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**Governor's Institute 2004**

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Lesson Plan  
7/31/04

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**Title:** Foods, Eating Habits, and Health Concerns

**Language and Level:** This lesson is designed for a French II and would be presented at the end of the second semester of study.

**Materials Needed:**

- bathroom scales and/or metric scales
- objects of varying weight (ie. 10 lb. bag of potatoes, small filing cabinet, weights from phys.ed. department)
- calculators for students
- pictures illustrating unfamiliar vocabulary
- newspaper article (*Un élève sur cinq souffre de surpoids en CM2 – FRANCE-AMÉRIQUE*, 26 juin-2 juillet)
- Venn diagram / French and American meals
- magazines with pictures of food, scissors, glue, crayons or colored pencils

**National Standards Addressed:**

Standard 1.1 – Students will access their background knowledge to discuss health concerns related to eating habits.

Standard 1.2 – Students will glean meaning from an article about obesity in French schools.

Standard 1.3 – Each student will present to the class his or her ideal plan for a day of healthy meals.

Standard 2.1 – Students will demonstrate awareness of the most typical scenarios for meals in France (foods eaten at each meal, times of each meal, attitudes toward snacking, etc.) French mathematical notation will be recognized.

Standard 3.1 – Students will reinforce information about the benefits of healthy eating habits discussed in health and in biology classes. They will also practice math skills, converting pounds to kilos.

Standard 4.2 – Students will compare the health concerns of the American and French governments regarding eating habits.

**Overview of the Unit:**

This lesson would be introduced to my French II class after they had begun the last chapter in their textbook, *C'est à toi*. The subject of the first part of this chapter is world problems and introduces vocabulary useful to the project. The pattern of the first dialogue, on the subject of students' opinions about world problems, would prepare the class to discuss a problem they often see mentioned in the press. The lesson is designed to take place over three class periods. Students will be directed to discuss, in pairs or threes, what they have heard or read in the press about concerns about obesity and related problems among American youth. (Current topics include local school districts'

decisions to send written notification to the parents of children found to be overweight, the recent revamping of the government's food pyramid, and Mary-Kate Olsen's hospitalization for anorexia). Emphasis at this stage is on interpersonal communication (C 1.1). After engaging in pre-reading activities, the students will read an article about the French government's concerns (C1.2). Comparing the mathematical notation and system of weight used in French and English (C3.1), students will explore the findings related to the French inquiry about overweight youth. Building upon their knowledge of the "typical" French meal tradition (C2.1, C4.2), they will present a healthy meal plan (C1.3).

### **Day One:**

Activity One: Three to five objects of varying weights are at the front of the room. On the board are their weights in kilos (the teacher will have weighed each object before class begins). Students are asked to guess (without discussion) which object corresponds to which metric weight. One by one, the objects are placed on the scale and the weight in pounds is noted. In pairs, students are asked to match the weight in pounds to one of the listed weights in kilos. Once the objects are matched to their metric weight, each pair tries to be the first to write the equation for conversion on the board.

Note: Unless the scales used are scientific scales and very accurate, students should be advised that the results will be approximate. Objects, therefore, must vary significantly in total weight.

Activity Two: Students will be asked to consider weight as it applies to humans and their health. In groups of four with one person acting as scribe and another as spokesperson, they will discuss the following questions:

1. What health concerns are related to weight?
2. What part can/should the school play in addressing these concerns?
3. Do you think that these issues are of concern to the French?

Questions are given in the target language, and all discussion will be in French, although emphasis at this stage is on successful communication rather than on grammatical precision. Once groups have jotted notes for each question (10-15 minutes), the group spokesperson will share answers with the whole class. All students are invited to ask questions, note connections with current events, agree or disagree with any conclusions.

### **Day Two:**

Activity One: Pictures of key vocabulary appear on the board (l'excès de poids, les cadres, les chômeurs, l'écran, les DOM-TOM). A student may ask for further explanation, and one who has understood the meaning of the expression may clarify (in French, or by pantomime). (five minutes)

Activity Two: Given copies of the article (*OBÉSITÉ: Un élève sur cinq souffre de surpoids en CM2*) and individual white boards and markers, students are asked to list cognates they find while skimming the article. As the lists are shared, the teacher

confirms true cognates and asks the class what the general subject of the article will be. Calling attention to a group of numbers, fractions, and percentages on the board (these are the answers below, listed in random fashion), the teacher asks students to identify the differences from English notation that they see (comma instead of period in decimal percentages, lack of comma in numbers in the thousands). The teacher then asks students to scan the article in order to decide which figure on the board answers each of the following questions (the questions are displayed on overhead or poster):

*Quelle fraction représente le nombre d'élèves qui sont trop gros? (1/5)*  
*Combien d'élèves ont participé dans l'enquête? (8 500)*  
*Quel pourcentage d'enfants obèses ont des parents agriculteurs? (4,7%)*  
*Quel est le pourcentage de surpoids chez les enfants des chômeurs? (27,7%)*  
*Quel est le pourcentage de surpoids chez les enfants qui mangent le petit déjeuner? (18%)*

As each student completes the questions, he will pair up with a partner and compare answers. Conflicting answers should be discussed in French with both students referring to the text. Teacher will answer questions from each group or share answers with the class as a whole if time is short.

In pairs, students are next asked to answer:

*Quel est le pourcentage de surpoids chez les enfants. . .*

*des cadres \_\_\_\_\_*

*des employés \_\_\_\_\_*

*des agriculteurs \_\_\_\_\_*

*de France métropolitaine \_\_\_\_\_*

*des DOM-TOM \_\_\_\_\_*

*Quelle différence curieuse existe entre les filles et les garçons?*

*Quelles raisons possibles pouvez-vous devinez pour ces résultats?*

Students discuss possible explanations for differing rates of obesity and the teacher notes plausible theories on the board or overhead.

Activity Three: Students (still in pairs) are given a set of cards each with a sentence relating to the article:

*Si on ne veut pas être trop gros, on doit manger le petit déjeuner.*  
*Les écoliers français ne souffrent pas de surpoids.*  
*Les ministères du gouvernement français étudient le problème de l'obésité.*  
*Si on ne veut pas être trop gros, on doit passer beaucoup de temps devant la télé ou l'ordinateur.*  
*Une des causes de l'obésité est l'inactivité physique.*  
*Les chercheurs ont eu besoin de la permission des parents avant de parler aux élèves de ce problème.*

The game is to put the sentences in two groups according to whether the sentence is true or false. Students can take turns reading a sentence and having the class identify *vrai ou faux*.

(homework): Students are to review what they know about French meals and complete the Venn diagram about meals.

### **Day Three:**

Activity One: The class is divided into groups of three or four, and each group draws an enlarged Venn diagram on the board. Using their homework papers, students in each group select ideas to complete their diagram comparing the French meal system to the American. The teacher calls attention to the ideas that the groups have in common and to any unique ideas. The discussion and notes are in French.

Activity Two: With magazines and art supplies on the table, students are asked to consider what would constitute a healthy meal plan for one day. They are asked to think about where they could get the food they choose – would they eat at home or bring a bag lunch? Are there fast-food restaurants nearby where they could find menu items? Will they want snacks in addition to three main meals? Cutting pictures from the magazines, or drawing if they prefer, students will construct an illustrated meal plan. They will label the foods chosen and say where they will find them. All writing is in the target language, but full sentences are not necessary.

Activity Three: In small groups, students will share their plans and explain what they have chosen to eat, where they will obtain the food, where and when they will eat, etc.

**Extensions:**

Many other activities could extend from this lesson:

Students could be asked to keep a food diary and a journal of where they eat out. This information could be compiled by the class and graphed to see which foods and restaurants are the most popular.

Students could debate how schools or the government in general could most effectively educate the public about the dangers of poor eating habits and eating disorders.

Students could research standards for recommended weight to height ratios and translate them into metric measures.

**Connections:**

The teacher may connect the lesson to those addressed in health classes when students learn about optimum weight, body-fat indexes, and eating disorders.

Connections in math rely primarily on review of skills learned in elementary and middle school and require prior knowledge of the conversion of English measures to the metric system.

**Resources:**

Textbook – *C'est à toi*, level II, Unité 11A (The lesson is not tied to this particular text)

Newspaper article – *OBÉSITÉ: Un enfant sur cinq souffre de surpoids en CM2*, FRANCE-AMÉRIQUE, 26 juin – 2 juillet 2004

**Assessment Strategies:**

Assessment will be made as students work in groups. Success is dependent upon consistent participation, understanding and making oneself understood in the target language. Superior standing necessitates use of new vocabulary and/or successful circumlocution when helping partners.

For written assessment, students may be given a list of nearby restaurants and asked to write where they would go for breakfast, lunch, and dinner and what they would order there when considering a healthy diet.

Assessment may also include keeping a food diary for a day and then commenting, in a personal conversation with the teacher, about the comparison between what one eats and what one thinks one should eat. A composition could be substituted for personal interview if time is not available.

Note: Students must be able to talk in general terms about healthy food choices, rather than discussing their own eating habits, if they prefer. The subject of obesity must be addressed with care, especially in any class with includes overweight students.

**Appendix:**

-newspaper article

Venn diagram -