

LICT Chapter 2 La Vache et le singe

The importance of personalized question-answer (pqa)

Teach vocabulary words by relating the vocabulary to your students in unusual, interesting ways. I typically taught the gesture for a word and then used it in a conversation with a student. We call this “personalized question-answer” because we are personalizing the vocabulary. If the word is a noun, the easiest way to pqa a noun is to ask, “Tu as (un singe)?” However, it is not enough to simply ask that one question. True personalization occurs when you show that you actually care about what the student told you. It is important to find out about the singe (size, color, name, age, food preferences, what he likes to do, clothing, etc.) In this way, the monkey becomes a character in the class. One year, a student of mine had a big monkey who slept in his bed with his shoes on! The boy’s mother didn’t like the monkey sleeping with his shoes on, but that’s the way it was. Oh, well!

While doing a pqa with one student, I behaved as though every fact I found out was utterly fascinating. I just had to repeat the fascinating information to the entire class:

“Class, Darren has a little monkey!” (Class says, “Ohh!”)

“Darren, what is your little monkey’s name?”

“Class, is Darren’s monkey big? What is his name? Does he speak French?”

“Darren, they say that he speaks French, is that right?”

and so forth.

Reminders for doing the pms:

When students act out the pms, be sure to encourage elaboration and exaggeration. For example, add details such as numbers to the stories, but use numbers that are ridiculous. Use exuberant students as actors in order to highlight their sparkle and to keep class attention high.

Slow down while telling the pms! Your aim is NOT to get through the pms; your aim is to say the words 70 times! Remember to ask plenty of questions and fill-in sentences before expecting students to retell the stories.

Vary your questioning technique so that students can never predict what you will ask next: either/or, who, how, why, all sorts of questions! Put up a list of question words in the classroom to remind you of all the types of questions you might ask! Ask questions that do not yet have an answer so that students can invent part of the story. React with enthusiasm to their creative answers. This will show them how much you value their participation.

Homework suggestions

Model written language by having the students copy the pms as you write it on the board or overhead. Then have them illustrate the pms at the bottom of the page. After doing this a couple of times, you can draw the pms and have them write the pms for homework.

They can always draw an original story for homework. There are many ways to capitalize on these original stories.

Grammar/Point of view

Adjective agreement and adjective placement are obvious structural elements in this chapter. Ask if the monkey is big or little, rich or poor, fat or skinny, intelligent, mean, beautiful, etc. Ask the exact same things about the cow. Continue doing this all year long. Agreement is not easy; it takes years of input to get it right. It is crucial that you provide agreement input constantly!

After the students have retold the pms of the day, change one character to two characters and show how this changes the language. My students enjoyed the idea of one character being slashed in half to become two or one character becoming two-headed twins. (Junior high, gotta love 'em!) Make sure that you are using irregular and regular verbs, possessive adjectives, object pronouns, objects of prepositions, etc. Carefully explain every alteration in the language by writing it down and saying it clearly. Then ask a lot of questions using the new structure so that it sounds comfortable.

Notice that the first person singular is introduced in this chapter. Familiarity with first person forms is necessary before you can expect students to retell from the point of view of a character. They have been hearing you converse with them all year long about yourself and asking about themselves. This abundance of first and second-person input will be the foundation for learning those forms later in the year.

Look, I Can Talk

Chapter 2

Vocabulary

1. une vache riche
2. gros (grosse)
3. les chaussures
4. un singe pauvre

5. dans la rue
6. il/elle l'emmène
7. la maison
8. le jour

9. il/elle se reveille
10. bon (bonne)
11. mouillé (mouillée)
12. le lit

13. mauvais (mauvaise)
14. Il pleut
15. sec (sèche)
16. l'arbre

17. je n'ai rien (j'ai)
18. pour toi
19. pour moi
20. je suis

21. nouveau (nouvelle)
22. mince
23. il/elle achète

24. le verre d'eau
25. il/elle dort (ils/elles dorment)
26. il/elle ronfle

Chapter 2

Day 1

une vache riche
gros (grosse)
les chaussures
un singe pauvre

Il y a **un singe pauvre** et **une grosse vache riche**. Le singe n'a pas de **chaussures**. Il va vers la vache riche. Il lui dit, «Donne-moi deux chaussures.» La vache riche ne lui donne pas de chaussures. Le singe demande, 'On danse?' La grosse vache riche est très contente. La vache va au Moulin rouge avec le singe. Elle danse le can-can avec lui. Elle lance deux chaussures en l'air! Le singe attrape les chaussures et crie, "Au revoir!"

Teaching suggestions:

Be sure to ask if the singe is gros. You want to model adjective agreement and placement at every opportunity. Be sure to ask "pourquoi" questions. Why is the monkey poor, why is the cow rich, why do they have and not have shoes. Name the animals, give them other characteristics that represent your students. (Maybe the cow plays football and the monkey run in cross-country. Maybe the monkey likes hip-hop music and the cow likes country western.) The more things you find out about these two characters, the more times you get to repeat your vocabulary words!

Get descriptions of the cow's shoes. "Combien de chaussures a-t-elle?" If each shoe is different, that is even funnier. If one is a sandal and one is white and one is red, it just gives you more reps and it gives you a chance to model agreement and placement of adjectives. "Combien des chaussures sont grosses? Blanches?" Repeat the answer to each question so that they hear complete sentences. Students do not speak in complete sentences when answering, but they absolutely MUST hear complete sentences!

Remember to use the words from TPR and from chapter 1! Ask if the cow is sad, happy, cries, hits the monkey, kisses the monkey. Ask where the monkey is, if he is happy NOW, if he knows how to get shoes from a cow, etc.

Be sure a sparkler plays the role of the cow. Kicking a shoe high into the air is such fun for this sort of kid! Playing a fat cow who dances the can-can is a memorable moment! Have a student take photographs for you to hang on the bulletin board. Any props or costumes you have will make it better!

If you want to take time to tell about the Moulin rouge, about Toulouse-Lautrec, this is a good time to do it. You may have a kid who wants to name the classroom "Le Moulin Bleu" with a sign outside the door. A student may want to draw a cow dancing the can-can, in the artistic style of Toulouse-Lautrec! None of this is required in order to speak French, but inviting the kids into a world where an artist's imagination is valued will pay off!

Day 2

dans la rue
il/elle l'emmène
la maison
le jour

Un **jour**, vendredi, un garçon voit (Christina Aguilera) **dans la rue** _____. Elle n'a pas de **maison**, alors elle marche dans la rue _____. Le garçon **l'emmène** à (Hobby Lobby.)

Teaching suggestions:

It is easier to teach "jour" by simply asking, "Quel jour sommes-nous?" at the beginning of every day. In that way, you do not need to worry about getting 70 repetitions of the word today!

A boring pms such as this one becomes fun when the students take the initiative. In one class, Christina was walking on 8th street (near our school.) Vieux Chien (a 12-year-old) was riding his big Harley Davidson when he screeched to a halt upon spotting Christina! He was so happy.

I asked, "Pourquoi est-ce que Vieux Chien s'arrête?" and somebody said, "Il regarde la poitrine de Christina Aguilera!" I was thrilled at the French, but uncomfortable with the content. So I told the class that there is another Vieux Chien in Spanish class who looks at her "poitrine," but Vieux Chien in French class is not that kind of boy. He was looking in his French book when he noticed "les chaussures de Christina." Use this technique (accepting the answer but deflecting any negative connotations away from our class) when something comes up that might be uncomfortable. Just attribute negative characteristics to the rival school, a different city, a different state, or to a celebrity. The Grinch is always available and his feelings never get hurt!

Finally, allow the students to tell you where the student takes Christina. In my class they took her to Hobby Lobby because there are "maisons en plastique" in Hobby Lobby. Furthermore, Hobby Lobby is on 8th street and they thought that made sense. Christina no longer walks 8th street because she has a plastic house. So take the most outlandish suggestion and accept it. Then ask "why" to get the reason for the final location.

Day 3

il/elle se réveille
bon
mouillé (mouillée)
le lit

Luc est un **bon** garçon. (C'est évident; c'est un garçon dans notre classe de français.) Il est dans son **lit** avec un singe. Le singe fait pipi. Luc **se réveille**. Luc crie, «Idiot! Le lit est **mouillé!**»

Teaching suggestions:

Know your kids. My sparklers acted this out with a little bit of water spilled on the floor. It appeared when they "woke up."

If this is not appropriate for your class, just have the monkey jump on the bed with a coca-cola in his hand. The bed will still get wet. The important thing is to get the repetitions of the words. You can put a wet t-shirt on the bed, or any other pms that uses these words.

Doing the third person plural will show how nouns and adjectives become plural, that "il est" becomes "ils sont" and "son lit" becomes "leur lit."

Day 4

mauvais
Il pleut
sec (sèche)
l'arbre

Luc est bon. Son frère est **mauvais**. Luc prend son lit et met le lit sur un **arbre**. Le lit est **sec**. Luc dort dans le lit pendant huit jours. **Il pleut**. Le lit est mouillé. Luc se réveille.

Teaching suggestions:

Luc makes a halo above his head. The brother makes little horns on his own head. Have your students tell you the bad things that little brothers do. They know how to say things like "jump on the bed with shoes" for example. Then have the little brother act out those bad things. The two boys are in their own house. Finally Luc can't stand his brother's bad behavior so he goes to live in the tree. Take your time asking questions and getting a good workout for all of the vocabulary the students have had this year.

Ask, rather than tell, this pms. Ask what Luc does, where does he go, what does he take, etc. Let the kids suggest ideas. If theirs are not funnier than the pms as written, just shake your head slowly and tell them with wide, innocent eyes that he takes his bed to a tree. But only do that as part of a give-and take with your students. Resist the temptation to simply state the next sentence in my pms. It is so much better to ask a story!

A student plays the role of a tree in the back yard of Luc's house.

I know they haven't had "dort" but the pms worked just fine. Since they had seen it on the vocabulary list and my actor did what I said, the students comprehended just fine.

Cultural tidbit: "huit jours" is a typical French expression for "a week."

Grammar idea: When you teach the third person plural retell, have it be Luc and his monkey who are good and who take their bed to the tree.

Day 5

Here are several ideas. Do as many as you need to get the students comfortable with the vocabulary. As you give unannounced quizzes every few days, you will notice which words need to be reviewed and that will help you decide when to do a mini-story and which one to use. change them to accommodate the needs of your students. if you have several sections of French I, they will probably each have different needs.

Mini-story

Un singe riche a 31 millions de dollars dans son pantalon de Wal Mart. Il voit une vache pauvre qui a 18 cents. Les 18 cents sont sur la tête de la vache.

Le singe riche regarde la vache et dit, «Je suis riche. J'ai 31 millions de dollars.»
Le singe emmène la vache à la banque. Le singe donne un dollar à la vache. La vache est contente.

Teaching suggestion:

If they don't need to work on the words for cow and monkey, then change the characters to kids in the classroom. Practice adjectives by describing the characters, of course!

Mini-story

Il y a une grande rue. Il y a une vache et un singe dans la rue. La vache est pauvre. Le singe est pauvre. Ils n'ont pas de maison, pas de lit. Ils dorment dans la rue.

Luc voit la vache et le singe. Il les emmène en France. Il leur donne un sandwich et du lait. Il leur donne 3 dollars et 25 cents. La vache est contente. Le singe est triste. Le singe a besoin de 4 dollars. Le singe pleure pendant 15 ans.

Teaching suggestion:

Again, it doesn't have to be a cow and a monkey unless your students need it. Change it to two other animals, two celebrities, or the English teacher and the science teacher from your school.

Mini-story

Un garçon a un singe. Le garçon danse dans la rue. Le singe chante dans la rue. Un touriste donne 5 Euros au singe. Ils sont pauvres. Ils pleurent.

Une fille a une vache. La fille chante et la vache danse dans la rue. Un touriste leur donne 1.000.000 d'Euros. Elles sont contentes ! Elles sont riches.

La fille dort au lit, la vache dort à la ferme. Le garçon et le singe vont à la ferme. Le singe regarde sous le lit de la fille. Il voit le million d'Euros! Il prend l'argent ! Il saute par la fenêtre et court vers le garçon.

Le garçon et le singe sont riches ; la fille et la vache sont pauvres.

Teaching suggestion:

Singing and performing in the street is a common way to earn spending money in France. Your students will see this when they travel to France. It is appropriate for your students to know to tip these performers!

If you object to the stealing of money in this mini-story, don't do it that way! the girl and her cow can give the money away. This would provide you the opportunity to use "La fille leur donne." Be alert to every chance to clarify third person plural grammatical structures!

Day 6 (or 7 or 8, it depends on how things are going! Do not hurry! Students acquire from comprehensible input. It does not matter how fast you go; it DOES matter how many minutes you spend giving comprehensible input.)

j'ai (je n'ai rien)
pour toi
pour moi
je suis

Regis Philbin marche dans la rue. Il voit Lulu. Lulu pleure, «**Je n'ai rien!** Je suis pauvre! Boo hoo!»

Regis lui dit, «**Je suis** Regis Philbin. Je suis riche. **J'ai** trois maisons. J'ai 20 voitures. J'ai une Porsche **pour toi.**» Lulu demande, «**Pour moi?**» Regis emmène Lulu chez lui. Lulu compte les voitures. Il y a 19 voitures. Elle lui dit, «Tu n'as pas 20 voitures. Tu as 19 voitures.» Regis pleure, «Oh non! je suis pauvre.!»

Teaching suggestions:

It is not possible to say "je n'ai rien" 70 times in one class period. But you can say "J'ai" and "je n'ai pas" and "je n'ai rien" that many times (combined.) Remember that during step one (gesture the words) you personalize them. Therefore during that part of class you will get many repetitions of these words while you find out the interesting things that your students have or do not have.

Students already know "je suis" from the mardi gras song in "Sing, Dance, Laugh and Quiche." This group of words is so easy that it will not take much time to get the students to be able to retell this pms.

Day 7

nouveau (nouvelle)
mince
il/elle achète

Harrison Ford va aux Oscars avec Calysta Flockhart. Calysta est très **mince**. Harrison lui **achète** une **nouvelle** robe. La robe est très belle. Calysta prend la robe et crie, «Pour moi?» Harrison répond, «Oui, Calysta. Pour toi. Pour les Oscars.»

Mais il y a un problème. Calysta court chez elle avec la robe. Elle essaie la robe. La robe est trop grande. C'est une robe pour une personne normale. La robe tombe par terre. Calysta pleure.

Teaching suggestions:

Of course when talking about being fat and thin, we must be sensitive to our students. It is more acceptable to have cows and celebrities be fat and thin than to risk embarrassing a student. You can have a boy play Harrison Ford and a broomstick play Calysta. That way, when you toss a dress over the broomstick, it will fall to the ground just as you say in the pms.

I do not think this story is very good in third person plural, so I would omit steps 6 and 7 today.

Day 8

le verre d'eau
il/elle dort (ils/elles dorment)
il/elle ronfle

Jacques **dort** dans la classe de maths. Il **ronfle**. Le prof de maths verse **un verre d'eau** sur lui. Jacques se reveille et crie, «Oh, non! Mon livre de maths est mouillé!»

Le prof crie, «Ne dors pas en classe.»

Le pauvre Jacques achète un nouveau livre de maths.

Teaching suggestions:

I think that achète and nouveau may need to be recycled from yesterday, so I put them in this pms. If they are not needed, end the pms with the wet book. It is a good pms for plural practice because “sur lui” becomes “sur eux.”

In French, “prof” and “maths” are more frequently used than “professuer” and “mathématiques.”

Day 9

Mini-story

Il y a deux singes qui **dorment** dans le même lit. Un singe est petit et gros. Il **ronfle** toujours très fort. L'autre singe est mince et grand. Il ne dort pas parce que l'autre singe ronfle beaucoup. Enfin le singe mince prend **un verre d'eau** et le jette dans la figure du singe gros. Le singe gros se réveille et crie, «Qu'est-ce qui se passe?»

Le singe mince rit parce qu'il est sec et son ami est mouillé. Il crie, «Ha ha! Tu es mouillé! Je suis gros!» Le gros singe est très fâché. Il prend un autre verre d'eau

et il le lance sur le singe mince. Maintenant les deux singes sont fâchés et mouillés.

Teaching suggestions:

This story from the old mini-story book is one of my favorites. I always prepared my actors by telling them the entire story before class so they knew what was going to happen. It is uncomfortable to try to spring surprises like this on students; and they know that I care about them when I take the time to prepare them for class by letting them know what will be expected of them.

At this point, tell the students to bring their textbooks (Look, I Can Talk!) to class for the next four-five days while you do all of the activities in the book. They are ready to have a chapter test during the next few days, but it should not be announced.