

POUR BIEN S'ATTABLER



**Un petit
guide**

**for creating,
animating
and maintaining
une table française
en Louisiane**

**brought to you by CODOFIL
and
your fellow 'tabliers'**

Dédicace

The idea for this guide grew out of a call to action. Burnell Lemoine (CODOFIL Chairman 2019-2024) asked Francophone community activists and stakeholders to come together to evaluate what was working best in the French movement in Louisiana and to identify needs for the future. Among our grassroots jewels, many pointed to **les Tables françaises**, homegrown meet-ups in towns across the state where people gather for French-language fellowship. In support of that idea, French table members collaborated to offer ideas and share best practices for others wanting to continue and spread this '**nouvelle tradition**.'

Ça se fait, ce guide est dédié

à

Monsieur Burnell Lemoine

Comme Burnell aime dire,

“Qui c’est t’après faire pour notre français aujourd’hui?”

Pour bien s'attabler

Un petit guide for creating, animating and
maintaining **une table française en Louisiane**

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2025

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C'est quoi, une 'table française'?

What is a French table?

Simply put, in modern-day Louisiana the **table française** is an event at which people gather to speak French. In an increasingly Anglophone state where speaking French might even be considered rude among non-speakers, the practice developed organically out of a desire local French-speakers felt to create spaces and occasions to express themselves in French among like-minded friends and acquaintances.

There are no set rules as to how a **table française** is run or organized. The very first known one was literally a table set aside in a local Lafayette diner where friends gathered for morning coffee and camaraderie once a week at a set time. The restaurant agreed to put up a sign reserving the table for French-speakers, and anyone who showed up was welcome. Some were regulars, others dropped in occasionally, and once the word got out, foreign tourists and other curious visitors began attending too.

At the other end of the spectrum, some tables are much larger events attended by twenty or more people. There is usually one person who oversees the organizing and sets a program, which can include guest speakers, singing, short films, literacy and language-building lessons, along with casual conversation. Some tables meet once a week, others on a monthly or bimonthly basis.

Table styles and activities vary to meet the goals, tastes and abilities of the people who attend. If you are new to French tables, it's a good idea to try different ones to see which of them best suits your needs and personality. And of course, if you have the luxury of time, there is no reason not to attend multiple tables that function in diverse ways. **Vive la différence!**

This document is designed to offer practical suggestions and ideas to those who want to start a new table or enhance one that already exists. It is based upon the experiences of those who have gone before you. Keep in mind that there is no magic formula for 'doing it right,' but we hope that some of these time-tested ideas and 'best practices' can be of use.

Français? Cadjin? Créole?

What's in a Name?

In this guide, we'll be talking a lot about 'French tables.' This is shorthand.

When talking about French in Louisiana, there are several labels to describe the language varieties we speak as well as the people who speak them.

- Typically, the French that people learn in traditional classrooms, read in European books and hear in European media is referred to as 'Standard French' (SF) or 'International French.' Some people still call it 'Parisian French,' though keep in mind that Parisians, like Francophones everywhere else in the world, speak a variety of their language that is not exactly 'standard.'
- The generic term 'Louisiana French' (LF) refers collectively to all the varieties spoken in our state. It is also commonly known as 'Cajun French,' even though a lot of people who speak it do not consider themselves to be of Acadian extraction.
- Kouri-Vini (KV), also known as Louisiana Creole, is sometimes called a 'sister language' of Louisiana French. Most of the words in its vocabulary are French-based and recognizable by French speakers, but the structures and grammar are different enough that it is considered its own language.
- Today, Kouri-Vini has its own distinct writing system, while Louisiana French is written using most of the same conventions that SF does.
- We sometimes say that KV exists on a continuum with LF. The two languages have co-existed in some areas for a long time, so many speakers can move back and forth using more Creole structures or more French structures, depending on whom they are speaking with, to make themselves better understood.

Many of the same labels mentioned above are also used to designate ethnic groups. Some people use their self-identified ethnic label to also describe the language variety they speak, even when it doesn't correspond to the language label that linguists use.

- Some Louisiana Creoles speak a French that is basically identical to Cajun French, but they call their language Creole because they call themselves Creole.

- Somebody can identify as Cajun and call their language Cajun French, but regularly use Creole / KV structures such as “**mo gain**” (= “**j’ai**” = “I have”).
- Some Native Americans say they speak Indigenous French. Others just say they speak French.
- Because language evolves constantly, the definition of these labels has changed over time and continues to be a moving target.

So what are the implications for our tables? We know that our ways of speaking include lots of interesting variables, while the common elements make it possible for us to communicate with each other. Like Ted Lasso’s encounters with British English, that’s half the fun.

While there do exist separate Creole tables dedicated to perpetuating Kouri-Vini, there are other tables where KV and LF speakers participate together. You just need to find the format that works for your group.

Finally, when we say ‘all French is good French,’ we mean that:

- we all have a lot to learn from each other;
- while some tables may emphasize certain dialects or varieties, we do not value one above the other;
- we are not alone in the Francophone world and would not want to be;
- we are delighted when French-speakers from outside Louisiana join us to share their own linguistic heritage;
- and we are just as delighted when French-speakers from within Louisiana share their linguistic heritage with each other.

In the interest of simplicity, when we say ‘French table’ in this guide, we include both French and Creole varieties of all sorts. The organizational tips and activity types suggested can actually apply to any language table. Most of the resource materials we propose in this guide are in LF, with a few in KV. We hope to continue building a bank of materials in both languages and make them available in the future on the CODOFIL website.

In the meantime, those interested in comparing Louisiana French and Kouri-Vini should take a look at “**Gombo de Mots**,” a set of 52 illustrated flash cards featuring the SF, LF and KV word for each image. These are available from CODOFIL and the Louisiana Consortium of Immersion Schools.

Tout d'abord

Getting Started

The goals and activities of your table can and will, no doubt, evolve over time, but having at least some guiding principles as you begin leads to a predictability that will keep your intended audience coming back.

Here are a few things to think about before you get started:

Qui? / Who?

Qui c'est le taureau dessus le cône? / Who's the boss? There always has to be someone in charge, even for low-maintenance tables. If this is your baby, consider how much time and energy resources you will have to devote to it. If you are acting solo and want to keep it simple, an informal meet-up in a restaurant or coffee shop is a natural choice. If your goal is something more elaborate, you can call on like-minded friends to support you. Many tables have co-organizers who share the responsibilities.

Does the leader need to speak French? Not necessarily. There have been tables where one person who is still very early in their learning journey takes charge of the logistics (arranging venue, communications, etc.) and another, more advanced speaker is responsible for planning the programming or leading the conversation. In any case, it is important to encourage the participation of fluent speakers in the mix. They model language for others, help jump start conversation, and can act as leaders in small group activities.

Qui c'est qu'on veut attirer? / Who are the target participants? While public tables are theoretically open to anyone, the type of activities in your table will eventually attract people with particular needs and interests, so it's worth spending some time considering who your primary target audience will be. Possibilities include:

- fluent speakers looking for chances to use their French by discussing prompted topics or free conversation;
- beginners looking for guided practice or vocabulary-building;

- speakers of various levels looking to meet other local or visiting French speakers;
- fluent speakers of LF wanting to acquire some reading abilities;
- students of SF wanting to learn some aspects of the local vernacular;
- speakers looking to learn more about LF language and culture;
- speakers looking for social activity like card games or sing-alongs in French.

Ayòu? / Where?

Here are some possible venues:

- Restaurant or café
 - Cajun and Creole-themed places are often glad for the publicity.
 - These venues are good for informal or unstructured tables where people will gather to share a meal and spontaneous conversation.
 - Consider asking the venue if it would be willing to set aside a table once a week at a specified time. Create a sign or marker to point out the table.
 - Keep in mind that businesses exist to make a profit and have to do so in order to exist. If you meet in a coffee shop or restaurant, make clear to participants that they should purchase at least one item as a courtesy for the services provided.
 - Unless the venue has a separate meeting room that they are willing to set aside for your table, it is not conducive to guest speakers or 'presenter' formats.
- Public libraries
 - Library meeting rooms are often available at no charge for non-profit events, but you need to make reservations well in advance.
 - Check to see if you are allowed to serve food and drink.
 - Some libraries have rules that don't allow 'for profit' activities, so if you have a guest speaker selling a book, for example, ask permission first.
 - Libraries typically have copy machines, which can be very helpful if you need last-minute photocopies.
 - Internet access, multimedia equipment and screens are available in most modern libraries. They often have a tech specialist who can assist you.
 - Find out if room setup can be modified. If so, who is responsible for doing that?

- Nursing homes that have activity rooms
 - French tables specifically geared to nursing home residents are a great community service.
 - Consider activities that would encourage interaction between residents and visitors.
 - Keep in mind that COVID and flu restrictions in these institutions might cause you to cancel meetings on short notice.
 - Some smaller nursing homes have only one commons area, which means that you may have attendees who have not chosen to attend or do not understand the proceedings.

- Recreation centers, community centers, museums
 - Like libraries, these spaces need to be reserved well in advance.
 - Since these are multi-purpose venues, they might involve more labor to set up and take down (chairs, tables, coffee service) than libraries.
 - Consider asking volunteers to help set up and take down chairs, tables, refreshment service, etc.
 - Remember that clean-up is usually expected in this type of space. Don't forget the bathroom!

- Bookstores
 - Some bookstores and other small businesses have meeting rooms and are happy for the flow of potential customers.
 - They may sell food and drink appropriate for your group, making it a win-win situation for both you and your host.
 - Consider that you may have to pay attention to keeping the noise level appropriate to the venue so as not to distract other customers.

- Private homes
 - A table hosted in an individual's house or outdoor kitchen is not usually a public event. However, some people find that inviting a small, regular group of like-minded people to gather at their home can allow for more meaningful conversation and activities.

- To avoid misunderstandings down the road, the host should set clear ground rules for inviting new participants, providing refreshments, cleaning up and setting beginning and ending times.
- Virtual tables
 - While many of you are familiar with discussion groups on Facebook and other social media that are sometimes referred to as ‘tables’, here we are talking about the real-time online meet-ups that take place on Zoom or similar meeting apps. These groups are able to include anyone anywhere in the world who has internet access, making them particularly attractive to people looking to compare dialects and local cultures with others from different locales.
 - Managing a Zoom meeting requires a certain level of tech savvy, both in the preparation and the execution. It also requires a certain level of tech savvy to log on as an attendee. It’s important to coordinate with a second person who can serve as the tech advisor.
 - See more tips for virtual meetings on p. 21

Accoutrements / Amenities and Equipment

Here are a few things to think about as you select a site:

- Is there adequate parking available? Free parking is a nice perk. Because a number of French speakers are senior citizens with mobility issues, check to see if adequate handicapped spaces are available.
- Are there bathrooms nearby (but not so nearby that the sound of the air dryer drowns out conversation)?
- If it’s a restaurant, are there large enough tables to accommodate a dozen people? What can the establishment do if more people show up than were anticipated?
- If you are using a meeting room in a public space, can you alter the configuration of tables and chairs?

- In a meeting room, is multimedia equipment (screen, projector, internet, outlets, etc.) available?
- Does the establishment have tech people who can help troubleshoot if necessary?
- Will you need to get a key or will someone be available to access the room?
- Since some older people are hard of hearing, it's a good idea to make sure that the site's acoustics are good.
- If you plan to work with a larger group, a public address system may be desirable. Libraries and community centers might provide this.
- Human resources are important too. It's helpful to establish a relationship with one contact person or department at the venue you select.
- Make yourself easy to find. Place a sign saying '**Table Française**' at your table or the door to your venue. A simple poster or folded tent sign of sturdy card stock is fine.
- Plan, at least for the first meetings, to be there 15-30 minutes early to wrangle newcomers. Ask a friend to help you. Give yourself more time if furniture needs to be moved and coffee needs to be made. Make sure that your reservation for the space includes set-up time if you need it.

Quand ? / When?

Most tables meet monthly, twice a month, or weekly. There is a lot of variety with respect to time of day and duration of each meeting. Some examples follow:

- Early morning coffee/breakfast at a café: Attracts working people with limited time. These often meet weekly and are typically of shorter duration.
- Monthly weekend meeting: Attracts a variety of ages and speaking abilities. Can typically last longer than a breakfast or lunch.
- Early evening happy hour: Often a monthly meeting at a watering hole. Tends to attract young working people.

- Lunch hour: Typically a reserved table in a restaurant for informal gathering. Great for unstructured conversation among people with limited time. Can get pricey for those on a budget.

À considérer / To consider

- Tables work best when participants can easily remember the meeting time without having to go to a community calendar. Be as specific as possible. Examples: Every Monday morning at 7:00 a.m., every third Saturday afternoon at 1:00 p.m.
- Remember that if you're meeting twice a month that different months have different numbers of days so that announcing a meeting 'every other X' is not sufficient. If you plan for a meeting every 1st and 3rd or 2nd and 4th insert day here of the month, it'll be easier for people to recall.
- If you meet monthly at the end of the month, designating the last Saturday (or whatever day) of the month is easier to manage and remember than designating the 4th Saturday, which may or may not be the last, depending on the month.
- There is no rule says that your table has to be active year-round. Some tables take a summer break or do not hold their meetings during busy holiday seasons.
- Your original meeting time and day is not set in stone. Groups have modified their meeting times or days as they began to have regular attendees who campaigned for a change.
- Provide a sign-in sheet for names, phone numbers and email addresses. This way, you can communicate with regular participants between events and keep occasional participants engaged with occasional messages.
- When reserving the space, keep in mind that you may need to reserve time before the meeting for set-up.
- If your table has a structured program, do you want to plan for unstructured socializing before or after the program? If so, calculate that in your reservation.

Manger et boissons / Refreshments

Our local culture revolves so much around eating that it's hard to imagine any social gathering that does not involve doing so, especially when the name of the event includes the word 'table'. Of course, if the venue is a restaurant or café, this is part of the package and therefore a non-issue for you as the organizer. For other locations, it's worth spending some time thinking about if and how you want to handle refreshments. While they can certainly add to the conviviality of a **table française**, food and drink can also complicate things. As the organizer, you set the tone that determines how this plays out.

À considérer / To consider

- Does the venue have a policy about serving food and drink in the meeting room? Will you be able to adhere to it?
- If you choose to offer coffee on location, you'll need:
 - something to make it in,
 - cups, stirrers, sweeteners, creamer, and napkins,
 - coffee, which is not cheap,
 - clean-up detail.
- Providing a small trash can and paper towels can facilitate cleanup. Does the location have these available? If not, you might want to provide them.
- Consider eco-friendly options:
 - You might ask participants to bring their own mugs or thermoses. You'll still need disposable cups for those who forget or are unaware, but there'll be less waste and less clean-up.
 - Individual packets of sugar and creamer are more costly, but in this case, too, there is less waste and mess, especially if your group is really large.
- For public spaces that do not sell food and drink, if you want to keep things really simple, let participants know that they are welcome to pick up a cup of coffee at their favorite spot and bring it with them to the table. The Kaplan table began at a local café, but the noise level and non-participating customers made the situation less than ideal for meetings, so the table moved to the local library a few doors down.

Participants were invited to get their coffee at the café before heading to the library, saving work for the organizer and keeping the café owner happily busy.

- One enthusiastic host inaugurated her table by frying up **beignets** on the bayou in July summer heat. While it was a big success, it was not sustainable over the long term. Today, many of the regulars at that table bring a breakfast treat on an informal basis. Sometimes there's an abundance, sometimes not so much. No one seems to mind either way.
- Consider requesting that people who want to contribute a treat bring only 'finger foods' (such as cookies, donut holes, or grapes) that don't need to be cut or served in a dish. If they bring something other than finger foods, they could be asked to provide the needed utensils and plates on which to serve them. Asking contributors to take their leftover contributions home at the end of the gathering cuts down on clean-up work for organizers.
- It doesn't have to be all or nothing. If refreshments are too much of a burden to deal with on a regular basis, you might want to consider serving food only for designated special occasions during the year.

Et asteur? Now What?

Once you've determined what kind of meeting you'd like to have and secured a meeting place, it's time to get the word out. Chances are that you've already been talking up the idea with like-minded folks.

Publicité / Getting the Word Out

- If you are planning an informal table at a restaurant or coffee shop, word-of-mouth may be the best way to get started. More is not necessarily better, especially starting out. Try getting 4 or 5 people to commit to coming to the first meeting and to bringing along a friend. People are more likely to try something new if they make plans to do it with someone else. A table of 8 to 12 people is easy to manage. Everyone can introduce themselves and still have time for conversation.
- Social media such as Facebook and Instagram are free and ubiquitous means to get the word out. Post an announcement about your table a week or so before the event, and then post a reminder the day before.
- The good news is that French tables are not in competition, but rather are bolstered by the creation of other groups, even within a same community. Lots of people regularly attend more than one table to take advantage of different types of interactions, meet different people, and use their French more often. So advertising your table on another group's site would not be a **faux pas**. Try including a post in Facebook public groups of similar interests such as:
 - Cajun French Virtual French **Table Française**,
 - La Table Chantante**,
 - Le français cadien de la Louisiane**,
 - Club Déj** Lunch Club Lafayette LA.
- Once you're established, you might find it useful to create a Facebook page for your own table. In the meantime, take pictures and post them on social media on your personal page to let people know that the table exists.
- Make sure to get on CODOFIL's calendar of events. Email mjustus@crt.la.gov or call Maggie at the CODOFIL office: 337-262-5810 to add your table's events. Likewise, if your table stops meeting for some reason, make sure to let them know about that, too.

- If you're meeting at a library, ask the librarian to include you in their calendar of events. They typically post it online as well as in the library itself.
- Your local radio station probably has a program where they announce community events. Call and ask to be included in the announcements.
- Check to see if your town website has a calendar of events that would include your meeting. Communities are happy to show that they have interesting things going on.
- Remember that reliability is important as you establish your table. Once you have your meeting on a calendar, it's also important to let those entities know if you cancel your meeting.
- Have a sign-up sheet handy at your meeting to get the names and emails of new attendees. Get in the habit of sending out an email blast reminding those people about your table a few days before it is to be held. You can't expect that everyone will attend every table, but people will feel more comfortable about coming back after an absence if you stay in touch with them and keep them on your list.

Ça coûte pas merci / Finances

Tables don't charge admission, but the long term cost of refreshments, copies and other incidentals can add up over time. While this may not be an issue for some table organizers, regular participants are usually more than happy to pitch in to help cover expenses.

- Consider putting out a donation jar near the coffee area to cover coffee expenses.
- As is the South Louisiana way, regulars at some tables sometimes organically come together to help, providing an occasional pound of coffee or a ream of copy paper.
- At one table, in order to defray these costs, raffle tickets are sold at the beginning of each meeting (\$1/chance or 6 chances for \$5). At the end of the meeting, the holder of the winning ticket receives half the pot of money collected. The rest serves as a fund to pay for coffee, supplies and photocopies.
 - You can buy a roll of 2000 double coupon tickets (one for the raffle box and one for the purchaser) for less than \$20 at business supply stores like Office Depot. If you've ever served on your child's PTA or band club, you may have a leftover roll in a closet somewhere at home.
 - Spice up the raffle by asking people to bring white elephant items they may have around the house that can be given away as door prizes. You can integrate discussion about the item and the raffle into your French language discussion. Great vocabulary builder!
- If your group uses printed material, once you have a list of participants and a routine established, you might prepare and email handouts to people on that list ahead of time to print at home prior to the meeting.
- Another host whose group focuses on songs and singing has created a catalog of traditional songs that she has made available as a Google document for her regulars and other interested parties. This way, she can provide a link to the songs to anyone who requests it, thus saving money on copies and reaching a larger audience.

Le programme / Content

As we've mentioned before, there is no single format for **une table française**. If you're reading this, you probably already have some ideas about what you'd like to accomplish.

Different table formats tend to attract different types of participants. After you've established your format, you may end up with a group that consists primarily of beginners looking for guided practice or perhaps a more advanced group looking for conversational opportunities. But at any given meeting, you will likely have a mix of fluency levels, different reading levels and varying degrees of ease with speaking in public. Ideally, your table will give everyone a chance to express themselves in a meaningful way at some time in the meeting.

Des idées / Some thoughts:

- Make sure to provide time for 'free range' socializing either at the beginning or end of the meeting. Establish from the beginning that this part takes place in French, too! **Après tout**, why are they there? Still, old habits die hard. See if you can find some committed members in the group and ask them to consciously make the effort to avoid English, especially at the beginning, as your table is establishing its 'group culture.'
- For those who may think their French isn't quite good enough, an encouraging statement like, '**Tous les français sont bons ici!**' / 'All French is good French here,' could make them more apt to share.
- For those who are still learning, there's a helpful **dicton** from France: '**C'est en forgeant qu'on devient forgeron.**' 'One becomes a blacksmith by blacksmithing.' Speaking in public can be scary, but we learn to speak French by speaking French. Everyone who has ever learned a second language has spoken it poorly—or haltingly—before speaking it well. Other learners have 'been there' and they understand.
- Everyone's comfort level and personal goals are different. People who are not speaking up may be shy, but they may also just be working on developing their comprehension before trying to speak. Don't force the issue, but do provide occasions to acknowledge those people, too, perhaps by asking simple yes-or-no questions.

Predictability can be comforting for some people. Consider including some routines that attendees will hear and participate in at every meeting:

- A recitation or choral reading keeps the spotlight off of the individual and gives people a chance to 'practice' speaking without being singled out. Reading or speaking in unison can help some reticent people feel as if they are participating. Such recitation might include:
 - Pledge of Allegiance,
 - a prayer or inspirational quote if appropriate ,
 - singing '**Bonne fête!**' for birthdays.
- **Des notices/annonces** can be made by the **capitaine** /leader, or the leader can ask for attendees to share news of:
 - births,
 - anniversaries,
 - deaths,
 - other French-language events festivals, talks, concerts .
- Info-capsules can be a fun addition to kick off your meeting. The **capitaine** can do these at first, and ask for a volunteer to do so at the next meeting.
 - **Un fait historique:** Describe a historical event that happened on this date.
 - **Une bêtise:** Tell a joke or riddle.
 - **Un dicton:** Share a proverb and explain it.

Introductions

If the group is not too big, especially with newly formed tables, it is natural to ask attendees to introduce themselves and say a little bit about where they're from and what they do. This approach can make people feel welcome and give them a chance to speak about a subject they are usually comfortable discussing in French—theirself. It's a simple and direct way to break the ice and get conversation started. On the other hand, with a larger group, this activity alone can eat up a significant chunk of your meeting time. And as the group settles in and 'regulars' establish themselves, it probably won't make as much sense for the same people to keep introducing themselves at every meeting. There will, of course, also inevitably be new people attending your table, so introductions will still have their place.

Here are some possible ways to manage introductions so they don't get too mundane or unmanageable:

- If the group is very big, try dividing them up into smaller groups of 2 or 3 people and have them introduce themselves to just the members of their group. Give them enough time so that each person can have a chance to speak within the group. After everyone is finished, ask for a volunteer from groups with new people to introduce a new attendee, telling what they learned about the newbie in their group discussion.
- If your group is established, ask people to pair up (preferably with someone they do not know too well) and find four things they have in common. When the group comes back together, ask random people to share one of those things (or more, if time is not a factor) they've learned about their partner.
- If your group is established and most people know each other, ask them each to say one thing about themselves that most people don't know. Some groups have name cards (folded card-stock rectangles) that they put at their place at the table and that are re-used at each meeting. Extra cards are available for new or visiting attendees. This way, if ever you are strapped for time, people still can learn or relearn each other's names without formal introductions. They also help prevent those awkward 'senior moments' where we can't remember the names of people that we only see once a month.

Activités méta-linguistiques

Meta-linguistic Activities (i.e. Overtly Talking 'About Language')

While most tables have as their main objective the act of communicating in French or Creole, communicating **about** the language is also often a topic of interest. Many attendees are emerging speakers who want to improve their fluency. Many who grew up speaking but not studying French formally are curious to learn more about its structure. Others who speak but were not taught to read it are interested in literacy. If these last two describe your group, then you may want to enlist the help of someone with a strong knowledge of the language to offer explanations or mini-lessons on topics that interest the group. The lesson might be a regular part of your meeting, or you could just announce that Person X is willing to answer language questions that may come up in the course of discussion, and that people are welcome to bring up questions that interest them.

Here are two ideas for meta-linguistic activities without doing an explicit lesson:

- **Mot nouveau:** Establish a routine of asking if anyone has learned a new word or phrase in French since the last table. What is the word? Can they explain what it means using French? In what context did they learn it? A book? A conversation? A song on the radio? It's helpful to have a dictionary handy at your meetings so that you can look up the spelling of words. If a blackboard is available, write the word down.
- **Question du jour:** If someone with a solid knowledge of French is part of the table, you might enlist the help of that person to serve as an on-the-fly resource. Open the floor for one question about grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation. This can be tricky because you don't want your table time to be eaten up by stuff that feels too technical, but if your 'expert' can keep the explanation short and sweet, it might help fill in gaps that people feel they need to fill. Sometimes a simple explanation can provide a key to unlocking more general understanding.
- **Themed vocabulary lists:** As we know from raising children, vocabulary building is the first step in learning a language. All the grammar in the world is useless if you don't have the words to say what you mean. Many **tables françaises** use themed vocabulary lists as a point of departure. You may want to hand these out as resource material to refer to before a discussion on a particular theme, or you may want to do activities with the lists.

Conférenciers invités / Guest speakers

Guest speakers can be outsiders or insiders. Asking a more fluent speaker within the group to prepare and give a short presentation on a topic he or she knows well can add variety to table programming and offer access to the body of knowledge existing within your community. Is there a **traiteur**, a gifted gardener, an expert in some aspect of local history, or a craftsman who could do a demonstration with visuals?

À considérer / To consider

Make sure that your outside guest speakers understand the format and goals of your table:

- Discuss time constraints with your guests. Explain how long they will have to speak and whether the talk will happen as one part of the meeting or will constitute the entire program.

- Remind them that some or many in the audience may have limited comprehension, so that visuals can be helpful. A PowerPoint is nice if technically feasible, but a real object can illustrate just as well. (Crab trap, quilt, seeds, tools, etc.)
- On the other hand, the main purpose of this gathering is to give participants the opportunity to practice speaking as well as listening skills. Encourage your guest speaker to ask questions and solicit comments. This is not a lecture series! Interaction is the goal.

Plus de conseils pour les tables virtuelles / More on Virtual Tables

Marlene Touns took over the Zoom table established by Rogers Romero during the COVID lockdown. They both love the multi-regional and multi-national participation that virtual tables can enable. Their table is structured around entries in the *Dictionary of Louisiana French (DLF)*, which provides not only definitions but contextual examples to help explain how words and phrases are used in authentic contexts. Here are some of Marlene's tips for managing a virtual table:

- The facilitator should have access to a paid Zoom account. It can be done with the free version of Zoom, but that limits the session to 45 minutes unless everyone logs out and re-enters the session. You always lose some people doing that.
- Things will run more smoothly if the **capitaine** has a certain level of computer literacy.
- If the **capitaine** has to be absent, a co-facilitator can take over hosting for that meeting. Alternatively, the **capitaine** can log in temporarily from their account and then designate someone else as host or co-host before leaving.
- The co-facilitator can also be available to receive texts, emails or calls from people having technical difficulties. That way, people having trouble signing in to a meeting can text or email that person for help while the other person opens the table. Invariably, someone needs help connecting, and the separation of duties helps keep things running smoothly.
- If you work from the DLF, keeping a file of the words that have already been examined is helpful over time. Of course, reviewing past words can help, too.
- Send out a reminder email on a regular schedule before each session.
- Be sure to specify time zones when announcing meeting times. For example, Mondays at 9 o'clock CST or CDT. Participants can potentially be from different time zones across the globe.
- Include the Zoom link to join in **each** email, even though it may not have changed. That way people don't have to go searching through older emails two minutes before the session starts.

- Include any handout document to be discussed as both an attachment **and** in the body of the email. This helps people who are less computer savvy.
- Set rules of decorum such as raising a hand to be recognized before speaking. As host, you can always mute someone, but encourage participants to mute themselves if something distracting is happening on their side.
- It's generally a good idea to strive to be apolitical. The 'mute' function is available if things get testy, but it's better if that situation does not arise.
- Generally, opening the meeting at least a half hour before the scheduled time is a good practice. Some people log in early to test their Zoom connections.
- Skip the 'waiting room' option. Having to admit participants in the waiting room is an added distraction to the host trying to facilitate the session.
- Before starting the session, there is chit-chat among participants just as there is with in-person tables. Encourage participants to do it in French.
- As with in-person tables, people take turns introducing themselves if a new attendee is present. Encourage participants to be brief so that introductions don't consume the entire session time. Attendees names do appear with on everyone's screens.
- If participants complain of not receiving group emails, remind them to check their Junk or Spam folders. Emails sent to large groups often get set automatically to recipients' Junk folders.
- Make a list of participants as they join the session and go down the list as you call on participants to speak. That way, there is less confusion about whose turn it is.
- Allowing time for questions and discussion at the end of the planned program is important. Questions are usually answered as they come up, but often at the end, we return to entries that participants want to know more about. We have a few SF speakers who can answer questions, as well as native LF speakers.
- Don't forget to laugh! Some of the DLF entries are really funny and may need to be explained to participants.

Activités communicatives

Communicative Activities

One of the challenges of finding appropriate activities for your table is that so many groups vary widely in their French language fluency. Fluent speakers naturally tend to dominate open discussion, and there is nothing wrong with this because less skilled speakers then have an opportunity to practice their listening comprehension skills and to learn new words. Ideally, though, it would be great if everyone left your table having had a chance to speak in a meaningful way at some point during the session.

The activities in this section are designed to foster participation among speakers within a wide skill range. They don't need to be the main activity of your table. You can use them as a warm-up or icebreaker at the beginning of your event, or as a way to put into use a specific vocabulary set that the group might have just discussed.

In 'teacher speak,' a communicative activity differs from a drill or lesson in that it has as its aim to get participants to use the language to communicate information or a message that has a purpose. The purpose may be as lofty as sharing one's dreams and ambitions, or it may be as playful and light-hearted as getting someone on your team to guess a secret you have. The idea is that language becomes a means to an end rather than the end itself.

Most of the communicative activities in this section have been adapted from language classroom activities and party games. You can play them to win or just to enjoy. You can adjust them to the tastes and abilities of your group.

J'AI ÉTÉ

- En bref:** • Cumulative memory game • Vocabulary building • Lots of repetition • Great for mixed-level group of speakers with strong vocabulary but not a lot of ability to string together complex sentences • Repetitive, but does not feel like a drill.
- Pour qui?:** Any number. Any level, including beginners.
- Matériel:** None required. If you have a blackboard or chart pad on which to write new words that come up, this can be helpful to many. Vocabulary should not be listed 'in order', however.
- Durée:** 10 to 20 minutes, depending on the group's interest and other programming planned.
- Descriptif:** Ideally, have participants sit in a circle so they all face each other. Tell them that they will need to pay attention and try to remember and repeat what they hear. The leader begins with a sentence. If desired, it can be written on a blackboard or tablet.

J'ai été à la grosserie et j'ai acheté....

I went to the grocery and I bought...

Then the leader finishes with an element such as: '**des bananes.**' The person next in turn continues by repeating the statement, then adding another element:

J'ai été à la grosserie et j'ai acheté des bananes....et du pain.

I went to the grocery and I bought bananas...and bread.

The next person must repeat the statement with the first two elements and then add another one:

J'ai été à la grosserie et j'ai acheté des bananes, du pain...et du riz.

I went to the grocery and I bought bananas, bread.and rice.

The game continues in this way until someone is unable to remember and name all the elements in the list. Keep in mind that the objective of the game is not to get people 'out,' but to get them to use their French, so if someone whispers a hint and the group is agreeable, it can be better to let the game continue a bit for the sake of momentum rather than stop it just for the sake of the 'rules'. When there is a slip-up, there is usually a bit of indulgent laughter. Then that person gets to start the list again with just one element.

Ex. J'ai été à la grosserie et j'ai acheté une volaille.

I went to the grocery and a chicken.

This activity could also be used after a discussion in which new vocabulary has been discussed, as the way to get people to use and pronounce the new words they've just learned. The nice part about this game is that it's not just based on

language knowledge but also on memory, so beginners might be better at it than some fluent speakers. Also, everyone is usually a bit 'relieved' when the list starts over again.

Variantes: The sentence can easily be modified to prompt different vocabulary of more specific in more general categories:

J'ai été à la boutique de linge et j'ai acheté...

I went to the clothing store and I bought...

J'ai été au WalMart et j'ai acheté....

I went to WalMart and I bought...

J'ai été au Bâton Rouge et j'ai vu....

I went to Baton Rouge and I saw...

J'ai fouillé dans ma closette et j'ai trouvé...

I dug around in my closet and I found....

J'ai été à la plage, au bois, au Mardi Gras, à l'école, à Paris, etc....

I went to the beach, the woods, to Mardi Gras, to school, to Paris, etc.....

et j'ai entendu*, j'ai mangé, j'ai trouvé, j'ai vu, etc.

and I heard, I ate, I found, I saw, etc.

*If you're emphasizing LF, remember that '**J'ai attendu** = I heard'

PIGEON VOLE

- En bref:** • A traditional children's game in south Louisiana • Emphasis on listening comprehension • Vocabulary building • Participants not required to speak.
- Pour qui?:** Any number. Beginners on up.
- Matériel:** None required, though because new vocabulary can be presented as part of the activity, visual aids such as pictures or a blackboard could enhance the game.
- Durée:** 5 to 10 minutes
- Descriptif:** Participants should all be facing the leader. If dealing with a lot of beginners, have or draw a picture of a pigeon and mimic the act of flying to explain '**Pigeon vole!**' Pigeon flies.

Ask them: '**Les pigeons volent?** (Do pigeons fly?) **Oui ou non?** (Yes or no?) **Si oui, on lève le doigt.** (If yes, raise your finger.)' The leader raises a pointer finger and moves it in a flying motion. Then he/she lowers the finger and says:

'On va jouer le jeu. Si je dis le nom de quelque chose qui vole, levez votre doigt. (We're going to play a game. If I say the name of something that flies, raise your finger.)'

Demonstrate the gesture.

'Si je dis le nom de quelque chose qui vole PAS, levez pas votre doigt. If I name something that DOESN'T fly, don't raise a finger.'

In the original version of the game, if someone raises a finger for something that does NOT fly, then that player is 'out,' but it's not necessary to eliminate players.

The leader might want to prepare ahead with pictures that can be shown at the beginning of the game to illustrate the vocabulary. Alternatively, the leader can present a picture introducing a new word while the game is taking place.

Ex.:

Moustique vole! (Mosquito flies!) Participants raise a finger.

Canard vole! (Duck flies!) Participants raise a finger.

Brique vole! (Brick flies!) Participants leave finger down.

Non! Un brique vole pas! (No, bricks don't fly.)

Papillon vole! (Butterflies fly!)

Chien vole! Non, le chien vole pas! (Dog flies! No, dogs don't fly.)

- Variantes:**
- 1) Players can take turns each calling out a statement as everyone plays along.
 - 2) Other action verbs can be used, such as 'rouler': **Char roule!** Car rolls!
Pelote roule! Ball rolls! **Les bons temps roulent!** The good times roll!

LA PYRAMIDE UN JEU DE CATÉGORIES

- En bref:** • A version of 'The \$10,000 Pyramid' seen on TV • Good practice using structures to define or paraphrase, as well as general vocabulary.
- Pour qui?:** Any number. Good for a mixed ability group.
- Matériel:** Blackboard or sentence strips and a marker. The leader can also prepare the game elements as PowerPoint slides ahead of time. Vocabulary handout 'Pour parler des catégories' (see p.108).
- Durée:** 20-30 minutes
- Descriptif:** The leader reviews phrases and structures that can be used to define, paraphrase and describe categories as presented in the handout. The object of the game is to guess the secret category after hearing examples of items that fit in that category. Before starting the activity, the leader can go over ways to talk about categories (see handout p.108) and help the group practice on some sample categories.
- Example: If the group hears '**les fraises, les pommes**' someone might guess '**les fruits**' as the category. In that case, the leader can say '**Proche**' almost , or '**C'est plus précis que ça**. (It's more precise than that.)' and continue with more examples: **les framboises, les raisins (mais pas tous les raisins!), les cerises**. The leader continues to give examples until the group guesses '**les fruits rouges**' or '**les fruits qui sont rouges**.'
- Variantes:**
- 1) To get everyone used to the activity, the leader can give examples and solicit guesses about the category from people in the group. Once everyone understands how things work, ask for a volunteer to come up and sit facing the group. Stand behind the volunteer and raise up a sign with category description so that the player cannot see it but the rest of the group can. Then, have other members of the group call out items that belong in the category until the volunteer correctly identifies the category.
 - 2) If your table likes competition, divide the group into two teams. Have team members vie to give clues to the guesser. Use a timer. Give a point to each team that gets its player to correctly guess the category within a certain time limit.
 - 3) With tables that are more advanced, they can play in pairs or small groups and make up their own categories for a partner to guess.

LA PYRAMIDE: Exemples de catégories / Sample categories

Les musiciens cajuns Cajun musicians

Les arbres qui fournissent à manger Trees that bear food

Les oiseaux Birds

Les poissons Fish

Les bébelles Toys

Les choses que tu mets dans le gombo Things you put in gumbo

Les choses qu'on voit au Mardi Gras Things you see at Mardi Gras

Les femmes blondes Blond women

Les outils Tools

Ça qu'une maîtresse d'école dit à sa classe Things a teacher says to her class

Les parties du corps Parts of the body

Les chansons tristes Sad songs

Les choses que t'achètes à la pharmacie Things you buy at the drugstore

Les choses qui roulent Things that roll

Du monde fameux aux yeux bleus. Famous people with blue eyes

Les choses qui volent Things that fly

Le manger blanc White food

Les animaux dessus l'habitation Farm animals

Les choses qu'on garde dans son garage Things you keep in your garage

Les métiers et les professions Jobs

Les choses qu'on achète avant un ouragan Things you buy before a hurricane

Les fameux chanteurs. Famous singers

Ça qu'on dit à un bébé Things you say to a baby

Les affaires pour mettre la table Things used to set a table

Les ingrédients pour faire un gâteau Things used in making a cake

Ça qui est bleu Blue things

HEUREUSEMENT, MALHEUREUSEMENT

En bref: • Warm up activity to spur creativity • As a group, participants create a story built from each other's evolving prompts • Amusing challenge for more fluent speakers and storytellers.

Pour qui: Any number. For intermediate to fluent speakers.

Matériel: Ideally, a blackboard or chart pad that everyone can see to write down the story as it grows. If working in small groups, then one person in each group can be the 'scribe' who takes down the story. However, if writing materials are not readily available, this activity can still be done just orally.

Durée: 10-15 minutes per story

Descriptif: The leader begins by telling the group that they are going to create a story together. The leader gives the prompt that sounds like a beginning of a story.

Start with something like:

'Un jour, Boudreaux était après travailler dans sa cour quand le gros vent a sifflé. Malheureusement, le vent a pris son chapeau de paille.'

One day, Boudreaux was working in his yard when a big wind blew. Unfortunately, the wind took his straw hat.

Then the leader, continues the story by prompting, **'Heureusement....'** (Luckily, fortunately...) and invites someone else to continue the story. Depending on the personality of the group, the leader can either go down the line and ask people in order to contribute, or simply ask for volunteers.

The next participant continues the story with an appropriate line, and others follow suit.

Example:

Heureusement, le chapeau a pas volé loin. C'était juste l'autre bord du chemin. Fortunately, the hat didn't go far. It was just on the other side of the road.

Malheureusement, c'était tombé dans le parc à cochon de son voisin.

Unfortunately, it had fallen in his neighbor's pig pen.

Heureusement, le chapeau a pas tombé dans la boue.

Luckily, the hat didn't fall in the mud.

Malheureusement, le gros cochon l'a mangé.

Unfortunately, the big pig ate it.

Heureusement, c'était la fête à Boudreaux cette semaine-là, et sa femme y a acheté un nouveau chapeau.

Luckily, it was Boudreaux's birthday that week, and his wife bought him a new hat.

The goal of the game is to keep the story going, and usually, the more outlandish it is, the better. If there is a lag in ideas, the leader should be ready to jump in with an idea to keep the story going until it resolves in a natural ending — or a dead end, whichever comes first.

Variantes:

While it's a good idea to do this as a whole-group activity first, the leader can prepare a variety of prompts to use as story-starters and then assign different ones to groups of 2-4 people, letting them build a story that they would then read or tell to the rest of the group at the end of the activity.

LA PARENTÉ

- En bref:** • Trivia game based on relationships between famous people • Uses vocabulary about the family • Extensive practice expressing relationships and possession.
- Pour qui?:** Any number. For all levels of fluency. With beginners you may need to review the vocabulary and structures needed. If you select the names carefully to include celebrities from an earlier time as well as those of the present, you can appeal to a group of disparate ages. If you select celebrities from a variety of domains (ex. pop culture, history, sports, Louisiana music), you can give people with various interests a chance to shine.
- Matériel:** Handout with a list of names of people who are related to each other in a variety of ways. A sample is included on the next page, but you can Google 'famous siblings in history,' 'famous in-laws,' etc. to build your own list corresponding to the interests of your group. When you create your list, include some easy matches as well as lesser-known ones. To make it more challenging, include people who are related but who have different last names.
- Durée:** Depends on organization of activity and number of names on your list. Plan on 20 minutes for group and 20 minutes for feedback.
- Descriptif:** If appropriate for your group's level, go over family vocabulary and ways to express family relatedness. If your group has a lot of beginners or people who want to learn to read French, provide a handout with a list of vocabulary for talking about family. See resource list '**La famille**' on pp.102-103.
- Provide copies of the list of names for participants, or project the list onto a screen where everyone can see it. Have participants break up into pairs or small groups of 3 or 4. If your group is multigenerational, you might want to mix up younger and older people. Explain that each person on the list of names is related to at least one other person on the list. Their task is to find as many pairs of relatives and explain how they are related. Give them a limited period of time to come up with their list.
- When time is up, ask for volunteers to take turns describing the relationship they have found. Verify if they are right. Allow other teams to challenge them if they think they are wrong before you verify.
- Variantes:**
- If your group likes competitive games, you can have them give themselves 1 point for every correct answer, and 5 points for every answer they have that no other group found.
 - If your table is not used to doing small group activities yet, try this as a whole group activity, asking for volunteers to find matches, and verify after each guess.
 - To increase talking time for all participants, let them work in pairs for ten minutes or so, then merge the pairs into groups of 4 people and have them discuss whether the statements they have come up with are correct or not. Then go over the answers as a whole group.

LA PARENTÉ: Fiche d'activité / Activity handout

Chaque personne dans la liste ci-dessous est parent avec au moins une autre personne dans la liste. Des fois c'est de la parenté biologique, des fois c'est parent par alliance. Trouve au moins 10 paires et décris lien de parenté. Each person on the list is related to at least one other person on the list, sometimes biologically, sometimes by marriage. Find at least 10 pairs of related people and describe their relationships. There are several different ways of expressing them.

Exemples possibles:

1. **Scrooge McDuck est le nonc à Huey, Louie et Dewey.** Scrooge McDuck is the uncle of Huey, Louie and Dewey. Scrooge is Huey, Louie and Dewey's uncle.
2. **Huey, Louie et Dewey sont les neveux de Scrooge McDuck.** Huey, Louis and Dewey are the nephews of Scrooge. H., L. and D. are Scrooge's nephews.
3. **Franklin Roosevelt était le mari d'Eleanor Roosevelt.** FDR was the husband of Eleanor Roosevelt. FDR was Eleanor Roosevelt's husband.
4. **Eleanor Roosevelt était la femme à Franklin Roosevelt.** ER was the wife of FDR. ER was FDR's wife.
5. **Franklin Roosevelt et Eleanor Roosevelt étaient mariés.** FDR and ER were married.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Anjelica Huston | 20. George Clooney | 39. Peyton Manning |
| 2. Annette Bening | 21. Gladys Courville | 40. Quincy Jones |
| 3. Arch Manning | 22. Glenn Close | 41. Rashida Jones |
| 4. Archie Manning | 23. Goldie Hawn | 42. Ravi Shankar |
| 5. Arthur Miller | 24. Huey, Louie et Dewey | 43. Richard Burton |
| 6. Brook Shields | 25. Humphrey Bogart | 44. Riley Keough |
| 7. Christine Balfa | 26. Jerry Lee Lewis | 45. Rod Bernard |
| 8. Clifton Chenier | 27. Jimmy Swaggart | 46. Rodney Balfa |
| 9. Cleveland Chenier | 28. Joe Dimaggio | 47. Rosemary Clooney |
| 10. Daniel Day Lewis | 29. John Huston | 48. Sady Courville |
| 11. Dennis McGee | 30. Judy Garland | 49. Scrooge McDuck |
| 12. Dewey Balfa | 31. Kate Hudson | 50. Shane Bernard |
| 13. Dionne Warwick | 32. Lauren Bacall | 51. Shirley MacLaine |
| 14. Eleanor Roosevelt | 33. Liza Minelli | 52. Sophia Coppola |
| 15. Elizabeth Taylor | 34. Marilyn Monroe | 53. Stanley Tucci |
| 16. Elvis Presley | 35. Mary Steenburgen | 54. Ted Danson |
| 17. Emily Blunt | 36. Mickey Gilley | 55. Theodore Roosevelt |
| 18. Francis Ford Coppola | 37. Nicolas Cage | 56. Warren Beatty |
| 19. Franklin Roosevelt | 38. Nora Jones | 57. Whitney Houston |

LA PARENTÉ: Notes

Philippe est le frère à Claudette. Philippe is Claudette's brother.

Claudette est la soeur de Philippe. Claudette is Philippe's sister.

- Notice that there is no such thing as 'apostrophe S' to show possession in French. 'Mary's father' is expressed as 'the father of Mary' in French. In the same way, 'Mary's house' is expressed as 'the house of Mary.'
- You can use either **à** or **de** to express relationships in Louisiana French.
- **De** can elide to become **d'** in front of a vowel sound.
- Il **est** = He is. Ils **sont** = They **are**.
- If the person is deceased, use the imperfect tense:
 - Pierre **était** (was) or
 - Marie et Alphé **étaient** / **étiont** (were)
- To show respect for deceased people, especially recently deceased people or people you know, use **défunt** (m.) or **défunte** (f.) in front of their name.

Ex. **Défunt** John Delafosse **était le père à** Geno Delafosse.

- To say 'related to' use the expression '**parent avec.**'
- To say 'distantly related to' use '**petit parent avec.**'
- **Femme** can mean both 'woman' and 'wife.'
- **Garçon** can mean both 'boy' and 'son,' depending on the context.
- Pronunciation hints:
 - **Soeur** rhymes with **fleur**.
 - The French word for 'husband' is pronounced just like the French woman's name **Marie**. Listen carefully for context clues to avoid confusion of the two.
 - **Femme** is pronounced a bit as if it rhymes with the man's name "Tom".
 - The term **oncle** is almost always pronounced **nonc** and typically represented that way in LF writing too.

LA PARENTÉ: Clé pour l'activité / Answer Key

Note: These statements are meant only to verify the veracity of relationships between the people in the list. They do not list every possible correct statement about those relationships.

1. Daniel Day Lewis est le genre de défunt Arthur Miller.
2. Glenn Close est la cousine de Brooke Shields.
3. Francis Ford Coppola est le nonc à Nicolas Cage et le père à Sophia Coppola, ça fait que Nicolas Cage est le cousin à Sophia Coppola.
4. Franklin Roosevelt était le cousin de Theodore Roosevelt et le mari et la cousine d'Éleanor.
5. Whitney Houston était la cousine de Dionne Warwick.
6. Jimmy Swaggert, Mickey Gilley et Jerry Lee Lewis sont tous des cousins.
7. Christine Balfa est la fille de Dewey Balfa et la nièce de Rodney Balfa.
8. (Défunt) Rodney Balfa est le frère de Dewey Balfa. Rodney était aussi le nonc à Christine.
9. Annette Bening est la femme de Warren Beatty. Annette est aussi la belle-soeur à Shirley MacLaine.
10. Warren Beatty est le frère à Shirley MacLaine
11. Anjelica Huston est la fille à John Huston.
12. Shane Bernard est le garçon à (défunt) Rod Bernard.
13. Sady Courville était le beau-frère à Dennis McGee.
14. Gladys Courville était la femme à Dennis McGee et la soeur à Sady.
15. Mary Steenburgen est la femme à Ted Danson.
16. Quincy Jones est le père de Rashida Jones.
17. Nora Jones est la fille de Ravi Shankar.
18. Kate Hudson est la fille de Goldie Hawn.
19. Huey, Louie et Dewey sont les neveux de Nonc Scrooge McDuck.
20. Emily Blunt est la belle-soeur de Stanley Tucci. Tucci est marié avec Felicity Blunt, la soeur à Emily.
21. Liza Minelli est la fille de défunte Judy Garland.
22. Riley Keough est la petite-fille à Elvis Presley.
23. Archie Manning est le grand-père d'Arch Manning. Peyton est le nonc à Arch.
24. Richard Burton était le mari d'Elizabeth Taylor.
25. Clifton Chenier était le frère de Cleveland Chenier.
26. Marilyn Monroe s'est mariée avec Joe DiMaggio puis plus tard avec Arthur Miller.
27. Humphrey Bogart était le mari à Lauren Bacall.
28. Rosemary Clooney était la tante de George Clooney.

LE SAC DE MYSTÈRES

- En bref:** • Simple game of identifying objects by touch • Small group activity • Practice using descriptive adjectives • Requires props.
- Pour qui?:** 6 to 8. Beginners to mixed-level group.
- Matériel:** Bag with different small items in it. Ex. Cotton ball, fork, small ball, pencil, tiny book, sponge, small bottle, etc.
- Durée:** 15 to 20 minutes
- Descriptif:** Place all items in a paper bag. Participants, one at a time, reach in the bag and select one item to hold without removing or naming it. The player then describes the item, trying to get others to guess what it is. The rest of group tries to name item from description given.
- Ex. C'est quelque chose de dur. C'est long, peut-être 5 pouces de long. Un bout est pointu. C'est un crayon.**
- Variantes:** Have several bags of items prepared. Larger number of participants play in several small groups.

Un grand merci à Yvonne Bogan qui a partagé cette activité.

UN PORTRAIT RACONTE UNE HISTOIRE

- En bref:** • Description of elements in pictures • Making inferences • Paying attention to details • Imagination stretcher.
- Pour qui?:** Any number. If a large group, students can work in pairs or small groups. Better for intermediate and above, though beginners can describe in simple sentences.
- Matériel:** Pages from magazines or printed pictures from the internet with scenes conducive to describing. You can Google “pictures that tell a story” or even specific scenes from movies. You may have pictures in your own photo collection that would work.
- Durée:** 15 to 30 minutes depending on group size
- Descriptif:** Ideally, do the activity with the whole group first to give them a model. Show the picture and ask people what they see. Answers may just be one word. (**femme, garçon, caresse, content**, etc.) With beginners, the leader can simply ask the group to come up with a list of words that fit the picture, nouns and adjectives. The leader can enlist the help of more fluent speakers others to build those words into complete sentences:

Il y a une femme avec un garçon.

La femme caresse le garçon.

Une maman est avec son fils.



With a group of fluent speakers, try encouraging people to support their statements.

Participant: **C'est l'hiver.** It's winter.

Leader: **Comment tu sais?** How do you know?

P: **Ça fait froid.** It's cold.

L: **Pourquoi tu dis ça?** Why do you say that?

P: **La femme porte un capot.** The lady's wearing a coat.

P: **C'est la France.** It's France.

L: **Comment tu sais ça?**

P: **Le garçon porte un béret.** The boy is wearing a beret.

You can then try to get them to imagine/infer things about what is happening in the picture. There are no 'right' answers, but the goal is to get them to support what they're saying with evidence.

P: Une maman dit au revoir à son garçon.

A mother is saying goodbye to her son.

L: Comment tu sais?

P: Elle l'embrasse. Elle est triste. Il y a un train derrière eux-autres. She hugs him. She's sad. There is a train behind them.

P: La femme est riche. The lady is rich.

L: Pourquoi tu dis ça?

P: Elle porte un capot en fourrure. She's wearing a fur coat.

As a final step, you can ask participants to imagine and fill in the rest of the story. Who is leaving whom? Or are they both leaving? Why is the mother sad but the boy smiling? Where are they going?

Variantes:

1 Do this activity in pairs with different pictures for each pair. Have them question each other to make sure they defend their statements. When everyone is finished, have each group get up and tell the story or give the description they created that goes with their picture.

2 Do this activity with works of abstract art. Participants can let their imaginations run wild trying to do concrete descriptions of things that are not meant to be described as concrete things.

Un grand merci à Yvonne Bogan qui a partagé l'activité adaptée ici.

TROUVE QUELQU'UN

En bref: • Get people up and moving around • Good mixer • Great icebreaker for a new group or new season • Participants do an oral survey • Good practice transforming 2nd person (you) questions into 3rd person (he/she/they) statements.

Pour qui?: Any number. For intermediate to fluent speakers, or beginners with coaching.

Matériel: Handout with survey list of statements in the form '**Trouve quelqu'un qui....**' Find someone who... When making up questions, try to avoid criteria that are too general ex. 'Find someone who is married' or too specific ex. 'Find someone who lived in Singapore.' Two sample handouts are featured on the next pages.

Durée: 15-20 minutes for the survey. 15 minutes to report on results of survey.

Descriptif: The leader explains to the group that they are going to get to know each other a little better by doing **une enquête** among the group. Give a copy of the handout to each person. Explain that they will have to find X number of people who fit one of the criteria. Decide on the number by the amount of time you have for the activity. They will do this by walking around the room asking people guided questions.

If you are working with beginners, point out that each statement forms the basis for the question they will ask:

Survey task: **Trouve quelqu'un qui a un chien.**

Find someone who has a dog.

Question asked: **(Est-ce que) t'as un chien?**

Do you have a dog?

Participants circulate in the room asking people a question of their choice. If someone answers **oui**, they ask the person's name and write it on their handout next to the appropriate survey question. Then they ask the follow-up question:

Quel est son nom? What is its name?

You can also include negative statements in the activity. For emerging learners, point out that if there is a negative statement in the handout, it will not require a negative question:

Survey task: **Trouve quelqu'un qui reste pas à Lafayette**

Find someone who does not live in Lafayette.

Question asked: **(Est-ce que) tu restes à Lafayette?**

Do you live in Lafayette?

In the case of a negative question like the one above, the participant is looking for someone who will answer '**non**' to the question.

After the allotted time is over, instruct everyone to sit down. Ask for volunteers to tell something they have discovered about someone else in the group.

Partagez quelque chose que vous avez découvert sur quelqu'un d'autre.

Share something that you've discovered about someone else.

J'ai découvert que Shane a un chien. Son nom est Fido

I discovered that Shane has a dog. His name is Fido.

J'ai découvert que Joanne a de la famille en Californie.

Sa fille reste à Fresno.

I found out that Joanne has family in California.

Her daughter lives in Fresno.

On va se connaître mieux!

Circulate in the group, trying to find people who fit the descriptions. Write the name of the person in the blank, then ask the follow-up question to get more info. Try to find different people to fit at least five of the descriptions.

Trouve quelqu'un qui..... / Find someone who...

1...a déjà travaillé dans un restaurant: _____

Quel restaurant? _____

2...a des chevrettes dans son DEEP-FREEZE: _____

Combien de livres (= *pounds*)? _____

3...a un chien _____

Quel est le nom du chien? _____

4...reste **pas** dans la ville de Lafayette: _____

Ayò il/elle reste? _____ (à Royville? aux Opelousas? à Carencro? à Scott?)

5...a visité le Canada: _____

Quelle province? _____ (le Québec? le Nouveau-Brunswick? l'Ontario?
la Nouvelle-Écosse?)

6...a mangé des fruits de mer cette semaine: _____

Quelle qualité? _____ (des huîtres? des chevrettes? des crabes? du
poisson?)

7...fait un sport _____

Équel? _____ (le tennis? le golf? la natation? le ski?)

8...a pas été né(e)n Louisiane _____

Ayò il/elle a été né(e) ? _____

9...a de la famille en Californie: _____

Qui? _____ (son garçon? son cousin? sa tante? ses petits-
enfants?)

On va se connaître mieux!

Circulate in the group, trying to find people who fit the descriptions. Write the name of the person in the blank, then ask the follow-up question to get more info. Try to find different people to fit at least five of the descriptions.

Trouve quelqu'un qui..... / Find someone who...

1...peut jouer d'un instrument de musique:_____

Équel?_____ (le piano? l'accordéon? le violon? la basse?)

2...a déjà été à la chasse:_____

Quel animal?_____ (aux canards? aux chevreuils? aux écureuils? aux tourtes?)

3...a un portrait d'un bébé dessus son phone:_____

Qui est le bébé?_____ (son petit-enfant? sa nièce? sa fille? l'enfant d'un ami?)

4...parle une langue autre que l'anglais ou le français:_____

Équelle? Quelle langue? _____ (l'espagnol? l'italien? le chinois? le créole? l'arabe?)

5...a été dans le service militaire:_____

Quelle branche?_____ (l'armée? les forces aériennes? la marine?)

6...est après lire un livre en ce moment:_____

Quel en est le titre?_____

7...a déjà resté à la campagne:_____

Ayò et quand?_____

8...a un char blanc:_____

Quelle marque (*brand*) ?_____

9...a de la famille au Texas:_____

Qui?_____ (une cousine? sa nièce? son frère? son oncle?)

CONVERSATIONS GUIDÉES

- En bref:** • Personal interviews with a partner • Partial scripts to guide conversation. Good for emerging learners • Practice using targeted vocabulary and structures.
- Pour qui?:** Any number. Even number is better so everyone can work in pairs. If the group is an odd number, then the leader can be part of a pair.
- Matériel:** A handout for each participant featuring a list of open-ended questions and possible answers. See sample sheets on the next pages.
- Durée:** 20 minutes or longer
- Descriptif:** The leader explains that participants will work in pairs to interview each other on a topic. Explain that the handout is a guide to structuring the questions and answers they will likely use.
- You may want to go over the handout before the activity starts.
- The group then breaks up into pairs, each taking turns playing the role of interviewer and interviewee.
- Variantes:** If you have someone in the group who can serve as your resource person, ask people if new words came up in their conversations. List them on a board if you have one. Additionally, if they have questions about words they would like to have used but didn't know, this would be the time to entertain the question '**Comment tu dis...?** / How do you say...?'
- If time permits, ask each person to mention one or two new things they've learned about the person they interviewed. Point out that they can use expressions such as:

J'ai appris que.... I learned that....

J'ai découvert que.... I discovered that...

Je savais pas que.... I didn't know that....

*Merci à Marie Ducôté d'avoir proposée et partagée cette activité
et les questionnaires qui suivent.*

Merci aussi à David Cheramie qui les a traduits.

Rencontrer du monde / Meeting people		
1	Quoi c'est ton nom? <i>What's your name ?</i> Ayoù tu restes ? <i>Where do you live?</i>	Mon nom, c'est.. Moi, je m'appelle... (SF) Je reste en/à.... J'habite à (SF)
2	D'où viens-tu? (SF) Ayoù tu deviens ? <i>Where are you from?</i>	Moi, je viens de.... <i>I'm from/ I come from...</i>
3	Ayoù t'as été né(e) ? <i>Where were you born?</i> Combien de temps t'as resté là ? <i>How long did you live there?</i>	J'ai été né(e) en/à.... Je suis né(e) en/à (SF) J'étais là jusqu'à j'avais # ans <i>I was there until I was # years old.</i>
4	T'as des enfants? Des tits-enfants ? <i>Do you have kids? Grands?</i> T'as combien d'enfants et de tits-enfants? <i>How many children & grandkids do you have?</i>	Non, j'ai pas d'enfants. <i>I don't have any kids.</i> J'ai # enfants. <i>I have # children.</i> J'ai # tits enfants. <i>I have # grandkids.</i>
5	Quoi tu fais comme travail/ouvrage? <i>What do you do for work?</i> Quoi t'as fait comme travail/ouvrage ? <i>What did you do for work?</i>	Je suis à la retraite. <i>I'm retired.</i> Je suis / J'étais... <i>I am/I was...</i> ingénieur, maîtresse, infirmière, fermier, comptable Je travaille dans/avec... <i>I work in/with....</i>
6	Depuis quand tu parles français ? <i>How long have you been speaking French?</i>	Je parle français depuis l'âge de # ans. <i>I've been speaking French since age #.</i> J'ai commencé à apprendre le français il y a # ans. <i>I started learning # years ago.</i>
7	Pourquoi tu parles français ou pourquoi tu veux parler français ? <i>Why do you speak or why do you want to speak French?</i>	Je parle français parce que... <i>I speak French because...</i> Je veux parler français parce que... <i>I want to speak french because...</i>
8	Comment t'as appris à parler français ? <i>How did you learn to speak French?</i>	J'ai pris des classes à l'école. <i>I took classes in school.</i> J'use des applications sur mon téléphone <i>I use apps on my phone.</i> Je parle/J'ai parlé avec... <i>I speak/spoke with...</i> Dans ma famille. <i>In my family.</i> Chez nous-autres <i>In our home.</i> Quand j'étais jeune. <i>When I was young.</i> Avec mes grandparents <i>With my grandparents.</i> le langage / la langue <i>the language</i>
9	Tu parles bien le français ? <i>Do you speak French well?</i>	Pas vraiment, je suis débutant(e). <i>Not really, I'm a newbie.</i> Assez bien <i>pretty well</i> Un tit peu. / Un tit brin. <i>A little bit.</i> Je comprends. <i>I understand.</i> Je comprends pas. <i>I don't understand.</i> Je sus après apprendre. <i>I'm learning.</i>
10	Tu m'as compris? <i>Did you understand me ?</i> Tu l'as compris ? <i>Did you understand him/her?</i> T'as compris ça ? <i>Did you understand that?</i>	Non, j'ai pas compris. <i>I didn't understand.</i> Tu peux répéter ça ? <i>Can you repeat that?</i> Hein? <i>Excuse me, I didn't understand, could you please repeat/explain?</i>

L'année passée et l'année qui vient / Last year vs. this one		
PRESENT		
1	Quoi c'est t'après faire droite asteur? <i>What are you doing right now?</i>	Je sus après.... parler avec..., manger, boire..., venir.... <i>I'm talking with..., I'm eating... or drinking ... or I'm coming to...</i>
2	Comment ça va asteur /aujourd'hui? <i>How are you doing right now/ today?</i>	Mieux que ça et les prêtres seraient jaloux. <i>Any better than this, the priests would be jealous.</i>
3	D'habitude, quoi c'est tu fais, chaque Jour de l'An? <i>What do you do every New Year's Day?</i>	D'habitude, je vas... <i>I go...</i> , Je reste <i>I stay...</i> Je fais rien. <i>I don't do anything.</i>
4	Quoi ce que tu manges d'habitude, le Jour de l'an? <i>What do you typically eat on New Year's Day?</i>	D'habitude je mange ... <i>I usually eat...</i>
5	T'as une résolution pour le Nouvel An? Si oui, quoi c'est? <i>Do you have a new Year's Resolution? If so, what is it?</i>	
6	Comment tu fêtes le Mardi Gras? <i>How do you celebrate Mardi Gras?</i>	
PAST		
7	Comment c'était ton Crismisse? <i>How was your Christmas?</i>	
8	Quoi c'était la meilleure chose qu'a arrivée l'année dernière pour vous ou votre famille? <i>What was the best thing that happened during last year for you or your family?</i>	La meilleure chose qu'a arrivée était que.. <i>The best thing that happened was that...</i>
9	Quoi c'était la chose la plus dure qu'a passe l'année dernière ? <i>What was the hardest thing that happened last year?</i>	L'année passée, j'ai été à / au... <i>Last year, I went to...</i>
10	Ayoù t'as été et quoi t'as fait la Veille du Jour de l'An? <i>Where did you go and what did you do on New Year's Eve ?</i>	On a été chez mon garçon... chez ma belle-mère. <i>We went to my son's house..., my mother in law's house.</i> feux d'artifice <i>fireworks</i>
11	Quoi c'est t'as fait pour le jour de l'An? <i>What did you do on New Year's Day?</i>	J'ai été à / au... avec ... <i>I went to... with...</i>
FUTURE		
12	Ayoù tu souhaites d'aller cette année? <i>Where do you hope to go this year?</i>	Je souhaite aller à / au.... Je vas aller à / au.... <i>I'm going to go to...</i> Je vas à / au.... <i>I'm going to...</i>
13	Quoi c'est quelque chose qui sera différent cette année ? <i>What is something that will be different this year?</i>	
14	À quelles tables françaises vas-tu aller cette année ? <i>Which French Tables are you going to go to this year?</i>	Je vas aller à la table au Centre-Ville vendredi. <i>I'm going to go to the Downtown table Friday.</i>

Love & Marriage - bonne fête de Saint-Valentin

Pose des questions à ta droite. Et après, réponds...	Les idées pour aider à répondre
1 Est-ce que t'es marié(e)? Quoi c'est le nom de ton mari/ ta femme? T'as une belle/un beau/un(e) prétendu(e)? Quoi c'est son nom? <i>Are you married? What is your wife's /husband's name? Or Are you dating/courting someone? What is her/his name?</i>	Ouais, je suis marié(e) avec.... Non, Je suis pas marié. <i>Yes, i am married to.... No, i'm not married.</i> Je suis divorcé(e)/séparé(e). <i>I am divorced/ separated.</i> Je suis veuf/veuve. <i>I am widowed.</i> Ouais, j'ai une belle/ j'ai un beau. Son nom c'est _____. <i>His/her name is ...</i>
2 Ça fait combien de temps que t'es marié? Dans quelle année vous-autres s'a/s'est marié(s) ? <i>How long have you been married? In What year did you get married?</i>	Je m'ai marié en 1990. On est marié depuis 1990. <i>I got married in X. I've/We've been married since X.</i> Je suis marié ça fait 35 ans. Ça fait 35 ans qu'on est mariés. <i>I've been married X years. We've been...</i>
3 Comment t'as rencontré ta femme/ ton mari/ ta belle/ ton beau? Comment vous-autres s'a rencontré/ s'est rencontrés ? <i>How did you and your spouse (or your sweetie) meet?</i>	On s'a/s'est rencontrés à l'école.... à l'église.... en ligne... au bal...au collège....à l'ouvrage <i>We met at school, at church, on line, at a dance, in college, at work.</i>
4 Combien de temps vous-autres s'a fréquenté/ a sorti ensemble/s'a courtoisé avant de vous marier? <i>How long did y'all go out before getting married?</i>	On s'a fréquenté/a sorti ensemble/on s'a courtoisé (pour) quelques mois/ trois ans <i>We went out forX months, years, etc.</i>
5 Quoi c'est que vous-autres faisait pour vous amuser quand vous-autres se courtoisait? <i>What did y'all do for fun when you were courting?</i> Et asteur? <i>How about now?</i> Quoi c'est que vous-autres fait pour vous amusez?	On habitude aller...<i>We used to go...</i> au bal, aux parties de pelotes, au cinéma, à la pêche <i>to the dance, to ball games, to the movies, fishing</i> On aimait....<i>We liked to...</i> cuire, jouer aux cartes, manger au restaurant, guetter le TV, visiter avec des amis <i>cook, play cards, eat out in restaurants, watch TV, visit friends</i>
6 Équand c'est que t'as connu/su pour sûr que c'était elle, la femme pour toi ? (ou)que c'était lui l'homme pour toi ? <i>When did you know he/she was the one for you?</i>	Moi, j'ai connu/su la première fois qu'elle.... Quand lui, il <i>I knew the first time she... I knew when he....</i>
7 Quoi c'est le meilleur cadeau que t'as jamais reçu pour la Saint Valentin ? Équel c'est le plus mauvais? <i>What was the best Valentine gift you have ever received? What was the worst?</i>	Le meilleur cadeau que j'ai jamais reçu, je crois que c'était Le plus mauvais cadeau que j'ai jamais eu c'était un(e)...
8 Vous-autres va sortir au restaurant ou faire quelque chose de spécial pour la fête de Valentin? <i>Will y'all go out to eat or do something special for Valentine's?</i> Si oui, ayoù? <i>If so, where?</i> Si oui, quoi? <i>If so, what?</i>	Non! Tous les restaurants sont beaucoup trop pleins ! <i>No! All the restaurants are much too full!</i> On va cuire chez nous. <i>We will cook at home</i> Oui, on va toujours chez* Charley G, au Thai Kitchen (*chez + name of person, so chez Mandez, chez Zia, but au Vestal, au Blue Basil)

Ressources

Resources

The material in this section of the guide offers texts that can serve as jumping-off points for discussion. We have tried to include a selection of works whose reading level is readily accessible, even for emerging learners, but interesting enough to attract the attention of fluent speakers. Most of them are relatively short, which is important to consider because many tables have time constraints. They include creative works as well as transcriptions of interviews.

- **Dictons** Old sayings, maxims, proverbs
- **Poèmes** Works in verse, some that rhyme and some that seem more like prose.
- **Short stories** Tales, jokes and real-life narratives
- **Chansons** Songs
- **Vocabulaire par fonction** Lists of words and structures that are organized by theme or by the purpose of the communication

Dictons Sayings

Dictons are popular sayings, also known as proverbs or maxims. They are short, pithy statements. **Dictons** sometimes express a superstition, but they are usually meant to impart a bit of folk wisdom in a situation. The French word **dicton** is also sometimes spelled **dit-on**, which means “they say....”.

Here are a few examples with both their literal and metaphorical meanings:

Jamais deux sans trois.

Literal: Never two without three.

Metaphorical: Bad (and sometimes good) things happen in threes.

Tout macaque trouve son petit joli.

Literal: Every monkey thinks its baby is beautiful.

Metaphorical: All parents find their own kids beautiful.
By extension, we tend to ignore faults in our own creations, homes, ideas, etc.

There are lots of simple things you can do with **dictons**.

- Make them part of your routine. Present a ‘**dicton du jour**’ at the beginning of each meeting. Either select one from the list that follows, or ask for volunteers to take turns presenting one that they know from their own experience. Spend a few minutes talking about both its literal meaning and its metaphorical one. See if they can think of English **dictons** that have the same metaphorical meaning but use different imagery.
- Once you’ve looked at a dozen or so of these at your meetings, ask attendees in small groups or pairs to pick a **dicton** and think up a scenario that would illustrate it (i.e. come up with a story to go with the moral). Then have them describe their scenario to the whole table and see who can guess the **dicton** in question.
- As a variant of the activity above, write **dictons** on slips sheets of paper and have small groups draw a **dicton** at random. Tell them to invent a scenario (as in the previous activity), then have them dramatize it as a brief skit for the rest of the group.
- Contribute to the body of knowledge about Louisiana French. Keep a running list of sayings as your group comes up with them. Share them with other tables or on social media.

Dictons I		
Dicton	Literal translation	Metaphorical meaning
Chien qui va à la chasse perd sa place.	<i>Dog that goes hunting loses its place.</i>	When you abandon your place (or something else you have), you lose it.
Il faut manger les grillots avec le tactac.	<i>You have to eat the unpopped kernels with the popped popcorn.</i>	We have to take the good with the bad.
Chacun prêche pour son saint.	<i>Everyone preaches for their own saint.</i>	We all have our own causes and favorites.
La poule qui chante est celle qui a pondue.	<i>The hen that sings is the one that laid the egg.</i>	The person who protests the loudest is likely the guilty one.
Jamais deux sans trois.	<i>Never two without three.</i>	Catastrophes happen in threes.
La beauté apporte pas à dîner.	<i>Beauty doesn't bring you dinner.</i>	Don't be seduced by appearances, particularly in love.
Prends mari, prends pays.	<i>Take husband, take country.</i>	When you marry, you marry your spouse's family, too.
Petit enfant, petite misère; grand enfant, grande misère.	<i>Small child, small troubles; big child, big troubles.</i>	The problems of your children are nothing compared to the kinds of problems they can have as they age.
Cheval donné, on doit pas regarder la bride.	<i>With a gift horse, you don't look at the bridle.</i>	"Don't look a gift horse in the mouth."
Chaque chien hale sa couenne.	<i>Every dog hauls his own skin.</i>	We each have our own burdens to carry.
Chaque chien a son jour/sa chance.	<i>Every dog has his day/his chance.</i>	We all have opportunities/success/good luck at some point.
Le cheval reste dans l'écurie, le mulet dans la savane.	<i>The horse stays in the stable, the mule in the pasture.</i>	We each have our place in society. Or do we???
Couper les oreilles au mulet en fait pas un cheval.	<i>Cutting the ears off of a mule does not turn it into a horse.</i>	Changing one's appearance does not change one's nature.
Si on peut pas monter cheval, on monte mulet.	<i>If you can't ride a horse, you ride a mule.</i>	You have to make do with what you have.
Si on peut pas téter maman, il faut téter mère.	<i>If you can't breastfeed from your mother, you nurse from your grandmother.</i>	You have to make do with what you have.
Où il y a des os, il y a des chiens.	<i>Where there are bones, there are dogs.</i>	"Where there's smoke, there's fire."
Chaque chien gratte pour son os.	<i>Every dog scratches for its bone.</i>	We each have our own burdens to carry.

Dictons II

Dicton	Literal translation	Metaphorical meaning
Chaque hibou aime son bébé.	<i>Every owl loves its baby.</i>	We all love our own children, and by extension, our possessions, tribe, etc.
Tout macaque trouve son petit joli.	<i>Every monkey thinks its baby is beautiful.</i>	
Crache en l'air, ça te tombe sur le bout du nez.	<i>Spit in the air, and it falls back down on the end of your nose.</i>	When you criticize others, it can come back to haunt you.
Dos brillant, ventre criant.	<i>Shining back, crying stomach.</i>	This is a critique of people who spend all their money on clothes and appearances, but don't take care of the necessities.
Pèse bouton, paie couillon.	<i>Press the button and pay, fool.</i>	This is a critique of complicated, new-fangled gadgets that often malfunction easily.
Le prêtre dit pas sa messe deux fois.	<i>The priest doesn't say his Mass twice.</i>	"I'm not going to say it twice!!"
Le Bon Dieu descend pas pour fouetter / bâcher.	<i>God does not come down to whip/beat.</i>	Vengeance is not immediate. It sometimes comes down the road.
Mets pas ton doigt entre l'arbre et l'écorce.	<i>Don't put your finger between the tree and the bark.</i>	Don't get mixed up in the affairs of married couples, close friends, etc. Mind your own business.
En parlant du diable, on voit sa queue.	<i>In speaking of the Devil, we see his tail.</i>	Said when someone you're talking about appears.
En parlant des anges, on voit leurs ailes.	<i>In speaking of the angels, we see their wings.</i>	
Quand on parle de la bête, on voit sa tête.	<i>When we speak of the beast, we see its head.</i>	
Jeu de chien tourne en bataille.	<i>Dog games end up in dog fights.</i>	This is a reminder to children that rough-housing play often ends up in real fights.
Jeu de chien, jeu de vilain.	<i>Dog game, ugly game.</i>	
Cinq sous commencent la piastre. / Cinq-sous commence la piastre.	<i>Five cents is the start of the dollar.</i>	"Rome wasn't built in a day." It takes time to do most worthwhile things.
Le donneur de conseils est pas le payeur.	<i>The giver of advice is not the one who pays.</i>	"Advice is free." Be skeptical of advice that comes from people who don't have to face the consequences of their advice.
Tout est bien qui finit bien.	<i>All's well that ends well.</i>	When the outcome is good, we can forget about how we got there.

Poèmes Poems

Why use poems at your table?

- **Focus.** A poem related to the theme you're discussing can be a great way to bring attention to the topic.
- **Word cloud.** If your group likes to study language, the elements of a poem provide a set of words used in specific ways and in specific relation to each other. Words can change meaning depending on their context, and poems are a great illustration of that.
- **Model.** A poem can be a jumping-off point for another activity. Can your group create poems in the same style or structure, for example?
- **Fun!** Poems, like songs and stories, can be sad and serious, but they can also be humorous or silly word play just for the pleasure of it.

While French poetry is widely accessible through books and the Internet, not everyone is aware of the works that have been written by Louisiana Francophone and Creolophone poets. We have provided you with a few examples that we think might be interesting to read at your table. With some of them we've included suggestions of activities that might accompany them, but you don't have to turn them into a lesson. You can just enjoy reading and listening to them. These works are all short and written in a French that is accessible to most intermediate speakers.

Leçon du bon français

C'est nécessaire dire:

"Je vais," plutôt que "Je vas,"

"Près de," plutôt que "au ras,"

"Beaucoup," plutôt que "un tas."

Un tas du monde oublie le "ne" avec le "pas."

Écoute, c'est:

"Attendre," pas "espérer,"

"Pleurer," pas "brailler,"

"Penser," pas "jongler."

Je pense que t'as jamais jonglé de ça.

Apprends:

"Lentement," au lieu de "doucement,"

"Gentil," au lieu de "vaillant,"

"Beaucoup," au lieu de "joliment."

L'essence ce n'est pas du parfum, tu vois.

Étudie cette liste:

"Une piastre," c'est "un dollar,"

C'est une "voiture," pas un "char,"

Une "fête" c'est un "anniversaire,"

C'est "pourquoi," pas "quo' faire."

L'essence va dans ton char, rappelle-toi!

Tu me demandes quo' faire

Tout ça, c'est nécessaire.

Juste jingle comment vaillant ça serait

Si tu rencontrais un vrai Français.

Dégât

Acadie Tropicale, Center for Louisiana Studies, 1983

Dégât est le nom de plume de Christy Dugas Maraist de la paroisse St. Martin.

Leçon du bon français

Français louisianais vs. français standard dans "Leçon du bon français"		
LOUISIANE	FRANCE	ANGLAIS
au ras de	près de	<i>near</i> (prép.)
un tas	beaucoup	<i>a lot</i> (adv.)
le monde	les gens	<i>people</i>
espérer	attendre	<i>wait</i>
attendre	entendre	<i>to hear</i>
brailler	pleurer	<i>to cry</i>
pleurer	pleurer	<i>to cry</i>
jongler	penser	<i>to think</i>
penser	penser	<i>to think</i>
doucement	lentement	<i>slowly</i>
doucement	doucement	<i>gently; quietly</i>
vaillant/vaillante	gentil/gentille	<i>nice</i>
l'essence (n.f.)	le parfum	<i>perfume</i>
le gaz	l'essence (n.f.)	<i>gasoline</i>
joliment (adv.)	beaucoup	<i>quite, pretty</i> (adv.)
une piastre [pjas]	un dollar	<i>a dollar</i>
un char	une voiture	<i>a car</i>
ma fête	mon anniversaire	<i>my birthday</i>
une fête	une fête	<i>a saint's day, religious holiday</i>
leur anniversaire	leur anniversaire de mariage	<i>their wedding anniversary</i>
quoi faire / quo' faire	pourquoi	<i>why</i>
par rapport à	à cause de	<i>because of</i>
pourquoi	pourquoi	<i>why</i>
le gros char	le train	<i>the train</i>

Veiller le corps

Dans le sud de la Louisiane on a l'habitude
De veiller les corps.
Les dames s'assisent dans la grande salle
Où se trouve le corps,
Les hommes se rassemblent dans le vestibule
En dehors.

Les dames parlent des fleurs:
"Oh! Les fleurs que Orta a données sont belles."
"T'as vu le bouquet que la famille à Georges a envoyé?"

Les hommes parlent de la récolte:
"La récolte sera bonne c't' année,
On a eu juste assez de pluie."
"Dieu merci, on a pas eu de sécheresse
Comme l'année passée."
Ça parle des légumes, ça fume
Il y en a qui donnent de l'argent
Pour faire dire des messes.

Ça vient, ça sort,
Ça veille le corps.

Carol Doucet

Carol Doucet. *La charrue: Poésies*. Center for Louisiana Studies, 1982.

Premiers bourgeons

Premiers bourgeons du printemps
chansons au bout du pêcher
le figuier, le mûrier.
J'entends leur refrain,
“L'hiver est fini, vienne la verdure”.

Seul le pacanier chante pas.

Zachary Richard

Richard, Zachary. *Faire récolte*. Éditions Perce-Neige, 1997.

Ce poème fait référence à une croyance populaire bien connue en Louisiane en ce qui concerne les signes naturels qui marquent le changement des saisons. Tu peux expliquer cette croyance?

This poem alludes to a well-known folk belief in Louisiana about signs of the changing seasons. Can you explain it in French? Do you know other 'signs' in nature that predict weather?

Nénaine Zoot

2006

Pas instruite qu'alle était
mais ces paroles peinturaient un portrait
quand alle a appelé
une bande de petits bébés
des nouveaux nés
qui pleuraient à l'hôpital
"Ça sonnait comme un bal de rainettes"
a disait...

Pas instruite qu'alle était
mais ses observations peinturaient un portrait
"Ayoù le diable?" a demandait
"On entend pus parler de lui..."

"Et les bois-le?
Comment ça se fait ça un bois?
Moi, j'crois que c'est les petits oiseaux qui apportent les graines
tout partout.
Et c'est comme ça que ça se fait ça,
un bois,
moi, j'crois."

Pas instruite qu'alle était,
mais ces pensées peinturaient un portrait.

"Ouais, j'en ai vu un *ROACH* qui était pas mort l'autre jour.
Je l'ai trouvé les 4 pattes en l'air,
qui demandait des grâces..."

Pas instruite qu'alle était,
mais son humour peinturaient un portrait.

Brenda Mounier

inédit

Mamouien

On parle comme on marche
et on marche plate.
On est “Mamouien.”

We talk like we walk
and we walk flat.
We’re from Mamou.

On vient pas de Vidrine,
ni de la Ville Platte.
On est “Mamouien.”

We’re not from Vidrine,
nor from Ville Platte.
We’re from Mamou.

On court les poules
pour Mardi Gras.
On est “Mamouien.”

We chase chickens
for Mardi Gras.
We’re from Mamou.

On danse chez Fred’s
tous les samedi matins.
On est “Mamouien.”

We dance at Fred’s
every Saturday morning.
We’re from Mamou.

Les Américains rient,
mais ça fait pas rien.
On est “Mamouien.”

Non-French speakers laugh at us
but it doesn’t matter.
We’re from Mamou.

On aime manger et s’amuser,
le Bon Dieu, et notre famille.
On est “Mamouien.”

We like to eat and have enjoy ourselves,
the Lord, and our family.
We’re from Mamou --or —Mamounites.

écrit par un(e) Mamouien(ne) anonyme

Un défi / *A challenge:*

Compose un petit poème qui décrit le monde de ton village. Prends ce poème comme modèle——ou improvise quelque chose d’autre!

Write a little poem describing the people of your town. Use this poem as a model——or let your imagination fly!

Internet Love

Parfois il faut chercher l'amour
là où tu peux le trouver.
http://amour.com/
yahoo.courtiser moi.
courtiser toi/ chercher l'amour
@quelque part dans cyberspace
à chacun son goût

Moi, je trouve que les affaires
entre homme et femme sont assez compliquées
face à face, nez à nez
où tout le monde se connaît.

Avec des bougres que tu connais
pour toute ta vie
entourés de la parenté
tu peux toujours tomber sur un monstre.
Qui c'est http?
L'homme virtuel?
Quand un vrai est difficile,
juste remplace-lé par une image
que tu conjures sur ton écran,
que tu fais la cour avec au chatroom.

Donne-moi la vieille manière,
le bon vieux homo sapiens.
Qui touche, qui parle, qui caresse,
qui tracasse, qui fâche, qui choque,
qui rôde, qui rit, qui sourit, qui séduit.....
Mais c'est vrai, on peut débrancher un ordinateur.

Deborah Clifton

Deborah Clifton. *À cette heure, la louve.* Les Éditions Perce-Neige, 1999.

Internet Love: **Fiche d'activités / Activity sheet**

T'as bien compris?

1. Trouve dans le poème...

- un synonyme pour “un homme” _____
- une expression qui veut dire “je pense que” _____
- un mot qui veut dire “la famille” _____
- un mot qui veut dire “des fois” _____
- le mot qui indique la partie de l'ordinateur que tu regardes pour travailler dessus _____
- un terme qui veut dire “les relations” ou “les choses” _____
- un terme latin qui veut dire “être humain” _____

2. Qu'est-ce qui se passe quand on débranche un ordinateur?

3. Dans ce poème, ‘face à face, nez à nez’ est une expression métaphorique. Explique la métaphore.

4. Explique le dicton ‘à chacun son goût’ en donnant un exemple de ton expérience.

Rond, rond, petit marais

Une comptine pour les petits enfants

Rond, rond petit marais
Petit zozo posé dedans
Celui-là l'a vu
Celui-là l'a tué
Celui-là l'a plumé
Celui-là l'a cuit
Et celui-là l'a tout, tout, tout mangé!
Ça c'est un grand gourmand!



Paroles	Gestes
	The child holds out a turned up palm.
Rond, rond petit marais (All around the little swamp)	With the your pointer finger, make circle motions around the palm of the child's hand.
Petit zozo posé..... (little bird perched...)	
dedans (inside)	Move the finger to the center of the palm and stop.
Celui-là l'a vu (This one saw it)	Grab and squeeze the tip of the pinky finger.
Celui-là l'a tué (This one killed it)	Grab and squeeze the tip of the ring finger.
Celui-là l'a plumé (This one plucked it)	Grab and squeeze the tip of the middle finger.
Celui-là l'a cuit (This one cooked it)	Grab and squeeze the tip of the pointer finger.
Et celui-là l'a tout, tout, tout mangé! (And this one ate it all up!)	Grab and squeeze the tip of the thumb, then run your fingers up the child's arm in a tickling motion.
Ça c'est un grand gourmand! (What a big glutton!)	
This children's rhyme varies greatly in both its words and gestures among different speakers. Some replace one of the lines about what is done to the bird with "éventré" (gutted). Some people begin with the thumb and end with the pinky finger.	

Petits contes *Short stories*

Learning French in context helps you to retain what you've learned. And if the context is a memorable story or joke, so much the better. The selection of stories here includes some short readings that are presented only in French. There are also several longer stories that are presented in a parallel bilingual format. Some of them can be heard on *YouTube*. Look for the URL address after “**Écoute ici:** (Listen here)” at the top of the page.

If you like David Lanclos' story, there are many more to savor in his collection, ***Les contes à Mémère***. If you enjoy Jean Arceneaux's “**Le dernier gombo**,” look for tales like it in his little book ***Le trou dans le mur***. See the **Bibliographie** on pp. 111-112 for more information about these and other resources.

If parallel bilingual stories work well at your table, get a copy of Marion Marcotte's hilarious ***Contes, farces et foleries / Marion Marcotte***, which includes a CD of the stories with the book. You can also find more bilingual stories on Amanda LaFleur's *YouTube* channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/@lacadjine>

Here are some things you can do with stories:

- Act out! Adapt them into short plays or skits.
- Take turns reading sections of them aloud.
- Study and discuss the new and interesting words and phrases you find in the text.
- Let the text inspire storytellers in your group. Ask for volunteers to prepare and tell a story at your next meeting. Leaving the topic wide open is fine, but consider that some people respond better to a focussed “assignment” that restricts the task in some way. For example, rather than just asking people to “tell a story,” challenge them to tell a story involving food, a story that includes a misunderstanding, tell about something scary that happened to them when they were little, etc.
- Ask your table to tell **le reste de l'histoire**. Can they invent a sequel to the story that you've just read? Try having them work in small groups, then compare your sequels.

Le dernier gombo

Vieux Monsieur Leblanc était sur son lit de mort. I y restait pas beaucoup de temps, et il avait fini de faire tous ses arrangements avec sa famille. Ils avaient fait venir le prêtre pour y donner les derniers sacrements. Il avait refait son testament pour partager son bien. Il avait parlé à sa femme et à tous ses enfants. Il était paré pour s'en aller.

D'ayoù il était couché dans sa chambre, il pouvait entendre le monde en bas après faire des préparations. Et i pouvait sentir un gombo. Il a appelé un de ses tits-enfants et i y dit, "Boy, este gombo sent à bon." Il dit, "Va dire à ta grand-mère que j'aimerais un tit bol pour goûter une dernière fois."

Le garçon a descendu en bas dans la cuisine. Et il a revenu tout de suite au lit de son grand-père avec arien dedans ses mains.

Le vieux bougre demande, "Ayoù mon gombo?"

Le garçon y dit, "Mame dit que tu peux pas en avoir. A dit que le gombo est pour après l'enterrement."

Jean Arceneaux

publié dans *Le trou dans le mur: fabliaux cadiens*. Éditions Perce-Neige, 2012

Le lapin et les cocodrils

raconté par David Lanclos

Il y a très longtemps les lapins avaient pas les queues courtes comme aujourd'hui. Ils avaient les queues longues comme celles des chiens. Un jour un lapin cherchait une manière de traverser le bayou, mais il savait pas nager. Il'y avait pas un pont. Il voulait aller sur l'autre côté du bayou parce qu'il y avait un jardin avec des carottes et de la laitue là. En marchant un peu plus loin, il y a une bande de cocodrils qui prenaient le soleil au bord du bayou. Une idée lui est entrée dans la tête. Il s'est adressé à un vieux cocodril qui avait l'air endormi.

“Bonjour, monsieur Cocodril!” a dit le lapin.

“Bonjour, monsieur Lapin!” a répondu le cocodril.

“Monsieur cocodril, j'aimerais bien vous compter, vous et vos amis” a dit le lapin.

Le cocodril a répondu: “Alors, compte!”

“Ah, non, vous êtes trop dispersés,” a continué le lapin.

“Comment nous compter alors?” a demandé le cocodril.

“J'ai une idée. Vous et vos amis, vous vous mettez côte à côte au travers du bayou. Moi, je ferai une course sus vos dos et je vous compterai,” a dit le lapin.

“C'est une bonne idée,” a noté le cocodril.

Les cocodrils se sont mis côte à côte en travers du bayou et le lapin a fait une course sus leur dos. Quand il était sus le dos du dernier cocodril il a éclaté de rire. La lapin a crié, “Bande d'imbéciles! Je voulais pas vous compter du tout! Je voulais seulement traverser le bayou!”

Cela a fâché les cocodrils et avant le lapin ait pu mettre ses pieds sus terre, le dernier cocodril lui a mordu la queue. Et c'est pourquoi aujourd'hui les lapins ont les queues courtes.



Ce texte, transcrit par Amanda LaFleur est basé sur un conte traditionnel raconté par David Lanclos dans le cadre d'une série d'émissions de radio intitulée "Raconteurs Cadiens et Créoles," réalisée par Côte Blanche Productions © 1982. Tous droits réservés. Used with permission of the producer and Mr. Lanclos.

Un défi / *A challenge*: Adapte cette histoire pour en faire une petite dramatisation. *Adapt this story into a little play.*

Sosthène au téléphone

Mon ami, Sosthène, me contait comment sa mémoire est rendue courte dans ses vieux jours. Il me disait comment la cloche du téléphone l’a réveillé autour de minuit la semaine passée. La voix lui demande, “Est-ce que votre numéro est une-une-une-une?” Et Sosthène, tout à moitié endormi répondit, “Non, c’est onze-onze qui est le numéro de téléphone.” Et le bougre à l’autre bout s’excusait avec “Ça m’en fait de t’avoir réveillé à cette heure tard.” Sosthène me disait qu’avant qu’il a pu jongler clair, il a répondu, “Oh, c’est AWRIGHT, il fallait que je me lève quand-même pour répondre le téléphone.” Et avec ça il a HANG-UP et puis il a été se recoucher! Bonne mémoire, mais bien courte.

Revon Reed

Extrait de “Les folies des Cajuns”

dans *Lâche pas la patate*, Éditions Parti Pris, 1976.

L’orthographe et la ponctuation de ce texte ont été légèrement éditées.

The spelling and punctuation of this text have been lightly edited.

Cyp et son chat de chasse

Mon vieux ami de coeur, Cyprien Landreneau, aime me conter l'histoire d'une chatte qu'il avait quelques années passées qui était sans réserve aux écureuils. La chatte, que Cyp appelait Minette, le suivait sus ses chasses et elle est venue tellement adroite quand ça venait pour abattre un écureuil. Elle grimpait l'arbre doucement, approchait son objectif avec finesse, et avant la pauvre bête pouvait dire "pistache" ou "noisette," la chatte à Cyp y avait coupé la gorge. Cyp n'avait pas seulement pas besoin d'un fusil ou une carabine. Il ramassait les écureuils, les mettait dans un sac à riz, et continuait à l'autre chêne ou copal.

Un jour la pauvre Minette a marché dans un piège de rat musqué et il fallait que Cyp lui coupe la patte d'en avant pour y sauver la vie.

"C'est tout fini," Cyp pleurait. "Baille a couru! Ba-bye ma chatte aux écureuils."

Mais après que sa patte a guéri, Cyp y a mis un bout de tuyau sur son bout de patte, et la vieille chatte marchait assez bien.

Ma foi, un jour plusieurs semaines ou mois après l'accident la pauvre chatte a miaulé assez, Cyp l'a laissée le suivre à la chasse avec lui. Il n'espérait rien d'elle, estropiée comme elle était.

Mais tiens! Voilà! Tonnerre m'écrase! C'est pas croyable! La vieille chatte après plusieurs efforts futiles est venue à bout de grimper au grand chêne vert où il y avait un gros mâle écureuil jaune qui jappait en se foutant de la vieille boiteuse. Cyp s'est assis sur un chicot avec toute confiance du monde dans sa chère vieille chasseuse.

Et qu'est-ce que vous croyez qu'elle a fait quand elle est arrivée près de l'écureuil effronté? Elle l'a approché doucement et quand elle est venue à portée de lui, elle a élevé sa patte-de-bout-de-tuyau et lui a écrasé la tête en bouillie. Et pouf! Monsieur Écureuil a tombé à terre, aussi mort qu'un bois sec.

Je ne sais pas si tout ça-ici est vrai ou non. Cyprien se vante de dire au monde bête comme moi que Minette a abattu pas moins qu'une cinquantaine d'écureuils avant de crever. Elle s'est fait tuer quand elle a manqué un petit écureuil volant et s'est écrasée à terre. Cyp y a porté deuil pour six mois...pas une vieille danse sur son accordéon pour six grands mois! Cyp aimait sa chatte!

Revon Reed

Extrait de "Les folies des Cajuns"
dans *Lâche pas la patate*, Éditions Parti Pris, 1976.

L'orthographe et la ponctuation de ce texte ont été légèrement éditées.
The spelling and punctuation of this text have been lightly edited.

Cyp et son chat de chasse

Fiche supplémentaire / Supplement

Notes:

- Revon Reed (1917-1994) was a Mamou native, Cajun activist, educator and editor of the bilingual newspaper *Mamou Acadian Press*. He helped promote numerous Cajun musicians to national and international notoriety.
- *Lâche pas la patate*, published in 1976 in Québec, is probably the first modern book expressly written in Louisiana French dialect. While other publications exist, they were typically in SF with some LF vocabulary incorporated. You will notice that there are also some elements of SF in this text that you don't typically hear in Louisiana, such as the negative particle *ne*.
- Cyprien Landreneau, the main character of this tale, was a real person, a well-known accordionist. He and his distant cousin Adam Landreneau formed the core of the Mamou Cajun Band.
- Revon's *conte fort* (tall tale) is a very popular genre among storytellers in the Mamou area. As they draw listeners in, these stories incorporate just enough truth to keep the line between fact and fiction murky.

Vocabulaire / Vocabulary

sans réserve	without equal
abattre	to kill; to butcher
"pistache" ou "noisette"	nothing, not anything (Literally: "peanut" or "hazelnut")
copal	sweet gum tree
Baille a couru!	It's all over. It's too late. (Literally: Palomino has run the race.)
estropié	crippled
Tonnerre m'écrase!	Expletive akin to "I'll be damned!" (Literally: Thunder strike me down!)
venir à bout de	to get to the point where
se foutant de	taunting; mocking
boiteuse (n.f.)	cripple; person (f.) who limps
chicot	stump
à portée	within reach
en bouillie	into liquid
crever	mourir
porter deuil	to mourn (Traditionally, one did not play music while in mourning.)
six grands mois	six whole months

Le chien à trois pattes

raconté par Wisteria Carlos

Écoute ici: <https://youtu.be/-eRhXFPSZ-s?si=E18ZWBveQi-Xms2Q>

dire entre moi-même to say to oneself

d'en bas from down the bayou

suit past participle of **suivre**

chêne oak tree

eusse them, they

piquer to stick, to puncture

le creux the deep part

le tétanos tetanus

pattes paws, feet of animals

en bas down the bayou

délivrer to deliver from a spell or curse

soûl [su] drunk

plein = beaucoup

courir rougarou to be under a spell as a werewolf
literally: to run werewolf

suivre to follow

église church

shape mot anglais

lockjaw mot anglais

viendrait imparfait de **venir**

Une fois, il y avait un homme, il était parti à un...au docteur. À Montégut il y avait un docteur et quand il a parti d'en bas, le chien à trois pattes l'a suivi. Il dit entre moi-même, "mais ça en a pas le même *shape*." Il était dessus un cheval. Il était parti chercher le docteur pour quelqu'un qui était malade. Elle avait le tétanos du mal aux dents, qu'on appelle. *Lockjaw*, she had.

Once there was a man. He had gone for a doctor. In Montegut there was a doctor, and when he headed out from down the bayou, the three-legged dog followed him. He said to himself, "but it doesn't have the same shape." He was on horseback. Had gone to get the doctor for someone who was sick. She had "tetanus toothache," they call it. Lockjaw, she had.

Ça fait, quand il a arrivé là-bas, il a dit au docteur voir s'il viendrait, mais il était soûl, le docteur. Il savait pas s'il allait venir ou pas venir. Ça fait, qu'il voulait le mettre sur le cheval avec lui. Mais le chien à trois pattes était toujours là, et il mettait sa patte. Il aurait voulu que mon oncle le délivre. Mon oncle dit entre moi-même, "Toi, il dit, je suis fatigué!" Il l'a suivi jusqu'à, il y avait un gros chêne icitte là, là ayoù ma place. Mon pap avait acheté la place, et ils l'ont coupé pour faire le chemin.

So when he got over there, he asked the doctor to see if he would come, but he was drunk, the doctor. He didn't know if he'd come or not. So he wanted to put him on the horse with him. But the three-legged dog was still there, and he put out his paw. It seemed to want my uncle to deliver him. My uncle said to himself, "You! I'm tired." It followed him up to where there was a big oak tree there, where my place was. My father had bought the place, and they had cut it [the tree] to make the road.

Ça fait, il a--- mon oncle, il a arrêté le cheval, le chien. Le cheval en a eu peur. Il a levé sa patte dans l'air. Mon oncle a pris son couteau, il y a fendu son couteau, et c'était un homme qui vivait toujours, c'était Wallace Picou. Et il dit: "Pour l'amour de dieu Charlie, il dit, nomme-moi pas." Il dit, "Il y a un an que je suis après courir rougarou. Il dit "Je suis assez content que tu m'as délivré. Et c'était un homme vivant qui était après courir rougarou.

Oh, ouais! Mais, il y en avait plein dans ce temps-là. Et le monde faisait plein plus de quoi qu'eusse fait asteur. Eusse allait pas à l'église Il y avait pas d'église, vous voyez. C'était comme, ça connaissait pas rien, je pense, dans ce temps-là.

Et là Nonc Charlie l'a piqué dans sa main, comme, dans le creux de sa main. Eh bin, là, il a sorti. "Oh, Charlie, il dit, si je suis content. C'est pour ça que j'ai arrêté ton cheval." Il dit, "Je voulais que tu me délivres."



So my uncle stopped the horse. The horse got scared of it the dog . He raised his paw in the air (again). My uncle took his knife and he stuck him with the knife, and it was a man who was still living. It was Wallace Picou. And he said: "For the love of God, Charlie, don't name me!" He said, "I've been a werewolf for a year." He said, "I am so glad that you delivered me." And it was a living man who had been "running werewolf."

Oh yeah. But there were a lot of them back in those days. And people then did a lot more than what they do today. They didn't go to church. There was no church, you see. It was like they didn't know anything, I think, in those days.

And then Uncle Charlie stuck him in the hand, in the palm of his hand. And then he came out of it (transformed into a human). "Oh, Charlie," he said, "I'm so happy. That's why I stopped your horse," he said. "I wanted you to break the curse and save me."

Cette histoire a été racontée par
Wisteria Pitre Carlos de Chauvin
dans

"Cajun and Creole Storytellers:
#28 The Tragic Pig and Cajun Werewolves
©1982
de Côte Blanche Productions

<https://www.coteblanche.com/#/oral-history/>

Transcription et traduction
par Amanda LaFleur

Les noces du vieux temps

raconté par Elta Hazelton

Écoute ici: <https://youtu.be/wgoP3sZnZol?si=ugSHQwiUgMveyrbl>

Quand une fille et un garçon déclaraient, ça, ça voulait dire ils avaient demandé la permission du père et de la mère de la fille pour se marier. Une fois ça c'était fait, eh bien, ils auront été à la maison de cour acheter la license. Et là, ça emmenait la jeune fille, le père et la mère et le garçon que a devait marier, l'auraient emmenée dans les boutiques. Et elle achetait son habillement de noces. Et dans ces temps-là, les robes étions pas tout faits. Soit la mère ou quelqu'un dans la famille aurait cousu pour la mariée. Et tout ce que elle achetait pour sa noce était payé par le jeune homme qui devait la marier.

Et le jour de la noce, c'était toujours l'après-midi. Et nous qui était invités dînait de bonne heure, et là, on allait tout droite chez les parents de la mariée. Et là, comme ça, on voyait la mariée, les filles d'honneur et les garçons d'honneur partir pour aller se marier. Et.... le marié et la mariée étaient dans le boghei en avant. Là, dans le deuxième boghei, c'était la première fille d'honneur et son garçon d'honneur. Et là, la deuxième, la troisième, combien ils (en) avaient [nõvjõ] ça dépendait, des fois c'était plus que trois, des fois c'était moins. Et le dernier boghei, c'était un homme et une femme mariés, et ça allait pour surveiller la partie.

When a girl and boy "declared," that meant that they had asked permission of the father and mother of the girl to marry. Once that was done, well, they'd go to the courthouse to buy the license. And then, they would take the young lady, the father and the mother and the boy that she was going to marry, and they'd take her to the shops. And she would buy [the stuff for] her trousseau. And in those days, the wedding dresses were not ready-made. Either the mother or someone in the family would have sewn for the bride. And everything she bought for her wedding day was paid for by the young man that she was going to marry.

And on the day of the wedding...it was always in the afternoon. And those of us who were invited would eat lunch early, and they we'd go right to the home of the parents of the bride. Like that, we would see the bride, the bridesmaids and the groomsmen leave for the wedding. And the bridal couple were in the first buggy. Then in the second buggy it was the maid of honor and the best man. And then the second, third, depending on how many there were; sometimes it was fewer. And in the last buggy was a married couple that went to chaperone the group.

Et là, un coup ils étiont mariés, et bien ça revenait, et dans la même ordre que ils aviont partis. Et naturellement quand ça arrivait, bin, il y avait quelqu'un pour amarrer le cheval du marié. On était tous là pour les féliciter... On était contents de les voir et on les embrassait et hop toujours. Et là ça coupait le gâteau. Il y avait beaucoup des gâteaux et plein du vin pour tout quelqu'un. Et toute la famille allait, des bébés jusqu'à les grand-pères et les grand-mères qui pouvaient toujours marcher, on allait tous aux noces.

Et là, le soir il y avait un bal de noces. Longtemps passé, le bal était dans une maison, mais là plus tard, quand moi je me rappelle, le bal était dedans un *hall*. Et ça c'était un soir, quand-même on était pas grand, s'il y avait de la place dans le boghei ou dans le hack--il y en a qu'allaient en wagon.... et je les trouvais beaucoup heureux, ceusse-là qui allaient dans le wagon parce qu'ils étiont une grand' bande. Et nous-autres on allait soit dans le boghei avec notre père ou dans le hack. Et j'aurais été curieuse d'être dans ce wagon-là avec les autres. Mais dans tous les cas, on allait et on voyait le marié, la mariée et leur partie danser.

And then, once they were married, they'd go back in the same order that they had come in. And naturally, when they arrived, there was someone to tie up the bridegroom's horse. And we were all there to congratulate... We were all happy to see them and we embraced them and all that. And then they'd cut the cake. There were lots of cakes and lots of wine for everyone. And the whole family went, from the babies to the grandfathers and grandmothers who could still walk, we all went to the wedding.

And then in the evening there was a wedding dance. A long time ago, the dance would be held at a house, but later, when I started recollecting, the dance was in a hall. And it was in the evening. Even if we were not very big, if there wasn't enough room in the buggy or the hack—there were those who went in a wagon... and I thought they were lucky, those who got to go in the wagon, because they were always a big gang. And we would go either in the buggy or the hack. And I would've been curious to be in that wagon with the others. But in any case, we'd go to see the bridal couple and their attendants dance.

Et là, quand le bal était fini, eh bien ordinairement le marié emmenait sa mariée chez son père. Et c'est là ça restait pour quelque temps. Et des fois ça restait tout l'année là parce que peut-être ils avaient pas assez d'argent pour acheter leur ménage. Et là, au bout de l'année, eh bien, ils avaient quelques piastres. Ça pouvait acheter leur ménage. Et ça allait se promener chez les parents--les tantes, les oncles, les cousines et hop. Et quand ça allait se promener, bin, on leur donnait une poule ou un coq et des oeufs pour eux-mêmes commencer leur basse cour, parce que tout quelqu'un avait une basse cour. Et là, tout quelqu'un élevait des cochons, et...et une bête ou deux, tu vois, pour leur lait. Ils avaient tout chacun une bête pour leur lait, et là ça élevait aussi pour la viande. Mais c'est comme ça, ça commençait.

And then, when the dance was over, well, usually the groom would take his bride to his father's home. And they would live there for a while. And sometimes they'd live there a whole year because maybe they didn't have enough money to buy things to set up their household. And then, at the end of the year, well, they'd have a few dollars. They could start to buy to set up their home. And they would make the rounds at their relatives--aunts, uncles, cousins and all those. And when they would go around visiting, well, we would give them a hen or a rooster or some eggs to get their flock started. because everyone had a poultry flock. And then everybody raised pigs and a cow or two, you see, for their milk. They each had a cow for their milk and they also raised animals for meat. But that's how they would get started.



Madame Elta Manuel Hazelton avec sa classe de 8e livre de 1959-60 à l'école de Châtaignier.
Mme Hazelton a été née en 1910 à l'Anse aux Pailles dans la paroisse Évangéline.

Cette histoire a été racontée dans "Cajun and Creole Storytellers: #29 Dances, Barbecues and Mardi Gras"
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<https://www.coteblanche.com/#/oral-history/>

Transcription et traduction par Amanda LaFleur

Les petits ouaouarons

raconté par Évelia Boudreaux

Écoute ici: <https://youtu.be/7k8qZC55x7s?si=wRikVlvBoUtYGcR3>

Oui, souvent il y avait des... contes pour
qu'auraient donné des leçons, et... Par exemple,
la famille des tits ouaouarons. La maman
ouaouaron avait une famille des tits ouaouarons.
Et elle restait joliment auprès tant que ils étiont
réellement petits pour les soigner. Et toujours les
petits ouaouarons a profité. La maman avait
pour chercher pour trouver des places où ils
auront pu manger.

*Yes, often there were...stories to...that
would give lessons. For example, the family of
little bullfrogs. The mama frog had a family of
little bullfrogs. And she stayed pretty close to them
while they were really little, in order to take care of
them. And the little frogs continued growing. The
mother had to find places where they could eat.*

Et toujours un jour elle a parti. Et elle dit à les
petits ouaouarons, "Je suis partie à la chasse. Et
je veux (que) vous-autres soit bons et je veux pas
que vous-autres va au loin. Il y a des grosses
bétailles qui va vous manger si vous-autres va
trop au loin. Vous-autres est pas assez grands
pour connaître le danger encore."

*And so one day she went out. And she told the
little frogs, "I'm going out hunting. And I want
y'all to be good and I don't want you to go out too
far. There are big creatures that are going to eat
you if you go out too far. Y'all are not big enough
to understand the danger yet."*

Maman ouaouaron a parti. Et elle a resté un peu
longtemps partie. Et les tits ouaouarons
commençaient d'être joliment forts. Ça
commençait à sauter tout partout. Et il n-a un,
que comme souventes fois il y en a toujours un
qui est plus curieuxou plus capable de faire le
grand.

*Mama bullfrog left. And she stayed gone quite
awhile. And the little frogs were getting to the
point where they could do for themselves. They
were starting to hop around all over. And there
was one, as often is the case, there is one who is
more curious...or more capable of acting 'big for
his britches'...*

Il s'est éloigné de la bande et il a rencontré un boeuf. Et il a eu beaucoup peur de voir cette grosse bétaille! Il savait pas que c'était. Mais la maman ouaouaron a revenu à la maison avant le tit ouaouaron. Quand il a revenu, la maman dit, "Où tu sors, mon petit?"

Et il dit, "Maman, j'ai été loin, loin dans la savane. Et j'ai vu une bétaille." Il dit, "Elle était grosse. Elle était grande." "Bin," elle dit, "Dis-moi, comment gros? Elle dit, "Gros comme ça?" Et il dit, "Non maman, plus gros," et il se soufflait pour essayer venir aussi gros comme la bétaille il avait vu pour montrer à sa maman comment gros. Et il se soufflait. Et elle dit "C'est gros comme ça?" "Non maman, plus gros," et il se soufflait plus... jusqu'à t'à l'heure, il s'est soufflé de trop, il a cassé!

Alors, la leçon est "Écoute tes parents. Fais pas des imprudences. Et essaie pas d'être ce que t'es pas." Dans des manières, il y a deux leçons dans le conte. Écoute tes parents. Ils connaissent où le danger est. Et essaie pas d'être ce que t'es pas.

He wandered away from the rest of them, and he met an ox and got very afraid scared seeing this giant beast! He didn't know what it was. But the mother bullfrog came back to the house before the little frog. When he got back, the mother said, "Where are you coming from, little one?"

And he said, "Mama, I went out very far into the pasture. And I saw an animal." He said, "It was big. It was tall." And she said, "Tell me, how big? This big?" And he said, "No, Mama, bigger," and he puffed himself up, trying to make himself as big as the giant creature that he had seen, so that he could show his mother how big it was. And he puffed himself up. And she said, "As big as that?" And he said, "No, Mama, bigger," and he puffed himself up even more. And he continued puffing himself up until pretty soon he had puffed himself up too much, and he popped!

So the lesson is, "Listen to your parents. Don't do imprudent things. And don't try to be what you are not." In some sense, there are two lessons. Listen to your parents. They know where the danger is. And don't try to be what you are not.



Evelia Richard Boudreaux est née en 1905 à la Prairie Basse dans la paroisse St. Landry.
Elle est décédée en 1998.

Cette histoire a été racontée dans
"#25 The Traveler and other Stories" dans la série
Cajun and Creole Storytellers, réalisée par
Côte Blanche Productions © 1982. Tous droits réservés.

Transcription et traduction par Amanda LaFleur.

Les petits ouaouarons

Fiche supplémentaire / Supplement

Evelia Boudreaux's story is closely related to a folk tale that was put into verse by the 17th century French author Jean de la Fontaine, who himself was inspired by Aesop. To watch a cool animated version of this story, see below.

Écoute et regarde ici: <https://youtu.be/Si1u3SDx9nQ?si=987WlZW-D0cN-2Fe>.

La Grenouille qui veut se faire aussi grosse que le Boeuf



Une Grenouille vit un Bœuf,
Qui lui sembla de belle taille.
Elle qui n'était pas grosse en tout comme un œuf,
Envieuse s'étend, et s'enfle et se travaille,
Pour égaler l'animal en grosseur ;
Disant : Regardez bien, ma sœur,
Est-ce assez ? dites-moi ? n'y suis-je point encore ?
Nenni. M'y voici donc ? Point du tout. M'y voilà ?
Vous n'en approchez point. La chétive péclore
S'enfla si bien qu'elle creva.
Le monde est plein de gens qui ne sont pas plus sages :
Tout Bourgeois veut bâtir comme les grands Seigneurs ;
Tout petit Prince a des Ambassadeurs :
Tout Marquis veut avoir des Pages.

*Jean de La Fontaine 1621-1695
Illustration de François Chaveau 1613-1676*

Galopay

avec Eddie Sainte-Marie

Écoute ici: https://youtu.be/5i27e0u-Apg?si=OukfPhsISUXxAk_m

Mé zami mon nom sé *Eddie J. Sainte-Marie*. Mo shérif de la parwas de LaFoush dan léta dla louwiziann.

Mo té né é èlvé dan Loroivil, dan la parwas de Ibéri. Sa sé dan léta dla Louwiziann. Kan mo té gin katòrz an, mo déménajé a Tibodo avèk Mamm et Pap.

Le premjé jour kan mo kouri a lékòl, lé ti boug yé té tapé parlé fransé. Mon mon komanse parlé fransé avèk yé. Tou din kou, yé komansé ri mwa. Kan lékòl té fini, mo kouri koté Mamm. Mo di Mamm, kofèr ti boug-yé ri mwa kan mo parlé fransé?

Mam di mwa, Ti-Èd, to p-olé di mwa to kouri parlé patwa-la to parl!

Mo di, “mé Mamm, yé parl pa komm sa?”

Li di mwa, “Non! Moun-sa yé parl bon fransé! Va pa ouvèr to ladjeul enkòr é parlé fransé isit dan Tibodo!

La mo gradjué. Kan mo gradjué, mo kommanse travayé avèk lé stét polis. Yé pèl sa dé spid kap. La mo kouri dan laermé. Kan yé désharjé mwa, yen na dan mé zami ké vini koté mwa. Yé di mwa, “Sint Mari, nouzòt tolé to galòp pour shèrif.”

Mo kouri koté Mamm, mo di, “Mamm, molé galopé pour shèrif.”

Li di, kout! To ka galopé si to lé, mé mo p-olé to instal twa minm su in stinn e parlé patwa-la to parl, parske t-alé fé to mamm hont.

My friends, my name is Eddie J. Sainte-Marie. I am sheriff of Lafourche Parish in the state of Louisiana.

I was born and raised in Loreauville, in Iberia Parish. That’s in the state of Louisiana. When I was fourteen years old, I moved to Thibodaux with my Mom and Dad.

The first day that I went to school, there were these boys who were speaking French. I started to speak French with them. All of a sudden, they started laughing at me. When school was out, I went home to my Mom. I said to her, “Mom why do those boys laugh at me when I speak French?”

My mother said to me, “Ti-Ed, you don’t mean to tell me that you went and spoke your patois that you speak (with them) ?!”

I said, “Mom, they don’t speak like that?”

She told me, “No! Those people speak good French! Don’t go opening your mouth again speaking (our) French here in Thibodaux.

Then I graduated. When I graduated, I started working with the State Police. They call them “speed cops.” Then I went into the Army. When they discharged me, some of my friends came to me. They said to me, “Sainte-Marie, we want you to run for sheriff.”

I went home to Mom, and I said, “I want to run for sheriff.”

She said, “Listen! You can run if you want to, don’t you go getting up on a podium and speaking the patois that you speak, because you’re going to embarrass your mother.

Mo kouri koté tou mo zami.
Mo di yé m-alé galopé pour shèrif, mè---
mo p-alé parlé fransé.

Mo zami yé di mwa, Sint Mari, si to parl
pa fransé, sé pa la pinn to galòp, paske
to pa ka ganyé. Toulmonn isit dan la
parwas Lafoush, yé parl tou fransé.

Sa fé mon komansé.

Le premjé miting mo té gin, yan navé jus
vinn deu pærsonn la. Mé zami, mo di a
mwamimm, mo pa ka ganyé, mo pa ka
fé li. Pa jus avèk deu, vinn-deu
paersonn isit a in miting avèk in gro
parwas kòmm sa.

Wèl la, kout sa ka arivé: lòt swar-le, le
swar aprè mo yu le miting, me zami, yan
navé sin mil paersònn a mon miting!
Kan mo arivé, mo di, “Mé ki sé kapé
parlé isit?”

Yé di, “Mé sé twa, Sint-Mari! Mé ékout!
Ouv pa to ladjeul é parlé langlé. Jus parl
fransé, paske moun-sa yé jamé tandé in
kadjin parlé kadjin la manyaer twa to
parl.

La, mé zami, si mo sé parlé le joli fransé
kom ouzòt, mo mèl lafaer, la mo pa
koné sa mapé di mwamimm. Sa fé, mo
parl fransé komm mo komprènn li.

Dagaow!

*I went to see all my friends. I told them that
I was going to run for sheriff, but that I was
not going to speak French.*

*My friends told me, “Sainte-Marie, if you
don’t speak French, you just as soon not run
because you can’t win. Everyone here in
Lafourche Parish speaks French.”*

So I started.

*At the first (campaign) rally I had, there
were just twenty-two people there. My
friends, I said to myself, I can’t win. I just
can’t do it. Not with just two...twenty-two
people here in the meeting with a big parish
like this.*

*Well, listen to what happened: the next
evening, my friends, the night after I had the
(first) rally, there were 5,000 people at my
meeting! When I got there, I said, “Who’s
talking over here?”*

*They said, “Well, it’s you, Sainte-Marie! But
listen, don’t open your mouth and speak
English. Speak just in French, because the
people here have never heard a Cajun speak
Cajun the way you speak.”*

*So, my friends, if I would speak the pretty
French like y’all do, I would mix things up. I
wouldn’t even know what I was saying
myself. So, I speak French the way I
understand it.*

Dagaow!



Né en 1915 à Loreauville, Adrien J. “Eddie” Sainte-Marie a servi
comme shérif de la paroisse Lafourche de 1956 à 1972. Le “patois”
qu’il parlait et que le monde de Lafourche trouvait si drôle est le créole
louisianais, aussi appelé le kouri-vini. Sainte-Marie est mort en 1976 et
enterré à Thibodaux.

*Born in 1915 in Loreauville, Adrien J. “Eddie” Sainte-Marie served as sheriff
of Lafourche parish from 1956 to 1972. The “patois” he spoke that sounded
strange to Lafourche ears is otherwise known as Louisiana Creole or Kouri-Vini.
Sainte-Marie died in 1976 and is buried in Thibodaux.*

Transcription et traduction par Amanda LaFleur.
Transcription and translation by Amanda LaFleur.

Les loups-garous avec Ted Jambon

Écoute ici: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X7RsLDwg6xM>

De tous les histoires que je peux penser, elle que moi j'aime le plus, c'était dans le temps de ma jeunesse quand j'avais peut-être 8, 9 ans. C'était la tradition dans les petits villages comme Golden Meadow qu'avait des petits magasins à peu près tous les demi-miles, que les vieux hommes, eux de 60 âge [ans] ou mieux, se rencontraient le soir et s'asseyaient sur les escaliers ou sur les galeries du magasin pour faire conversation.

Et nous, les jeunes, allait là pour les attendre dire des histoires du temps passé. Tu sais, de ce temps-là, il y avait pas de télévision, il y avait pas de GAME électronique. Et c'est seulement aller au théâtre pour voir un film, peut-être une fois par semaine ou la radio. Alors, c'était plein plus intéressant d'écouter les vieux hommes.

Et tous les ans, à peu près deux ou trois semaines avant HALLOWEEN, ils commençaient à conter les contes des loups-garous. Et ça commençait tout le temps avec un homme qui disait que...il avait eu une expérience, qu'il avait jamais parlé de ça, parce que c'était...c'est pas sauve de faire le conte avant que la personne qui allait parler dessus était mort. Et il expliquait que c'était un homme qui avait fait un complot avec le diable. Et pour ça, il fallait qu'il soit un loup-garou, à certaines de nuits. Et le loup-garou, c'était des temps pas un loup. Des fois, c'était un autre animal. C'était peut-être un jeune veau ou un gros chien ou peut-être un cabri ou quelque chose comme ça-là.

Of all the stories that I can think of, the one that I liked the best, was in the time of my youth, when I was 8 or 9 years old. It was the tradition in the small towns like Golden Meadow that had little stores about every half mile, that the old men, those 60 years of age or better, would get together in the evening and sit on the steps or the porch of the store to converse.

And we young boys would go to listen to them tell stories about the old days. You know, in those days there was no television, there were no electronic games. There was only that we went to the movies to see a film about once a week, or there was radio. So, it was a lot more interesting to listen to the old guys.

And every year about two or three weeks before Halloween, they would start telling werewolf stories. And it would always start with one man who would say that he had had an experience, but that he'd never talked about it because...it was not safe to tell the story until the person involved had died. And he explained that it was a man who had made a deal with the Devil. And for that, he had to be transformed into a werewolf on certain nights. And the werewolf in those days was not always a wolf. Sometimes it could be another animal form. It was perhaps a young calf or a big dog or maybe a goat or something like that.

Et son histoire était que il s'en venait de son travail un soir un peu tard. Et il avait un gros chien qui venait, qui se frottait contre lui. Il avait jamais vu ce chien dans sa côte. Et tous les soirs, le chien l'approchait et il commençait à avoir manière peur du chien. Mais le chien y faisait pas de tort. Et là ç'a venu que le chien se mettait devant lui et il voulait pas laisser passer.

Et il se met à penser que son père y avait conté des histoires des loups-garous. Et ça donnait dans l'histoire que si un homme avait fait un complot avec le diable, il allait avoir tout ce qu'il voulait. Mais que il fallait qu'il passe les nuits dans la forme d'un animau.

Et la seule manière qu'il pouvait s'échapper de perdre son âme, c'était si avant qu'un an avait passé, qu'une autre personne pouvait le couper sus la main ou sus la patte et le faire saigner. Et ça, ça aurait cassé le contrat avec le diable. Et il avait fait ça. Il avait sorti son couteau et le gros chien avait mis la patte dessus son corps et il l'avait coupé. Et le chien avait parti à la course et il avait disparu.

Et après 3 ou 4 jours, il était après parler avec un homme qui habitait à peu près à une distance de chez lui, de chez lui. Il a remarqué que l'homme avait la main enveloppée. Et y a demandé: "Monsieur, il dit, qui ce que c'est ça qu'est à ta main ? Il dit: "J'ai une coupure. " Il dit, un ami m'a fait une faveur." Et il a pas dit plus, mais il s'a mis à rire. Il est parti.

And his story was that he was coming home from work one evening a little late. And there was a big dog that came and rubbed itself against him. He had never seen that dog in his neighborhood. And every night the dog approached him, and he started to be kind of scared of the dog. But the dog didn't hurt him. And then it happened (one night) that the dog wouldn't let him pass.

So he starts thinking that his father had told him stories about werewolves. And it was said in the story that if a man had made a deal with the Devil, he was going to receive everything he wanted. But, he would have to spend several nights in the form of an animal.

And the only way he could get out of it and save his soul was if before a year had gone by, another person cut his hand or paw and made him bleed. And that would break the contract with the Devil. And that's what he had done. He had taken out his knife, and the big dog had put its paw on his body, and he had cut it. And the dog left and disappeared.

And after 3 or 4 days, he was talking to a man who lived a short distance from him. He noticed that the man's hand was bandaged. And he asked him, "Sir, what happened to your hand?" He says, "I got cut. Someone did me a favor." And he said nothing more, but he started to smile. And he left.

Et là, dans l'intervalle, quand on était après écouter ça, et le temps que ça prenait pour dire le conte, la nuit s'avait fait, il faisait réellement noir, et il fallait qu'on se rend chez nous. Et on avait tous peur parce que on savait pas s'il y avait des loups-garous.

Alors, les plus vieux garçons, eux qu'avaient attendu les contes les années avant nous, savaient que ça allait arriver ce soir-là, alors eusse a été tous cacher dans les arbres. Alors, dès qu'on se rendait chez nous, eusse sautait dans les arbres, eusse secouait les branches, eusse faisait différents de sons, comme un chien qui était enragé. Alors, on avait réellement, réellement peur. Mais quand même, dit que ça nous faisait peur, on retournait tous les soirs pour écouter le conte.

And in the meantime, while we were listening, with the time it took to tell the story, night had fallen and it was really dark, and we had to get home. And we were all scared because we didn't know if werewolves were out there.

And the older boys, who had heard these stories in years before us, knew what was going to happen that night. So they had all gone and hidden in the trees. Then, as soon as we started heading home, they began to jumping in the trees, shaking the branches, making all sorts of noises like a mad dog. So we were really, really scared. But even though we said that it scared us, we returned every night to hear the story again.



Ted Jambon, natif de Golden Meadow, a été interviewé en 2008 par Doug Smith, un étudiant à LSU, pour son projet final en Français Cadien 2201. Monsieur Jambon est décédé en 2014.

Chansons Songs

If French and Creole are still spoken today in Louisiana, it is no doubt due at least in part to our attachment to our music traditions. Many young people going through language immersion developed a love for Louisiana music as a result of their exposure in school. And many young musicians have pursued language study as adults out of a desire to better understand and interpret that music.

There are hundreds of popular songs in French available on the Internet. We've selected a few here that are catchy, easy to understand and heavy on repetition. If you have a group that might be inclined to include singing as an activity in your gatherings, these could be a good place to start.

Hints:

- Try playing a recording of the song first so that everyone can get an idea of the melody.
- Knowing what syllable to emphasize or when to 'drop' a syllable can be tricky. Someone who knows the song and the pronunciation of the words can read them out loud with the group, using the rythmes of the tune but no music, to build confidence before singing.
- If you're fortunate enough to have musicians in your group, enlist them to accompany you.
- Even if your table is not into singing, simply listening to a song can be a great starting point for discussion. A song like "**Brasse donc le couche-couche**" is a great way to launch a conversation about "westward migration" with the arrival of the petroleum industry, for example.
- Take the time to entertain questions about the meaning of words in the context of the song.

And don't stop there:

If you live in the Lafayette area and like to sing, there is a table dedicated to singing. **La Table Chantante** meets both in Lafayette and in St. Martinville, and their **capitaine** has amassed an impressive collection of both traditional and newer songs that she is willing to share. If you're interested in accessing them or knowing more about this table, email Jolene Adam at longfellow_int@crt.la.gov.

Mon bon vieux mari

version à Cléoma et Joe Falcon



Écoute ici: https://youtu.be/OCiEgQfy-JM?si=T38Rm713a_RYRj-m

LA FEMME chante:

Ayòu ce que t'es parti, ouais, mon bon vieux mari?
Ayòu ce que t'es parti, ça qu'on appelle amour?
Ayòu ce que t'es parti, ouais, mon bon vieux mari?
Qu'est le meilleur buveur du pays!

Quoi t'es parti faire, mon bon vieux mari?
Quoi t'est parti faire, ça qu'on appelle amour?
Quoi t'es parti faire, ouais, mon bon vieux mari?
Qu'est le meilleur buveur du pays!

Quand tu t'en reviens, ouais, mon bon vieux mari?
Quand tu t'en reviens, ça qu'on appelle amour?
Quand tu t'en reviens, ouais, mon bon vieux mari?
Qu'est le meilleur buveur du pays!

Quoi tu eux je t' fais cuire, ouais, mon bon vieux mari?
Quoi tu veux je t' fais cuire, ça qu'on appelle amour?
Quoi tu veux je t' fais cuire, mon bon vieux mari?
Qu'est le meilleur buveur du pays!

Ça, ça va te tuer, ouais, mon bon vieux mari.
Ça, ça va te tuer, ça qu'on appelle amour!
Ça, ça va te tuer, ouais, mon bon vieux mari.
Qu'est le meilleur buveur du pays!

Ayòu tu eux je t'enterre, ouais, mon bon vieux mari?
Ayòu tu veux je t'enterre, ça qu'on appelle amour?
Ayòu tu veux je t'enterre, ouais, mon bon vieux mari?
Qu'est le meilleur buveur du pays!

LE MARI répond:

Je sus parti au café!

Je sus parti me soûler!

Demain ou un autre jour!

Une douzaine d'oeufs et un gallon de couche-couche!

**Oh, c'est ça—
je veux mourir
quand-même!**

**Dans le coin
de la
cheminée, et
tous les temps
en temps,
passe-moi une
patate chaude!**



Brasse donc le couche-couche

par Willie Broussard

Écoute ici la version des Magnolia sisters:

<https://youtu.be/uTiV5nM9vsw?si=z5RAEoxjJiYOnztC>

Je sus parti à ce matin au Texas
J'emmène une gamine avec moi
Si tu viens faut tu me dis
Ou je te laisse par ici
Je suis partie à ce matin z-au Texas.

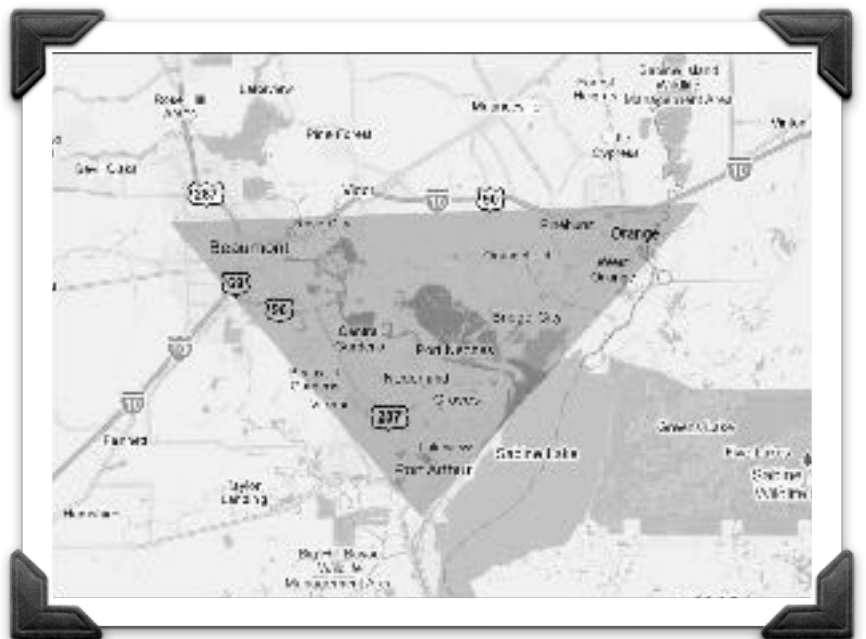
REFRAIN:

Brasse donc le couche-couche
Tire bien la vache
Chauffe le café
Je sus partie à ce matin z-au Texas.

Je suis parti à ce matin à Nederland
Nonc Vallot m'appelle, il dit « Viens! »
Amène ta robe et amène ta couronne
On se marie demain matin z-à Orange.

REFRAIN

Je sus parti à ce matin à Beaumont,
Il y a un gros JOB qui m'espère sus le moment.
Si je fais bien, je vas rester,
Si je fais pas, je m'en reviens,
Mettre mes pieds sous la table à maman.



Brasse donc le couche-couche

Notes supplémentaires

According to Lester Gauthier, Jr., this song was written by Willie Broussard of Maurice, Louisiana, his eighth grade math teacher. Lester recounts, "Willie sang it first on a 45-rpm accompanied by Leroy Broussard and his band. Many used to say that it was Leroy's song, since he performed it often in public and included it on one of his albums. However, the song was written by Willie." An early and long-time frequenter of **la table française** at Dwyer's Café, Lester says that the tune was for many years the "theme song" of that group.

"Brasse donc le couche-couche" depicts the pleas of a young man who is going to Texas to find better-paying work. He urges his fiancée to decide whether to accompany him because he's determined to leave in the morning. If she chooses to go, she should bring her dress and veil, and they'll marry in Orange.

Migration away from Louisiana farm communities toward the East Texas oil fields was particularly prevalent during the 1940s, and many Cajuns and Creoles resettled in the area bordered by Beaumont, Port Arthur and Orange, the "Golden Triangle." According to Lester, Willie Broussard had two sisters who married and moved to Beaumont and remain there, so the song is inspired by personal experience. Lester says, "Almost everyone from Vermilion Parish in the 1950s and 1960s had a cousin who lived in the Golden Triangle."

Lester continues, "The third verse about Beaumont has never been recorded because nobody had it. I wrote the verse down on a napkin after seeing Willie one time and he mentioned the existence of the third verse which he never had the chance to sing. Willie was named a Living Legend at the Acadian Museum in Erath. I introduced him and sang the refrain with him and prompted him on the verses, since age is getting to him." The bonus verse is included in the version printed in this guide.

The song gained great popularity when it was recorded by Jim Olivier in the 1980s. The Magnolia Sisters have redone it with a feminist twist, replacing "J'emmène une gamine" (I'm bringing a girl with me) with "J'emmène un gamin." (I'm bringing a boy). Steve Riley and the Mamou Playboys also have a version out, though Steve sings "Midland" rather than "Nederland," a misinterpretation likely due to the fact the French pronunciation of "Nederland," (NEED-LANN), sounds a lot like the French pronunciation of "Midland."

Source: Personal correspondence between Lester Gauthier and Amanda LaFleur, 2016.

La chanson de cinquante sous

chanson traditionnelle, version de Marion Dugadet

Écoute ici: <https://youtu.be/giWhiWwwHEw?si=hukocvixvads82Vx>

Moi et ma belle on a été z-au bal
C'était (dessus) un samedi soir
Moi et ma belle on a été z-au bal
C'était (dessus) un samedi soir

Elle a ordonné une volaille rôtie
Et une demi-douzaine de z-huîtres
Elle a ordonné une volaille rôtie
Et une demi-douzaine de z-huîtres

On a revenu le lendemain matin
Le lendemain matin z-au jour
On a revenu le lendemain matin
Le lendemain matin z-au jour

Moi j'ai mis mon cinquante-sous
Dessus le comptoir
Moi j'ai mis mon cinquante-sous
Dessus le comptoir

Je l'ai demandé si elle avait pas faim
Pour manger quelque chose
Je l'ai demandé si elle avait pas faim
Pour manger quelque chose

Massacré dans un coup de poing
Mais ils m'ont tiré dans la fenêtre
Massacré dans un coup de pied
Ils m'ont tiré dans la rue

É m'a dit elle avait pas beaucoup faim
Mais elle aurait mangé quand-même
É m'a dit elle avait pas beaucoup faim
Mais elle aurait mangé quand-même

Prenez un conseil de moi
Tous les jeunes tits bougres
Allez jamais dans un restaurant**
Avec cinquante sous dans la poche

Moi, je croyais elle aurait ordonné
Un petit LUNCH* de quinze sous
Moi, je croyais elle aurait ordonné
Un petit LUNCH de quinze sous

*lunch = *sandwich*

**“restaurant” est prononcé “lestaurant”

version de Marion Dugadet dessus "Cajun Songs of Louisiana," Folkways Records, 1957

Acadie de nos cœurs

par Johnny Comeau et Lennie Gallant

Écoute ici: <https://youtu.be/oQgEoMRFd84?si=N-JcbRSfiGBc-gd9>

Séparés par la mer
Pendant les années tristes
Dispersés à travers
On n'avait pas eu le choix de partir

C'est le temps pour se revoir
Chanter, danser ensemble
Où ç'a tout commencé
Presque 400 ans passés

REFRAIN:

Acadie de nos cœurs
Enfin c'est ton heure
Tes enfants reviennent dans tes bras
2x

Viennent du nord et de l'est
Pour fêter la joie de vivre
Viennent du sud et de l'ouest
Attirés par les racines

T'es mon frère, t'es ma sœur
J'ai point connu jusqu'asteur
Je peux voir dans tes yeux
Comment t'as pas pu oublier

REFRAIN

Acadie de nos cœurs
Enfin c'est ton heure
Tes enfants reviennent dans tes bras
2x

La douleur du départ
Et les larmes déjà versées
S'oublie dans la joie
Que l'on prend à se retrouver

REFRAIN

"Acadie de nos cœurs" a été composé à l'occasion du premier Congrès Mondial Acadien au Nouveau-Brunswick en 1994 et a servi de chanson thème pour cette fête internationale.

Si longtemps séparés

par Waylon Thibodeaux et Roland Gauvin

Écoute ici: https://youtu.be/5TrlBgBxWIM?si=Wdhg_FJEZW7V-iHi

Je me souviens bien d'une vieille z-histoire
D'un beau pays ancien
Labouré par les mains
De nos ancêtres acadiens
Éparpillés par les Anglais
Cinquante ans ils ont cherché
Pour un autre paradis
Pour une autre Acadie

REFRAIN:

Chère Acadie,
Je pense souvent à toi
Mais je peux pas me détacher
Du pays où je suis né
Ceux qui sont pas Acadiens
Ne peuvent pas comprendre
Qu'est-ce que c'est d'avoir
Le coeur en Acadie
Et les pieds en la Louisiane

Je pense souvent à tous mes frères
Toutes mes soeurs aussi
Déportés sur la mer
Si loin de leur pays
Et quand la famille se rassemble
Je vois même qu'on se ressemble
Quand l'Acadien joue du violon
Et le Cadien l'accordéon

REFRAIN

Asteur la famille acadienne
Si longtemps séparée
Se rejoint dans la Louisiane
Pour enfin se rencontrer
Cousins, cousines, allons s'amuser
Dans le pays des bayous
On va parler le vieux français
Et le temps sera à nous

REFRAIN

Le deuxième Congrès Mondial Acadien a eu lieu en Louisiane en 1999. "Si longtemps séparé" a servi de chanson thème pour cette fête internationale.

Ma Louisiane

par David Marcantel

Écoute ici: <https://youtu.be/bO8x5nYSIlY?si=LoZAOaZoTZL8IOuF>

Oh, que j'aime ma Louisiane
Terre promise, chênes verts et mousse grise
J'étais jeune quand je l'ai quittée
Pendant combien d'années j'ai fort voyagé

REFRAIN

Je m'ennuie de mon pays, des bayous si loin d'ici
La Louisiane acadienne, je m'ennuie de mon pays

Quand le vent du nord me gèle
Je vois passer les vols des oies blanches
Elles vont chercher un abri d'hiver
Dans les clos de riz, c'est proche Paradis

REFRAIN

Je m'ennuie de mon pays, des bayous si loin d'ici
La Louisiane acadienne, je m'ennuie de mon pays

Sortie d'une race qui n'a jamais su mourir
J'ai abandonné sa langue, sa voix, la vie dure du passé
Mais au fond de mon coeur, j'entends la musique de mon peuple
Qui m'appelle chez nous—“Reviens chez nous!”

REFRAIN

Je m'ennuie de mon pays, des bayous si loin d'ici
La Louisiane acadienne, je m'ennuie de mon pays.
Je m'ennuie de mon pays.

chanté sur l'air de “Country Roads” de John Denver

Chante-moi une chanson, Dad

par Al Bérard

Écoute ici: <https://youtu.be/ec56Xj-6vsk?si=7XEGOUhWbWxtp32U>

Kréyol

Français Louisianais

Viv ta vi la monyèr to peu

Vive ta vie la manière que tu peux

Mont té piti sa to koné

Montre à tes petits ça que tu connais

**Mont wa yé lé prijèr ushka yé
koné**

Montre y-eux les prières jusqu'à (que) ça les connaît

Le plu vjeu no vyen

Plus on vieillit

No veu séjé fé sa ki bjen

Plus on veut essayer de faire ça qui est bien

Kout war sa jé pou di

Écoute voir ça que j'ai pour dire

En jour no va mouri

Un jour on va mourir.

Vocabulaire par fonction

Vocabulary lists by function

Sometimes when you're doing an activity with a group, it's useful to have list of words and phrases that come up frequently when trying to communicate a certain way like (defining or comparing), or a list organized around themes (ex. talking about the weather, greeting people, talking about relatives). The lists below are not meant to function as an activity in themselves, but rather as a quick "cheat sheet" to help people find examples of what they need to say in specific circumstances. They are predominantly in Louisiana French. Of course, they are not exhaustive. For more, survey your table to see what other words and expressions on the same theme they can share. And don't forget the *Dictionary of Louisiana French*!

Here are a few ways to use the vocabulary lists:

- Hand them out individually when the discussion you plan on having calls for the particular words and expressions on the list.
- Hand them all out together as a packet to newcomers to your table, encouraging them to use them as a resource when appropriate.
- Use them to help you build or expand on guided scripts such as the ones in the previous section of this guide.

Poser des questions pour mieux comprendre

Asking questions for clarification

Français	Anglais	Commentaires
Comment tu dis....?	How do you say...?	The questions in this section all use the “familiar” form for “you”—tu. Note, however, that even when using the “familiar” form in Louisiana French, we still usually say “s’il vous plaît.” S’il vous plaît has become an invariable form in Louisiana.
C’est quoi le mot pour...?	What’s the word for....?	
Je comprends pas.	I don’t understand.	
J’ai pas (bien) compris.	I didn’t get it. = I didn’t understand	
Quoi ce que ça eut dire?	What does that mean?	
Ça veut dire...	That means.....	
Tu peux répéter ça?	Can you repeat that?	
Tu peux dire ça encore?	Can you say that again?	
Dis ça encore....	Say that again....	
Plus doucement, s’il vous plaît.	More slowly, please.	
Espère!	Wait!	
Quoi c’est ça?	What’s that?	
Qui c’est ça?		Regional variant: Avoyelles, Evangeline, Lafourche
Tu comprends?	Do you understand?	
Là je comprends.	Now I get it. Now i understand.	
J’ai bien prononcé ça?	Did I pronounce that right?	
J’ai bien dit ça?	Did I say that right?	
C’est la même chose que...	It’s the same thing as...	
C’est la même affaire.		
Quelle est la différence entre...et...?	What is the difference between...and...?	
T’as compris?	Did you get it? Did you understand?	
Ouais, j’ai compris.	Yeah, I got it. I understood.	
Vraiment?	Really?	
C’est ça.	That’s it.	

Salutations Greetings

Français	Anglais	Commentaires
Bonjour.	Hello.	
Bonsoir.	Good evening.	
Comment ça va?	How's it going?	
Comment les affaires?	How are things?	Also: How's business?
Comment c'est?	How are things?	Literally: How is it?
Comment les haricots?	How's it going?	Literally: How are the green beans?
Comment les cannes sont?	How's it going?	Literally: How's the sugar cane? or as a pun, How's the underwear?
Ça va.	Ok.	
Ça peut faire.	It'll do.	
Comme ci, comme ça.	So so.	
Ça va pas trop bien.	Not too well.	
Ça va mal.	It's going badly.	
Ça va pas.	It's not going well.	
Ça va pas du tout.	It's not going well at all.	
Ça va bien.	It's going well.	
Ça va beaucoup bien.	It's going very well.	
Mieux que ça et les prêtres seraient jaloux.	Any better and the priests would be jealous.	
Mieux que ça serait un enterrement.	Any better would be a funeral.	
Mieux que ça serait un cas d'hôpital.	Any better would be a hospital case.	
Et toi?	And you?	Familiar to one person.
Et vous?	And you?	Speaking to an older person or to show respect.
Et vous autres?	And y'all?	Addressing 1+ person.
Merci.	Thank you.	Thank you.
Quoi ça dit?	What's happening?	Literally: What are they saying?
Pas grand' chose.	Nothing big. No big deal.	
Pas un tas. Pas beaucoup Pas much.	Not a lot.	

Partir *Taking leave*

Français	Anglais	Commentaires
Moi, je m'en vas.	I'm leaving.	
Tu t'en vas?	Are you leaving?	Familiar address to one person.
Moi, j'sus gone.	I'm leaving. I'm heading	
Au revoir.	Good-bye.	
On va se revoir.	See you!	Literally: We'll be seeing each other.
À demain.	See you tomorrow.	
Reviens!	Come back!	Familiar address to one person.
Reviens back!		
Revenez!	Come back!	Formal address or to 1+ person.
À plus tard!	Later!	Literally: Until later
T'à l'heure!	See you in a little while.	Abbreviated form of: à tout à l'heure
Soigne-toi!	Take care of yourself!	Familiar address to one person.
Soignez-vous!	Take care of yourself!	Formal address.
Soignez-vous-autres!	Take care of yourselves!	When addressing 1+ person.
Aie une bonne journée.	Have a good day.	Familiar address to one person.
Ayez une bonne journée.	Have a good day.	Formal address or to 1+ person.
Bonne soirée.	Have a nice evening.	Familiar address to one person.
Bonne journée.	Have a nice evening.	Formal address or to 1+ person.
Fais attention dessus le chemin.	Be careful on the road.	Familiar address to one person.
Faites attention dessus le	Be careful on the road.	Formal address or to 1+ person.
C'est l'heure de partir.	It's time to go.	
C'est l'heure de lever la patte.	It's time to go.	Figurative. Literally: It's time to raise a foot.
C'est l'heure de lever la paille.	It's time to go.	Figurative. Literally: It's time to tip one's straw hat.
Plus tard, canard!	See you later alligator.	Literally: Later, duck.

Présenter et être présenté

Making introductions & being introduced

FRENCH	Anglais	Commentaires
On se connaît?	Do we know each other?	
Non.	No.	
On se connaît pas.	We don't know each other.	
déjà	already	
Ouais. Oui.	Yeah. Yes.	
On se connaît déjà.	We already know each other.	
mon ami	my friend (m.)	
mon amie	my friend (f.)	
ma femme	my wife	
mon mari	my husband	
Tu connais mon ami....?	Do you know my friend...?	
ici	here	
icitte		
Ça ici c'est...	This here is...	
Ça (ici) c'est mon ami(e) ...	This is my friend...	
Son nom c'est...	His/her name is...	
Content de te rencontrer.	Glad to meet you.	Said by a male. Familiar
Content de vous rencontrer		Said by a male. Formal.
Contente de te rencontrer		Said by a female. Familiar
Contente de vous rencontrer.		Said by a female. Formal.
Pareillement.	Same here.	
Moi aussi.	Me too.	
C'est mon plaisir.	It's my pleasure.	

Se présenter *Introducing oneself*

Français	Anglais	Commentaires
Qui c'est ça?	Who is that?	
Ça c'est... Ça c'est...?	That is... Is that...?	Raised intonation to make a question
Quoi c'est ton nom?	What is your name?	familiar, to one person
Qui c'est ton nom?	What is your name?	Evangeline, Avoyelles, Terrebonne and LaFourche ariant
Quoi/Qui c'est votre(s) nom(s)?	What is your name? What are your names?	formal or address to +1 person
Quoi/qui c'est son nom?	What is his/her name?	
Quoi/qui c'est leur(s) nom(s)?	What are their names?	
Mon nom c'est...	My name is...	
J'ai un tit nom.	I have a nickname.	
Mon tit nom c'est...	My nickname is...	
Ça m'appelle...	They call me...	
Tout quelqu'un m'appelle...	Everybody calls me...	
Mes amis m'appellent...	My friends call me...	
Ma famille m'appelle...	My family calls me...	
Moi, j'sus...	I am...	
Je m'appelle...	My name is...	Not used frequently in Louisiana.
Je sus un(e) LaFleur.	I'm a LaFleur.	with family names
un tocaille	someone who has the same first name as another	Not necessarily a namesake. Often indicates a coincidental fact.
Mon nom c'est Brad Léger. Brad Pitt c'est mon tocaille.	My name is Brad Léger. Brad Pitt is my "name twin."	
nommer	to name	
Ça m'a nommé...	They named me...	
J'ai été nommé(e) pour mon père.	I was named for my father.	
J'ai été nommé(e) après	I was named for	

Lieux d'origine et d'habitation

Talking about your birthplace and where you live

Français	Anglais	Commentaires
J'ai été né(e)	I was born	Regional variants
J'ai été éné(e)		
Je suis né(e)		standard French
J'ai été né(e) et élevé(e)	I was born and raised	
Je viens de...	I'm from...	Regional variants
Je deviens de...		
J'habite...	I reside/live in...	
Je reste...		
à Mamou, à Chauvin, à St. Martin	in + one-word town name	St. Martin=St. Martinville Donaldson=Donaldsonville
au Pierre Part, au Pont Breaux	in + compound name m.	Pont Breaux = Breaux Bridge "au Bâton Rouge / à Bâton Rouge" both used
à la Ville Platte, à la Saline,	in + compound name f.	la Saline = Avery Island
en Ville à la Nouvelle-Orléans	in New Orleans	
aux Opelousas	in Opelousas	
aux Natchitoches	in Natchitoches	
dans la paroisse	in the parish	
dans la paroisse St. Landry	in St. Landry Parish	
dans la paroisse St. Jacques	in St. James Parish	
aux Avoyelles	in Avoyelles Parish	
en Louisiane	in Louisiana	
dans la Louisiane		
dans l'état (de)...	in the state (of)...	
dans l'état de Maine	in the state of Maine	
en Californie, en Floride	in + state with feminine name	
dans la Californie, dans la Floride		
au Texas, au Vermont	in + state with masculine name	
dans le Texas, dans le Vermont		
C'est là ayoù mon nombouril est enterré.	Literally: That's where my umbilical cord is buried. Metaphorically: That's where I was born or first lived .	

Noms de places qui diffèrent entre l'anglais et le français.

Place names that are different in French and English

Français	Anglais
Béville	Abbeville
Donaldson	Donaldsonville
Napoléon	Napoleonville
Paincourt	Paincourtville
Plauchéville	Plaucheville
Royville	Youngsville
St. Martin	St. Martinville
l'Anse Bleue	Point Blue
l'Anse des Tate	Tate Cove
(le) Canal Yankee	Golden Meadow
(le) Chemin Neuf	New Roads
la Fausse Rivière	False River
(le) Lac Arthur	Lake Arthur
(le) Lac Charles	Lake Charles
la Mintav	Mermentau
la Prie Ronde	Prairie Ronde
la Nouvelle-Orléans	New Orleans
en Ville	in New Orleans
(le) Pont Breaux	Breaux Bridge

Parler de sa vie en couple

Talking about one's couple status

mon mari	my husband	
ma femme	my wife	
mon fiancé	my fiancé (m.)	
ma fiancée	my fiancée (f.)	
ma belle / prétendue	my girlfriend	
mon beau / prétendu	my boyfriend	
J'ai une prétendue.	I have a girlfriend.	
J'ai un beau.	I have a boyfriend.	
Je sus...	I am	
Il est...	He is	
Elle est...	She is	
T'es...	Are you? / You are	familiar
T'es marié(e)?	Are you married?	familiar
Vous est marié(e)?	Are you married?	formal
Vous êtes marié(e)?	Are you married?	formal rare
Je sus marié(e).	I'm married.	
Je sus pas marié(e).	I'm not married.	
J'ai jamais été marié(e).	I've never been married.	
divorcé(e)	divorced	
veuf/veuve	widowed	
séparé(e)	separated	
On est...	We are / Are we?	
Ils sont...	They are / Are they?	
Vous-autres est divorcés?	Are y'all divorced?	
Il est vieux garçon.	He's an "old bachelor." Never married	
Elle est vieille fille.	She's an "old maid." Never married	
Il/a s'a jamais marié(e).	He/she never married.	
Mon mari est mort.	My husband is deceased.	
Ma femme est morte.	My wife is deceased.	
On a été marié quarante ans.	We were married for 40 years.	
On s'a marié. On s'est mariés.	We got married.	

Pour parler de la date I

Talking about the date

Français	Anglais	Commentaires
le calendrier	the calendar	
l'almanaque	the calendar	
Quelle est la date?	What's the date?	
Quelle quantième on est?	What's the date?	
Quelle date?	What date?	
Aujourd'hui c'est....	Today is....	
Demain c'est...	Tomorrow is....	
C'est le premier de juillet.	It's July first.	Except for the "first," in French we use cardinal rather than ordinal numbers to say the day. I.e. You don't have to say the "thirtieth," just the "thirty."
C'est le trente de septembre.	It's September 30th.	
en mai	in May	All three of these prepositions are heard in Louisiana with the names of months, sometimes varying by region and sometimes even varying with the same speaker.
dans mai	in May	
dedans le mois de mai	in the month of May	
un mois	a month	
janvier	January	
février	February	
mars	March	
avril	April	
mai	May	
juin	June	
juillet	July	
août	August	
septembre	September	
octobre	October	
novembre	November	
décembre	December	

Pour parler de la date II

Talking about the date

Français	Anglais	Commentaires
un jour	a day	
Quel jour on est?	What day are we?	The L sound in Quel is not pronounced here in front of a consonant. Sounds like KAY [ke].
Quel jour c'est?	What day is it?	The L sound in Quel is not pronounced here in front of a consonant. Sounds like KAY [ke].
Quel quantième on est? Quel quantième c'est? Quelle est la date?	What is the date?	
C'est lundi.	It's Monday.	
mardi	Tuesday	
mercredi	Wednesday	
jeudi	Thursday	
vendredi	Friday	
samedi	Saturday	
dimanche	Sunday	
en quelle année...?	In what year....?	
dix-neuf cent___	the year 19___	
deux mille___	the year 20___	
En deux mille vingt-cinq	in 2025	
Quand	When?	
Équand?		
Équand c'est....?	When is...?	
Le lendemain	The next day	
Hier c'était....	Yesterday was....	
Avant hier	Day before yesterday	

Parler de sa fête et son âge

Speaking about one's birthdate and age

Français	Anglais	Commentaires
En quelle année t'as été né(e)	In what year were you born?	
J'ai été né(e)	I was born...	
Je suis né(e)		Français standard
J'ai été né(e) en dix-neuf cent trente-sept.	I was born in 1937.	Variant: dans instead of en
J'ai été né(e) en quarante-cinq.	I was born in '45.	
Équand c'est ta fête?	When is your birthday?	
Ma fête c'est le treize de janvier.	My birthday is January 13.	
Ma fête c'est en février.	My birthday is in February.	Variant: dans instead of en
Équand c'est sa fête?	When is his/her birthday?	
Sa fête c'est le onze de novembre.	His/her birthday is November 11.	
Bonne fête!	Happy birthday!	Note: In English, "years old" does not have to be stated, but in French you need to say "ans" after the stated age. J'ai vingt-trois ans. NOT: J'ai vingt-trois.
J'ai cinquante ans.	I'm 50 years old.	
J'auras quarante ans en mai.	I'll be 40 in May.	
Il a quinze ans.	He's fifteen.	
Elle a vingt-deux ans.	She's twenty-two.	Alle as a subject pronoun is more common than elle , which is heard in Arnaudville area. Note: the final L sound is not pronounced if followed by a consonant sound. Ex. Alle a 15 ans. A devient de Chauvin.
Alle a soixante ans.	She's sixty.	

Parler du temps I

Talking about the weather

Français	Anglais
le temps	the weather
comment	how
Comment est le temps?	How is the weather?
Comment est le temps aujourd'hui?	How's the weather today?
ici / icitte	Here
là-bas	over there
Comment est le temps là-bas?	How's the weather over there?
Ça fait beau.	It's nice out.
Ça fait chaud.	It's hot.
Ça fait beaucoup chaud.	It's very hot.
Ça fait frais.	It's cool.
Ça fait gris.	It's overcast.
Ça fait froid.	It's cold.
Ça fait manière froid.	It's kind of cold.
Ça fait frète.	It's very cold.
Tu parles!	Talk about!
Ça fait humide.	It's humid.
Ça fait un petit brin froid.	It's a little (bit) cold.
Ça fait un petit peu froid.	
le soleil	the sun
Ça fait du soleil	It's sunny.
Le soleil est fort.	The sun is strong/hot.

Parler du temps II

Talking about the weather

Français	Anglais
le vent	the wind
Ça fait du vent.	It's windy
Le vent est fort.	The wind is strong.
Le vent a viré.	The wind has changed direction.
Il vente.	The wind blows.
C'est après venter.	The wind is blowing.
Ça/Il mouille.	It's raining. It rains.
C'est après mouiller.	It's raining right now .
Il a mouillé.	It rained.
Ça va mouiller.	It's going to rain.
Le temps est beau.	The weather is nice.
Le temps est mauvais.	The weather is bad
On va avoir...	We're going to have...
On a eu...	We had...
...un/du mauvais temps	...bad weather
...un/du beau temps	...nice weather
...de la pluie	...rain
...du vent	...wind
...des gros vents	...big winds
...de la neige	...snow
...de la glace	...ice
...de la grêle	...hail
...du verglas	...sleet
...un vilain temps	...ugly weather
...un ouragan	...a hurricane
...un tourbillon	...a tornado
...une colonne	...a tornado
...des nuages	...clouds
...du brouillard	...fog

Pour parler de la famille I <i>Talking about family</i>		
T'as des enfants?	<i>Do you have children?</i>	
Non, j'ai pas d'enfants.	<i>No, I don't have kids.</i>	
J'ai....	<i>I have...</i>	
Il a ...Elle/alle a	<i>He has.... She has</i>	
On a...	<i>We have...</i>	
Elle a...un enfant.	<i>She has...one/a child.</i>	
un petit-enfant	<i>a/one grandchild</i>	
trois petits-enfants	<i>three grandchildren</i>	
J'ai deux filles et trois garçons.	<i>I have two daughters and three sons.</i>	
.....est parent avec	<i>....is related to</i>	
T'es parent avec....?	<i>Are you related to...?</i>	
tit-parent	<i>distantly related</i>	
Je suis tit-parent avec...	<i>I am distantly related to...</i>	
.....par allianceen alliance	<i>step relative ;by marriage</i>	
On est parent par alliance.	<i>We related by marriage.</i>	
un père	<i>a father</i>	
une mère	<i>a mother</i>	
un frère	<i>a brother</i>	
une soeur	<i>a sister</i>	
Comment c'est parent avec toi?	<i>How are they is he/she related to you?</i>	
Ça c'est <u>mon</u> père.	<i>That's my father.</i>	
Ça c'est <u>ton</u> frère?	<i>Is that your brother?</i>	
Ça c'est <u>son</u> frère.	<i>That's his/her brother.</i>	Son = his/her or its , depending on context. Use in front of masculine singular noun.
Ses frères sont ici.	<i>His/her brothers are here.</i>	Ses = his/her or its , depending on context. Used in front of a plural noun.
Ça c'est <u>ma</u> mère.	<i>That's She's my mother.</i>	
Qui c'est <u>ta</u> mère?	<i>Who's your mama?</i>	
<u>Sa</u> soeur est là-bas.	<i>His/her sister is over there.</i>	Sa = his/her or its , depending on context. Use in front of feminine singular noun.
<u>Notre</u> père	<i>Our father</i>	Notre = our. Use in front of singular noun.
<u>Nos</u> enfants / <u>notres</u> enfants	<i>Our children</i>	Use in front of plural noun.

Pour parler de la famille II *Talking about family*

un grand-père	<i>a grandfather</i>
une grand-mère	<i>a grandmother</i>
un oncle nonc	<i>an uncle</i>
une tante	<i>an aunt</i>
un fils / un garçon	<i>a son</i>
une fille	<i>a daughter</i>
un cousin	<i>a male cousin</i>
une cousine	<i>a female cousin</i>
un neveu	<i>a nephew</i>
une nièce	<i>a niece</i>
un mari	<i>a husband</i>
une femme	<i>a wife</i>
un beau-père	<i>a father-in-law; a stepfather</i>
une belle-mère	<i>a mother-in-law; a stepmother</i>
un gendre	<i>a son-in-law</i>
une bru	<i>a daughter-in-law</i>
une belle-fille	<i>a daughter-in-law; a stepdaughter</i>
un beau-frère	<i>a brother-in-law; a stepbrother</i>
une belle-soeur	<i>a sister-in-law; a stepsister</i>
un demi-frère	<i>a half-brother</i>
une demie-soeur	<i>a half-sister</i>
un bébé	<i>a baby</i>
un(e) enfant	<i>a child</i>
un parent	<i>a relative; a parent</i>
un grand-parent	<i>a grandparent</i>
un petit-enfant	<i>a grandchild</i>
un petit-garçon	<i>a grandson</i>
une petite-fille	<i>a granddaughter</i>
les petits-enfants	<i>the grandchildren</i>
le parrain	<i>the godfather</i>
la marraine	<i>the godmother</i>
le filleul	<i>the godson</i>
la filleule	<i>the goddaughter</i>
la parenté	<i>relatives</i>
C'est de la parenté.	<i>They are relatives. He/She is a relative.</i>

Parler de ton ouvrage ou ton métier I

Talking about your job or profession

Je sus / J'étais	I am / was=I used to be	
Il/Elle est / Il/Elle était	He/she is / He/she was	
avocat(e)	lawyer; attorney	Feminine form adds "e".
banquier (m.) / banquière (f.)	Banker	
boucher	butcher	
boulangier	baker	
charpentier	carpenter	Feminine = "charpentière" rare
commis	sales clerk	
conseilleur	counselor (m.)	Not common but would be understood.
conseilleuse	counselor (f.)	Not common but would be understood.
comptable	accountant	
cuisinier	cook (m.)	Feminine = cuisinière
dans la politique	in politics	
dentiste	dentist	
docteur(e)	doctor; physician	Feminine form adds "e".
maîtresse d'école	teacher (f.)	
maître d'école	teacher (m.)	
mécanicien	mechanic	Feminine = "mécanicienne"
modiste	seamstress, dress designer	
musicien(ne)	musician	Feminine form adds "ne".
pêcheur	fisherman	Feminine = pêcheuse
pharmacien(ne)	pharmacist	Feminine form adds "ne".
pilote	pilot	
plombier	plumber	
policier	policeman	
postillon(ne)	postal worker; postmaster (m.)	Feminine form adds "e".
récolteur / récoltier / fermier	farmer	Feminine = "récolteuse"
secrétaire	secretary	
vendeur	salesman	
vendeuse	saleswoman	
de chars	car salesperson	
d'assurance	insurance salesperson	

Parler de ton ouvrage ou ton métier II

Talking about your job or profession

J'ai / J'avais	I have / I had=used to have	
Il/Elle a... / Il/Elle avait...	He/she has / had	
un business	a business	
une boutique / un magasin	a store	"Magasin" can also mean "barn" in LF.
une grosserie	a grocery store	
un garage	a garage	
une halle	a butcher shop, meat market	
Je travaille / J'ai travaillé	I work / I worked	
Il/Elle travaille / Il/Elle travaillait	He/she works / He/she used to work	
dans une banque	in a bank	
dessus les puits huile	on oil rigs	
pour le gouvernement	for the government	
pour l'office du shérif	for the sheriff's office	
pour une compagnie d'huile	for an oil company	
pour moi-même	for myself	
Je fais... Je faisais / faidais...	I do... / I used to do...	
de la charpente	carpentry	
récolte	farming	
de la peinture	painting	
l'élevage des bêtes	cattle raising	
Je montre l'école.	I teach.	
J'ai montré l'école pour 30 ans.	I taught for 30 years.	
J'arrange les chars.	I fix cars.	
J'habitude arranger les chars.	I used to fix cars.	
J'arrangeais les chars.		
Je fais récolte. Je sus récolteur.	I farm. I'm a farmer.	
Je sus ingénieur(e).	I'm an engineer.	Note that no article is used in this structure.
J'ai été ingénieur pour 40 ans.	I was an engineer for 40 years.	
Tu fais de la charpente?	Do you do carpentry?	

Des adjectifs pour décrire une personne

Adjectives to describe people

beau handsome	pas tout là kind of crazy, "not all there"
belle beautiful	fou, folle crazy
joli(e) pretty	fout-pas-mal reckless, impulsive (invariable)
grand(e) tall	gêné(e) shy
petit(e) little	bavard(e) talkative
court(e) short	badjeulard(e) talkative
basset, bassette short	obéissant(e) obedient
gros, grosse fat	bien élevé(e) well-mannered, poli
mince thin	mal élevé(e) ill-mannered, rude
maigre skinny, thin	emplâtre awkward
mignon, mignonne cute	gâté(e) spoiled
haïssable. hateful	gâté(e) pourri(e) spoiled rotten
membré(e) muscular	intelligent(e) intelligent
canaille mischievous	smatte smart, intelligent
avenant(e) nice, kind	vif, vive quick, quick-witted
vaillant(e) nice, kind	doucement slow, slow-witted (invariable)
farce funny	tête dure hard-headed (invariable)
drôle strange	entêté(e) hard-headed
bon, bonne good	doux, douce sweet, gentle
content(e) happy	patient(e) patient
heureux, heureuse happy	difficile hard to get along with
malheureux, malheureuse unhappy	bonasse. good-natured, to the point of being vulnerable to abuse
triste sad	paresseux, paresseuse. lazy
chagrin, chagrine sad, downhearted	journalier, journalière. moody, unpredictable
généreux, généreuse. generous	chiche/chisse. stingy

Pour définir Defining

Français	Anglais	Exemples	
C'est quelque chose	<i>It's something</i>		
C'est quelque chose qui	<i>It's something that + verb</i>	Une lumière, c'est quelque chose qui brille.	<i>A light is something that shines.</i>
C'est quelque chose que	<i>It's something that + subject + verb</i>	La soupe, c'est quelque chose que tu manges quand ça fait froid.	<i>Soupe is something you eat when it's cold.</i>
C'est quelque chose que tu vois...	<i>It's something you see...</i>	Une étoile, c'est quelque chose que tu vois la nuit.	<i>A star is something you see at night.</i>
Ça sert à...	<i>It's used to... + infinitive</i>	Un balai, ça sert à nettoyer le plancher	<i>A broom is used to clean the floor.</i>
On se sert de ça pour...	<i>We use that to...</i>	On se sert d'un marteau pour frapper des clous.	<i>We use a hammer to hit nails.</i>
C'est manière comme...	<i>It's kind of like...</i>	Un pamplemousse est manière comme une orange, mais plus haigre et plus gros.	<i>A grapefruit is kind of like an orange, but more sour and bigger.</i>
C'est un autre mot pour...	<i>It's another word for...</i>	'Plein' c'est un autre mot pour 'beaucoup'.	<i>'Plein' is another word for 'beaucoup'. a lot</i>
C'est une autre manière de dire....	<i>It's another way to say...</i>	'Boutique' c'est une autre manière de dire 'magasin'.	<i>'Boutique' is another way to say 'magasin'. store</i>
C'est le contraire de...	<i>It's the opposite of...</i>	'Vilain' c'est le contraire de 'beau'.	<i>'Ugly' is the opposite of 'beautiful'.</i>
C'est une affaire/ chose que...	<i>It's a thing that...</i>	Un livre, c'est une chose que tu lis.	<i>A book is something that you read.</i>
C'est une qualité de...	<i>It's a type of...</i>	Un tigre c'est une qualité de chat farouche.	<i>A tiger is a type of wild cat.</i>
C'est un outil qui...	<i>It's a tool that...</i>	Une hache, c'est un outil qui coupe le bois.	<i>A hatchet is a tool that cuts wood.</i>
C'est un outil pour...	<i>It's a tool to...</i>	C'est un outil pour arranger un char.	<i>It's a tool for fixing a car.</i>
C'est une partie de...	<i>It's part of...</i>	Le pouce c'est une partie de ta main.	<i>The thumb is part of your hand.</i>
C'est quelqu'un qui...	<i>It's someone who...</i>	Un récolteur, c'est quelqu'un qui laboure la terre.	<i>A farmer is someone who tills the soil/works the land.</i>
C'est ça que tu fais...	<i>It's what you do...</i>	Brailler, c'est ça que tu fais quand t'es triste.	<i>Crying is what you do when you're sad.</i>

Pour parler des catégories

Talking about categories

Français	Anglais	Exemple	
Les choses	Things		
Les choses qui sont...	Things that are...	Les choses qui sont lourdes.	Things that are heavy.
Les choses qui + verbe	Things that + verb	Les choses qui brillent.	Things that shine.
Les choses qu'on voit...	Things we see...	Les choses qu'on voit dans un garage.	Things we see in a garage.
Les choses qu'on + verbe	Things we + verb	Les choses qu'on oublie.	Things that we forget.
Ça qu'on dit quand...	What we say when...	Ça qu'on dit quand on est après partir.	What we say when we're leaving.
Ça que tu fais quand...	What you do when...	Ça que tu fais quand t'es malade.	What you do when you're sick.
Ça que tu fais avant de + infinitif	What you do before + infinitive	Ça que tu fais avant de te coucher.	What you do before going to bed.
Ça que tu mets dans...	What you put in...	Ça que tu mets dans un panier de Pâques.	What you put in an Easter basket.
Les choses qu'on trouve...	Things you find...	Les choses qu'on trouve dans un bateau.	Things you find in a boat.
Ça qu'on trouve...	What we find...	Ça qu'on trouve dans une office.	What we find in an office.
Les ingrédients dans...	The ingredients in...	Les ingrédients dans une tarte aux pacanes.	The ingredients in a pecan pie.
Ça que t'as de besoin pour faire...	What you need to make...	Ça que t'as de besoin pour faire une étouffée.	What you need to make an étouffée.
Les choses que t'as de besoin pour...	The things you need to...	Les choses que t'as de besoin pour faire un gâteau.	Things you need to make a cake.
Des qualités de...	Types of...	Des qualités de fleurs.	Kinds of flowers.
Le monde/Les gens qui...	People who...	Le monde qui travaille dans un hôpital.	People who work in a hospital.
Le monde/Les gens que...	People whom...	Le monde que t'appelles quand t'as un tracas un problème .	People you call when you have a problem.

Pour parler de mes peurs I

Talking about what I'm scared of

Aujourd'hui		<i>Today</i>
Asteur		<i>Now</i>
Dernièrement		<i>Lately</i>
	J'ai peur de ...	<i>I'm afraid of ... I'm scared of ...</i>
Quand j'étais petit(e)		<i>When I was little...</i>
	J'avais peur...	<i>I was scared...</i>
Quand on était petit		<i>When we were little....</i>
	On avait peur....	<i>We were afraid</i>
Quand t'étais petit(e)		<i>When you were little...</i>
	T'avais peur...	<i>Were you afraid...</i>
	T'as peur....	<i>Are you afraid...</i>
	des hauteurs? de l'eau creuse? des serpents? des araignées? du tonnerre? des éclairs? des ouragans? des malfaiteurs? des chevaux? des revenants? des tatailles? du noir? de voler dans un avion/un aéroplane? de naviguer sur un grand chemin? de parler devant le public? de mourir? de rester seul(e) la nuit? d'être seul(e) ?	<i>of heights?</i> <i>of deep water?</i> <i>of snakes?</i> <i>of spiders?</i> <i>of thunder?</i> <i>of lightning?</i> <i>of hurricanes?</i> <i>of "bad guys"?</i> <i>of horses?</i> <i>of ghosts?</i> <i>of scary creatures?</i> <i>of the dark?</i> <i>of flying in a plane?</i> <i>of driving on big highways?</i> <i>of speaking in public?</i> <i>of dying?</i> <i>of staying by yourself at night?</i> <i>of being alone?</i>
De quoi t'avais peur? De quoi t'as peur?		<i>What were you afraid of?</i> <i>What are you afraid of?</i>

Pour parler de mes peurs II

Talking about what I'm scared of

Quand il était petit...	il avait peur	<i>When he was little, he was afraid</i>
Quand elle était petite...	elle/elle avait peur...	<i>When she was little, she was afraid</i>
Quand on était petit...	on avait peur....	<i>When we were little, we were afraid</i>
Quand j'étais petit(e)	j'avais peur....	<i>When I was little, I was scared...</i>
Quand t'étais petit(e)	t'avais peur...?	<i>When you were little, were you afraid...?</i>
	des raverts / des cafards (SF)	<i>of roaches</i>
	des bêtes puantes	<i>of skunks</i>
	des bourdons	<i>of bumblebees</i>
	des guêpes	<i>of wasps</i>
	des bonnes soeurs	<i>of nuns</i>
	des tourbillons	<i>of tornados</i>
	des chiens enragés des chiens farouches des gros chiens	
Il/Elle a peur...	du diable	<i>He/she's afraid of the Devil</i>
	de sa maîtresse d'école	<i>of his/her teacher</i>
	de perdre ses enfants	<i>of losing his/her children.</i>
	de se noyer / se néyer	<i>of drowning.</i>
J'ai peur...	de me noyer / me néyer.	<i>I'm afraid of drowning.</i>
	de perdre mes enfants	<i>of losing my children.</i>
J'ai peur d'être...	oublié après ma mort.	<i>I'm afraid of being forgotten after my death.</i>

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A host of traditional songs with transcribed lyrics and musical notation, as well as photos and annotations. A second volume, published by UL Press in 2020, includes Creole and Zydeco music.

Valdman, Albert, et al. *Dictionary of Louisiana French: As Spoken in Cajun, Creole, and American Indian Communities*. University Press of Mississippi, 2010.

The DLF is the most complete inventory of Louisiana French to date and includes authentic contextual examples taken from literary sources, oral interviews and a variety of other sources.

Valdman, Albert, et al. *Dictionary of Louisiana Creole*. Indiana University Press, 1998.

The dictionary reflects Creole of the Bayou Teche, St. Tammany, German Coast and Point Coupee areas. Introduction features a grammatical sketch of Louisiana Creole. Includes both French and English meaning equivalents and contextual examples.

Wendte, Nathan, et al. *Ti Liv Kréyòl: A Learner's Guide to Louisiana Creole*. TSÒHK, 2020.

Lessons with grammar explanations and a 1000-word glossary for beginners in Louisiana Créole.