

SALUT LES JEUNES



LA SALLE DE CLASSE: For our brand new students of French, logic dictates we lead them through their familiar tangible environment to create a base from which to build toward more abstract concepts and structures. *Les objets de la salle de classe* are the natural place to begin. Students can associate a visual stimulus they see every day (and can reinforce every day) with sound to work into simple structures. The following activities can also be review for more advanced students who may have some cobwebs in the French section of their brains after the summer vacation!

Begin with simple choral repetition, pointing out no more than 5 or 6 objects in the classroom at a time. Timid students who might be uncomfortable trying out the sounds alone tend to be braver when they can join the group first. The traditional progression for acquiring vocabulary or any structure begins with LISTENING (reinforced with the visual as you touch the object), followed by REPETITION (begin chorally before asking for individual repetition to build confidence). The next step is RECOGNITION. A noisy kinesthetic activity can be especially constructive for nontraditional learners as well as adding a level of reinforcement for the others students (not requiring any speech)— simply recognizing meaning. The entire class (of any size if you are courageous!) can participate at once. Call out in French: *Toute la classe, touchez la porte! Touchez la poubelle! Touchez la fenêtre!* Reluctant students can at least follow what the others are doing. A little chaos can be healthy! As accuracy develops, continue in pairs of students, and then finally individually. Lastly, RECALL requires the student to produce the vocabulary or structure with just the visual cue. Start with a recognition question giving the student confidence. Point to an object and ask: *Est-ce que c'est la fenêtre ou la porte?* When they are ready for straight recall, point to an object and ask: *Qu'est-ce que c'est?*

Médor's game below is at the RECALL level. Students can play in teams or for individual points. The student reads down the list giving just the French. If you are a purist or have very young children, by all means replace the English with picture cues. Students earn the number of points indicated at the top for themselves or for their team. Make your list for each line with increased difficulty. This works really well to drill numbers (out of order), time, dates, or any vocabulary or structure you wish to reinforce. Be creative!

Do you have some games with *les objets de la salle de classe* that you would like to include in a future *National Bulletin*? We invite FLES* and middle school teachers to share ideas, classroom gimmicks, games for oral interaction, National French Week activities, and successful lessons with other AATF members. Join the teacher network! Send your ideas to Elizabeth Miller, 74 Tuscaloosa Avenue, Atherton, CA 94027; e-mail: [mmemiller@aol.com].

