



CRUMBS!

Teaching your pupils about healthy eating? Then whet their appetite for French at the same time with this mini whoddunit play, says Jennie Wilson...

Picture the scene. A French guest called Pierre pays a visit to your classroom. He comes bearing gifts – a special selection of fruit and biscuits for everyone to share at morning snack time. But when the children return from assembly, the biscuits have vanished. Only a few crumbs remain.

Pierre plays detective to find out *qui a mangé les biscuits?* – who has eaten the biscuits. And eventually, with the children's help, he discovers the culprit hiding beneath a

desk, covered in crumbs.

Staging a classroom incident with a storyline like this is a fantastic way to weave MFL teaching into curricular topics such as healthy eating. Encouraging children to 'live' the adventure and then act it out repeatedly as a mini play supports natural language acquisition, helping them absorb key language structures through shared experiences. With actions and story-making

techniques, the children learn how to recite the play together. Confident children may eventually be able to act out parts solo or in small groups in front of each other or the whole school.

The mini play below can be adapted for children as young as Reception to children as old as Y6. And it works equally well as a song, which you can download from Sparkle Speak's blog at (sparklespeak.co.uk). ▶

Tip

If the children guess what has happened prematurely and begin shouting out Lucas' name or pointing at the table, make sure Pierre remains puzzled to the end. You could make him put his hand to his ear and say, "Comment?" (Pardon?)

As the drama unfolds, an adult helper could take photos of the events to use as a story board in later sessions.



Songs are a fantastic way to help internalise language, especially when used with actions to reinforce memory and meaning. A musical version of this play with a native French singer is free to download from Sparkle Speak's blog on sparklespeak.co.uk. From here you can also download a spoken version of the play with a native French speaker, which may help with pronunciation.

questioning his friends.

First he asks Juliette: "Qui a mangé les biscuits?" Make Juliette shrug, shake her paw and point to herself as she says "Je ne sais pas. Ce n'est pas moi." (I don't know. It isn't me.) She then picks an apple from the fruit bowl and says: "Moi, j'aime les pommes." (Me, I like apples.) Juliette points to Cassandre and suggests asking her - "Demande à Cassandre."

Cassandre responds to the question in the same way: "Je ne sais pas. Ce n'est pas moi." She picks a banana and says: "Moi, j'aime les bananes. Demande à Amélie."

Repeat the routine with Amélie who says: "Moi, j'aime les oranges," and takes an orange from the fruit bowl.

Amélie, probably with the children's help, now notices the prints on the floor and exclaims: "Mais qui a laissé ces empreintes?" But who has left these footprints/tracks?.

When the children start pointing to the table, whip away the tablecloth with a flourish to reveal the culprit Lucas, covered in biscuit crumbs. Everyone exclaims: "Lucas!"

Hopefully there will be enough biscuits left for you to enjoy!

The script

USE THIS MINI-PLAY AS THE BASIS FOR YOUR LESSON..

PIERRE: Qui a mangé les biscuits?

JULIETTE: Je ne sais pas. Ce n'est pas moi. Moi, j'aime les pommes.
Demande à Cassandre.

PIERRE: Qui a mangé les biscuits?

CASSANDRE: Je ne sais pas. Ce n'est pas moi. Moi, j'aime les bananes. Demande à Amélie.

PIERRE: Qui a mangé les biscuits?

AMÉLIE: Je ne sais pas. Ce n'est pas moi. Moi, j'aime les oranges.
Mais qui a laissé ces empreintes?

EVERYONE: Lucas!

You will need

- > Table and long tablecloth
- > Five teddies, puppets or adult helpers
- > A bowl of fruit - apples, oranges and bananas
- > A packet of biscuits
- > Some cut-out paper footprints or pawprints

Session 1 - Set the scene

Introduce the class to Pierre, your French guest. This could be a teddy bear, puppet or an adult helper. Rehearse greetings such as "Bonjour Pierre." "Ça va?" "Ça va bien, merci." You will also need to introduce the pupils to his friends Juliette, Cassandre,

Amélie and Lucas. Again, these could be teddies, puppets or adult helpers.

Explain that today Pierre has arranged a special treat for the class, a selection of fruits and biscuits for their morning snack.

Put a tablecloth over the table, making sure it hangs to the floor so the children can't see underneath. Lay the table with the fruit bowl and biscuits.

Rehearse the French names for the fruit - *une pomme* (an apple), *une banane* (a banana) and *une orange* (an orange.)

Now add *J'aime* (I like), *J'aime les pommes*, *J'aime les bananes* etc.

Include actions to reinforce

meaning. Rub your belly or put your hand on your heart as you say *J'aime* and then use actions for the fruit (draw a semi-circle for banana, mime crunching into an apple and purse lips for eating an orange).

Session 2 - Stolen biscuits

Hide the biscuits under the table with Lucas. Leave just a few crumbs on the table. Stick the paper footprints to the floor near the table.

When the children return from assembly or break, make a horrified Pierre exclaim: "Qui a mangé les biscuits?" Make him act out his words - *Qui* (shrug shoulders with spread palms) *a mangé* (mime eating) *les biscuits?* (point to crumbs).

Once the children have worked out what he is asking, get Pierre to play detective by



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A primary lead languages teacher for Devon LA, Jenny is the co-founder of Sparkle Speak, which specialises in musical language resources. See a demo video at sparklespeak.co.uk

