

Chicken Pox

Classroom at a Glance

Teacher:	Jai Scott
Language:	French
Grade:	Kindergarten
School:	Ecole Kenwood Alternative Elementary School, Columbus, Ohio
Lesson Date:	November 11
Class Size:	27
Schedule:	About 6 hours daily (immersion)

Video Summary

In this lesson, students demonstrate their knowledge of body parts. They begin by talking about the chicken pox and reading Marc Brown's story, *Arthur a la varicelle* (Arthur has the chicken pox). Then they sing a song about the chicken pox that names different parts of the body. Finally, students do a cut-and-paste activity, labeling a drawing of a person with words for body parts that they had practiced in the song.

Standards Addressed

- Communication: Interpretive, Presentational
- Cultures: Products
- Connections: Making Connections

Read about these standards at the end of this lesson.

Key Terms

- immersion program
- informal assessment
- kindergarten benchmarks

Definitions for these terms can be found in the Glossary located in the Appendix.

Class Context

“A lot of the teaching at this age level starts and ends with songs. That is a way for children to access the language, and one way we teach them to read. Most of the songs we sing in class have text to go with them. By the end of last year, the children had learned the curriculum using over 70 songs.” —Jai Scott

School Profile

Jai Scott teaches kindergarten at Ecole Kenwood, a K–8 French immersion school in Columbus, Ohio. At the Kenwood School, instruction is in French, so that the school’s 400 students learn to read, write, and speak French as they learn the standard curriculum mandated by the Columbus Public Schools. When students leave Kenwood, they receive two Carnegie Units (high school credits) in French. Students also study Spanish in grades 6–8, for which they receive one Carnegie Unit. The following table shows what percentage of each day students spend learning in French and in English at each grade level:

Grade	Percentage of Day in French	Percentage of Day in English
K-1	100%	—
2	80%	20%
3	70%	30%
4	60%	40%
5-8	50%	50%

Year at a Glance

Songs; Body Parts; Colors; Numbers

Apples
 Parts of the Classroom
 Letter of the Week (ongoing)
 The Farm
 Science Unit (buoyancy)
 Halloween
 National French Week
 Thanksgiving
 Winter Holidays
 Winter (clothing, weather, sports)
 Journal Writing (start writing)
 Black History Month
 100th Day of School
 Valentine’s Day
 Spring; Flowers
 Prepare for School
 Performance
 Food (fruits and vegetables)
 Change of Seasons
 Shapes
 The Community and
 Transportation
 The Zoo

Class Context, cont'd.

Lesson Design

When designing his lessons, Mr. Scott refers to the Columbus Public Schools Benchmarks, which are aligned with the Ohio Academic Content Standards (see Resources). The focus of each lesson is the academic content, with French as the means of instruction. Mr. Scott's students study the same sequence of units studied by all kindergartners in Columbus. However, because his students must understand the content in a new language, Mr. Scott, who is certified to teach elementary school, relies more heavily on visuals, hand gestures, repetition, songs, and movement to make meaning clear than he might in an elementary classroom taught in English. These strategies also meet the different learning styles of his young students and retain their attention during a full-day class.

The Lesson

In this lesson, students studied vocabulary for the different parts of the body while reading a story and singing a song about the chicken pox. Some students knew about the chicken pox from personal experience, and students had learned some of the body parts vocabulary in a previous lesson. Some also knew initial letter sounds in English, which helped them recognize the corresponding vocabulary words in French. The class next moved on to a lesson about the common cold.

Key Teaching Strategies

- **Developing Literacy:** In a primarily oral class, the teacher begins to show the sound/symbol correspondence in written alphabetic languages. (In character languages such as Chinese, students develop connections between oral vocabulary and the character with the same meaning.)
- **Establishing Routines:** The teacher establishes clear, expected routines to maximize productive class time, increase student responsibility, and minimize distractions or opportunities for misbehavior. Examples range from consistent procedures to begin the class (from discussing the day, date, and weather for today, yesterday, and tomorrow to having students pair up to craft one comment about a prompt or a visual) to cooperative learning activities

for language practice to routines for providing peer feedback.

- **Storytelling:** The teacher communicates the meaning of a story by paraphrasing the text in the target language and showing its illustrations, while frequently checking for learner comprehension and reaction.

Analyze the Video

As you reflect on these questions, write down your responses or discuss them as a group.

Before You Watch

Respond to the following questions:

- What kinds of activities are appropriate for teaching a foreign language to pre-readers?
- What principles guide instruction in immersion/partial immersion programs?
- What teaching techniques are essential in the early grades?
- What student characteristics must be taken into account in the early grades?

Watch the Video

As you watch “Chicken Pox,” take notes on Mr. Scott’s instructional strategies, particularly how he introduces new vocabulary and assesses student comprehension. Write down what you find interesting, surprising, or especially important about the teaching and learning in this lesson.

Reflect on the Video

Review your notes, and then respond to the following questions:

- Which approaches does Mr. Scott use to facilitate both learning a new language and learning kindergarten skills?
- How does Mr. Scott assess student comprehension during the different activities: storytelling, singing a song, and labeling the parts of the body?
- How would you describe the balance between teacher talk and student talk in the classroom?

Analyze the Video, cont'd.

Look Closer

Take a second look at Mr. Scott's class to focus on specific teaching strategies. Use the video images below to locate where to begin viewing.



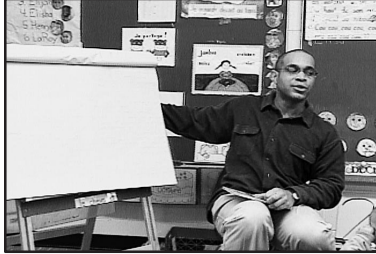
Video Segment: Storytelling

You'll find this segment approximately 5 minutes and 30 seconds after the video starts. Watch for about 1 minute and 30 seconds.

Mr. Scott uses the children's book *Arthur a la varicelle* to talk about a common childhood illness with his students.

- What language strategies does Mr. Scott use to convey the story?
- When do students use French, and when do they use English? How do they decide which language to use?

Analyze the Video, cont'd.



Video Segment: Learning the Parts of the Body

You'll find this segment approximately 13 minutes and 30 seconds after the video starts. Watch for about 4 minutes.

Mr. Scott reviews the parts of the body by drawing a picture of a person based on input from students.

- As Mr. Scott draws a picture of a person, what kinds of information do students contribute? How do they respond?
- How does Mr. Scott develop word recognition skills during the activity? Where else in the lesson does he use recognition of written text?
- What content are students learning as they develop their language skills?
- How does Mr. Scott develop students' social skills, so that they learn to work together in the classroom?

Connect to Your Teaching

Reflect on Your Practice

As you reflect on these questions, write down your responses or discuss them as a group.

- How might you teach a new language to young students with limited literacy in their first language? How is this different from and similar to working with students who are already literate in one language?
- How might you use children’s or young adult literature with your students?
- What immersion teaching strategies can be used in other elementary, middle, and high school models?
- In classroom interactions, how do you balance the use of the target language and the use of English for students who have a limited vocabulary but are eager to communicate?

Watch Other Videos

Watch other videos in the *Teaching Foreign Languages K–12* library for more examples of teaching methodologies like those you’ve just seen. Note: All videos in this series are subtitled in English.

- “Communicating About Sports” (Chinese) illustrates oral and written (character) language recognition of new vocabulary.
- “Holidays and Seasons” (German) shows the integration of songs into a lesson.
- “People Who Help Us” (Arabic) demonstrates how visuals can be incorporated into a lesson to serve different pedagogical purposes.

Connect to Your Teaching, cont'd.

Put It Into Practice

Try these ideas in your classroom.

- Introduce children’s literature to help students understand, reproduce, and recall language in context. A story’s narrative—beginning, conflict/problem, developments toward a resolution, and conclusion—can help advance the meaning of new vocabulary. Children’s books usually have illustrations that help readers make sense of unfamiliar words. Mr. Scott’s selection, *Arthur a la varicelle*, appeals to children because they can relate to the character and to the childhood illness. Mr. Scott did frequent comprehension checks and allowed students to “take over” some of the story with their predictions and solutions. You could also use children’s stories with some middle and high school students; success depends upon the dynamics of the group and their interest in the story itself. Students with greater language proficiency can also use the illustrations to lead the story reading with classmates. You can devote time on an ongoing basis to reading sections of longer stories. Many popular children’s books are available in numerous languages.
- Incorporate songs into lessons to reinforce and introduce authentic language, choosing songs that are appropriate for the grade level and the topics you teach. “La varicelle” (“The chicken pox”) mentions many parts of the body and repeats phrases with unusual words—such as *itchy*, *scratch*, and *jiggle*—that quickly become familiar. These words are fun to say in French, are quickly internalized, and, when spoken using facial and hand gestures, provide an opportunity for kinesthetic and rhythmic learning. Mr. Scott taught the song by first playing it and acting out the meaning himself, and then inviting students to imitate (or reproduce) his gestures and sing along. He also showed the text to students, an activity that could be done sooner with older students. Songs can be used with all age groups, although some classes may be resistant to singing at first. In those cases you may wish to concentrate on the lyrics and not require students to sing at all. Students can act out the lyrics with gestures or movement instead.

Resources

Lesson Materials

Brown, Marc. *Arthur a la varicelle*. Translated by Natalie Zimmermann. Paris: Les éditions Épigones, 1994.

"La varicelle," L'album de Marie-Soleil. Performed by Suzanne Pinel. 50 min. Produced by Les éditions Clown Samuel, Inc., 1993. Videocassette. www.clownsamuel.com

Curriculum References

Columbus City Schools: World Languages Curriculum at a Glance
<http://www.ccsch.us/GeneralInformation.aspx>

Ohio's Learning Standards for World Languages
<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/Foreign-Language>

Jai Scott's Recommendations

Web Resources:

French Immersion Schools
<http://www.frenchculture.org/education/studies/immersion.html>
Information about French immersion schools in the U.S., including details about each school organized by state

ProTeacher
<http://www.proteacher.com>
A collection of resources for elementary school teachers, including lesson ideas, classroom management tips, and discussion board

Standards

World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages

The *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages* create a roadmap to guide learners to develop competence to communicate effectively and interact with cultural understanding. This lesson correlates to the following Standards:

Communication

Communicate effectively in more than one language in order to function in a variety of situations and for multiple purposes

Standard: Interpretive Communication

Learners understand, interpret, and analyze what is heard, read, or viewed on a variety of topics.

Standard: Presentational Communication

Learners present information, concepts, and ideas to inform, explain, persuade, and narrate on a variety of topics using appropriate media and adapting to various audiences of listeners, readers, or viewers.

Connections

Connect with other disciplines and acquire information and diverse perspectives in order to use the language to function in academic and career-related situations

Standard: Making Connections

Learners build, reinforce, and expand their knowledge of other disciplines while using the language to develop critical thinking and to solve problems creatively.

Cultures

Interact with cultural competence and understanding

Standard: Relating Cultural Products to Perspectives

Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the relationship between the products and perspectives of the cultures studied.