



SOUND LAB GAMES

Timing: around 15 min. for each activity

Format: whole class, Small group or in pairs

Previous knowledge required: none in particular

Though music and language are not processed by the same parts of the brain there is plenty of scientific evidence showing connections and interactions between the two.

As a result, ear training plays an important role in becoming a confident and effective speaker of a foreign language. There is also a playfulness to it that is at the heart of experiencing oneself as 'another', making those sounds that we don't normally produce in one's mother tongue.

The following games are suggestions to explore this with a group of pupils. They can also be used as supporting activities for learning the song.

STEP-BY-STEP

Activity 1: For those who don't mind a little bit of playfulness and silliness.

Ask your pupils to think about what French sounds like to them. Can they show it asking a question to a friend (like where the glue is or what do they have in their packed lunch today etc.) using made up words from an imaginary language that would sound like French.

1– Now tell them that some of the main ‘markers’ of the French language are its nasal sounds: ã (as in ‘enfant’), ã, (as in ‘vin’), Õ (as in ‘bon’) as well as stressing the end of a word/sentence (The song, which replicates spoken French well, can help the children get a sense of this).

2– Explain that a ‘nasal’ sound resonates in the nose. So one way to self-check one’s pronunciation of these sounds is to put one’s hands on each side of the nose and feel the vibrations when speaking. If you can’t feel the vibrations very clearly, then the sound that you are producing is probably not ‘nasal’ enough. Keep on trying!

Try these words from the Crow and the Fox :

Bonjour

Mentir

Un

Activity 2 : Listen to The Crow and the Fox.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a40xYw7zPsA>

Level 1: Put your hands up everytime that you hear the sound ã.

Level 2: Put your hands up everytime that you hear the sound ã and clap everytime you hear the sound Õ.

N.B. Please note that the important thing is not to always get it right. It is to boggle your mind by asking it to try and discriminate between those sounds !

Activity 3: You might prefer to present the pupils with the written text at the same time as the audio recording and ask them to underline the sound ã every time that they hear it. At the end ask them how many different spellings of that sound they have found.