

Teacher's notes

These songs were written specifically to aid in the teaching of French in primary schools, and are also relevant to Key Stage 3. They link to the QCA guidelines/Key Stage 2 scheme of work.

Why use songs?

- ❖ Starting the lesson with a song attunes the brain to the language.
- ❖ The use of songs and poems enhances the National Literacy Strategy.
- ❖ Songs are an enjoyable, natural and stress-free way to learn the rhythm of language, intonation and pronunciation, as well as embed complex structures, such as questions and answers.
- ❖ Songs combine naturally with drama.
- ❖ Songs can be learned just for fun.

Using songs – a few ideas

- ❖ Clap, stamp, tap the rhythm or the beat of key lines or whole verses.
- ❖ Hum to the song (or 'la') – loudly then softly.
- ❖ You say a line – children clap the rhythm (beat) or the syllables; count the syllables.
- ❖ Invent actions – associating words with actions hastens learning.
- ❖ Use for games in which children move round the room, eg *Stations (Quatre coins)*.
- ❖ Listen for specific repeated sounds and perform a physical response, eg tap your nose, hold up a card (picture, sound or word) or pass on an object.
- ❖ Children accompany the song with their own instruments, with or without the CD.

Learning the words

- ❖ Do not expect children to sing the whole song at once – first listen many times.
- ❖ Use prompts such as props, picture cards or illustrated copies of the song on OHP.
- ❖ Learn the chorus; choose interesting/difficult/ amusing key words or lines to practise; use to play favourite games, eg *La Hola (Mexican wave)* – each child in turn says a given word in a short sequence or line from the song.
- ❖ Learn the song one line at a time, using a backward or forward build-up technique.
- ❖ Pause the CD for a moment for children to sing a word then continue the song, the children will hear the correct version for immediate reinforcement.
- ❖ Turn down the sound for a bar or line, then turn it up again to see if their singing still corresponds to the CD.
- ❖ Divide the class into groups – they hum or clap or sing the chorus, according to groups.
- ❖ Children sing the song, with groups taking different parts.

- ❖ Have a singing competition between groups.
- ❖ Learn and use as a basis for role-plays, eg Song 2.

Playing with text

- ❖ Sequence correctly ... pictures, words, lines or verses while listening to the song.
- ❖ Group together words with the same sounds or number of syllables.
- ❖ On the OHP show the text and pictures, and have the children supply missing words.
- ❖ Progress to the children drawing or writing in missing words on individual song sheets.
- ❖ Make a frieze or display of the song – the children illustrate it and add written or word-processed captions, or lines from the song.
- ❖ The children make up new verses or songs, using familiar language. Use the children's own illustrations as prompts.

1 Bonjour, ça va! (Greetings)

- ❖ Prepare flashcards from the illustrations to show happy, sad and so-so at the appropriate moment in the song, or do thumbs up, thumbs down or so-so gestures. Progress to children giving the correct greeting in response to the flashcards or gestures.
- ❖ The children stand face to face with partners and mime or sing the greeting; between the verses they move round the room to face new partners. This can be done in two circles, each moving in a different direction.
- ❖ Use the song as a basis for puppet conversations, working in pairs.