

Interactive Reading

Level: Third year French, high school level

Subject: Interactive Reading Lesson, *Le corbeau et le renard* by Jean de la Fontaine

Objectives:

- 1) The students will be able to read through an entire French poem.
- 2) The students will be able to identify the main ideas of a text in the target language after skimming the poem thoroughly.
- 3) The students will be able to create their own fables, modeled after Jean de la Fontaine's, in the target language.
- 4) The students will be able to infer meaning from the poem in order to play the role of one of the characters and debate it in the target language.

Content Standards:

- **Standard 1.1:** Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions. The students will share their ideas about the poem in a discussion format.
- **Standard 3.1:** Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language. The students are learning about poetry and fables. It is in the foreign language however it is the literary aspects of it.

Materials:

- Handouts of the poem and illustration for each student
- French Dictionaries
- Paper and colored pencils

Activities and Procedures:

I. Interpretive

A. Preparation Phase (6 min): The teacher will pass out copies of the poem, *Le corbeau et le renard*, to the students with the illustration that accompanies it. The students will be asked to look at the illustration and the title of the poem. Once they have done this they will be asked to answer some questions in French about their expectations of the poem. The class will be divided into groups of 3-4 students and they will be given the following questions:

- 1) What do you think this poem is about?
- 2) What kind of mood does the illustration present?
- 3) Think of a reason why the author chose a fox and crow in the illustration.

The students will share their answers orally in their group, using as much spoken French as they can.

B. Comprehension Phase:

1. Identify Main Elements (6 min): The students will individually skim the poem. They will be asked not to read it word for word. As they are skimming, they will underline any words that are unfamiliar to them. As they skim, they might be able to get the meaning of the word from the context. If they still cannot find the meaning, they can look it up in the dictionary (only if it is hindering their comprehension of the poem). The main purpose of this poem is the moral because it is a fable. The students will be given 4 different morals to choose from and see if they can match it with the moral of the poem. The morals they will be given are:

1. It is good to brag.
2. One should beware of others intentions and not forget to be humble.
3. The fox will always win because they are sneaky animals.
4. Talking too much will get one into trouble.

Moral number two is the correct one. This will show the students that they can locate the main idea of the poem.

2. Identifying Details (8 min): Now the students will be asked to skim the article again, taking a closer look for some details of the poem. The students will be asked to find adjectives that describe each of the characters of the fox and the crow. Based on the adjectives, the students will be able to infer what type personality each character has. The students will also be asked to look at the dialogue of the characters and from that determine who they think is the “bad guy” in the end. This will be done in discussion format with the whole class; it will be conducted in French.

II. Interpretive + Interpersonal:

A. Interpretation Phase (10 min): The students will get into pairs. One of them will play the part of the crow and the other will play the part of the fox. They will be asked, “Should the fox give the cheese back to the crow?” The students will discuss this and take the side of their respective character. They can use reasoning based on they poem. The students will have a dialogue/discussion in French.

III. Presentational:

A. Application Phase (15 min): The students will be asked to think of a situation in which they learned something and what they learned from it. They will take the characters in the situation and choose animals to represent them. The animals will be used as characters in their own fable. The students will create their own fable in French. They will also be asked to make an illustration that will depict an idea in their fable. If there is not enough time to complete this in class, it is homework.

IV. Interpretive Revisited

A. Extension Phase (remainder of class period): The students will be asked to compare this fable to a popular American fable. Can they find similarities and differences in style, structure and theme? Why do the authors write these? What purpose do they serve in society?

LE CORBEAU ET LE RENARD

Jean de la Fontaine

Maître Corbeau, sur un arbre perché,
Tenait en son bec un fromage.
Maître Renard, par l'odeur alléché,
Lui tint à peu près ce langage :
" Hé ! bonjour, Monsieur du Corbeau.
Que vous êtes joli ! que vous me semblez beau !
Sans mentir, si votre ramage
Se rapporte à votre plumage,
Vous êtes le phénix des hôtes de ces bois."
A ces mots le Corbeau ne se sent pas de joie ;
Et pour montrer sa belle voix,
Il ouvre un large bec, laisse tomber sa proie.
Le Renard s'en saisit et dit :
" Mon bon monsieur, apprenez que tout flatteur
Vit aux dépens de celui qui l'écoute :
Cette leçon vaut bien un fromage, sans doute."
Le Corbeau, honteux et confus,
Jura, mais un peu tard, qu'on ne l'y prendrait plus.