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# Using Music and Song in the Second Language Classroom: A Description of the Many Ways Music and Song Can Enhance the Teaching of French

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USING MUSIC AND SONG IN THE FRENCH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

A DESCRIPTION OF THE MANY WAYS MUSIC AND SONG  
CAN ENHANCE THE TEACHING OF FRENCH

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER OF ARTS IN TEACHING  
DEGREE AT THE SCHOOL FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAINING

BRATTELBORO, VERMONT

BY

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This project by Christine Geueke is accepted in its present form.

Date August 5, 2005

Project Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

Project Reader Patricia McCullough

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## Abstract

Recent language acquisition research supports the theory that language learning and the learning of music are closely linked. The learning of languages can be enhanced by the use of music. This paper will be an account of how I have used music and songs in my French language classroom as a classroom management tool and to teach grammar concepts, writing and vocabulary. I would like to encourage other French teachers to use music and song and give them the tools, ideas and resources they need to begin using music and song in their classrooms.

ERIC Descriptors:

Language Teachers  
Teaching Methods  
Classroom Techniques

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

“‘Motivé’, Madame, s’il vous plaît, ‘Motivé!’<sup>1</sup>” Several of my fifteen year old French II students are requesting their favorite French song on the CD player. These students are not necessarily the most motivated academically, but they find French class cool. They enjoy the music played in class and this enjoyment carries over to creating a more positive attitude toward the class as a whole.

I teach at Nauset Regional High School, a high-ranking public high school of a little over 1,000 students in North Eastham, Massachusetts. Located on Cape Cod, the high school is only a mile from the ocean and has a college-like flair, with its open-air campus. I teach many different levels of French. This past year I taught levels II and II Honors, classes of mainly freshmen, and a French IV class of juniors. I have also taught level III and III honors sophomores. My class sizes vary from year to year but average approximately 22 students per class, with fewer students in the honors classes.

Foreign languages are not a graduation requirement at Nauset but because many of my students are college-bound, they are taking French in order to be able to attend the college of their choice. They want to do well in the class grade-wise, but are not particularly enthusiastic about learning the language. And yet some of my students have

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<sup>1</sup> Zebda, “Motivé”, *Essence Ordinaire*, (Barclay/Universal Music-France, 1995)

developed an enthusiasm for the language, have traveled to France on the exchange program, and enjoy speaking French amongst themselves. This year was the first time our French Department participated in the National French Exam, and we were proud that three of our students placed nationally and many won regional awards. I am convinced that music has been a key factor leading to the success of my classes both in terms of student achievement and enthusiasm for the language.

I started teaching four years ago as a second career, and have been very interested in attending conferences and workshops on how best to teach my students. One of the many conferences I attended was the fall 2002 Massachusetts Foreign Language Association (MaFLA) Conference in Springfield, where I became motivated to teach using immersion, speaking only French in the classroom. I am convinced that immersion is the best way for my students to learn the language.

I also attended a workshop by Barbara Snyder<sup>2</sup> from the Bureau of Education and Research (BER), on “Increasing Effective Communication Through Interactive Learner-Centered Activities”. This workshop provided me with practical ways to encourage my students to communicate with each other using the target language by participating in partner and small group activities. Barbara Snyder emphasized the importance of input, giving the students as much exposure as possible to the target language.

I also attended a MaFLA workshop on “Using Music in the Classroom” by Brian Thompson<sup>3</sup>, author of *La clef des chants*, and professor and Department of Modern Languages Chair at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, where he is director of Le

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<sup>2</sup> Barbara Snyder, *Enhancing Instruction in the Foreign Language Classroom*, (Bureau of Education & Research, 2003)

<sup>3</sup> Brian Thompson, *La Clef des Chants*, (Boston, 1986)



Centre National de la Chanson. Brian Thompson's workshop was inspiring to me. Not only would using music in the classroom be a pleasant way to provide input and allow my students to hear many different voices singing in French, but songs could be used to reinforce the grammar being taught in class. I have been using music in the classroom ever since and it has become an invaluable resource for me and has had a tremendous effect on the motivation and learning of my students.

In this paper I would like to inform French teachers about my experience using music in the classroom. I will explain how I use music as a classroom management tool and as a way to reinforce grammar, aid students in their writing and introduce elements of French and francophone culture. Lastly I will provide a list of resources that are readily available for French teachers interested in starting to use music in their classrooms right away.

## CHAPTER TWO

### WHY USE MUSIC IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ?

I began using music and song in the classroom because I wanted my students to hear as much French as possible. I wanted to fill every empty minute (when students arrive to class, when students transition from one activity to the next or when they prepare to leave class) with music and the sound of people singing in French. Using songs from all over the francophone world has allowed me to introduce a variety of voices into the classroom; male and female, young and old, from France, or from any number of regions where French is spoken. This way I am not the only voice the students hear speaking French in the classroom. Besides added target language input<sup>1</sup> there are many other positive attributes to using music in the classroom.

In his book *Music and Learning*, Chris Boyd Brewer compiled the following list of reasons why music helps us learn:

Music helps us learn because it will establish a positive learning state, create a desired atmosphere, build a sense of anticipation, energize learning activities, change brain wave states, focus concentration, increase attention, improve memory, facilitate a multisensory learning experience, release tension, enhance imagination, align groups, develop rapport, provide inspiration and motivation, add an element of fun, and accentuate theme-oriented units.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Stephen Krashen, *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*, (New York, 2000)

<sup>2</sup> Chris Boyd Brewer, *Music and Learning : Seven Ways to Use Music in the Classroom*, ( 1995)

My experience using music in the French language classroom confirms all of these many ways that music enhances learning. In order to establish a positive learning state it is important for students to be comfortable in the classroom. My students have been very receptive to the use of music in the classroom. When I surveyed my students early in the school year on their personal interests, the one common denominator was music. Many of the students are already listening to their own music as they enter the classroom. I simply exchange the music they are listening to with the French music.

Hearing the same music in class helps put students and teachers on the same plane. There is a common experience that takes place when listening to a song together that helps create a bond, and lessens the teacher/student divide. When listening to the song “La Corrida” by Francis Cabrel<sup>3</sup> with my French II Honors students, for example, there was a class discussion as to why bull fighting still takes place in Spain, and the importance of traditions versus the importance of animal rights. I was able to relate to the students my experiences of having seen a bull fight in the south of France and my feelings about it. The class seemed to grow closer through this discussion which would not have been as heart-felt if we had not just listened to the song together. The students are also making their own connections outside of class and are enthusiastic about sharing their discoveries with me. Students come up to me in class to tell me : “I heard that song we listened to in class this weekend!” or “I read about Jordy in the ‘Guinness Book of World Records’!” The music creates moments of shared enthusiasm and connection.

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<sup>3</sup> Francis Cabrel, “La Corrida”, *Samedi soir sur la Terre*, (Chandelle Productions, 1994)

When learning a foreign language there is so much that needs to be remembered.

It is much easier to remember a song than a sentence because there is something, a melody, to attach the words to. Carmen Mora's research indicates that :

Verbal practice associated to musical information seems to be more memorable, using melody with new phrases lowers students anxiety, and foreign sounds paired with music are stored in long-term musical memory and are accessible for sub vocal rehearsal.<sup>4</sup>

When students have trouble remembering an irregular verb I just have to hum a fragment of a song we used in class and they will remember it. For example "Tu verras, Tu seras bien" by Jean Ferrat<sup>5</sup>, will help them to remember irregular verbs in the future tense.

There are many different teaching aids such as the well-known cassette series: *Sing, Laugh, Dance and Eat Quiche*<sup>6</sup> which help students remember verb tenses and vocabulary. As I prefer to use authentic French songs, and not those adapted to the teaching of French, I won't be discussing these in great detail. Music is a great memory booster, and these songs do seem to help students retain the verb endings and other sentence structures.

The textbook our school has recently begun to use is *Allez Viens*<sup>7</sup> from Holt, Rinehart and Winston publishing company. It is a communicative-based textbook, in which students learn grammar in context, and with the communicative purpose in mind. Students are accustomed to writing dialogues and carrying out a variety of partner and small-group interactive activities during their 85 minute block classes. Many of the interactive activities I use I have adapted from a resource book by Barbara Snyder, who

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<sup>4</sup>Carmen Mora, *Foreign Language Acquisition and Melody Singing*, ELT Journal, 54 (2), 146-152

<sup>5</sup> Jean Ferrat, "Tu verras, Tu seras bien", *Ferrat 1979-1980*, (Productions Alleluia, 1988)

<sup>6</sup> Barbara MacArthur, " Sing, Dance, Laugh and Eat Quiche",

<sup>7</sup> *Allez Viens*, Holt, Reinhart and Winston, Austin , 2003.

defines the communicative language teaching approach as “the major goal of foreign language teaching today, because it underlies success in reaching such goals as communicative competence and communicative performance standards.”<sup>8</sup> Music is an asset to the communicative language classroom. Because many of the interactive activities involve the active participation of the students ; finding a partner or obtaining a piece of missing information from several other classmates, the music can help students to maintain energy levels as they move about the room. The music keeps the students motivated and on task.

There are many different ways songs can be used in the classroom. Songs can be listened to, lyrics can be read, sentences of lyrics can be typed up and cut out and manipulated by the students and put into order. Students can make hypotheses about grammar contained in a song or predictions about the message of a particular song. They can be motivated to discuss and debate themes they have heard in songs and can be inspired to write more creatively on a theme because of a song they have heard. Howard Gardner who has developed the theory of Multiple Intelligences has said that “Songs are a gem for they activate several of the known intelligences simultaneously: linguistic, musical, bodily kinesthetic, spatial, logical-mathematical, interpersonal and intrapersonal.”<sup>9</sup> The more intelligences that are activated the better the individual students’ needs are being met, and the easier it is for the students to learn the language.

Using music in the classroom is easy. The only materials needed are a working CD or tape player, French CD’s or cassettes, which can be ordered online, and the lyrics

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<sup>8</sup> Barbara Snyder, *Enhancing Instruction in your Foreign Language Classroom*, Bureau of Education & Research, 2003, Page 5.

<sup>9</sup> Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind : The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, Harper and Row, 1983.

which are often included with the CD or cassette tape or can be found on-line. Most of the activities involving the use of music take very little time to prepare and once a teacher has developed a repertoire of songs they can be organized by grammar point or title and kept together with worksheets, and other materials in folders so they are easily accessible.

Most French songs are quite poetic in nature. Similar to most poems they are short, and message-laden with distinct rhythms and often with elements of rhyme. Students can become more receptive to studying poetry through the use of song. Songs, however, have the advantage over poems of being put to music and sung, so that the mood of the music and the intonation and performance of the singer can provide the students with cues to help them better interpret the song.

Using music has enriched the learning environment of my classroom by providing more input and a better overall atmosphere. It has become an irreplaceable classroom management and teaching tool. When surveyed, most of my students responded positively when asked how they thought music and song in the classroom affected their learning of French. Here are some of the comments I received from French II level students : “I found the music helpful, and I wish other classes used the same technique.”, “I think it has helped a lot because it gives me a chance to hear the vocab verbally and it keeps me interested in the class.”, “It helped me learn new vocab.”, “It has made the learning experience less straightforward teaching sort of thing. ”, “I really enjoy using music during French class. I think it really helps us to learn things better.” and “Music is a great tool and it should be used more often in the classroom setting.” It is my hope that this paper will inspire French teachers to use songs and music more often in their classrooms.

## CHAPTER THREE

### MUSIC AS A CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TOOL

#### A) Music to Influence Mood.

Music is playing as my students enter the classroom. First block classes begin at 7:25 a.m. and my students are understandably sleepy. In response to this I play music with an energetic beat that helps to wake them up. Students are accustomed to the routine of the music being on as they enter into the classroom. This background noise is an indicator that it is all right for them to be talking with one another. While the music is playing I can be doing last minute administrative duties, such as locating the attendance sheet, or I can be speaking to an individual student.

The music acts as a non-verbal cue that class has started. When the music stops the students automatically look up. This happened from the very first day. No explanations were necessary, the silence was a change that forced the students to pay attention to what was going on, and this became the routine from then on. The advantage to this signal is that the students can react independently and not because of explicit directions from my part telling them to do so. This allows for a less authoritative classroom and the class can begin without my having to call the class to order. When surveyed as to whether my students noticed when the music at the beginning of the class stopped, 41% of students said very much so. One student surveyed put it this way: "I always notice the music when

I walk in, and when it stops I know it's time to start class. It's become part of the routine." This routine is helpful because students know what to expect and feel more comfortable.

Students need time to transition from one class to another, but when changing from one language to another the transition is even greater. Music at the beginning of class eases the transition from a previous class and helps the students adjust to a French environment. As several students surveyed have pointed out: "It's a nice way to transition from the previous class into one that's in a completely different language." and "I enjoy having music played, it helps bring you into 'French mode'. It reminds you that you're in French class."

The music can also influence the mood of the students. When students were asked whether the music played when they walk into class influenced their mood or enthusiasm most students responded emphatically that it had. One student said: "If it's upbeat, it usually makes me happier." Another said : "The music definitely sets the mood of a positive learning atmosphere, and helps to influence one's mood during the class." Generally speaking, music played at the beginning of class should be upbeat, and lively. Especially early morning classes will benefit from a beat that is somewhat fast, energetic, and played with the volume set somewhat loudly<sup>1</sup>.

It is possible to capture and modify the energy level of the students by using music. During his workshop Louis Mangione<sup>2</sup>, pointed out that sometimes students who have just come into from an assembly or fire drill, or unforeseen incident, are wired up. In

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<sup>1</sup> For a list of songs I have found particularly effective as energizers see Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> Louis Mangione, *Strengthen Instruction in your Foreign Language Classroom*, Bureau of Research & Education, 2004.



these cases he uses music with a steady but moderate beat, played fairly loud. The music absorbs the noise of the talkative students by creating a background of sound. Then Mr. Mangione approaches individual students, talking very seriously in a hushed voice about something such as the past night's assignment. The result is that the students turn their attention to him, wondering what is going on, rather than on each other. He is getting these distracted students to focus themselves rather than trying to make them focus on him by raising his voice. After a few minutes he is able to turn off the music and begin class.

There are slower, more calming pieces of music that can be used if students seem to be too energetic, or if the topic the teacher is covering is a more serious one. With some experience and a wide range of music to choose from, the teacher will be able to select which particular piece will best fit his or her students' needs.<sup>3</sup> It is important to be aware of the energy level and mood of the students when they enter into the classroom, and to make adjustments to the music selection accordingly. Music chosen for a Friday afternoon before a vacation will surely be different from music chosen for a Monday morning.

Chris Boyd Brewer<sup>4</sup>, in his book *Music and Learning: Integrating Music in the Classroom* suggests many different pieces of music which could be used to help establish a mood the teacher is trying to evoke. Most of the music he suggests is not in French but is effective in creating a certain atmosphere in the classroom. Playing a theme song from a film students recognize, such as *Gone with the Wind*, helps students get more involved

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<sup>3</sup> For a list of more calming songs see Appendix.

<sup>4</sup> Chris Boyd Brewer, *Music and Learning : Seven Ways to Use Music in the Classroom*. (LifeSounds, 1995)

in their creative writing. Music by French classical composers such as Berlioz or Camille Saint-Saens or Maurice Ravel can be played before a writing assignment to help create a desired atmosphere.

### B) Music to Accompany Activities

Since our textbook is communicative-based, students participate in several interactive small group or partner activities per class. Between activities students need a few minutes of time to transition. After students have participated in a partner finding activity, for example, they will need to gather their materials and find a seat with their partner. Music is the ideal accompaniment to a transition. The transition time is not void of learning because the music is filling this otherwise unproductive time with language input or in some cases a musical thematic boost such as the James Bond theme music or the Pink Panther theme music if the students are about to begin an activity involving suspense or mystery.

When students are participating in a communicative partner activity, such as asking each other for a piece of missing information, they are actively practicing the language. It is much easier for them to do this, and much less distracting, when music is being played in the background. When students are speaking French in a rather noisy environment they are less inhibited about making errors because if they do make a mistake, the background noise will swallow it up, and no one else will notice. If a student bursts out laughing the noise doesn't disturb the rest of the class as much as it would if there were no music playing.

When using music to accompany an activity I observe students to make sure the music is not distracting them from the task at hand. On occasion students ask that the

music be turned off during longer writing assignments and it is important to respect their wishes. The majority of the time the music played in the background is willingly accepted by my students.

When I choose music to be used as a backdrop for activities I have a purpose in mind. My hidden agenda is language input. What might sound like a nice tune to the students will actually contain the grammar structure they are currently practicing within the lyrics of the song. The students are not made aware of this and very few actually notice it. The input is at a low level of consciousness for the student, but it is there as part of the periphery, just as there are posters, and grammar rules posted around the room.

Louis Mangione<sup>5</sup>, suggests three criteria for choosing music to use in class to accompany activities. He notes the importance of a steady beat and that the music be consistent in its dynamics. The music should not be something the students can identify with as it would be too distracting for them, and the music should have ‘bounce’. By ‘bounce’ he means the ability of the music to help move the students along as they participate in an activity. One of the songs I’ve used that meets these criteria is “C’est le Printemps” by Matt Maxwell<sup>6</sup>. This children’s song is so far removed from anything the students would normally listen to, it doesn’t clash with their own sense of musical identity. The steady beat and cheerful melody help keep their feet moving, and the energy level high.

There are many communicative activities that require students to move around the classroom. Music can accompany these activities. When students are participating in ‘go around’ type activities, such as a signature search, where they need to circulate around

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<sup>5</sup> Louis Mangione, 2004

<sup>6</sup> Matt Maxwell, “ C’est le Printemps ”, *Let’s sing and Learn in French*, New York, 1983

the room and ask each other questions, the music can keep the students energized. A song such as “Petit frère” by Toma Sidibe<sup>7</sup> or “J’ai trouvé des amis” by Tryo<sup>8</sup> work well, as does any song with a steady, bouncy beat.

One of the activities I’ve begun using since attending Louis Mangione’s workshop on “Strengthening Student Learning in the Block Schedule Classes” is to have students form two circles, an inner and outer one, and walk in opposite directions to the music. When the music stops students face the partner opposite them and proceed with the task at hand, whether this be explaining everything they know about a certain topic, or talking about what they did yesterday. When the music selected to accompany this activity is fun, such as “Tomber la chemise” by Zebda<sup>9</sup>, a lively song that was an absolute hit in France, the students don’t feel as self-conscious participating in the activity as they would if the activity were carried out in silence. The music distracts from the fact that they are playing a kindergarten-type game. I have observed my students participating in these activities to the music; they swing their arms, they sway to the music, they are visibly enjoying themselves and participate with an enthusiasm that I do not believe would be present without the music.

### C) Music as a Timer

Music is a very effective timer in my classroom. Most of the interactive partner activities carried out in class are about five minutes in length. I previously used a kitchen timer with a buzzer to keep the students on task and well-aware that time is at a premium.

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<sup>7</sup> Toma Sidibe, “Petit frere”, *Mali Mélo*, (Sony Music France, 2002)

<sup>8</sup> Tryo, “ J’ai trouvé des amis”, *Faut qu’ils s’activent...* (Sony Music France, 1999) in *Génération Française* 4, Bureau Export, 2001

<sup>9</sup> Zebda, “ Tomber la chemise”, *Essence Ordinaire*, (Barclay, 1999) in *Génération Française* 4, Bureau Export, 2001

I have now switched to exclusively using music as a timer. The length of a particular song is conveniently written on the inside pocket of most CDs, so it is very easy to select a song with the appropriate content and length for a particular activity. When the song is over the students know that time is up. If students are participating in a longer activity, several songs can be lined up to total the amount of time required. In this case, it is helpful to take note of the last song, so that students can be warned that the activity will end when that last song stops. The songs work just as well as the kitchen timer, but add input, and keep the students motivated during the activity.

CHAPTER FOUR  
MUSIC AS A TEACHING TOOL

A) Music to Teach Grammar

By the time students begin to formally learn a grammar concept in my classroom, they will already have heard it many times. Before formally learning the passé composé they will have heard, “J’ai trouvé des amis” by Tyro<sup>1</sup>, many times. They will have heard the music played before class begins, to accompany an activity, or as they are leaving class. Before ever learning about the existence of reflexive verbs they will have heard the song “D’habitude”, by Michel Sardou<sup>2</sup>, which includes many different reflexive verbs, several times.

When my students write dialogues based on the expressions in their *Allez Viens*<sup>3</sup>, Level II textbook, which are divided into functions such as making and refusing suggestions, I can locate songs that use these expressions and play the songs in the background while the students are writing. If the students are writing dialogues about apologizing and accepting apologies, for example, the song “T’en fais pas” by Pierre Perret<sup>4</sup> can be played quietly in the background. In this way the students are hearing the expression “T’en fais pas” (don’t worry) many times in the background as they are

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<sup>1</sup> Tyro, “ J’ai trouvé des amis ”, 1999

<sup>2</sup> Michel Sardou, “Comme d’habitude”, *Anthologie Michel Sardou, Vol.2 #6*, ( Mercury,2004)

<sup>3</sup> Allez Viens, Holt, Rinehardt & Winston, 2003

<sup>4</sup> Pierre Perret, “ T’en fais pas”, *Le Meilleur de Pierre Perret*, (Adèle, 2000)

writing. The song functions as an auditory drill because students are hearing the expression repeated in the song.

I find it important for students who have just learned a grammar concept to see the grammar used in context as soon as possible. Songs are the ideal vehicle to contextualize grammar. While grammar drills are solely repetitious, songs contain elements of meaningful repetition in the form of refrains. When Jean Ferrat sings “Tu verras, Tu seras bien”<sup>5</sup> (You’ll see, You’ll be fine), the grammatical focus is the irregular future tense while the music and the rendition of the song help connect this with meaning and emotion. The song helps to bridge the abstract ‘how to form the grammar concept’ with the meaningful use of the grammar.

For every grammar concept or expression taught in class there is a song that offers examples of the grammar in context. Since songs have been written for a variety of purposes and on a wide range of topics, teachers can choose from a wide variety of themes that correspond with or complement the current unit of study and contain the grammar concept the teacher would like to focus on. Using the internet, especially a site such as “[www. Paroles.net](http://www.Paroles.net)”, and searching songs by topic will lead to lists of songs that teachers can choose from. Brian Thompson has also listed songs by theme on his homepage.<sup>6</sup>

Song lyrics containing many examples of a grammar concept being studied can be a means for students to work out the rules of grammar independently, by forming and testing their own hypotheses, and verifying how the grammar is used in the songs. Not all

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<sup>5</sup> Jean Ferrat, “tu verras, tu seras bien”

<sup>6</sup> Brian Thompson, [www.faculty.umb.edu/brian-thompson/theme.htm](http://www.faculty.umb.edu/brian-thompson/theme.htm)

songs, however, are written in correct grammar. The teacher may choose to ignore any errors unless the students question them, or may decide to bring these errors to the attention of the students and explore whether the error was intentional or not.

Occasionally the lyrics do not exactly match up with the way the song is sung. This is an opportunity to hone listening skills and discuss whether the singer made a mistake or purposely changed the text.

There are several different ways to teach grammar concepts and reinforce the learning and retention of grammar with songs. One way is to distribute copies of the song lyrics before listening to the song. Students search for examples of the grammar used in the song. In this case students are in the noticing phase. They are recognizing the grammar and how it is being used in this particular context. Students are then asked to read the lyrics sentence by sentence, in order to clarify any difficulties with understanding and pronunciation. I usually have my students move into a circle (at their desks) and have each student read one line of the song. Students can use a subtle hand signal (thumbs up/ hand flat on desk) to indicate whether they understand the sentence or need further clarification. This hand signaling allows me to assess how well students are understanding and also keeps the class on task. Students then listen to the musical introduction of the song and predict what mood they think the song is in, whether it is going to be a serious song, or perhaps sarcastic. Listing what instruments they hear and what emotions they associate with these instruments helps them to interpret the mood of the song. Focusing on the first few bars of music of “ La Corrida” by Francis Cabrel, students hear string instruments and interpret the mood of the song as quite sad. This helps the students to understand the nature of the song so that they can better understand



the text. Students are next directed to think about other elements in the song. The teacher asks a variety of questions about the song in French :“Who are the main characters?, Where is the song taking place?, Who’s singing? ,What time of year is it?” The students are practicing understanding the questions that are being asked while at the same time working on their comprehension of a song.

Students listen to the song in its entirety as they read along with the lyrics. Hearing the singer’s intonation and expression help the students understand the song. They are also hearing the correct pronunciation of the individual words and word groupings. This is important because in the French language many of the letters of individual words are not pronounced, and words often flow together. Students can develop a sense of the rhythm and melody of the language as it is spoken by listening to the songs. Words that are difficult to pronounce such as the word “ailleurs” can be pleasantly repeated by playing songs that contain these words. The song “Ailleurs” by Keren Ann<sup>7</sup>, is perfectly suited for this particular word, but there are many more songs containing words that are difficult to pronounce.

Cloze activities where certain elements of grammar are left blank and students need to fill in the blanks as they listen to the song, are effective ways to practice the grammar. Another way to assess whether students are able to recognize certain grammar concepts involves having students listen to a song and raise their hands every time they hear a certain grammar element in the song. This is a form of auditory recognition and TPR<sup>8</sup>!

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<sup>7</sup> Keren Ann, “ Ailleurs”, *Ailleurs*, (EMI, 2000)

<sup>8</sup> Dr. James Asher, Total Physical Response, Learning Another Language Through Actions, 1973.

Students can be given the lyrics of the song being studied in the form of sentence strips, which the students need to put in order, either in partners or as a whole class activity. For partner activities the sentence strips are prepared in advance and handed out to each pair of students in an envelope. For a whole class activity the teacher enlarges the lyrics sentence by sentence, cuts them out, and hands out at least two sentences per student in random order. The students try to position the sentence strips in the correct sequence while listening to the music together. This works best when desks are cleared away and space is made on the floor. The students are noticing how the grammar is used and are obliged to listen carefully in order to place the sentences in the correct order. This activity is kinesthetic; the students are listening, reading, thinking, and using their whole bodies to place the sentences in order, and it is also a cooperative activity with students helping each other. The music is played an extra time for all students to check if the sentences are in the correct sequence. The students are listening to the same song at least three times but because they are participating in an activity that engages, they do not seem to notice. Students sometimes leave the classroom singing the song because it has become 'stuck in their heads'.

Before listening to a song students can be given an envelope with individual words from the lyrics, and as partners, form a text out of the random mix of nouns, verbs, etc., in the envelope. Students are learning about sentence structure as they form sentences. This activity works best with short, fairly simple songs, depending on the level of your students. Providing the students with the title of the song is helpful, but not necessary. Students can then present their texts to the class. In this way they have seen and

manipulated the words that are used in the song before they have heard it and the students are more interested in hearing the song to compare it with what they have written.

The following is a list of songs that I have used in my classroom to reinforce the teaching of grammar organized by verb tenses, reflexive verbs, adverbs, pronouns, negative constructions and grammar review. After each song I briefly describe the recording artist or group, and make suggestions for ways to use the song in class.

### 1. Verb Tenses

#### a. Présent

“Dur, dur d’être bébé ” by Jordy <sup>9</sup>

Jordy Lemoine was actually four years old when he sang this song, making him the world’s youngest recording artist. This song is a favorite of my students and is high on the request list. The song is simple enough for beginning French students, the first lines being: “Je m’appelle Jordy, j’ai quatre ans, je suis petit” (My name is Jordy, I’m four, I’m little) This song is appealing because of its funky beat, and irresistible refrain “Oh là là bébé.” The teacher can use the song as a structure for beginning writing. The teacher simply writes out parts of the song for the students to fill in individually. Je m’appelle \_\_\_\_\_, J’ai \_\_\_\_\_ ans, Je suis \_\_\_\_\_. Oh là là \_\_\_\_\_. Dur, dur d’être \_\_\_\_\_.

“La mauvaise reputation” by Georges Brassens <sup>10</sup>

Georges Brassens is a poet/singer who is one of the most well-known and respected ‘chansonnier’ of France. In his song “La mauvaise reputation” he criticizes

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<sup>9</sup> Jordy Lemoine, “Dur, dur d’être bébé”, *Potion Magique*, (SONY, 1993)

<sup>10</sup> Georges Brassens, *Poèmes et Chansons*, (Paris, 1993)

conformity. He uses his incredible talent for rhyme and rhythm to tell this little story in song, changing tempo several times on the guitar. He also uses the subjunctive in the line “Les braves gens n’ aiment pas que l’ on suive une autre route qu’eux.” For beginning levels I would simply choose not to focus on this unless a student had a question about it. This song is best for intermediate levels because of the use of slang words and colloquialisms that will need to be explained.

“Où vas-tu Basile?” by Line Renaud<sup>11</sup>

This charming traditional song is about a gullible boy who sets off to the market with a white horse, and along the way is persuaded to trade it for a cow, then a goat, then a hen, then a bouquet of flowers, but in the end wins over a young girls’ heart with the bouquet. There is a fun refrain to the song and it works well at beginning levels (especially for younger children, but works at the middle and high school level as well) because the students can act it out while singing. For very young children this song is ideal to create a coloring book. At the bottom of each page the teacher writes down one line of the song, and has the children cut and paste the corresponding animal shape to the page or illustrates the page on their own. It is also an effective song to review the different farm animal vocabulary and inverted questions.

“Papa pique et maman coude” by Charles Trenet<sup>12</sup>

Charles Trenet is one of the most well-known French singers of all time. He was especially popular in the 40’s and 50’s. With his smooth voice, his songs are full of old-fashioned charm and humor. “Papa pique et maman coude” follows the simple life of a man from birth to old age, always accompanied by the sound of his parent’s sewing. The

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<sup>11</sup> Line Renaud, “Où vas-tu Basile ?”, *Copacabana*, (Paris, 1968)

<sup>12</sup> Charles Trenet, “Papa pique et maman coude”, *Charles Trenet*, (Milan Musique, 2000)

refrain is sung very quickly, alluding to this whirl of activity. The song contains many irregular verbs in the present tense and is easy enough for French II level students to understand without difficulty.

#### b. Impératif

“Le plus beau du quartier” by Carla Bruni<sup>13</sup>

Carla Bruni is an Italian woman who began her career as a model, and has had a very successful second career as a singer with a sultry voice and often provocative lyrics. “Le plus beau du quartier” is a song I use in the background when students are completing activities involving the imperative, because of the somewhat adult nature of the lyrics when read in detail. “Regardez-moi” (Look at me) and “Observez-moi” are expressions that are repeated several times in this comical song about a man who is the most handsome guy on the block. The structure: “Le plus beau du quartier” is an example of the superlative.

“Dur, dur d’être bébé” by Jordy<sup>14</sup>

This song, mentioned earlier, is also well-suited to help students understand the imperative. When asked “Why does Jordy think it’s hard to be a baby? What are people always telling little children?” students begin to grasp what is meant by the imperative. Students then make a list of all the things some one is telling Jordy to do, or not to do. Then students are asked if they notice anything unusual about the spelling of the verbs. This way students have the chance to come up with the rule themselves (that ‘-er’ verbs don’t end in ‘s’ in the imperative, like they normally would), using the lyrics of the song.

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<sup>13</sup> Carla Bruni, “Le plus beau du quartier”, *Quelqu’un m’a dit*, (Naïve, 2002)

<sup>14</sup> Jordy Lemoine, « Dur, dur, d’être bébé”.

When students write the verbs that they have found in the text and that they think are in the imperative on the board, misunderstandings can be caught early on. Students can become aware of when a sentence is not imperative, finding negative examples of the grammar point. If students have written the following sentences on the board: “Fais pas ça.”, “Enlève tes doigts du nez.” and “Tu auras pas de dessert.”, they can be asked what the difference between the three sentences are, and can realize on their own that one of the sentences contains a subject, the first person pronoun ‘tu’, while the other two don’t. The students develop their own hypotheses for the imperative using the song lyrics. A lively assessment to see if students have understood the concept is to play the song and have students raise their hands every time they hear the imperative. In this particular song students raise their hands very rhythmically to the imperative, and are able to self-correct by observing fellow classmates.

“No me moleste moustique” by Joe Dassin <sup>15</sup>

Joe Dassin was an especially popular singer in the 70’s and 80’s. This is an amusing song sung directly to a mosquito and contains examples of the imperative used in the ‘tu’ form and examples of the imperative in the negative : “Ne me pique pas. Ne sois pas antipathique”. The placement of pronouns in the sentence and the change to ‘moi’ or ‘toi’ after the imperative can be studied by using examples from this song. For example: “Ne me pique pas” changes to “Pique-moi!”

“Ne me quitte Pas” by Jacques Brel<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Joe Dassin, “No me moleste moustique”, ( ed. G. Marouani, 1972)

<sup>16</sup> Jacques Brel, “ Ne me quitte Pas”, *Jacques Brel*, (Polygram, 1990)

Jacques Brel is a very well known Belgian singer and guitarist, who was especially popular in the 60's. His songs are often very poignant and beautifully sung. This song contains examples of the imperative in the negative form.

### c. Passé Composé

“J’ai trouvé des amis” by Tryo<sup>17</sup>

This group, created in 1995, is comprised of four singers, who call their musical style ‘acoustic reggae’. This song is ideal to play in the background because of its upbeat music, and positive message. Since the singer is talking about all he’s done in the past, examples of the passé composé abound. Cloze exercises work well with this song. The structure of the song can also be used for guided writing exercises for beginning students. Students write about what they have done in their own personal history by filling out lines of the lyrics left blank, for example : “Ma force à moi, c’est....” (My strength is): \_\_\_\_\_, creating a personalized song. The singer ranks finding friends as the most important factor leading to happiness in his life. The students can form their own personal list of what is important to them.

“La Mère Michel”<sup>18</sup>

In this traditional song the passé composé with ‘avoir’ is used many times, but especially with the -re verbs, and this reinforces the learning of the -re verbs in the passé composé. This song contains many examples of the difficult to pronounce [y] sound such as in the words ‘vendu, répondu, rendu, Père Lustucru.’. The story of “ La Mère Michel” who has lost her cat and is asking who will find it and “Le Père Lustucru” who didn’t

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<sup>17</sup> Tryo, “J’ai trouvé des amis”

<sup>18</sup> La Mère Michel, traditional song, Mon Premier Livre de Chansons, (Larousse, 1960)

want a kiss as a recompense is well-known in France. Students are often somewhat shocked that “Le Père Lustucru” admits to selling the cat as a rabbit at the market. Traditional songs are often interspersed with cultural and historical bits of information that help students gain a deeper understanding of the French culture.

“Le temps du muguet” by Francis Lemarque<sup>19</sup>

Francis Lemarque wrote hundreds of songs, especially in the 50’s, but performed only a few of them. This song is about the return of spring. The passé composé with être is used with the verb ‘revenir’ and the verb ‘aller’. Remembering which verbs take être in the passé composé is a challenge for many French students, and this song gives several examples of verbs using ‘être’. Humming the first line of the song, “Il est revenu le temps du muguet” makes it easier to remember that ‘revenir’ for example, takes ‘être’ in the passé composé.

#### d. Imparfait

“L’homme à la moto” by Edith Piaf<sup>20</sup>

Edith Piaf is an internationally acclaimed French singer whose songs span from the 30’s until the 60’s. She was literally singing for her supper when she was first discovered. One of her most popular songs in the United States in the 50’s was “Black Denim Trousers and Motorcycle Boots”. This song tells the legend of a motorcycle rider, who never washed, and wore a black leather jacket. Written almost completely in the imparfait, it allows students to see the imparfait used in a legend, describing how a person looked, and what he used to do, thus illustrating the use of the imparfait in context.

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<sup>19</sup> Francis Lemarque, “Le temps du muguet”, *Francis chante Lemarque*, (EPM Musique, 2004)

<sup>20</sup> Edith Piaf, “L’homme à la moto”, *Carnegie Hall 1956/1957*, (Capitol, 2003)



“Le petit cheval” by Georges Brassens <sup>21</sup>

Another famous French chansonnier, Georges Brassens is first poet, then singer, having written hundreds of poems put to music. His unusual style is easily recognized because his guitar carries the melody while his voice remains virtually unchanging. In this song Georges Brassens sings about a horse and its simple and noble life. Sung almost entirely in the imparfait, the song describes the horse and sets the scene. The only “event”, the sudden death of the little horse, is in the passé composé. Hearing the song makes the difference between the imparfait and the passé composé more clear to the student.

“Parce que c’était lui, Parce que c’était moi.” by Michel Sardou<sup>22</sup>

Another popular French singer of the 70’s and 80’s, Michel Sardou describes a friendship: “ Because it was him, because it was me”. This song contains the imparfait in sentence after sentence because the singer is using description, which calls for the use of the imparfait. Students can take the basic structure of the song, and write their own description of a friendship they had growing up. This enables them to practice the imparfait using a structured but engaging writing assignment based on the song.

#### e. Passé composé/ Imparfait

“La Tribu de Dana” by Manau<sup>23</sup>

Manau is a modern group of three young Breton musiciens who combine traditional Celtic music with rap, mixing the modern with the traditional very successfully. Reading this Breton legend, students notice the differences in the use of imparfait and passé

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<sup>21</sup> Georges Brassens, *Poèmes et Chansons*.

<sup>22</sup> Michel Sardou, “Parce que c’était lui, Parce que c’était moi”, *Bercy 2001*, (Tréma, 2001)

<sup>23</sup> Manau, « La Tribu de Dana », *Panique Celtique*, (Polydor, 2000), in *Génération Française 4*.

composé, by finding examples of when each is used in the context of the legend. Students search the text, underlining the imparfait and circling the passé composé. Students analyze the difference between the sentences in the imparfait and those in the passé composé in order to develop a clearer idea of the use of each.

“Il était trois petits enfants”<sup>24</sup>

Studied in early December in honor of Saint Nicolas, this song tells the legend of three children who became lost, and were killed and pickled by a butcher they had sought help from. Students find this a bit shocking, but are relieved to hear that the children are rescued by Saint Nicolas and even the butcher is pardoned. The first line: “Il était trois petits enfants qui s’en allait glaner au champs...” (There were three children who were going to the fields) sets the scene and is a good illustration of the use of imparfait for this purpose. “Ils se sont perdus” (They got lost) switches to the passé composé because it is an event, or something that happened at a specific time.

“Il est trop tard” by Georges Moustaki<sup>25</sup>

Born in Egypt, of Greek parents, Georges Moustaki studied in Paris, where he came in contact with singers, such as Georges Brassens. He was most popular in the 60’s and 70’s. About the passage of time, the song illustrates the use of the imparfait and passé composé in the same sentence. While the singer was doing one thing (in the imparfait), something else happened ( in the passé composé). An example of this is in the line “Pendant que je chantais, ma chère liberté, d’autres l’ont enchainée.” (While I was singing about my dear freedom, others put it in chains). Students can write their own

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<sup>24</sup> “Il était trois petits enfants”, traditional song, *Mon Premier Livre de Chansons*, (Larousse, 1960)

<sup>25</sup> Georges Moustaki, “Il est trop tard”, *Le Météque*, (Polydor, 1997)

sentences using the basic structure : While I was : \_\_\_\_\_, others : \_\_\_\_\_,  
using imparfait and passé composé in the same sentence.

#### f. Futur

“Que sera, sera” by Doris Day<sup>26</sup>

I play a short version of Doris Day singing “Que sera sera” so students will remember the irregular future of ‘to be.’ Having heard this song sung a few times helps the students to remember this irregular verb form.

“Tu verras Tu seras bien ” by Jean Ferrat<sup>27</sup>

Especially popular in the 70’s and 80’s Jean Ferrat is another songwriter, whose songs are much like poetry and who does not shy away from controversial issues. Many of my students can relate to this song because their parents are often going through the same type of situation. It is sung from the perspective of an adult son who is trying to convince his mother that it is time for her to move into a nursing home, while trying to convince himself at the same time. The refrain, “Tu verras, Tu seras bien”, (You’ll See, You’ll Be Fine), is repeated several times along with many other irregular future verbs. This song lends itself well to cloze activities, and subsequent follow-up activities such as role-playing, telephone dialogue writing and letter writing. This is one of the songs students remember easily. When at a later date they need reminders of irregular future endings, I only need to hum it to them, triggering their memory of the irregular endings. This is much more effective than simply telling them the ending they hadn’t remembered.

“La dernière minute” by Carla Bruni<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Doris Day, “Que sera, sera” Written by Jay Livingston and Ray Evans in 1956 remake of “The Man who Knew Too Much” by Alfred Hitchcock.

<sup>27</sup> Jean Ferrat, “ Tu verras, Tu seras bien”

Sung to the rapid ticking of a clock (one tick every half second) this song is about the last minute of a person's life, and how they want just one more minute and what they would do with that last minute. The song includes many irregular verbs in the future tense such as the verbs 'avoir', 'être' and 'voir'. It is also interesting to study because of its form, being exactly one minute in length. Carla Bruni uses the repetition of sounds that end in the letter 't' to allude to the ticking of a clock (for example 'minute', 'doutes', 'routes', 'rajoute', 'toute') The song can lead to a challenging writing assignment where students are asked to think about the last minute of their lives. What would they do given just one more minute, "juste encore une minute"?

"Conscience" by Merzhin<sup>29</sup>

This modern group comprised of six Breton musicians combines modern rock music with traditional Celtic musical influences. Students can relate to this song because they are forming their own identities and can understand the inner conflict of the young singer talking to his conscience and telling it to leave him alone, wanting to be truly free. This song uses irregular future tense verbs such as in the line : "Le temps viendra, où je serai libre, je n'aurai plus besoin de toi" in a very cool package.

#### g. Conditionnel / Si Clauses

"Ma rencontre " by Bertrand Burgulat<sup>30</sup>

Bertrand Burgulat is an incredibly gifted and versatile musicien, composer, arranger, sound engineer, and more. He is a forerunner of the 'retro-future wave' in France. This song is an example of 'si clauses' used in a reflective way. "If I met myself at the end of

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<sup>28</sup> Carla Bruni, "La dernière minute"

<sup>29</sup> Merzhin, "Conscience", *Pleine Lune*, (Stormy Music, 1998) in *Génération Française 4*.

<sup>30</sup> Bertrand Burgulat, "Ma rencontre", *The Sssound of Mmmusic*, (Trica 2000) in *Génération Française 4*.

the road, what would I say? What would I do?” Students use the first sentence as a prompt for a creative writing assignment in which they write prose with the sentence “Si je me rencontrais au bout de la rue, je...” (If I met myself at the end of the road, I would \_\_\_\_\_. It would be \_\_\_\_\_) The students enjoy this writing activity because it affords them with an opportunity to look at themselves from the outside and decide what they would say if they bumped into themselves.

“Et si tu n’existais pas” by Joe Dassin <sup>31</sup>

This beautifully sung love song asks “How would I exist if you didn’t exist?” The song offers the students many examples of how ‘si clauses’ are used with the conditionnel mood. Students can be given the task to underline all verbs in the imparfait and circle all verbs in the conditionnel tense to show how the two tenses relate when forming ‘si clauses’. There are many examples of irregular verbs conjugated in the conditionnel in this song.

#### h. Subjunctif

“Pour que tu m’aimes encore” by Céline Dion<sup>32</sup>

Many of my students recognized the voice of internationally acclaimed Canadian singer, Céline Dion, when listening to this song. I used it as a review of the subjunctive with conjunctions. The students had learned that several conjunctions in French take the subjunctive, including ‘pour que.’ This song brings the grammar point alive. My French IV students were given sentence strips and put the song back together sentence by sentence on the floor. This helped them to listen carefully, and stay focused. This is also a cooperative activity because the students confer with one another and help each other.

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<sup>31</sup> Joe Dassin, “Et si tu n’existais pas”, *Le costume blanc*, (CBS, 1975)

<sup>32</sup> Celine Dion, “Pour que tu m’aimes encore”, *D’eux*, (Mercury, 1995)

Introducing the themes of a song by drawing upon the students' personal experiences, through active discussion will help keep the students involved in an activity. In this song the singer lists all that she would do to regain a lost love. Asking the students if they have ever been in love or had a boyfriend/girlfriend with whom they had broken up, engages the students on an individual level. Students can brainstorm ways to convince a boyfriend/girlfriend to stay with them. The proposals require the active use of the conditional tense.

“Les hommes endormis” by Calogéro<sup>33</sup>

Calogéro is an exciting contemporary singer from France with a beautiful voice. This song is a plaidoyer for pacifism, and includes many examples of the verb ‘venir’ in the subjunctive when used as an imperative. The song’s message is that men do the least harm when they sleep, so let the night come. Students can sing the refrain “Vienne, oh que vienne la nuit ” to help them remember this irregular form.

“Attendez que ma joie revienne ” by Barbara<sup>34</sup>

Barbara (Monique Serf) is another icon of the French chanson, especially popular in the 60’s and 70’s. This song about a woman not quite ready to move on after a lost love is beautifully sung. A variety of forms of the subjunctive including regular, irregular, and the past subjunctive are included in this piece. The conjunction ‘avant que’ is followed by the subjunctive when there are two different subjects in the sentence, but changes to ‘avant de’ and the infinitive when there is only one subject. This abstract concept causes confusion when first taught to students, but seeing it used in the context of a song such as

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<sup>33</sup> Calogero, “Les hommes endormis”, 3, (Universal Research, 2004)

<sup>34</sup> Barbara, “Attendez que ma joie revienne”, *L'aigle noir*, (Mercury, 1963)

“Attendez que ma joie revienne ”, which contains an example of both cases, illustrates the proper use of this conjunction with the subjunctive.

## 2. Reflexive/ Reciprocal Verbs

“Comme d’habitude” by Michel Sardou<sup>35</sup>

Michel Sardou was a very popular French singer in the 70’s, 80’s and 90’s in France. His songs deal with love and relationships but also with controversial subjects such as immigration. Beginning with the lines, “Je me lève, je te bouscule, tu ne te réveilles pas ...” the song contains many examples of reflexive verbs. When beginning to learn to recognize reflexive verbs students benefit from deciding which verbs of the lyrics are reflexive. Is “Je me lève” reflexive ? Is “Je te bouscule?” What are the differences between the sentences? In this way students learn to distinguish between reflexive verbs like ‘se lever’ and verbs that simply have a preceding direct object. This is helpful practice because students often have trouble differentiating between the two.

Students study the lyrics and listen to the somewhat sad song about a relationship gone stale. The song can be a starting point for a variety of written activities. Students can take on the role of one of the partners in the song and write to a newspaper columnist for advice and/or respond with advice to the couple. By writing a telephone dialogue between the two characters and acting it out verbally, students can practice interpersonal conversation in French. Writing a list of what the two people could do to change their situation gives students practice using the conditional tense.

The poem “Déjeuner du matin” by Jacques Prévert<sup>36</sup> can be compared with the song. Both the poem and the song concern couples experiencing difficulties in their

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<sup>35</sup> Michel Sardou, “Comme d’habitude”

married life. One activity involves the exploration of whether the two couples could in fact be the same people.

“Le balcon” from the musical *Romeo and Juliet* (Musical arrangement by Gérard Presgurvic)<sup>37</sup>

“Le balcon” includes many examples of reciprocal verbs such as ‘s’aimer, se haïr, se désirer’ which are conjugated much like reflexive verbs. Students can search for reciprocal verbs within the lyrics, then write them down on the board, and explain which are reciprocal and which are reflexive, and why. When each student is able to explain how they know that a verb is reciprocal as opposed to reflexive the teacher can be sure they understand.

### 3. Adverbs

“Tout le monde ment” by Massilia Sound System<sup>38</sup>

This is a funny song, sung very fast. The song takes advantage of the play on words that can occur in French because the verb ‘mentir’ means ‘to lie’ and is also the suffix ‘ment’ which is the equivalent of ‘-ly’ in English. The third person singular of the verb ‘mentir’ is ‘ment’, so the song “Tout le monde ment” means ‘Everybody lies’. Scores of adverbs are listed in this song, for example “le physiquement”, which can mean both the adverb ‘physically’ and ‘the physique lies’. My French IV students each chose one adverb from the lyrics and were able to explain the double entendre. For “le physiquement” they were able to explain that some people may seem strong on the

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<sup>36</sup> Jacques Prévert, “Déjeuner du matin”, Paroles, 1945.

<sup>37</sup> Gerard Presgurvic, “Le balcon”, Musical, *Romeo and Juliette*, 2000

<sup>38</sup> Massilia Sound System, “Tout le monde ment”, *3968 CR 13*, (Adam Sarl, 1986) in *Génération Française 4*.



outside, but are actually weak. They were able to recognize adverbs after studying this song.

#### 4. Pronouns

“Dis-lui oui ” by Bénabar <sup>39</sup>

Bénabar is another contemporary French singer, many of whose songs are about every-day life, including an amusing song about the contents of a pocket book. The song “Dis-lui oui” is great fun. About a friend trying to get his two good friends back together but with ulterior motives, this song is full of charm and wit. It is well-suited for reinforcing indirect and direct object pronouns, for example with a cloze activity. This can be done before the students hear the song. The teacher prepares a list of sentences taken from the song lyrics in random order, and leaves out the pronoun. The students decide whether to use a direct or indirect pronoun depending on the verb and fill in the blanks. The students then discuss their answers and finally hear the song and correct their answers.

Students deduce how many people they think are involved in the song by reading the title :“Dis-lui oui”.The students realize that the verb is in the imperative and this is in the ‘tu’ form. The person singing is therefore talking to one person directly about another person. (‘lui’ is an indirect object pronoun meaning him or her). The person singing must know the person they are talking to well because the verb “dire” is in the ‘tu’ form. The title contains only three words, but so much can be extrapolated from them.

“La vie en rose ” by Edith Piaf <sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Bénabar, “ Dis-lui oui ”, *Les Risques du Métier*, (Prism, 2003)

<sup>40</sup> Edith Piaf, “La vie en rose”, *Edith Piaf*, ( EMI, 2001)

Not only should every French student know this song because Edith Piaf is such a French cultural icon, it is also a pronoun minefield. A variety of pronouns are used in the lyrics, for example, “Quand il me prend dans ses bras”, the first line of the song, includes the subject pronoun ‘il’, the direct object pronoun ‘me’ and the possessive pronoun ‘ses’. Students can categorize the pronouns in the song in list form and make hypotheses about the placement of the pronouns in the sentence. Students can be given a cloze activity of the song with the pronouns blanked out, but including a word bank. As they listen intently to the song they complete the cloze activity.

“Si seulement je pouvais lui manquer” by Calogéro<sup>41</sup>

This is a song that can be used to illustrate the unusual use of the verb ‘manquer’. In French this verb means to be missing of someone, so the subject pronoun is not the person doing the missing but being missed. For example: “Tu me manques” means “I miss you”. This use of ‘manquer’ is difficult to comprehend but the song helps students to become more familiar with the concept.

The song is about a young man who wishes his father would get in touch with him. Follow-up activities such as a letter from the father, in which he tells why he hasn’t been a part of his son’s life or a dialogue of the first meeting between father and son give students opportunities to practice language functions such as ‘making excuses’ or ‘apologizing’. As with all songs, it is important to know your students before you play a particular song, as some of your students could be going through the loss of a parent, or a similar tragedy that is being dealt with in the song. The song “Si seulement je pouvais lui

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<sup>41</sup> Calogéro, “ Si seulement je pouvais lui manquer”

manquer” is sung by Calogéro with such palpable emotion that it may hit too close to home for students in this particular situation.

### 5. Negative Constructions

“Je ne t’aime plus” by Manu Chao<sup>42</sup>

The musical style of this modern French singer is hard to define, combining salsa, reggae, punk and rock, he has a very original style. The phrase “Je ne t’aime plus, mon amour. Je ne t’aime plus, tous les jours” ( I don’t love you anymore, my love, I don’t love you anymore, every day) is repeated excessively in this song. When students hear this song several times a week they can’t help but ingest the placement of ‘ne’ and ‘pas’ when there is a preceding direct or indirect object. To reinforce this concept the teacher carries out a substitution activity replacing the pronoun ‘te’ with other pronouns. This works best when carried out as a choral response. The teacher says a word in French, such as cheese, ‘le fromage’ and the students repeat back in chorus to the tune of the song, but replacing ‘te’ with ‘le’. “Je ne l’aime plus, mon amour. Je ne l’aime plus tous les jours.”, or the teacher says “Madame ” and the students answer back replacing ‘te’ with ‘vous’. “Je ne vous aime plus, mon amour. Je ne vous aime plus, tous les jours.” This activity is active and fun, and helps students to internalize the placement of ‘ne plus’ in a sentence.

“ Je ne regrette rien ” by Edith Piaf<sup>43</sup>

This song is worth playing just to have students hear Edith Piaf roll the r’s in ‘rien de rien’ and is a reinforcer of the negative words: ‘rien’ and ‘jamais’.

“Le France” by Michel Sardou<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Manu Chao, “Je Ne T’Aime Plus” , *Clandestino* (Virgin, France, 2001) in *Génération Française 4*.

<sup>43</sup> Edith Piaf, “Je Ne Regrette Rien”, Edith Piaf, (Capitol, 1991)

With the powerful refrain :“Ne m’appelez plus jamais France ” (Don’t ever call me France again), this song was written in 1975 when the beautiful ocean liner S.S. France was decommissioned because of high costs and languished in the harbor of Le Havre for four years before being sold, much to the chagrin of the French public. The refrain is an example of the placement of the negative expression ‘ne...plus’ with the imperative. The interesting twist to the song is that in the refrain the perspective is that of the ocean liner. This use of personification could be tapped for a creative writing assignment where the students take on the perspective of an abandoned object, and write as if it had feelings, for example: an abandoned Barbie doll, or even an abandoned baseball glove. The students use the same grammatical structure as in the refrain, the imperative in the negative form, to practice this concept.

## 6. Songs to Review Grammar

“Madeleine ” by Jacques Brel<sup>45</sup>

Madeleine is a wonderful song to review grammar at the beginning of the year for French students who have learned the present, past and future tenses. It is the hopeful story of a man pursuing his love interest by bringing her flowers, something he does every week, then singing about how he brought her flowers, and finally about how he will bring her flowers. The past tense, present tense and future tense are juxtaposed in a song with changes in tempo, as well as changes in tense. In the past tense, for example, it is sung a bit more slowly and sadly, because things didn’t turn out well for the singer, but as the singer begins to sing in the future tense his increase in hope is audible, as the music

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<sup>44</sup> Michel Sardou, “Le France”, *La Vieille*, (Mercury 1975)

<sup>45</sup> Jacques Brel, “ Madeleine”, *Jacques Brel*,( Polygram, 1990)

increases in tempo. The music and the changes in tempo help the students make the transition from tense to tense.

“Je t’aimais, je t’aime et je t’aimerais” by Francis Cabrel<sup>46</sup>

Expressing the love of a father for his little daughter, this song is sung in the imparfait, the present tense and the conditionnel and subjunctive modes as well. This is an ideal song to review several tenses. As a whole-group activity each student can be given one verb and must conjugate the verb in the same way as the song title, and recite the three verbs. The teacher can prepare a recording of the refrain that is played as each of the students speaks simultaneously with the recording. This is an exercise in fluidity and helps students with their pronunciation. A variation of this activity is more challenging. Starting off with the song’s “Je t’aimais, je t’aime and je t’aimerais” each student adds a new verb and conjugates that one and repeats all previous verbs.

Scavenger hunt activities based on song lyrics are a means to assess how many grammatical structures students can recognize. The teacher lists categories that include as many verb tenses as the students have learned. To add interest, prizes can be offered for the most complete lists in a certain amount of time. This is useful to determine if your students can identify the imperative, or distinguish a reflexive verb from a reciprocal verb, for example, and misunderstandings will be identified and clarified. This type of activity can be carried out individually or with a partner, competitively or cooperatively. My students have benefited from doing these activities with a partner and it has been satisfying for me to observe them asking each other: “Did you find an imperative yet?” or “Is this a reflexive verb?”

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<sup>46</sup> Francis Cabrel, “Je t’aimais, Je t’aime et Je t’aimerais”

## B) Music as a Catalyst to Student Writing.

Certain songs are written with a powerful message. The song “Le déserteur”, by Boris Vian<sup>47</sup>, was written at the time of the French/Algerian conflict in 1954. It is about a conscientious objector who has been drafted, and is writing a letter to Monsieur le Président, to inform him that he will not be fighting, and will instead be spreading the message of non-violence. Originally put to music by Harold Berg in 1954 and arranged by Mouloudji, Peter, Paul and Mary<sup>48</sup> called the song “The Pacifist” during the Vietnam War era. It is sad to note that the message of the song still carries so much meaning today. There is often a deep silence in the class when the students are listening to this song. They can relate to it and are moved by it, and because of this, their writing is more engaged and personal. This song lends itself for preparation of an in class debate on ‘peaceful conflict resolution’ vs. ‘war as a necessary evil.’

There are a variety of possible writing tasks possible following the listening of “The Pacifist” by Peter, Paul & Mary.

1. Students can take on the role of ‘Monsieur le Président’, and respond to the letter in proper letter form, supporting their position or changing their minds because of the letter. This allows students to take on a point of view that may not be their own, and build up an argument supporting their point of view with sentences supporting their opinion.
2. Students can be asked to decide which title they feel to be the most appropriate, “Le déserteur” or “The Pacifist” and develop an essay expressing the reasons why they made that choice. Commenting on how important they feel the title of a song is in general, and

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<sup>47</sup> Boris Vian, “Le Déserteur”, 1954.

<sup>48</sup> Peter, Paul & Mary, “The Pacifist”, *Peter, Paul & Mary in Concert*, (Warner Bros. Records, 1964)

finding examples of songs with titles they feel fit well will help to keep the students engaged in the writing activity.

3. Students can be asked to choose between several quotes taken from the song and develop essays that express their thoughts on the subject. For example:

-“Nous sommes tous les frères, gens de tous les pays.” (People of all countries, we are all brothers). Do they believe this statement is true? Is it possible for people to forget their differences and look at what unites rather than divides them? What could help develop fraternity in the world?

-“Les guerres sont des bêtises, le monde en a assez.” (Wars are stupid, the world has had enough of them) Do they believe this to be true? Do they believe that war is sometimes necessary? In what cases do they feel war is justified?

-“Profitez de la vie! Eloignez la misère!” (Take advantage of life, keep misery far from you), How are the students really taking advantage of life? Do you think you would need to be reminded of this sometimes?

4. Students imagine that the pacifist is now a grandfather, and is writing to his grandchildren about his life and accomplishments in letter form. Using the past tense students imagine what the person did, where the person lived, and how they took advantage of life and compose the letter.

Any song that has a strong message or content that can reach the students on an emotional level is a good base to develop writing activities. The song “ La Corrida” by Francis Cabrel<sup>49</sup>, is a song written about bull fights, but from the bull’s perspective.

Emmanuelle Vanborre from Boston College, has developed a web site devoted to this

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<sup>49</sup> Francis Cabrel, 1994.

song. The site includes both objective and subjective questions such as : “How do you think the singer feels about bull fighting?” and contains web links to the singer, the lyrics, maps of Andalousie, and many possible writing activities. These can be downloaded, or given to your students to work from. The web site is [www.2.bc.edu/~rusch/corrida.htm](http://www.2.bc.edu/~rusch/corrida.htm). The topic is one students feel strongly about and can lead to a class debate where both sides must prepare written statements supporting or opposing bull fighting and then present their arguments in the form of a formal debate on the subject.

The song “La Corrida” is written from the perspective of the bull and his gradual comprehension of what is happening to him. This could inspire students to write from the perspective of another animal or object. Students imagine the sounds, smells, and sights they would experience if they were this object or animal, and then write from that perspective.

Another song wiith the same theme but a very different approach is “La Corrida n’aura pas lieu” by Michel Sardou<sup>50</sup>. An interesting writing assignment would be to compare the two approaches to the same theme and discuss or write about which song carries the message better and why.

Songs function as a scaffold for creative writing, giving students the structure and allowing them to express their creative ideas. Brian Thompson, the French professor and music expert from University of Massachusetts, Boston suggests using the song “Où vont les chevaux quand ils dorment?” by Allain Leprest<sup>51</sup>, and music by Romain Didier, to help students learn to play with the language, and write imaginative questions, inspired by such questions in the song as “How old are you when you smile? Where does the cry

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<sup>50</sup> Michel Sardou, “La Corrida n’aura pas lieu”

<sup>51</sup> Allain Leprest, “Où vont les chevaux quand ils dorment?”, *Romain Didier en Concert*, (EMC, 2003)



of the whales end?” and always coming back to “Où vont les chevaux quand ils dorment?” Virtually every form of question is included in the song. Students can be inspired to create inventive and imaginative questions using this song as their model. Students can work in small groups to brainstorm, and proceed to write down their thought-provoking questions in booklet form which they share with the other small groups in the class.

Hearing a song they particularly like can inspire students to want to learn more about a particular artist. A meaningful assignment is to ask students to write a biography of a singer of their choice. These biographies can be presented in class so that the students learn about a wide variety of singers. One student has developed a life-long love of Jacques Brel after hearing “Madeleine” and “Ne me quitte pas” in class and writing a biography on Jacques Brel. This student went to see the musical *Jacques Brel is alive and well and living in Paris* and even sang “Madeleine” while out and about in Paris. Another student was very moved by Edith Piaf’s story. After writing her biography this student created a marionette based on the song “Polichinelle” which she then presented to the class, explaining the song, and relating it to Edith Piaf’s life.

Internet research projects work very well to give students an overview of the wealth of material about French singers that is available on line. The website [www.lehall.com](http://www.lehall.com) promotes contemporary French songs and has a web link called “20 years of chanson populaire ” that gives students a myriad of songs and singers and groups to choose from. They can research a song by genre, as the songs are color-coded by genre. They can read about their favorite singer and write a summary of what they have learned. This internet

research project coincides very well with the *Allez Viens*<sup>52</sup> Level II textbook, Chapter 11, on music, the different genres of music, and music preferences.

Students have enjoyed creating their own CD covers for their favorite song, including illustrations pertaining to the song of their choice, and the name of the singer, and title of the song, genre of music and brief summary of the song. These are writing assignments students participated in with enthusiasm and creativity beyond my expectations.

### C) Using Music to Practice and Increase Vocabulary

The language students hear through using music and songs in the classroom has enriched their vocabulary, and has helped them to remember the vocabulary. Certain songs are especially helpful to practice specific categories of vocabulary, for example, to practice vocabulary related to parts of the body. “J’ai mal partout” by Matt Maxwell<sup>53</sup> lists many parts of the body and coincides well with Chapter 7 in the *Allez Viens*<sup>54</sup>, Level II textbook, dealing with health and well-being. Also the traditional songs “Mon ane, mon ane”, and “Alouette” both work well to practice this vocabulary and most students sing along and enjoy the songs. Learning parts of the body is easier when songs such as the classic “Savez-vous planter les choux” or “Que sais-tu bien faire?”, a traditional song from Quebec, that can be heard on the CD “Danse mon cœur danse”,<sup>55</sup> are played. In the latter song parts of the body are gradually added to the preceding line, making it a challenging way to repeat the vocabulary and aiding the retention of the vocabulary.

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<sup>52</sup> Allez-Viens, Holt, Reinhardt and Winston.

<sup>53</sup> Matt Maxwell, “J’ai mal partout”, *Let’s Sing and Learn in French*, 1983

<sup>54</sup> Allez Viens, Holt Rinehardt and Winston, 2003

<sup>55</sup> France Bourque-Moreau, “Que sais-tu bien faire?”, *Danse, mon cœur danse*, CD, 1999

When teaching about farm animals students sing “Old Macdonald had a Farm” in French. My students made up their own rhymes, and sang it so loudly I was afraid I was disturbing neighboring classes. Some classes are more willing to sing than others, but I would never prejudge the students, because many of them do like to sing, and actually appreciate the opportunity to sing.

One class of mine presented the song: “Ma mère m’envoie au marché”<sup>56</sup>, a traditional song from Quebec, arranged by Matt Maxwell, to a group of second grade students at a nearby elementary school. They brought in stuffed animals to represent each of the animals in the song, and a basket, and acted out the song for the students. One of my students always brought his guitar in to class anyway and was happy to accompany the performance on the guitar. This was a nice group-building experience for the class. My students have also learned the traditional song: “Où vas tu Basile?” to help them learn farm animals, and have acted it out, taking on the different roles in the song.

Songs that add one element each refrain, as in “ Alouette ” are helpful, because the challenge of remembering the next element can add to the fun, and there is built-in repetition of vocabulary. Visuals to support the students’ memories while singing are helpful. Posting pictures of different food items, for example, when studying the song: “ La dame tartine ” a traditional song, or posting pictures of farm animals and other objects on the board when singing: “Biquette”, a song about a goat that would not get out of the cabbage patch, are ways to aid students’ retention of the vocabulary.

When studying the days of the week students can listen to and perhaps sing along to the song: “Lundi, jour de lavage” a traditional song from Quebec. A song to help learn

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<sup>56</sup> Matt Maxwell, *Let's Sing and Learn in French*.

vocabulary for clothes is the traditional song : “Quand Biron voulait danser” where everything Biron needed to dance is brought to him, and each subsequent item is described, for example: “Sa culotte, à la mode”. This makes the song challenging, and also fun to manipulate creatively. The students can write about themselves and what they need when they go out and find a rhyme to describe it. For example: “Quand Christine voulait sortir, elle fit apporter sa jupe oh Zut!, son chapeau, oh non, et sa chemise, grise.” The students can have fun finding rhymes to go with their outfits. “La garde-robe d’Elizabeth” by Amelie-les-Crayons<sup>57</sup> is a contemporary song about a young girl having a wardrobe crisis and is perfect for reviewing clothes-related vocabulary. Contemporary songs contain many slang words and colloquialisms that enrich the students’ vocabulary and help them understand the concept of register, that there are different levels of language for different situations.

#### D) Music to Introduce Culture into the Classroom

The variety of voices, accents, and the combination of musical styles inherent in the different songs played in class remind students of the diversity of the francophone world. Music and songs from francophone Africa, North Africa, Haiti, Canada, Belgium and many other countries invite culture into the classroom and awaken interest.

Rokia Traore<sup>58</sup> in her “Château de sable” uses traditional instruments from Mali and Niger (balaba, karignan, djembe) and sings partially in Bamanam, a Mali language. Students find Mali on a map of Africa and learn about French colonial history and which countries in Africa were former French colonies. Djoloff<sup>59</sup> is a rap group created in 1995

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<sup>57</sup> Amelie-les-Crayons, “La garde-robe d’ Elizabeth”, *Et Pourquoi les crayons?*, (Orlan Productions, 2004)

<sup>58</sup> Rokia Traoré, “Château de sable”, *Wanita*, (Indigo, 2000) in *Génération Française 4*.

<sup>59</sup> Djoloff, “Sénégal”, *Lawané*, (Emma Productins, 1995) in *Génération Française 4*.

by three Senegalese :Aumar Sow, Doudou Seck and Mbégane Ndour. The group combines elements of hip hop with traditional instruments from Senegal. The song “Sénégal”, is very powerful because it is a resumé of colonial history seen from the Senegalese point of view, as well as an appeal not to forget this history. Researching information about former French and Belgian African colonies, and Senegal in particular, and presenting this research in poster form to the class is a way for students to expand their knowledge.

Listening to francophone African music helps to dispel misconceptions students may have about Africa in general. When Amadou et Mariam sing “Pauvre type”<sup>60</sup> (Poor fellow) about a young man knocking on doors to get his outfit for the weekend together students can see that even though some people need to borrow to get the things they need, they are also helping each other, and looking out for one another. The mood of the song is very happy which conflicts with the title of the song. “Amiyo” by the Congolese group Bisso Na Bisso<sup>61</sup> is a beautiful song expressing nostalgia for the past but hope for the future. From the album *Racines*, (Roots) Bisso Na Bisso combines hip hop beats with traditional African music such as Soukousse and Rumba.

There are many songs to introduce or complement a unit on the Maghreb, and the history of French colonialisation in Tunisia, Morocco and especially Algeria, and the implications and problems of immigration in modern France today. Zebda<sup>62</sup> is a group comprised of seven friends with diverse ethnic backgrounds. The group has been very active in trying to distill some of the anti-immigrant sentiment growing in France because

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<sup>60</sup> Amadou et Mariam, “Pauvre type”, *Sou ni Tilé*, (Universal Music France, 2001) in *Génération Française* 4.

<sup>61</sup> Bisso Na Bisso, “Amiyo”, *Racines*, (V2 Music France, 2001) in *Génération Française* 4.

<sup>62</sup> Zebda, “Motive”, *Essence Ordinaire*, (Barclay,1999) in *Génération Française* 4.

of high unemployment and low wages, and general discontentment. Their well-known song “Motivé ”expresses their solidarity with resistance fighters from the Second World War, and their encouragement to stay motivated to continue to resist discrimination. Their song “Oualalaradime” is an excellent song about the difficult youth of a young North African living in France. “Oualalaradime” is an expression meaning something like “this isn’t true”, and is about getting by. The song is powerful and the musical influences are both modern and traditional.

The song ‘Ben Ali’” by Seba<sup>63</sup> about a grocery store owner and his simple but honorable life gives an idea of how some North Africans live in France. Patrick Bruel’s beautiful song “Au café des délices”<sup>64</sup> is about nostalgia for the beautiful country left behind. Listening to the first few minutes of the instrumental introduction of the song, the teacher encourages the students to explore what feelings the music evokes, whether they have heard this kind of music before, what countries they associate with this kind of music, and of what the music reminds them. They can proceed to hear the song in its entirety or read the lyrics first and then hear the song. Part of the song is sung in Arabic and the music contains many North African musical influences and blends the French with the North African influences making a beautiful combination. The ending is almost a chant bringing the aura of North African culture into the classroom.

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<sup>63</sup> Seba, “Ben Ali”, *Alimentation Générale*, (Kwark Publishing, 2001) in *Génération Française 4*.

<sup>64</sup> Patrick Bruel, “Au café des délices”, *Juste avant*, (14 Productions BMG France, 2000) in *Génération Française 4*.

The song “Tellement N’Brick” by Faudel<sup>65</sup> is also sung half in Arabic, half in French, with many North African instrumental influences, but is combined with modern rock. The effect is exciting, and another example of the positive effect of blending the two cultures musically.

Different regions in France can be explored by introducing traditional songs to the students. There are many contemporary artists who have rediscovered their traditional roots and combined them with more modern musical elements. Manau is such a group, and their song “ La tribu de Dana”<sup>66</sup> is a modern version of a traditional song from Bretagne, combining rap with traditional music. Students listen to the original traditional version of the song, than listen to this more modern version, and recognize the Celtic influences in the music by indentifying instruments and music that to them sound Irish. This can lead to a study of Bretagne, and the breton language and history. The song “ La découverte ou l’ignorance ” by Tri Yann<sup>67</sup> introduces students to some of the questions many Breton face as their language and culture are at risk of disappearing altogether. Are they French or Breton foremost? What does it mean to be Breton in modern France today? Traditional songs from Bretagne can also be sung in class. “Dans la prison de Nantes”<sup>68</sup> can be sung in canon form with the class divided into two sections each competing to keep up with the fast paced music.

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<sup>65</sup> Faudel, “Tellement N’Brick”, *Baïda*, (Mercury, 2001) in *Génération Française* 4.

<sup>66</sup> Manau, “La Tribu de Dana”

<sup>67</sup> Tri Yann, *L’Ame de la Bretagne*.

<sup>68</sup> Tri Yann, *L’Ame de la Bretagne*.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

Cape Cod is a man-made island and for some of my students crossing the bridge is a rare occasion, so the metaphor of a bridge is very important in my classroom. I have posters of Monet's famous bridge at Giverny hanging on the wall and one of the first phrases my students learn in French is "Traversez le pont." (cross the bridge). Using music and song have become bridges in my classroom connecting my students to a diversity of musical styles, artists and the whole francophone world. Voices, like friends, from all over the francophone world have been every day guests in the classroom.

My students have listened to almost every genre of music from MC Solaar, and his rap, to Serge Gainsbourg's jazz, and even classical music. Students have heard how different traditional musical influences can be combined with more modern music to create something new and beautiful, as in "La Tribu de Dana" by Manau, or in "Au café des délices" by Patrick Bruel. These songs show that at least musically it is possible to successfully integrate two very diverse cultures.

My students have listened to French singers long gone but revered in their day (and still today) such as Charles Trenet along with contemporary singers still high on the charts in France today. (such as Bénabar). They are familiar with the names of scores of French and Francophone singers and know how to easily access information on them.



Even among the students in the classroom the use of music and song has helped to form connections. Listening to the same music has helped to create a common bond amongst the students. Songs such as “Dur, dur, d’être bébé ” by Jordy, which the students all love, “S’il pouvait me manquer” by Calogéro, which touches the students emotionally, or “Dis-lui oui” by Bénabar which is funny ; all have helped to create shared moments of joy or sadness or laughter among the students and a positive classroom atmosphere. Since I am enjoying the same music with the students there is more of an opportunity to bond through the shared experience, and so the teacher/student connection is also better.

Most importantly to me are the connections the students are making outside of the classroom on their own time. Several students have downloaded their own French music that they listen to or have gone to concerts because of the discoveries they’ve made in French class. Students who participated in our high school’s French exchange program were already familiar with some of the music their French exchange students listen to, making that connection easier. The songs have helped to bridge friendships.

Another positive aspect of using music and song in the classroom is that I am constantly making new discoveries of songs and artists, and methods to use song in the classroom. I recently attended a conference at the French Library of Boston, where I became inspired to explore using music clips in the classroom. These short visual renditions of songs can be analyzed, students can read the lyrics as they listen to them, and critique how well they feel the music video captures the essence of the song. Teaching remains interesting and fun for me because of the music and song. I couldn’t imagine teaching without it.

## RESOURCES

Many of the resources quoted below are from the informative pedagogical booklet : Génération Française 4, made available by CAVILAM, and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

### BUREAU EXPORT DE LA MUSIQUE FRANÇAISE

Created in 1993, the goal of the Office of Export is to facilitate the efforts of professional musicians wanting to perform abroad, and to create works of general interest using such tools as Le site Internet French-music.org, the Music News from France, and the pedagogical compilations of Génération Française.

Address: 33, 4ue de Surene, 75008, Paris, France

Tel.: 33 (0)1 43 12 95 70 and Fax: 33 (0)1 43 12 95 79

Contacts: Patrice Hourbette et Gaelle Heurtevis

E-mail: Patrice.h@french-music.org or gaelle.h@french-music.org

Internet address: <http://www.french-music.org>.

### CAVILAM (Centre audiovisuel de langues modernes)

Cavilam is a center of study for French as a foreign language. The center has been developing specific activities to use with songs in the classroom for many years.

Cavilam offers articles and worksheets available to download from its website, and also offers professional development for teachers. Cavilam offers education and expertise throughout the whole world.

Address 2, avenue des Celestins, 03206 Vichy, France

Tel.: 33(0)4 70 30 83 83

Fax: 33 (0)4 70 30 83 84

Contact: Michel Boiron-E-mail:mboiron@cailam.com

Site Internet: <http://www.cavilam.com> et <http://www.leplaisirdapprendre.com>

#### DIRECTION DE LA COÖPERATION CULTURELLE ET DU FRANÇAIS

Produces and distributes video cassettes of music video clips and pedagogical booklets to go along with them to teachers and to resource centers. The booklets are edited by Cavilam and are called "Des clips pour apprendre".

Adresse: Ministère des Affaires étrangères-244, boulevard St.-Fermain-75007 Paris

Tel: 33(0)1 45 87 43 26 Fax: 33 (0)1 46 26 43 18

Contact: Jean-Claude Demari-Email: [jcdemari@vuef.fr](mailto:jcdemari@vuef.fr)

Site Internet :<http://www.fdlm.org>

#### LE FRANÇAIS DANS LE MONDE (LA REVUE DES PROFESSEURS DE FRANÇAIS)

In every edition are one or several articles on recent songs and special worksheets to go along with them.

Adresse: 27, rue de la Glaciere-75013 Paris-France

Tel. 33 (0)1 45 87 43 26 Fax 33 (0)1 46 26 43 18

Contact: Jean-Claude Demari-E-mail: [jcdemari@vuef.fr](mailto:jcdemari@vuef.fr)

Site Internet: <http://www.fdlm.org>

### RFI MUSIQUE (RADIO FRANCE INTERNATIONALE)

This is a true gold mine of biographies, discographies, musical extracts and also excellent exercises to learn the French language on line. It is available by satellite and on the internet 24 hours a day.

Adresse: 116 Avenue du President Kennedy-BP 9515 Paris cedex 16 France

E-mail: [courier.auditeur@rfi.fr](mailto:courier.auditeur@rfi.fr)

Site internet: <http://www.rfimusique.com>

### TV 5

This French television program especially for abroad offers several programs on music and especially; “paroles de clips” (three music video clips sub-titled in French and including texts and worksheets for the teacher written and edited by Cavilam available on the internet).

Adresse: 19 rue Cognacq-Jay-75007 Paris France

Tel 33 (0)1 44 18 55 90- Fax 33 (0)1 44 18 48 35

E-mail: [enseignant@europe.tv5.org](mailto:enseignant@europe.tv5.org)

Site Internet: <http://www.tv5.org>

FIPF (Fédération internationale des professeurs de français)

Created in 1960, the federation unites more than 90,000 french teachers, divided among 180 associations.. The federation participates in the publication of the magazine: “Le Français dans le Monde” and organizes colloquiums and congresses on a regular basis.

Tel 33 (0) 1 46 26 53 16 Fax: 33(0)1 46 26 81 69.

Email: [fipf@artinternet.fr](mailto:fipf@artinternet.fr)

Sites Internet : <http://www.fipf.com> and <http://www.franc-parler.org>

Other Web sites of interest:

The press and media

Chorus: les cahiers de la chanson. Three times a year. <http://www.chorus.com>

Les inrockuptibles: <http://www.lesinrocks.com>

Libération: <http://www.liberation.fr>

Le monde: <http://www.lemonde.fr>

Musiqueinfo: <http://www.lmusiqueinfo.com>, site of the four magazines: Musique Info

Hebdo, Rock & Folk, L’Affiche et Musiciens

Télérama: <http://www.telerama.fr>

M6 Musique : <http://mcm.net>

TV5: <http://www.tv5.org>

Zicline : <http://www.zicline.com>, webzine sur la musique

## Appendix

This Appendix contains a list of songs, in alphabetical order by singer, that will help to energize a class, a list of songs that will help to calm an already energized class, and one that lists songs that can be used for the different holidays in the year. Many of these songs are available on the Generation Française 4 CD made available through the French Bureau of Export.

### 1. Songs to energize a class :

Alizée, “Moi, Lolita” from Putumayo World Music. 2003.

Aznavour, Charles : “Me que, Me que”

Baguette Quartette : “En Douce” from Putumayo World Music. 2003.

Bénabar : “Dis-Lui Oui” from Génération Française 4

Calogéro : “Le plus beau Jour de ma Vie”, “Face à la Mer”, “Un jour parfait”

Dassin, Joe : “ça va pas changer le monde”

Dionysos : “Coccinelle” from Génération Française 4

Gainsbourg, Serge : “Du Jazz dans le Ravin”, “Chez les yéyé”, “Quand tu t’y mets”

Louise Attaque : “Comme on dit” from Génération Française 4

M : “Je dis Aime” from Génération Française 4

Matmatah : “Lambé an Dro” from Génération Française 4

Polo : “La Fée Clochette” from Putumayo World Music. 2003.

Sanseverino : “Mal ô Mains” from Putumayo World Music. 2003.

Sergent Garcia : “Médecine Man” from Génération Française 4

Tété : “Air de Rien” from Génération Française 4

Tyro : “Trouver des Amis” from Génération Française 4

Zebda : “Y a pas d’arrangement”, “Oualarlaladime” and “Tomber la Chemise” from Génération Française 4

## 2. Songs to calm a class:

Barbara : “Si la Photo est Bonne” from Putumayo World Music. 2003.

Bardot, Brigitte : “Un Jour Comme un Autre” from Putumayo World Music. 2003.

Bruel, Patrick : “Au Cafe des Délices” from Génération Française 4

Burgalat, Bernard : “Ma rencontre” from Génération Française 4

Clément, Coralie : “La Mer Opale” from Putumayo World Music. 2003.

Enzo Enzo : “Juste Quelqu’un de Bien” from Putumayo World Music. 2003.

FFF : “Mauvais Fils” from Génération Française 4

Farah, Samia : “Les Temps Difficiles” from Génération Française 4

Gainsbourg, Serge : “Marilou Sous la Neige” from Putumayo World Music. 2003.

Paris Combo : “Fibre de Verre” from Putumayo World Music. 2003.

## 3. Songs for the Holidays

Halloween : Matt Maxwells’ “C’est l’Halloween”

For Saint Nicolas, on December 6<sup>th</sup> : “Il était Trois Petits Enfants.”

Christmas : “Il est Né le Divin Enfant”, “Mon Beau Sapin”, “Vive le Vent”, “Petit Papa Noël”

Birthday : “Bonne Fête à toi”

New Years : “Bonne Année” by Sally Nyolo from Génération Française 4

Musicals :

Romeo and Juliette especially the songs : “Les Rois du Monde” and “Le Balcon”

La Belle et La Bête

The film *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* featuring Catherine Deneuve and Nino

Castelnuevo



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