famous and less famous Francophone painters.

IM.CLL.3.1 Use a series of connected sentences in presentations to describe experiences, events, and opinions.

In the first part of this paper, students imagine by writing what the main character in the song might be saying.

In the second part of the curriculum unit, students write in the target language a paragraph to give their opinions on the visual representations analyzed in class.

Appendix 2

Suggested illustrations for Anne Green Gilbert BrainDance patterns



BrainDance Patterns

copyright 2000 Anne Green Gilbert www.creativedance.org



Breath - "Oneness"

- Take 4-5 deep breaths

Image: wind



Tactile - "Sensing"

- Tap, pat, squeeze, scratch, brush whole body

Image: hugs, raindrops



Core-Distal - "Twoness"

- Engage core muscles then reach out from naval

Image: starfish



Head-Tail - "Lively spine"

- Wiggle, bend, twist spine

Image: puppy dog, kitty



Upper-Lower - "Grounding"

- Stabilize lower, move upper body; stabilize upper, move lower

Image: tree in wind, ice skater



Body-Side- "Making choices"

- bend, stretch, twist, shake one side then other side of body

Image: bear walking



Cross-Lateral - "Robust Brain"

- Move and connect opposite body parts: knee to elbow, etc.

Image: climbing a ladder



Vestibular - "1st sense"

- Tip, sway, turn

Image: top spinning

<http://www.musicmovesthebrain.com/braindance-patterns>

Suggested translation in French

1. Respiration- "Unité"

Respire 4 ou 5 fois profondément
Image: Le vent

2. Toucher- “Sentir”

Frappe, tapote, sers, gratte, brosse tout le corps.
Image: embrassade, gouttes de pluie.

3. Noyau distal- "Binôme"

Engage les muscles du centre du corps et étire-toi à partir du nombril.
Image: L'étoile de mer

4. Tête-Queue- “Colonne vertébrale active”

Remue, plie, tourne la colonne vertébrale.
Image: un chiot, un chaton

5. De bas en haut- “Enracine-toi”

Stabilise la partie basse du corps, bouge le haut du corps.
Stabilise la partie haute du corps, bouge le bas du corps.
Image: Un arbre dans le vent, un patineur sur glace

6. Côté du corps- “Faire des choix”

Plie, étire, tourne, secoue un côté du corps puis l'autre.
Image: Un ours qui marche

7. Transversale- “Cerveau robuste”

Bouge et connecte les parties opposées du corps: Genou au coude, etc.
Image: Grimper sur une échelle.

8. Vestibulaire- “Le premier sens”

Balance-toi, penche-toi, tourne sur toi-même.
Image: Une toupie

Appendix 3

Ecoute la chanson *L'Ours* par Christophe Maé et Youssou N'Dour et complète les blancs

Laisse-moi _____, j'suis pas d'humeur.

Je suis bouillant comme _____

Pose sur quelques mètres carrés

J'ai beau _____ mais

Y'a personne pour m'aider

Laisse-moi seul, j'te dis, j'ai pas le _____

La saison des _____ se meurt

Je suis qu'un taulard a _____ ouvert.

Regarde, on dirait un _____ en mer

Ça devient _____

J'en perds le _____, j'en perds l' _____

J'entends des _____ des fois venues d'Afrique

Refrain

Adouna mome sedena.

Africa diouklene mbolo

Waylene si kaw niou degue sene bate

Nioun nioun nioun nio far

Adouna mome sedena.

Africa diouklene mbolo

Waylene si kaw niou degue sene bate

Nioun nioun nioun nio far

Laisse-moi _____ sous ma _____ Ourse

Aujourd'hui, je donne pas cher de ma _____ à la Bourse

Je me traîne une _____ d'allure

Je fais de la _____ a voir

Dans ma _____

C'est plus le grand _____ chez moi, même plus _____

Et elle _____ pas ma polaire

Un jour, les _____ ours blancs

Seront les _____ de mes enfants

Je crève de _____

J'en perds le _____, j'en perds _____

J'entends des _____ des fois venues d'Afrique

Refrain

Je meurs de chaud dans ma _____

Je _____ pas moi, ma polaire

Africa diouklene mbolo

Je meurs de _____, j'te le jure

Sur la _____ de ma mère

Refrain

Laisse-moi _____

De toute façon, Y a plus de place sur mon _____

Lyrics: *L'Ours*, Christophe Mae, Youssou N'Dour

Laisse-moi **seul**, j'suis pas d'humeur.

Je suis bouillant comme **l'Equateur**

Pose sur quelques mètres carrés

J'ai beau **hurler** mais

Y'a personne pour m'aider

Laisse-moi seul, j'te dis, j'ai pas **le coeur**

La saison des **amours** se meurt

Je suis qu'un taulard à **ciel** ouvert.

Regarde, on dirait un **clochard** en mer

Ça devient **chaud**

J'en perds le **Nord**, j'en perds **l'Arctique**

J'entends des **voix** des fois venues d'Afrique

Refrain

Adouna mome sedena.

Africa diouklene mbolo

Waylene si kaw niou degue sene bate

Nioune nioune nioune nio far

Adouna mome sedena.

Africa diouklene mbolo

Waylene si kaw niou degue sene bate

Nioune nioune nioune nio far

Laisse-moi **seul** sous ma **Grande** Ourse

Aujourd'hui, je donne pas cher de **ma peau** à la Bourse

Je me traîne une **drôle** d'allure

Je fais de la **peine** à voir

Dans ma **fourrure**

C'est plus le grand **froid** chez moi, même plus **d'hiver**

Et elle **s'enlève** pas ma polaire

Un jour, **les seuls** ours blancs

Seront **les peluches** de mes enfants

Je crève de **chaud**

J'en perds le **Nord**, j'en perds **l'Arctique**

J'entends des **voix** des fois venues d'Afrique

Refrain

Je meurs de chaud dans ma **fourrure**

Je **l'enlève** pas moi, ma polaire

Africa diouklene mbolo

Je meurs de **faim**, j'te le jure

Sur la **vie** de ma mère

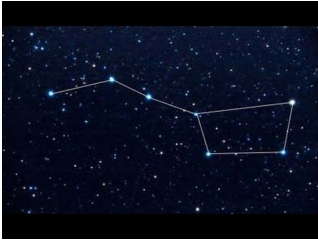
Refrain

Laisse-moi **seul**

De toute façon, Y a plus de place sur mon **glaçon**.

Appendix 4

Suggested keywords for the song *L'Ours* and their definitions.

MOTS CLES	DEFINITIONS
1. Ne pas être d'humeur	Ne pas être de bonne humeur. Ne pas être content/heureux.
2. Bouillant, adj.	Chaud, très chaud
3. L'équateur	Ligne imaginaire qui divise la Terre en deux hémisphères.
4. Hurler, v.	Crier très fort
5. Ne pas avoir le cœur	Etre triste
6. Un taulard, n. m.	Une personne enfermée en prison
7. Un clochard, n.m.	Une personne qui n'a ni maison ni travail.
8. La Grande Ourse 	Constellation dans l'hémisphère nord. Elle est composée de 7 étoiles qui forment une casserole.
9. La Bourse	Institution financière
10. Une peluche	Jouet, animal pour enfant

Appendix 5

Links to the paintings studied in the lesson

<p>Peintre: <i>René Magritte</i> Pays d'origine: <i>Belgique</i> Titre de la peinture: <i>Le Thérapeute</i> Lien de la peinture: https://beatricegiraudeau.typepad.fr/sculpter_sa_vie/2012/11/richeesse-de-la-symbolique.html</p>	<p>Peintre: <i>Henri Rousseau</i> Pays d'origine: <i>France</i> Titre de la peinture: <i>Tigre dans une tempête tropicale</i> Lien de la peinture: https://prodiart.com/fr/Fine-Art/expos/e/tigre-dans-une-tempete-tropicale/product/print-artwork</p>	<p>Peintre: <i>Van Gogh</i> Pays d'origine: <i>Pays Bas</i> Titre de la peinture: <i>La nuit étoilée</i> Lien de la peinture: https://www.artmajeur.com/en/titovilla/artworks/10789735/la-nuit-etoilee</p>
<p>Peintre: <i>Soro Pehouet</i> Pays d'origine: <i>Côte d'Ivoire</i> Titre de la peinture: <i>M'Ma Fitini</i> Lien de la peinture: https://africanviewsnechoes.wordpress.com/tag/soro-pehouet-patrick/</p>	<p>Peintre: <i>Nfally Diedhiou</i> Pays d'origine: <i>Sénégal</i> Titre de la peinture: <i>Le chasseur</i> Lien de la peinture: https://www.singularart.com/en/artworks/nfally-di%C3%A9dhiou-adanna-le-chasseur--1144373</p>	<p>Peintre: <i>Henri Matisse</i> Pays d'origine: <i>France</i> Titre de la peinture: <i>Le chat aux poissons rouges</i> Lien de la peinture: https://society6.com/product/henri-matisse-le-chat-aux-poissons-rouges-1914-the-cat-with-red-fishes-artwork_stretched-canvas</p>
<p>Peintre: <i>Pablo Picasso</i> Pays d'origine: <i>Espagne</i> Titre de la peinture: <i>Tête de femme</i> Lien de la peinture: https://www.masterworksfineart.com/artists/pablo-picasso/artwork/tete-de-femme-head-of-a-woman-1962-2/id/W-6115</p>	<p>Peintre: <i>Paul Gauguin</i> Pays d'origine: <i>France</i> Titre de la peinture: <i>Femme à la mangue</i> Lien de la peinture: https://www.posterlounge.fr/p/383856.html</p>	<p>Peintre: <i>Abdelaziz Gorgi</i> Pays d'origine: <i>Tunisie</i> Titre de la peinture: <i>Joueur de flûte</i> Lien de la peinture: https://dafbeirut.org/en/abdelaziz-gorgi/works/2183-232519-joueur-de-flute</p>
<p>Peintre: <i>Baya Mahieddine</i> Pays d'origine: <i>Algérie</i> Titre de la peinture: <i>Femme en robe blanche</i> Lien de la peinture: https://dafbeirut.org/en/baya/works/1681-233036-femme-en-robe-blanche</p>	<p>Peintre: <i>Claude Monet</i> Pays d'origine: <i>France</i> Titre de la peinture: <i>La pie</i> Lien de la peinture: https://galeriemontblanc.com/products/la-pie-claude-monet</p>	<p>Peintre: <i>Rafic Charaf</i> Pays d'origine: <i>Liban</i> Titre de la peinture: <i>Sans titre</i> Lien de la peinture: https://dafbeirut.org/en/rafic-charaf/works/1206-233521-untitled</p>
<p>Peintre: <i>Hussein Madi</i> Pays d'origine: <i>Liban</i> Titre de la peinture: <i>Sans titre</i> Lien de la peinture: https://dafbeirut.org/en/husein-madi/works/1090-233639-untitled</p>		

Appendix 6

1. Possible description of La liseuse by Claude Monet given by the teacher and half the class.

Peinture: La liseuse, 1972.

<https://museeduluxembourg.fr/fr/collection/objet/la-liseuse-ou-printemps>

- C'est une peinture d'une femme blanche.
- Elle est assise dans l'herbe en dessous d'un arbre.
- Elle porte une longue robe blanche qui a des reflets roses et un chapeau de la même couleur. La robe est ample et prend beaucoup de place dans l'herbe.
- Elle a des cheveux châtain qui sortent de son chapeau.
- Il y a des taches de soleil sur sa robe blanche.
- Elle lit un livre qui est posé sur sa robe. Son visage est penché vers le livre.

2. Possible description of Le champ de coquelicots by Claude Monet given by the teacher and half the class.

Peinture: Le champ de coquelicots

<https://www.pariscityvision.com/fr/giverny/coquelicots-monet>

- C'est un paysage.
- A l'avant droit du tableau, une femme se promène avec un petit garçon. La femme porte une robe gris bleu avec un foulard noir noué autour de son cou. Elle porte une ombrelle bleue dans sa main droite. Elle porte aussi un chapeau jaune entouré d'un ruban noir. On ne voit pas son visage.
- Le petit garçon porte des vêtements beiges, mais on ne voit que le haut de son torse. Le reste de son corps est caché dans l'herbe.
- Derrière la femme et le garçon vers la gauche, se promènent aussi une autre femme et un autre petit garçon. La femme porte une robe bleu foncé et un chapeau.
- Le petit garçon porte une chemise grise et un chapeau. On ne peut pas distinguer les traits ni du garçon ni de la femme.
- Les personnages se promènent dans une prairie remplie de fleurs rouges.
- Il y a des arbres à l'horizon et une maison blanche qui a 3 fenêtres visibles et un toit rouge.
- Le ciel est bleu et couvert de gros nuages blancs.

Material List

L'ours/Day 1/lesson 1

- [L'Ours](#)
- Cards/Signs with the words: Happy (heureux), energetic (énergique), Upset (bouleverse), Calm (calme).
Total number of cards: 4
- Large sheets of chart paper
- Markers

L'ours/Day 2/lesson 2

- <https://lyricstraining.com/>
- [Appendix 3](#)

L'ours/Day 3/lesson 3

- Pencils
- Colored pencils/Markers
- Play Doh

L'ours/Day 4/lesson 3 (continuation)

- Signs indicating: Center 1, center 2, center 3, center 4, center 5 posted around the room.
- The 5 reading comprehension questions in this lesson should be posted on a poster on the wall or on a piece of paper placed on a table in each center.

L'ours/Day 5/lesson 4

Option 1

- A piece of construction paper (8" by 12")
- Colored pencils/Markers

Option 2

- A piece of construction paper (8" by 12")
- Colored pencils/Markers
- Metersticks

Option 3

- Access to the Internet
- Access to Google slide or PowerPoint

- Websites in French on global warming (see Student Resources)

Paintings/Day 1/Lesson 1

- Index cards

Paintings/Day 1/Lesson 2

- *La liseuse*
- *Le champ de coquelicots*
- [Appendix: 5](#)
- White construction paper (8" by 12")
- Privacy partitions
- Timer

Paintings/Day 2/Lesson 3

- [Appendix: 5](#)
- Titles of each painting written on a paper strip that you will turn to reveal the real title.

Paintings/Day 3/Lesson 4

- [Appendix: 5](#)
- *La liseuse*
- *Le champ de coquelicots*

Student Resources

Websites on global warming

These French websites explain global warming to kids in a simple way. The students can use these resources to create a Powerpoint or a Google slide if they choose this option for the culminating project of lesson 1 (first part of the instructional implementation).

1. <https://www.salamandre.org/article/le-rechauffement-climatique-tu-connaiss/>
2. http://fr.hellokids.com/c_16133/lire-et-apprendre/reportages-pour-enfant/les-sciences/le-d-eveloppement-durable-explique-aux-enfants/le-rechauffement-climatique
3. <https://www.1jour1actu.com/planete/rechauufement-du-climat>

Teacher Resources

Book

Gilbert, Anne Green, Bronwen Anne Gilbert, and Alecia Rossano. 2006. *Brain-compatible dance education*. Reston, VA: National Dance Association.

In this book, Anne Green Gilbert presents Brain Dance, a series of exercises that replicate the movements a baby goes through during the first year of his life.

Websites

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UH2xNx2t6Xw>

In this video, Gary Reed presents the Brain dance created by Anne Green Gilbert. He leads four children through the different patterns. This is a good resource to use to introduce this dance.

<https://lyricstraining.com/>

The website [Lyricstraining.com](https://lyricstraining.com) allows students to fill in the blanks of a song online. This website is a great resource if you look for songs that are popular in the target country. It offers songs and their videos in five languages: English, Spanish, German, Italian, and French. Teachers get to choose between four modes: The beginner mode (students fill 19 words out of 185), the intermediate mode (students fill 46 words out of 185), the advanced mode (students fill 93 words out of 185), and the expert mode (students have to fill all the words in the song). You select in advance which words the students have to fill. You also choose among 2 options: a “write mode” or a “choice mode”. With the first mode, the students have to type the missing words, and spelling counts. The second mode is a multiple choice.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WsILHnwc4As>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vp2YGRwPC08>

In order to explain the concept of global warming, watch these videos with your students to generate a discussion around this issue.

Google slide

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ZOKneClcAvsFJyMSP-YBA4wWL7y6XjzDD-XD4T2KZO4/edit?usp=sharing>

This Google slide presents all the painters presented in the second part of this unit, their country of origin and the title of the painting studied.

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