Overview

“La Deuxième Guerre mondiale: Résistance et conformité” is a historically based lesson for French III or French IV. Students will explore this commonly studied historical event from a unique perspective – that of an occupied European country. Foreign language learners will examine photos, authentic letter and a French movie in order to consider the concept of resistance and conformity in World War II era France while enhancing sociolinguistic competence. While exploring this historical event, students will learn important war related vocabulary and the conditional verb tense.

Objectives

Grammar: Conditional Tense

Vocabulary: Key war vocabulary, including words such as soldat, guerre, paix, victoire, défaite and défilé

1. Students will be able to recognize key vocabulary words that pertain to war.
2. Students will be able to categorize war-related vocabulary and will be able to justify their categorizations.
3. Students will be able to describe what they see in pictures depicting scenes of France during World War II.
4. Students will be able to determine what is being depicted in the picture.
5. Students will identify questions that arise while observing these pictures.
6. Students will interpret a letter written by Victor Renelle to his wife.
7. Students will imagine Suzanne Renelle’s response and will create a letter in response to the one they have read.
8. Students will describe the characters and story line in Au revoir les enfants.
9. Students will be able to determine which French people conformed to demands of the Nazis, who resisted the Occupation and who was “in the middle.”
10. Students will imagine what their own decisions would have been had they lived in France during World War II.

Time Requirement

Approximately 11 to 12 days, including time for evaluation.

Grade Level

This lesson is recommended for third or fourth year French.
Procedure

Day One

Warm-up

Presentation of Vocabulary and Comprehension Check

1) Voici un soldat.
   a. Oui ou non – un soldat? (Holding up pictures)
   b. Montrez-moi << un soldat >>. (Students will salute to physically demonstrate their understanding of the word).
   c. Qu’est-ce qu’un soldat porte ?
   d. Est-ce qu’il y a un soldat dans Saving Private Ryan? Est-ce qu’il y a un soldat dans The Notebook?

2) La guerre
   a. Oui ou non – la guerre? (Holding up pictures)
   b. Comment s’appelle quelques guerres?
   c. Où est-ce qu’il y a une guerre maintenant?
   d. Qui est dans le combat pendant une guerre?
   e. Est-ce qu’il y a une guerre dans Harry Potter? Harry Potter est un soldat? Est-ce qu’il y a une guerre dans Superman?

3) La paix
   a. Oui ou non – la paix? (Holding up pictures)
   b. Est-ce qu’il y a de la paix en Irak maintenant? Est-ce qu’il y a de la paix en Suisse maintenant? Est-ce qu’il y a de la paix en France maintenant?
   d. Qui a écrit un livre qui s’appelle La Guerre et la paix?
   e. La guerre ou la paix? (Holding up pictures)

4) La victoire
   a. Montrez-moi la victoire. (Students will make a << v >> to physically demonstrate they understand victory.)
   b. Qui a eu une victoire pendant la Guerre civile aux Etats-Unis?
   c. A ton avis, qui va avoir une victoire – Harry Potter ou Voldemort?
   d. Les Etats-Unis ont eu une victoire contre Hitler? Au Vietnam?

5) La défaite
   a. Montrez-moi la défaite. (Students will hang their heads or make some other sign to physically symbolize their comprehension.)
   b. Montrez-moi la victoire.
6) Un défilé
   a. Montrez-moi un défilé (Three or four students will form a parade and march
      around the classroom to physically demonstrate their understanding.)
   b. Est-ce qu’on fait un défilé le 4 juillet ? Est-ce qu’on fait un défilé le 25
décembre ?
   c. Oui ou non - un défilé ?
7) Qu’est-ce que c’est ?

Guided practice

Students will be provided with squares upon which several proper nouns, review
vocabulary and new vocabulary are written. The teacher will lead the class in
brainstorming one or two ways in which their words could be organized/categorized.

He/she will take on of the suggested methods and will categorize two or three of the
words.

Independent Practice

Students will work in groups of two or three to categorize the words in any way they
choose. The words will include:

Hitler  Ho Chi Minh  Jefferson Davis   Napoleon  la guerre  un défilé  un soldat
une victoire  une défaite  la guerre  la paix  les fleurs  les fusils  les enfants  les
feux  la pluie  les tombes  le drapeau  la propagande  la famine  la joie  la tristesse
l’égglise  le cimetière

Wrap-Up

One or two groups of students’ volunteers will explain how they categorized their words
and why.

Day Two

Warm-up

Using pictures, the teacher will remind students of vocabulary words from the previous
day.

Presentation/Guided Practice

   1. The teacher will place a photograph depicting the French city of Caen in ruins at
      the end of World War II. Covering ¾ of the picture, the teacher will ask students
to discuss the people, objects and actions they see in the exposed quarter of the
photo. After a few minutes, he/she will ask students to share their finding with the class.

2. After students have completed the first part of their independent practice, the teacher will ask them to return to the picture of Caen in ruins and will have them summarize one conjecture they can make based on their observation and one question they have.

Wrap-up

As time allows, each group of students will share the conjectures they were able to make about the photo and the questions that arose while making observations.

Day Three

Warm-up

Review of vocabulary

Presentation

1. Students will continue to present what they learned and questions that arose from their photos. The teacher will take the opportunity after each picture to share a snippet of information about World War II in France.

Guided Practice

Students will work with the teacher to make a list of things they know about France during World War II.

Independent Practice/Homework

Students will use a graphic organizer to help them arrange the information they know about France in the Second World War.

Day Four

Warm-up

*Students will conduct interactive reading activities on day four.*

Pre-reading questions

1. Est-ce que tu as jamais écrit une lettre à quelqu’un qui te manqué beaucoup ? Quelles informations est-ce que tu as mis dans ta lettre ?
Scanning and Skimming

1. Qu’est-ce que c’est ?
2. Quelle est la date sur la lettre ?
3. Qui a recu la lettre ?

Comprehension Check Questions

1. Suzanne est probablement:
   a. La femme de la personne qui a écrit cette lettre.
   b. L’enfant de la personne qui a écrit cette lettre.
   c. La soeur de la personne qui a écrit cette lettre.

2. L’auteur de la lettre dit à Suzanne de:
   a. Informer la police de ce qui lui est arrivé
   b. Ne pas informer les gens

3. Qu’est-ce que Suzanne doit dire á sa grand-mère? _________________

4. Qu’est l’ auteur de la lettre, selon toi ?

At this point, the class will reassemble to go over these questions. The teacher will provide historical background about Victor Renelle.

Extension Question

Expliquez en anglais la phrase suivante qui est dans la lettre :

<< Trop nombreux sont ceux qui ne comprennent pas qu’on se sacrifie á un idéal et qui vous prennent pour imbécile ou fou. >>

Extension (Homework Assignment)

Students will imagine what Suzanne’s response to this letter would be and will compose it.

Day Five through Eight

Students will view a French film entitled Au revoir les enfants, a film about a French boarding school where Jewish boys were hidden during World War II. The film is based on a true story; the director was a boy at the school while this occurred. The class will watch the film for approximately half an hour and will complete story maps and character evaluation during the remainder of the time.
Day Nine

Warm-up

Students will make a summary of the primary sources that have been used to learn about World War II in France.

Guided Practice

The teacher will make a list of two columns: Conformité and Resistance. He/she will use the example of the priest in the film *Au revoir les enfants* and will ask in which column he should be categorized. Students must justify their response.

Independent Practice

Students will do the same for various characters in the film, as well as Victor Renelle, the miliciens they viewed in one of the photographs, etc.

Wrap-up

The teacher will ask students in English, if they believe they would have the courage to resist or whether they would try to keep their families safe by keeping a low profile or if they would join with German forces.

***This would be an excellent opportunity to present the conditional tense to students.

Evaluation

1. Students will be shown a novel picture of a scene from France during the World War II and will describe what they see in the photo in the target language.

2. Students will compose a paragraph describing what they would have done if they had lived in France during World War II.

3. Students will read a different letter from Victor Renelle and will respond to some comprehension check questions about it.