

Note: While created specifically for teachers of French, this lesson plan could be easily adapted, with some additional research, for the German, Italian, or Spanish classroom.

## **America's French Heritage Lesson Plan** **By Marcel LaVergne Ed.D.**

In accordance with the Foreign Languages National Standards, the following activities which complement the article *America's French Heritage* focus primarily on the Connections and Communities Strands. Each activity will be identified as achievement or proficiency based.

### **Goals and Objectives**

1. Students will make a Connection to History while learning what role France played in the early years of the United States.
2. Students will make a Connection to History while learning who the French explorers and the early settlers were.
3. Students will make a Connection to the geography of the United States as they discover where those cities and towns with French names are located.
4. Students will make a Connection to the geography of France as they locate the cities in France after which the American cities are named.
5. Students will make a Connection to History as they learn which cities and towns are named after French Royal families, and other notable French people.
6. Students will engage in the Communities Strand as they discover information about their community.
7. Students will engage in the Communities Strand as they discover what role France played in the development of other communities in the United States.

### *Activity I*

Using an Atlas of the United States, give each student/group of students a copy of a map of a different American state and have the student/group of students

- a) highlight each city or town with a French name; (achievement)
- b) explain the meaning of the French name; (proficiency)
- c) if named after a person, indicate who that person was; (achievement)
- d) if named after a French city, indicate where that city is in France and state 5 facts about it; (achievement)
- e) present the information orally to the class. (proficiency)

### *Activity II*

Using the website [www.civilization.ca/vnmf](http://www.civilization.ca/vnmf), assign a different French explorer to each student who will

- a) write a brief biography of the explorer; (proficiency)
- b) trace his exploration route; (achievement)
- c) indicate his discoveries; (achievement)
- d) present the information orally to the class. (proficiency)

#### *Activity III*

Using the websites [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com) and [www.epodunk.com](http://www.epodunk.com), have the students

- a) write a brief biography of the Marquis de LaFayette; (proficiency)
- b) discover how many cities, towns, counties, and other places are named after him; (achievement)
- c) indicate in which states they are located. (achievement)
- d) write an opinion piece about Lafayette's contribution to the Independence of the United States. This could be done individually or in groups. (proficiency)

#### *Activity IV*

Using the websites [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com) and [www.epodunk.com](http://www.epodunk.com), have the students

- a) find the cities, towns, and counties named after Americans of French descent; (achievement)
- b) indicate in which states they are located. (achievement)
- c) present the information orally to the class. (proficiency)

Then as a homework assignment, each student will be assigned an American of French descent and

- d) write a brief biography of him/her; (proficiency)
- e) state his/her importance to our nation. (proficiency)

#### *Activity V*

In order to discover how much French there might be in their own community, students will be asked to

- a) find if there are any streets, businesses, schools, parks, bodies of water, mountains, etc. with French names. (achievement)
- b) discover how many residents of their community are of French descent, speak French, or observe French traditions. (achievement)
- c) write an article for the local newspaper including the facts that they found. (proficiency)

#### *Activity VI*

Each student will be given the name of a city or town that was named for a French explorer, early settler, French Royalty, or Lafayette. They will be asked to contact the city or town hall to secure the following information:

- 1) the year the city/town was incorporated; (achievement)
- 2) the reason why the city/town was named; (achievement)
- 3) if there is a statue or monument named after the person for whom the city/town was named including photos if possible; (achievement)

- 4) if there are any celebrations done in the name of the person the city/town was named after including programs or articles if possible; (achievement)
- 5) if the present-day residents feel any connection to the person the city/town was named after. (achievement)

Each student will then present the information orally to the class. (proficiency)