



Moultonborough Central School

FOREIGN LANGUAGE UNIT B

Spanish and French Grade 4

The first 10 weeks of school, students are introduced to the French language. Typical beginner language topics include the vocabulary for introductions, expressions of courtesy, the alphabet, days of the week, months, numbers and colors, the weather, and classroom commands. We talk about the words in our language that come from the French language and culture. (Some that the students have come up with are ballet, buffet, bouquet, chalet, pate, soufflé, sauté .) We keep a list that can be added to.



After the initial ten-week introduction students choose either French or Spanish to continue with for the remainder of their time at MCS. When they leave MCS after sixth grade they will choose again a language with French, Spanish and Latin being the choices. They don't have to change languages but can if they want to.

For the remainder of the year we follow a storytelling language method called TPRS, or Total Physical Response Storytelling. In an immersion (no English) style format we introduce simple stories that are told and acted out with gestures, a few props and lots of cognates (words that are the same in both languages). We focus on a small amount of vocabulary and a lot repetition. We use a lot of pictures and students are active participants, retelling the stories themselves for the class. Mostly the stories are a bit on the outrageous side, or silly. When we feel the students understand the format well enough we ask them to use the base of vocabulary they have and write up their own simple story and illustrate it. They are then asked to share that with the class. Students have responded well to the new method with a frequent comment being "Is class over already?"

Typically we try to do a few cultural projects as well, in French we have explored some French cooking, making crepes in class and eating them. In Spanish we explore the creation of papel picado. We also do a thematic unit concentrating on body parts.

HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD AT HOME

Since we meet only twice a week, it is important that students practice the stories outside of class. Ask your child what we are doing in class, let them tell the current story to you.

When shopping together look at packaging for French and Spanish labeling. Go down the international food aisle in the supermarket and look at the labels on various products. Choose a French or Spanish movie with subtitles on occasion or try switching the language setting on your favorite DVD's at home. Talk about current events that may be on the news in a part of the world where this language is spoken. Keep it fun.

