

Activities for Your Classroom

Body Parties: les parties du corps

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Level: French or any other lan- guage; Middle School—grades 5 and 6

“Body Parties” or giant body part people is the culminating activity of a unit on body parts. It is an arts and crafts project that students do mostly at home. This project is a lot of fun and makes a great bulletin board exhibit (see photo on next page). Prior to “body parties” we picked the most disgusting bloody and bruised body parts out of a “magic” Halloween bag. We responded totally and physically to each item: we tossed eyeballs back and forth, stuck out tongues, smelled feet, whispered sweet nothings into cut-off ears, tangoed with a hand and a shirt sleeve, batted eyelashes, raised eyebrows, and polished nails. We pointed, we named, we labeled. We discussed the “verb-al” capabilities of each body part: The mouth can eat and speak—*la bouche* (mouth), *manger* (to eat), *parler* (to speak); the tongue can taste—*la langue* (tongue), *goûter* (to taste); the feet can walk, run, and jump—*les pieds* (feet), *marcher* (to walk), *courir* (to run), *sauter* (to jump); etc. We compared idioms. A Frenchman wouldn’t be caught dead putting his foot in his mouth; he puts his feet in his plate. Whereas Americans merely “split hairs,” the French “cut a hair in four,” etc. We played *Jacques a dit* (Jacques said), we made a whole class human chain. We worked out to *Tête* (head), *épaules* (shoulders), *genoux* (knees), *et pieds* (toes). We planted cabbages in bizarre ways

Savez-vous planter les choux? (Do you know how to plant the cabbages?) We sang and plucked *Alouette*. To the tune of *Alouette*, we ran the gamut of diseases in Barbara MacArthur’s *Mal à la Tête*. In Josée Vachon’s *Le remède à son talon*, we searched for cures. We scratched to Patti Lozano’s *Ça me gratte la figure* and to Suzanne Pinel’s *J’ai la varicelle*. We discoed with Étienne in Steven Langlois’ *Rocumentaire* and threw our entire bodies and souls into *le Hoogie Boogie*.

Targeted Standards:

Communication

- 1.3 Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or readers on a variety of topics.

Cultures

- 2.2 Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

Connections

- 3.1 Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.

Comparisons

- 4.2 Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

Communities

- 5.2 Students show evidence of becoming lifelong learners by using the language for personal enjoy-

ment and enrichment.

Objectives:

1. Students will understand and manipulate body-part vocabulary.
2. Students will create an original arts and crafts personality using mixed media.

Materials:

1. For the body: poster board, cardboard, plastic board, styro foam, wood, etc.
2. Mounting stick: yardstick, ruler, metal stick, paint stirrer, etc.
3. Glue, tape, staples, velcro, etc. Stickers, pictures, pompoms, feathers, fur, pasta, beans, ice cream cones, fabric, ribbon, pipe cleaners, streamers, glitter, sponges, earrings, costume jewelry, cotton, shells, candy, soup, nuts, etc.

Procedures:

- Choose your favorite body part: hand, foot, heart, nose, mouth, tongue, eye(s), ear(s), etc.
- Make a giant version of the body part. Cut out its form. This will be the focus of your person.
- Give your person a name, using the title *Monsieur*, *Madame*, or *Mademoiselle*.
- Give your body-part person arms, legs, eyes, nose, mouth, etc.
- Label all body parts in French. Write clearly and double check your spelling.
- Mount your person on some kind of a stick so that you can hold it up and move it like a puppet.
- Give your creation a French twist: Eiffel Tower earrings perhaps; a Basque beret; lots of bracelets; a *fleur de lis* emblem; a French flag, etc.
- Be prepared to present your person.
- Be creative! Have fun!
- *Small Groups*: Write and perform a puppet show.

- *Whole class*: Students come up individually. The class creates a personality profile around each body person.
- *Individual*: Write a biography for your person.

Students' arts-and-crafts projects displayed on classroom bulletin board for les parties du corps unit.