

FRENCH CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

FOR CARMEN SANDIEGO EPISODES

SEASON 1, EPISODE 9: "The French Connection Caper"

Carmen is forced out of hiding and into a reunion with her former VILE teachers that reveals details about Carmen's murky past.

What in the world . . . ? / Mais qu'est-ce que c'est?

As this caper's title indicates, there are several connections to France in this episode.

1. Organize students in groups of four or five.
2. Read the following questions related to this episode to the class. They should take notes as you speak, or you may write them on the board for easier comprehension:

La comtesse a une résidence à Poitiers. Qu'est-ce que c'est, Poitiers? (*une ville en France*)

Quelle est la nationalité de l'agent Devineaux? Comment le savez-vous? (*Il est français. Son nom est français, son accent est français, il habite en France, il chante l'hymne national français.*)

Carmen est en Polynésie française au début de l'épisode. Qu'est-ce que c'est, la Polynésie française? (*C'est un groupe d'îles dans l'océan Pacifique. C'est une collectivité d'outre-mer de la République française.*)

Où se passe l'action dans cet épisode? (*à Poitiers, en France*)

Quelle chanson Devineaux chante quand il est prisonnier? (*La Marseillaise, l'hymne national français*)

La chef (the Chief) appelle les gendarmes pour sauver Devineaux. Qu'est-ce que c'est, un gendarme? (*C'est un militaire français qui assure l'ordre et la protection des personnes.*)

3. Have students work together to answer the questions. They should have access to resources such as an encyclopedia or online resources to research some of the answers, as well as a bilingual dictionary.
4. Each group takes turns answering the questions in French.



The Best Hideouts / Les meilleures cachettes

Students locate the perfect French-speaking spot to get away from it all.

1. Explain that early in this episode, Carmen is on a beach in Tahiti, French Polynesia, where she thinks nobody will find her. As a class, find Tahiti on a map. What makes it a great hideout? Have your class brainstorm a list of characteristics of a great “hideout.” You might give students the following French expressions to help them discuss the topic: **isolé(e)** (isolated), **bien caché(e)** (hidden), **pas très populaire** (not very popular), **pas très connu(e)** (not well known), **loin de tout** (far from it all), **difficile d'accès** (hard to get to), **inconnu(e)** (unknown), **désert(e)** (deserted).
2. Break the class into small groups and have them find more perfect French-speaking hideouts all over the globe. Have students present their hideout locations to the class in French, including the reasons why they chose them.

The French National Anthem / La Marseillaise

Toward the middle of this episode, Agent Devineaux is captured by VILE because the organization believes he'll eventually take them to their nemesis, Carmen. To keep his mind occupied while subjected to the VILE's truth detector, Devineaux sings the French national anthem.

1. Have students research the name of the French anthem. (*La Marseillaise*)
2. Have them find and transcribe the first stanza and the chorus of the anthem (*from “Allons, enfants” to “abreuve nos sillons”*). Then play that section of the song from an online source and have students sing along as they read the lyrics they've transcribed.
3. Have students research the history behind this song: Around what time was it created? (*at the end of the 18th century*) What did it come to symbolize in French history? (*the French Revolution*)
4. Have volunteers present their findings to the class.
5. Ask students why Devineaux chooses to sing this particular anthem. (*He is French.*)

To learn more about Carmen Sandiego, visit hmhco.com/carmen.

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