

THE USE OF AFRICAN AND ACADIAN LITERATURE TO TEACH CULTURE IN  
THE BEGINNING/INTERMEDIATE FRENCH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

by

Addie E. Olsen-Andrews

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## ABSTRACT

According to recent research, it has been agreed upon by most teachers and pedagogical experts that it is necessary for second language students to acquire not only linguistic knowledge of a language, but cultural knowledge as well in order to achieve proficiency. A broader view of culture is extremely important in the French language classroom where, most commonly, the culture of France has been the primary focus. There is a definite need to shift this focus in order to increase student awareness of other francophone cultures. Literature is an excellent tool for introducing culture to students in the beginning/intermediate French language high school or college classroom. Classroom models based on African and Acadian folktales are proposed as a means of increasing students' francophone cultural knowledge, while examining basic literary concepts and improving linguistic skills. An examination of the folktale, review of the literary works chosen for instruction, and current pedagogical research on second language reading are the basis for the exercises presented in the classroom models. Finally, the two models are presented with appropriate exercises for the beginning/intermediate French language classroom. The models are based on "Maman-Caïman" from *Les Contes d'Amadou Koumba*, by Senegalese author Birago Diop and a passage from *L'Oursiade* by Acadian author Antonine Maillet. Each model is presented with background information on the country or region of origin and the author, along with exercises to help instructors explore African and Acadian folktales and culture with their students.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Overview

In recent years, it has been agreed upon by most teachers and pedagogical experts that there are many benefits that stem from using literature to teach culture in the foreign language classroom. A 1993 study conducted by Professor Henning concludes that culture must be woven into the curriculum due to the prevalent attitude in the United States that “FL learning is fundamentally an exercise with utilitarian (i.e., career) goals and that those goals should be the predominating factor in the development of the language curriculum”. She also points out that foreign language texts typically “tend to take a touristic rather than a cultural approach” (Henning qtd. in Shanahan 165). Daniel Shanahan’s 1997 study supports this idea of the importance of integrating culture into the foreign language classroom with the use of literature by stating that “nothing is likely to contribute more to research into language learning today than a deeper, more systematic understanding of how literature and culture can contribute to the learning of FL” (171). It is necessary for foreign language students to acquire not only linguistic knowledge of a particular language, but cultural knowledge as well. A lack of cultural knowledge, no matter how advanced a second language learner’s linguistic abilities may be in the target language, can lead to miscommunication between individuals. A broader view of culture is extremely important in the French language classroom where, most commonly the culture of France has been the primary focus. The focus needs to shift in order to increase student awareness of other francophone cultures. The following pages will demonstrate the need for cultural proficiency in the foreign language classroom, while examining how literature can be an excellent tool for introducing culture to students in

the high school or college French classroom. This study will explore the benefits of including African and Acadian folktales as a means of increasing students' exposure to cultures that have not been widely emphasized in the French language classroom. After specifically relating this issue to African and Acadian literature, an introduction of the goals and objectives of including these works in the beginning/intermediate French language classroom will be examined.

The acquisition of cultural knowledge plays an important role that goes hand in hand with the acquisition of linguistic knowledge for the purpose of gaining proficiency in a foreign language. This is an especially important concept in the French language classroom. A study conducted by Sharon L. Shelly highlights this by stating that "Indeed, students acquiring French need to be made aware of the strong prescriptive tradition favoring *le français standard*, and of the social and political factors which determine the relative status of various dialects of the target language" (114). Her study also underlines "the importance of integrating linguistic and cultural diversity into basic language study, rather than ignoring these issues until the literary survey course in the mistaken belief that students who have acquired advanced-level skills in Hexagonal French will automatically be able to adjust to literature from a variety of non-European Francophone contexts" (113-114). Cultural instruction "is nonetheless often a part of the hidden agenda, a pervasive but unrecognized dimension, coloring expectations, perceptions, reaction, teaching and learning strategies, and is, more often than not, a contributing factor in the success or failure of second or foreign language learning and acquisition" (Damen 4). The importance of cultural instruction is also recognized within the Standards for Foreign Language Learning as one of the five "C's". "Cultures" states

that the primary objective is to “Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures” (Phillips iv). Although there are some who see cultural instruction in a classroom setting as artificial, it still provides an environment for communication and learning, and in some cases may be the only way for cultural content to be learned. Therefore, it is necessary for the environment of the classroom to be made as open as possible in order to promote meaningful cultural learning (Damen 7). Students also recognize the need for cultural awareness. Morello states that the two main reasons that students choose to study a language are to increase oral/aural skills and to learn about the culture of the language community (Hadley 359). Students recognize the need for cultural competence to promote effective communication. It is up to the instructor to discover ways of offering a window to the richness that other cultures have to offer.

The question then remains as to when and why culture should be taught. Author H. Ned Seelye states that, “Culture should be taught when we have students to teach. The national attrition rate of 90 percent at the end of the second year of language study indicates that culture must be taught during the first two years of foreign language study” (3). Therefore, teachers of foreign language have an obligation to teach culture to their students, especially at the beginning and intermediate level of instruction. Oftentimes culture is reserved for students who go on to take upper-level courses. Cultural instruction must go beyond its presence in the background, for example, like a trip to the market used to introduce vocabulary or some other linguistic structure. In this case, the purpose is still primarily linguistic instruction, not cultural instruction. This is the way in which culture is taught in the foreign language classroom at the beginning and intermediate level. Linguistic and cultural instruction must be intertwined and deliberate.

One purpose of this project is to demonstrate what the domain of literature can contribute to the language learning process. There are essentially two schools of thought that have developed among teachers of foreign language. “One bases emphasis on communicative competence, and the other on the importance of exposure to culture and, especially, literature” (Shanahan 164). There needs to exist a set of clear functional goals for language learning, as well as a recognition of the value of the study of literature.

Professor Henning argues that:

Culture must be woven into the curriculum and that literature is one feature among many in the cultural domain that provides what one might call ‘added value’ beyond the level of language acquisition. Through literature, students can develop a full range of linguistic and cognitive skills, cultural knowledge and sensitivity. (Henning qtd. in Shanahan 165)

Henning makes an excellent point that language, literature, and culture are all intertwined. But the problem arises of determining which types of literature to teach. “Literary works become important as they develop themes of universal interest, but to understand a culture’s uniqueness, study must also be directed to the local nonuniversal cultural patterns” (Seelye 15). Given that, folklore becomes an ideal compromise. “The very durability of folktale, proverbs, slurs, and jests is an indication of the validity they have for a given people. A study of carefully selected folk materials could illuminate some of the important cultural themes that underlie a country’s thought and action” (Seelye 17). One of the benefits of using the folktale as literature to introduce culture is that, by its very nature, the folktale contains both universal elements as well as elements specific to a particular culture. In addition, the folktale is typically short, thus making it

accessible to students in the beginning and intermediate levels. Therefore, folklore is the ideal choice for literary study for the purpose of teaching culture.

Teaching culture through literature offers many potential benefits. The choice of appropriate literature increases these benefits. These benefits may be “characterized as *intercultural competence*, an ability that enables individuals to operate effectively and appropriately in more than one language-culture, and an ability that is increasingly valued and needed in today’s world and in the years ahead” (Phillips 167). The effects of cultural teaching and understanding are far-reaching and therefore essential in the foreign language classroom.

#### Statement of the Problem

There are many challenges that exist when it comes to teaching culture. The first issue that arises is which culture to teach. Oftentimes the only cultural information offered is that which exists as informational tidbits in a language textbook. This leads to an “information only” approach to culture. This may actually establish stereotypes of a given culture rather than diminish them because this type of approach does not account for cultural variation. The fact-based approach only offers data that may not remain true over time, location, or social strata (Hadley 358). This approach cannot lead to any kind of cultural proficiency because it does not allow for the information given to be used and interpreted within any kind of problem-solving context.

Foreign language teachers have also stated that there is simply not enough time to teach culture in their already full curriculum, which they refer to as the teaching of the language structure. Seelye states that “culture must be purposeful if it is to lead to skill

development” (2). Lack of time in an already full curriculum can be a barrier. Therefore, foreign language instructors must find a way to intertwine both language and culture.

Another argument is that students will be exposed to culture later. Seelye argues that “if a foreign language objective is not taught during the first two years of elementary instruction, so few students will be enrolled that for all practical purposes the objective will not be taught” (4). Thus, it is imperative for students to be exposed to culture in a meaningful way early on in their course of study so that larger numbers of foreign language students are gaining cultural proficiency, not just those who go on to more advanced level courses.

Another problem which exists is that, while teaching the linguistic structure of a language is obviously an important place to begin, that knowledge by itself does not provide any information as to how certain words and phrases can be used in ways that are culturally appropriate. “Culture must be taught systematically in addition to purely linguistic concerns” (Seelye 5). The sooner students are exposed to the cultural intricacies of a language, the better their chances are of gaining communicative and cultural competence in that language.

Student attitudes also present a challenge with regard to the teaching of culture. Hadley state that “Students often approach target-culture phenomena assuming that the new patterns of behavior can be understood within the framework of their own native culture. When cultural phenomena differ from what they expect, students often react negatively, characterizing the target culture as ‘strange’ or ‘weird’” (359). This can put up barriers with regard to a student gaining cultural competence. Damen believes that we cannot continue relying on our universals. We must deal with both similarities and

differences (6). This process of giving students a frame of reference is further complicated by the fact that “cultures have both *functions* (meanings, purposes, needs) and *forms* (manifestations, realizations, operations) that vary widely, not only across cultures, but also within the subcultures of a society” (Hadley 359). Students need to be made aware that they should expect differences and hopefully they will learn to appreciate them. Students must “begin with an understanding of their own frame of reference, and then, with teacher guidance, explore the target culture through authentic texts and materials” (Hadley 360). This also ties in with another of the 5 C’s, which is “Comparisons”, or the concept of comparing the foreign language and culture to the native language and culture. Exposing students to authentic literary texts is an excellent way to explore a particular culture. However there are some challenges that exist with the use of literature to teach culture.

While there are problems that exist which prevent the integration of culture in the foreign language classroom, there are also some challenges that exist with the use of literature in the foreign language classroom. Student attitudes toward the study of literature play a major role in the success of its implementation. Students’ practical concerns with careers and travel may be at odds with study of literary texts (Davis 321). Students often do not see the value of literature. According to James N. Davis et al., oftentimes:

Instructors expect a transition from the stage of painful word-by-word decoding of contrived written dialogs or narrations dealing with simple everyday events to comprehension of relatively lengthy literary texts containing highly abstract

vocabulary, complex syntactical patterns, and sophisticated style and content which even an educated native speaker often cannot read without effort. (321)

This type of exposure to literature in the foreign language classroom leads to negative attitudes among students toward its study. If literature is going to be used in the foreign language classroom to promote cultural study, it must be done in a more effective manner. This highlights the importance of introducing authentic literary texts at an earlier level, as a way to bridge the gap between the simple, contrived texts of the introductory and intermediate courses and the great literary works examined in advanced literature courses, which are reserved for the small number of students who go on to continue their foreign language study.

Students indicated much more positive attitudes toward literary study when given opportunities to: 1) express their personal opinions; 2) look for the underlying meaning of the text; and 3) read about people and experiences different from their own (Davis 324). This suggests that the way in which literature is introduced and taught to foreign language students must be meaningful and interactive. Because so much of foreign language literary instruction has focused primarily on literal comprehension and unfamiliar cultural references, literary study in the foreign language classroom is met with negativity. “A pedagogy that also takes into account individual interpretations and responses is more likely to enable a broader range of students to see literary studies as relevant in their lives” (Davis 325). The focus must be shifted to include methods of teaching which spark student interest in literature.

It is clear that there are challenges present with regard to cultural and literary instruction in the foreign language classroom. Many educators feel ill-equipped to meet

these challenges. However, it is imperative that the challenge be met in order to expose students to culture, as it is such an integral part of achieving language proficiency.

Literature, if chosen and used appropriately, would be an ideal way to bring the richness of various cultures into the foreign language classroom.

### Organization

This project will go on to include and describe in detail classroom models created with the aforementioned problems in mind. While the need for cultural and literary instruction in all foreign language classrooms is clear, these models are designed specifically with the beginning/intermediate French classroom in mind. The francophone world offers a wide variety of cultures and literatures to explore. The French classroom is far from limited to the teaching of the culture of France. The need for teaching the rich cultures and literatures of the francophone world is great. This is because “In the traditional curriculum which analyzed only French literature of the *métropole*, readers extrapolated a set of cultural values considered to be universal... teachers and students cannot approach this new literature seeking only to affirm the largely Eurocentric values learned from canonical texts” (Willen 762). A true francophone cultural exploration “must seek indicators that valorize these different cultures and provide a counterpoint to Eurocentric values” (762). Because cultural knowledge is an integral part of the second language learning experience and not only the structure of the language itself; through the use of authentic texts and materials, culture and literature can be taught in a way that is meaningful to students. For the purpose of this project, instructional models have been designed to present the francophone cultures of Acadia and Africa in the beginning/intermediate French classroom. These models have a dual purpose. One

purpose is to reinforce and build upon students' linguistic and reading abilities in the target language. The other purpose is to introduce students to literary study by getting them to begin to analyze and interpret.

The works that have been chosen are authentic texts from both the Acadian and francophone African literary traditions. They are both folktales which offer universal elements that are familiar to students and offer a multitude of elements specific to the respective cultures. These works have been selected based on the prominence of the authors within their cultures, the wide availability of the works, and the themes present in the works that will be familiar to students, while exposing them the rich francophone cultures of Acadia and Africa.

## CHAPTER 1

In order to explore the literary traditions of Canadian Acadia and African Senegal as a means of presenting these two francophone cultures in the beginning/intermediate high school French classroom, it is necessary to examine the reasons for choosing folktales at this level. The very nature of the folktale lends itself nicely to literary and cultural instruction. Folktales have appealed to people for centuries. They have served as a source of entertainment for people from all backgrounds and walks of life. They tell us about the way of life for the common man. Folktales tell the history of a people, where they live, and what their values are (House 1). In this way, folktales are universal. Folklore as a genre contains these universal elements, rather than just complex culturally-specific elements. Thus, folktales are an ideal compromise for literary and cultural instruction at this level in that their form is similar from culture to culture, which gives students a clear frame of reference and sense of familiarity. From there they will be better able to delve into the more culturally-specific elements of the Acadian and African folktale.

### The Link of the Folktale to Orality

Folktales originate from the oral tradition. “Literature is a one-dimensional form, words *seen*: oral art is multi-dimensional, woven not only of words *heard* but also of music, movement, and immediate interaction between teller and listeners” (Julien 190). This is true particularly in the Acadian and African traditions. By examining the link of the Acadian culture and the African culture to orality, it will be possible to see the effectiveness of folklore in evoking these unique cultures, and the universality present in folktales. “If literary themes reflect the preoccupations and insights of the cultures from

which they have sprung, then it follows that these tales, too, should reveal their culture through their themes” (Julien 191).

Acadian author Antonine Maillet reflects the oral legacy in her description of the Acadian writer with:

... one foot in the tradition and one in the group; so he has the impression of making himself the spokesperson of this group. And I feel like that. First because of my background. An Acadian cannot begin by being a novelist. If he is typically Acadian, if he profits from a culture which has been transmitted to him by his fathers, he is going to benefit from all the baggage of oral culture, transmitted by the fathers, which is a lot more similar to a tale than a novel.

(Lyons 48)

It is clear from this passage that the tales of Antonine Maillet are embedded in the Acadian oral tradition. To her, the best way to evoke the Acadian culture is through stories passed down from generation to generation. Her tales are based on the truth of eyewitnesses and the oral history of Acadia. Maillet’s tales are for the people and she asks her Acadian readers to experience a new sense of identity. For readers outside of her culture, she restores the history of a people. Maillet narrates her history from her own standpoint (Lyons 55).

In Antonine Maillet’s works in particular, orality produces a spoken style. It is conversational and informal (Lyons 57). Other marks of the oral tradition in Maillet’s works include immediacy of the link between speaker/narrator and audience. “The social contexts of oral histories include the additional condition that their tellers must intersect with a palpable audience at a particular moment in time and space” (Tonkin as qtd. in

Lyons 57). Orality also often entails repetition in order to remind the listeners of the important details or a warning or instructional quality (Lyons 57). These are all important characteristics of the folktale, one universal aspect being to instruct the audience and the other to tell the history of a given people.

For Acadians in particular, genealogy proves their identity. “Knowledge of one’s genealogy may prove access to a historical event, verify transmission of the event, or enhance one’s worth by linking one through forebears to crucial historical moments” (Lyons 58). This is an important way in which the Acadians preserve their oral tradition. “Oral history depends on the commitment of the one family to storytelling, to memorizing and memorializing” (Lyons 59). Maillet also reflects the Acadian accent in her writing, which further stresses the importance of orality in her work. She allows her characters to speak in their own voices. Orality creates a relationship between storyteller and listener, rather than between writer and reader.

The works of Antonine Maillet seek to entertain as well as instruct which are two very important aspects of the folktale. “She revives the history of the Acadian people and tells the story for the community within and without” (Lyons 63).

Orality is also prevalent in African folktales. Senegalese author Birago Diop “affirms in the most positive way the wealth of African civilizations by anchoring his work, nourishing it in African traditions. Diop, a literary storyteller, captures in printed form the elusive flavor of oral art” (Julien 189). As discussed above, the storyteller relies on the reaction of the audience. There is active participation in the telling of tales. The folktale, because of its tie to orality, allows authors or storytellers some degree of flexibility with regard to how their tale is told which affords them an opportunity to

exercise their creativity. However, one thing remains constant with regard to the tale and the role of oral narrative in society: “language is a vehicle for leading the individual away from attitudes antagonistic to the preservation and prosperity of the group” (Julien 196). Folktales, with their origin bound to orality, are for the whole group or community and stress the importance of the group rather than the individual. Translator Dorothy S. Blair demonstrates in her introduction the importance of the oral tradition for author Birago Diop, in that:

in spite of his instinctive and poetic literary gifts, he refuses to claim for himself any credit for the originality of these *Tales of Amadou Koumba*... Instead he modestly offers himself as the disciple, scribe, and translator into French (which is the literary language of his country) of his household *griot* Amadou, son of Koumba. These tales, he tells us, he heard at his grandmother’s hut, told in Woloff, the local dialect of the district of Dakar, Senegal, where he was born in 1906. (x)

Clearly, the passing on of these tales is of great importance to the author, Diop. He just happens to be passing the tales on in written form to share with the rest of the world. “Thus, although *Les Contes* is a literary work, it nonetheless retains and projects the perceptions of language and art characteristic of oral peoples. One dramatic lesson, as we have seen, is that words are a providential force which sustains tradition, community, and life” (Julien 199). Oral literature for both the Acadian and African people is a way of life, which goes beyond the oral to write the history of their people to give a reading audience access to their people’s past. Both Antonine Maillet and Birago Diop write to legitimize their culture’s oral tradition (Lyons 72).

### Elements of the Folktale

The very elements present in folktales make this particular literary genre ideal when it comes to teaching literature and culture to students at the beginning and intermediate level of foreign language study. Some aspects of folktales are fixed, while others are flexible. Because they originate from the oral tradition of a specific culture, authors of tales are able to use their own creativity to make the tales they pass on unique.

Author Mohamadou Kane states that the narrator:

...emprunte le thème et la moralité à la tradition; pour enrichir son œuvre il puise les divers éléments susceptibles d'actualiser son "dit" dans sa société. Ainsi, d'un groupe social à un autre, d'une société à une autre, le conte conserve sa structure, son thème, sa morale, mais les éléments secondaires changent. Ces derniers sont en général ceux-là mêmes qui permettent aux auditeurs de retrouver dans l'univers du conte l'image de leur société et une peinture des caractères qui s'apparentent aux leurs, c'est-à-dire des éléments qui les mettent à même de se sentir "concernés". (10)

Kane gives an excellent overview of how a folktale is structured. It is clear that the group is of the utmost importance and that the themes and the morals of tales are always fixed. Because one of the primary functions of the folktale is to instruct its audience, the moral must always remain the same each time a tale is told. Each member of the society can benefit from the message of the tale. The tale establishes the norms and traditions of a society, as well as the importance of a society's link to the past. While the other primary function of the folktale is to entertain, the teller or author is afforded some flexibility in

how he/she presents the background details. In this way the storyteller or author can demonstrate his/her own creativity.

Animals are often used as protagonists in folktales. “Each portrait is rapidly sketched, but with masterly economy, giving us not only the main features of each animal’s appearance, but his character and habits” (Blair xi). By focusing primarily on the animals’ personality traits rather than their physical description, the audience can identify with their humanistic personality traits, both good and bad.

Another important element of the folktale is the importance of tradition and the link to the past. The eldest members of society are the wisest. They have the important role of instructing the youth in their community. This comes from their link to orality. Tales are handed down from the elders, therefore it is the elders who instruct and carry the most wisdom. Children are to respect their elders and their ancestors and life experience is revered.

Oftentimes folktales contain fantastic, magical, or supernatural elements. In the tales of Antonine Maillet, “magical realism startles the reader and raises the specter of ambivalence and uncertainty in a text. This disjunction may jar a reader into a different point of view and make learning or belief possible” (Lyons 83). The use of magical or supernatural elements awakens the readers and brings them face to face with the text. On the other hand, “In the traditional animistic beliefs and mythology of Africa there is no dividing line between life and death, between animate and inanimate objects, between animals and humans... All these partake of the same essence and contribute to each other’s total experience of existence” (Blair xii). The supernatural exists everywhere in African culture.

Again, the folktale is by its very nature a source of entertainment and more importantly, of instruction for society's members. "Tales both form and are informed by ideology, whether the context is European, American, or African" (West and Donato 395). Through tales, norms are established to relationships among people, the respecting of ancestors and elders, and the call upon tradition when necessary. Students in the beginning/intermediate French language classroom will be able to relate to some of the characteristics of folktales which will allow for instruction of both literary and cultural concerns.

*L'Oursiade* by Antonine Maillet

Before discussing models for cultural and literary instruction using *L'Oursiade* by Acadian author Antonine Maillet, it is important to consider the place of this particular work in the Acadian tradition and some of the author's philosophies which inspired this particular work. Antonine Maillet was born in 1929, in the village of Bouctouche, 40 kilometers from Moncton, in Acadia, today's New Brunswick (Smith 243). She received her doctorate in French Literature from the Université Laval and worked as a script-writer and as a radio announcer for Radio-Canada. She was also a professor of literature. She has won many awards for her literary works, among them the French Prix Goncourt for *Pélagie-la-Charrette* in 1979. Maillet thinks of herself as a "radoteuse", as they say in Acadia, which refers to a woman with the gift of gab (244). She is a storyteller whose characters are "défricheteux de parenté". These characters seek to discover their common ancestors and untangle family connections (244). As previously discussed, genealogy and oral tradition are major themes in Maillet's works. Maillet celebrates the

geography, the culture, and the people of Acadia. She puts into writing the legends and folklore of Acadia and believes that the literature of Acadia belongs to the storytellers.

*L'Oursiade* is an expanded fable, or folktale, of bears, men, and women. All of the characters in the fable are paired with each other. The bears are paired with the humans. By presenting the main characters in this way, one can see that this tale demonstrates the coexistence of animals and humans. It expresses their friendship as well as hostility and their similarity. It also expresses the theme used by Antonine Maillet of evoking the importance of nature, which is basic within Acadian culture. It is also like a parable of Maillet's Acadia, where isolation and being connected to nature show the importance of the connection between man and animal. One can also see themes of ancestral wisdom and wisdom with age, as well as fantastical and magical elements. All of these themes are consistent with the characteristics of the folktale.

*Les Contes d'Amadou Koumba* by Birago Diop

It is important to also consider the place of *Les Contes d'Amadou Koumba* in the African literary tradition and the themes and philosophies present in Birago Diop's work before using it for cultural and literary instruction. Birago Diop, born in 1906 in Dakar, Senegal, was a poet and a storyteller. As a young man, he studied at a Koranic school and then studied veterinary medicine in France. Diop participated in the Negritude movement, which is the idea of being black, being proud of it, and expressing its qualities in literature. When he returned to Senegal from France, he further explored the Wolof traditions and the oral tradition of his people that he learned as a child (Blair x). Diop believed that it was important to communicate this oral tradition to the rest of the world.

*Les Contes d'Amadou Koumba* incorporates all of the characteristics of a folktale, while maintaining unique African cultural elements. Each tale presents a clear moral. The characters in Diop's tales are primarily animals; however men and women are also present as protagonists. The role of elders and ancestors is of great importance and age is equivalent with wisdom in these tales. It is important to listen to one's elders and one's ancestors and they are to be regarded with respect. Diop's tales are filled with local customs and traditions and these tales also contain fantastic and supernatural elements. Because there is no separation between life and death in African culture, the spirits can help, punish, give life, and cause death. *Les Contes* are filled with repetition and music, which is characteristic of African culture. Like all folktales, Diop's *Contes* tell a story and teach the audience.

By placing these folktales within a literary and cultural context, it is possible to examine some pedagogical approaches to second language reading for cultural study. This will lead us to the goals and objectives of including *L'Oursiade* and *Les Contes d'Amadou Koumba* in the beginning/intermediate French language classroom.

## CHAPTER 2

It has been demonstrated that the introduction of folktales to teach culture in the foreign language classroom at the beginning/intermediate level is appropriate for students because of folktales' universal nature along with their cultural component. Before examining the models chosen for introducing Acadian and African literature into the French classroom, it is important to briefly consider some of the pedagogical theories that influence and support them. It is first important to examine second language reading.

### Second Language Reading

Given that the models for cultural instruction are based on literature, it is obvious that reading is an important skill in the French language classroom. The first thing to consider is how first and second language reading relate. "In first or second language reading, individuals vary in their reading styles in the strategies they use to comprehend, and in their level of awareness of their own reading processes" (Barnett 9). Barnett then goes on to say that "Whereas first language readers normally speak the language with some facility before they learn to read it, foreign language learners may advance more quickly in reading than in speaking; they may, in fact, visualize spoken words in written form" (11). It is interesting to consider the second language reader's interaction with a text. Kellerman and Sharwood Smith state that "it seems reasonable to assume that L2 readers bring their L1 orthographic knowledge and corresponding processing mechanisms to their L2 reading processes... L2 learners utilize, to varying extents, L1-based processing devices during L2 word recognition" (Koda 456). This research indicates that second language readers bring with them their processing and interpreting skills from their first language. In this way, it is helpful that the authentic texts that have

been chosen are folktales, a genre that will be familiar to students from all backgrounds due to its universal nature. Additional support for this idea comes from Hadley who states that:

The importance of considering our students as individuals who approach a text with differing background knowledge, interests, motivations, skills, and strategies becomes clear when one considers the interactive nature of reading. In order to help students become more efficient and successful readers, teachers need to keep such individual factors in mind. They also need to think about both the purposes for which students might be reading and the reading skills, strategies, and processes involved in achieving these purposes. (197)

By keeping the texts within the folktale genre, students have an advantage in that they are able to understand the content of what they are reading with greater ease, which will allow for more emphasis to be placed upon the cultural elements of the text. Folktales are also good because their oral character leads to relatively simple syntax and frequent repetition of words. From there, activities can be geared toward cultural instruction.

#### Five Stages of Reading Instruction

The reading of literature in the foreign language classroom does not stand alone, but rather is intertwined with cultural learning. However, in order for cultural understanding to be achieved by reading authentic literature, there are certain stages of reading instruction that must take place in order to create helpful activities for the purpose of comprehension and a higher level of proficiency. The instructional models created for *L'Oursiade* by Antonine Maillet and *Les Contes d'Amadou Koumba* by Birago Diop are based on these stages.

The first stage identified by Phillips is the Preteaching/Preparation Stage. This stage serves the purpose of helping to develop prediction skills, which helps readers “build on and/or retrieve from memory appropriate schemata to help them comprehend” (qtd. in Hadley 200). Phillips recommends activities like brainstorming to help generate ideas about the text, looking at visuals that go with the text, and predicting or hypothesizing based on the title or first line of the text (200).

The next stage involved based on Phillips’ stages of reading instruction is the Skimming/Scanning Stage. Phillips believes that second language readers need practice with this particular skill, so she proposes practice activities to help these readers achieve their comprehension goals. Some of these activities include getting the gist of what is being read, identifying topic sentences and main ideas, choosing the best paraphrase from multiple-choice options of the main idea or conclusion of a particular text, filling in charts with key concepts, and making global judgments about a reading passage (200). This is particularly important with regard to students being able to extract and react to cultural content within the texts.

The third stage of this instructional reading model is the Decoding/Intensive Reading Stage. The process of decoding involves guessing the meaning of unknown words or phrases from content. “Fluency and rapid understanding are the most common objectives in reading, and it is only when comprehension is impeded by unknown words, complex structures, or very unfamiliar concepts that skilled readers resort to decoding” (Hadley 201). Decoding is a particularly important skill for beginning/intermediate second language readers, as this skill will serve them in all texts they encounter throughout their foreign language study.

In the Comprehension Stage, comprehension checks are made periodically to determine whether or not the students' reading goals have been achieved. These checks are important, particularly with literary texts, to ensure that the students understand what they are reading. Comprehension is essential if further literary analysis and cultural discussions are going to occur.

The fifth and final stage of reading instruction is the Transferable/Integrating Skills Stage. In this stage, "Phillips maintains that exercises should be used that help students go beyond the confines of the specific passage to enhance reading skills and effective reading strategies per se" (qtd. in Hadley 201). Exercises at this stage should include contextualized guessing, reading for the main idea, appropriate dictionary usage, as well as rereading strategies.

These five stages of reading instruction will provide a guideline with regard to creating a cultural lesson based on *L'Oursiade* and *Les Contes d'Amadou Koumba*. By following these steps, students will be better equipped to read these literary works. It is now important to consider the Standards for Foreign Language Learning in order to establish both short term and long term goals for beginning/intermediate level French language students.

### Instructional Goals

By using a proficiency-oriented approach to reading, instructional models have been created that will integrate literature and culture. "Reading is central to the goal areas of Cultures, Connections, Comparisons, and Communication and is therefore considered as important an area to school success as is first language reading to general academic learning" (Phillips et al. 221). Because reading is so important in four of the

five C's for foreign language learning, this skill is an excellent one to use for cultural instruction. A foreign language instructor can achieve several language goals with his/her students through reading. One of the most important goals of this project is to bridge the gap between the contrived dialogs and passages found in beginning/intermediate French language textbooks and the intricate literary works of advanced French classes. By being exposed to literature and culture at an earlier stage of their language instruction, French students will hopefully find their interest sparked, thus inspiring them to go on with their language study, rather than simply fulfilling a course requirement. Short term goals and objectives are contained within the following instructional models, according to the foreign language standards, and the models will contain exercises for each of the four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

#### Proposed Exercises

Instructional models have been created for use in the beginning/intermediate high school or college French language classroom with a passage of *L'Oursiade*, by Antonine Maillet and "Maman Caïman", from *Les Contes d'Amadou Koumba*, by Birago Diop. The passage chosen from *L'Oursiade* is an extract of the expanded fable. Due to the length of Maillet's tale, students will only read the short passage that was chosen based on its universal elements and its culturally specific elements that students will be able to extract. Both of these models will need to be modified for beginning students, as the texts will be too complex for them to read independently. The reading of the texts should be instructor-directed, with frequent pauses for discussion and clarification for the students at this level. Intermediate students will be able to read the texts independently. These folktales from both the Acadian and African traditions will allow for cultural

diversity in the French language classroom by providing an opportunity for exposure to a wider variety of francophone cultures. It is also extremely important that authentic texts are used as the basis for the following exercises. An authentic text is a text that “authors write for their own cultural group, which shares their experiences, beliefs, values, and assumptions” (West and Donato 393). Therefore, this type of text is ideal for cultural instruction.

Each of these models will begin with background information about the country or region of origin and the author. Although both texts are folktales, they give students exposure to different writing styles, and obviously, exposure to the African and Acadian cultures. The models will consist of three main components: structural, literary, and cultural. The structural exercises will focus on getting the students to find the meanings of unknown vocabulary within the context of what they are reading. The literary exercises will introduce students to some of the elements of the folktale. The cultural exercises will focus on introducing students to culturally-specific elements within the Acadian and African tales.

The instructional models will begin with a pre-reading exercise to get students ready for what they are going to read. Students will then do an initial reading of the text that will contain short exercises for the purpose of checking comprehension. The post-reading exercises are based on the Five Stages for Reading Instruction examined previously and incorporate the Standards for Foreign Language Learning, which can be found in Appendix C. These models have been designed for use by French language instructors who wish to expand upon francophone cultural instruction in their classroom at the beginning/intermediate level.

## CHAPTER 3

### Model 1: *Maman-Caiman*

#### Background

The Republic of Senegal is situated at the westernmost edge of Africa. It is bordered by Guinea and Guinea-Bissau to the south, Mali to the east, Mauritania to the north and the North Atlantic Ocean to the west (Destination Senegal). Like many of the African tribes, the Wolof, Senegal's main indigenous group, has a very stratified society in which one's status is determined by birth. At the top are noble and warrior families, then the farmers and traders, along with blacksmiths, leather workers, wood workers, weavers and griots. Griots are the lowest of the castes, but are highly respected within their culture. This is because they are in charge of passing on the oral traditions and are the persons responsible for reciting a family or village history (Destination Senegal).

Approximately 90 percent of the population of Senegal is Muslim, including the Wolof and Mandinka. Wolof is the second most common language, however French is the official language of Senegal. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, France controlled Senegal's capital, Dakar, but in 1958, Senegal gained its independence from France. Léopold Senghor, one of the founders of the Negritude movement, was the first president of Senegal and remained in that position until 1981 (Destination Senegal).

Birago Diop, born in 1906 in Dakar, began as a veterinarian by profession. After spending many years practicing veterinary medicine, he began participating in the Negritude movement and, while gaining pride in his Wolof heritage, began to learn about the oral tradition of his people (Blair xi). He is famous for his collection of folktales, *Les*

*Contes d'Amadou Koumba* as well as for his poetry. His tales celebrate the oral tradition of his people which emphasize African life and society.

### Objectives and Exercises

**OBJECTIVES:** In this model, students will be able to identify elements of the folktale, both universal and culturally specific to francophone Africa. Students will also be able to identify the role of animals in the tale and be introduced to how they represent human traits. Students will then become familiar with how animals represent different types of people in African society, and how the concept of respecting one's elders is revered.

*Directions to the instructor are indicated in italics in both models.*

**Avant la lecture:** *As a pre-reading exercise, the students will locate Senegal on the map of West Africa. The map included in the appendix will be used to locate Senegal's capital, Dakar. This will provide the students with a geographical frame of reference.*

Dans les contes, les animaux possèdent des caractéristiques humaines. Dans les contes africains, les animaux représentent les différents types de gens dans la société. Quelles caractéristiques associez-vous à ces animaux? Choisissez quelques adjectifs différents pour décrire les traits de ces animaux.

<b>L'animal</b>	<b>Les traits</b>
Le caïman	
Le singe	
Le lièvre	
Le chacal	
L'hyène	
Le perroquet	
La panthère	

*The purpose of the above exercise is to get the students to offer their personal perceptions of these animals and what traits the animals possess. Their descriptions will most likely be based upon how their own cultures describe the traits of the above-mentioned animals. This will, in later exercises, allow them to tie in Standard 4.2, which allows the students to demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the culture studied and their own.*

Lequel de ces animaux à votre avis est le plus sage? Pourquoi?

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Lequel de ces animaux est malicieux? Pourquoi?

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*These pre-reading questions incorporate Standard 1.1 in which students provide information on a given topic and Standard 1.2 in which the students understand and interpret written language on a given topic.*

*Have the students share their responses in small groups and then with the whole class. This will get the students thinking about these different animals before they read the tale. This will tie in Standard 1.1 allowing the students to engage in conversations and exchange opinions, as well as Standard 1.3 in which the students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners on this topic.*

*Now, with the students back in their small groups, give each person a vocabulary worksheet as a skimming/scanning exercise. Divide the list so that each group has an equal number of words and have the students work together to find and underline these vocabulary words in the text. The students will then try to derive the meaning of the words from their context in the story. This incorporates Standard 3.1 in which students reinforce and further their knowledge through the foreign language itself. When all of the groups have finished, they will present their definitions to the class. Any incorrect or unclear definitions can be discussed at that time. This will also tie in Standard 1.1 allowing the students to engage in conversations as a means of obtaining information and Standard 1.3 allowing the students to present the information they have obtained to an audience. The vocabulary words include the page number in which they are found in the text.*

## Liste de vocabulaire

<b>Le mot</b>	<b>La Définition</b>
<b>mal embouché (p. 47)</b>	<i>désagréable, grossier dans ses paroles</i>
<b>le griot (p. 47)</b>	<i>le conteur, chanteur, généalogiste, dépositaire de la tradition qui est uniquement orale (Diop 11)</i>
<b>taquinerie (p. 48)</b>	<i>plaisanterie</i>
<b>les calebasses (p. 48)</b>	<i>les récipient de liquides</i>
<b>les potins et racontars (p. 49)</b>	<i>les commérages, cancans, bavardages à propos de quelqu'un d'autre</i>
<b>les pirogues (p. 49)</b>	<i>les petits bateaux</i>
<b>les guerriers (p. 50)</b>	<i>les soldats</i>
<b>bâillaient (bâiller) (p. 50)</b>	<i>ouvrir largement et involontairement la bouche, de sommeil, faim, ou fatigue</i>
<b>les pépites (p. 51)</b>	<i>les petits morceaux d'or</i>
<b>les rameurs (p. 51)</b>	<i>les gens qui guident les bateaux</i>
<b>croassaient (croasser) (p. 52)</b>	<i>le son d'un corbeau ou d'un oiseau</i>
<b>cancanier (p. 52)</b>	<i>l'adjectif pour celui qui fait des potins</i>
<b>la berge (p. 52)</b>	<i>le bord d'une rivière</i>
<b>tout émue (p. 53)</b>	<i>très agitée</i>
<b>les chameaux (p. 54)</b>	<i>les animaux du désert qui porte de l'eau dans une bosse sur le dos</i>
<b>les ânes (p. 54)</b>	<i>les petits animaux à quatre pieds qui ressemblent à des chevaux</i>
<b>les marabouts (p. 54)</b>	<i>les musulmans réputés pour leurs pouvoirs magiques; devins, guérisseurs</i>
<b>les guérisseurs (p. 54)</b>	<i>les gens dans la société africaine qui aident les malades ou blessés</i>
<b>la plaie (p. 54)</b>	<i>la déchirure provoquée dans la chair par une blessure, etc.</i>
<b>la cervelle (p. 54)</b>	<i>un autre mot pour le cerveau-la partie du corps qui nous aident à penser</i>

**Après la lecture:**

**Vrai ou faux?** Indiquez “V” si l’événement a eu lieu dans le conte, ou “F” si l’événement n’a pas eu lieu dans le conte.

*This activity will serve as a quick comprehension check. It also incorporates Standard 1.2 in that it demonstrates that the students are able to understand the written language.*

**V/F**

\_\_\_\_\_ Golo le Singe croit que le caïman est l’animal le plus sage dans le monde.

\_\_\_\_\_ Diassigue a bonne memoire et écoute toutes les histoires des animaux et des gens.

\_\_\_\_\_ Les petits caïmans aiment écouter les histoires de leur mère et ils pensent qu’elle est intéressante et sage.

\_\_\_\_\_ Les petits caïmans meurent à la fin de l’histoire.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tous les autres animaux dans le conte croient que Diassigue est bête.

Mettez l’animal avec la citation qui le décrit. N’utilisez pas le livre!

*This activity also serves as a comprehension check and goes one step further by incorporating Standard 1.2 by showing that the students are able to interpret the written language as well as Standard 3.2 in which the students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only present within the target language and its culture.*

**Diassigue-le-Caïman****Thile-le-Chacal****Golo-le-Singe****Thioye-le-Perroquet****Leuk-le-Lièvre****Sègue-la-Panthère****Bouki-l’Hyène**

\_\_\_\_\_ “...à cause de sa fourberie, aurait, peut-être, volontiers partagé l’opinion de tous ces badalos de basse condition, mais elle gardait trop rancune à Golo des coups de baton qui lui meurtirssaient encore le muffle et que Golo lui administrait chaque fois qu’elle essayait de l’attraper en bondissant jusqu’aux dernières branches des arbres.” (49)

\_\_\_\_\_ “...Les bêtes les plus bêtes des bêtes qui volent, marchent et nagent, vivent sous la terre dans l’eau et dans l’air...qui rampant sur terre et marchent au fond de l’eau.” (47)

\_\_\_\_\_ “...En matière de mémoire , en effet, le jour où le Bon Dieu en faisait la distribution, (il) avait dû arriver certainement en retard. Sa tête légère, malgré sa grande malice, oublie bien vite, aux dépens de ses côtes et de son derrière pelé...” (48)

\_\_\_\_\_ “...le malin et malicieux..., dont la conscience est aussi mobile que les deux savates qu’il porte accrochées à la tête, du jour où il les enleva pour mieux courir, et qui, depuis, lui servent d’oreilles.” (48-9)

\_\_\_\_\_ “...dont la langue ronde heurte, sans arrêt, le bec qui est un hameçon accrochant tous les potins et racontars qui volent aux quatre vents.” (49)

\_\_\_\_\_ “...que la peur d’un coup venu d’on ne sait jamais où, fait toujours courir, même sur les sables nus, à droite et à gauche.” (49)

\_\_\_\_\_ “...poltronne et voleuse, dont le derrière semble toujours fléchir sous une volée de gourdins.” (49)

### **Questions à considérer**

Avez-vous choisi quelques adjectifs similaires pour décrire ces animaux dans l’activité avant la lecture? Quels adjectifs?

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Pourquoi est-ce que Birago Diop utilise ces animaux différents dans ces contes? Donnez quelques exemples spécifiques.

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### Les éléments culturels/Les éléments universels du conte

Le conte a une nature double. Il y a des éléments universels, qui ne peuvent pas changer, mais aussi des petits détails qui peuvent être changés chaque fois que le conte est raconté pour démontrer la créativité du conteur.

*Here the students are tying in Standards 3.1 and 3.2 in that they are connecting with the literary discipline by having to further analyze the text. They are also having to acquire information by examining the distinctive viewpoints in the African text.*

Quelle est la morale de *Maman-Caiman*?

*Listen to and respect your elders. Their wisdom is invaluable.*

Est-ce que la morale est un élément qui peut changer, ou est-elle un élément présent dans tous des contes?

*The moral is present in all folktales and remains the same each time the tale is told.*

Si vous étiez un griot dans la société africaine, quels détails pourriez-vous changer pour raconter ce conte, et quels éléments respecteriez-vous pour les enseigner aux autres membres de votre société?

*Here again, the students are having to incorporate several of the Standards. They are interpreting the written language (Standard 1.2), presenting information (Standard 1.3), reinforcing their knowledge of the literary discipline (Standard 3.2), and showing evidence of using the language for personal enjoyment by getting to exercise their creativity (Standard 5.2).*

Les éléments fixes	Les détails

### Questions pour la discussion

*These questions are designed to target the Cultures Standards. The discussion questions are getting the students to demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between practices and perspectives of African culture. They also provide an opportunity to incorporate the Communication Standards by engaging in conversations which will allow them to express feelings and exchange ideas and opinions as well as present information.*

Est-ce qu'on peut utiliser ce conte pour démontrer l'importance de la sagesse des plus âgés dans la culture américaine?

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Pensez-vous que les Américains mettent en valeur la sagesse de leurs parents et leurs grands-parents? Pensez-vous que cette idée est unique dans la culture africaine?

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*Now the lesson can be tied together by opening up a class discussion on some of the cultural elements within the tale. Have the students brainstorm about elements that they found striking in the tale and make a list on the board. These may be historical elements, language elements, geographical elements, or customs. This discussion should be conducted in English to allow the students to comfortably explore the cultural elements of this folktale and to allow them to make connections and comparisons between this tale and tales that they are familiar with in their own native culture. This will allow for the inclusion of the Cultures Standards, Connections Standards, and Comparisons Standards. The discussion should be led by the instructor in such a way as to include Standard 4.1 in which the students make comparisons between the language used in the text and their own, and Standard 4.2 in which the students demonstrate understanding of African culture by comparing it to their own.*

## CHAPTER 4

### Model 2: *L'Oursiade*

#### Background

New Brunswick is a province in eastern Canada. It is the largest of the three Maritime Provinces. The others are Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. This area was known to the French as Acadia. New Brunswick is bordered by Maine to the west, the province of Québec to the north, and Nova Scotia to the southeast (New Brunswick Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 99). Most of Antonine Maillet's works take place near her birthplace of Bouctouche. The town of Bouctouche was founded over 200 years ago on the shores of Bouctouche Bay. The French people of the Maritime Provinces of Canada have highlighted the value and meaning of their culture. "Arriving in the homeland of Micmac Indians, who numbered about 15,000 in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the French established a colony in 1604. Both France and England wanted the land that separated New England and New France" (Lyons 3). Between 1604 and 1763, Acadia shifted between French and English sovereignty four times. The French gained Amerindian support against the English, but in 1755, the British prevailed and deported the French from their Acadian homes (4). The Acadian people maintained an oral record of the past and kept their songs, stories, and foods as a means of recovering from political annihilation. They held on to their history and culture despite great opposition from Anglophone culture (4).

Antonine Maillet has passionately told the stories of her people. Born in 1929, Maillet's many works have placed cultural difference in the foreground. She recreates

the history of the Acadian people through her fiction and emphasizes the importance of orality for her people as well as some of their other major cultural values.

### Objectives and Exercises

**OBJECTIVES:** In this model, students will be able to identify the important elements of Acadian culture, such as genealogy and the preservation of the oral tradition by hearing her characters speak in their own voices. Students will see the emphasis on geographical elements in this passage of the text, by recognizing how the human characters in this story interact with nature. After reading the short passage, the students will be able to identify the cultural values of the Acadian people by examining the main themes present in this particular passage of Maillet's folk epic.

**Avant la lecture:** *As a pre-reading exercise, the students will locate and identify the region of Canada known as Acadia. The map included in the appendix will be used to identify Bouctouche, birthplace of Antonine Maillet and inspiration for her works. These pre-reading questions are aimed at getting the students to think critically about this particular literary work. This ties in Standard 3.1 which will have the students reinforcing and furthering their knowledge of the literary discipline through the target language.*

Selon l'auteur, Antonine Maillet, "Oral literature is the personal treasure of a people without access to large artistic accomplishment and who, in consequence, have but a collection of myths, tales, legends and songs to console itself for not being a god" (as qtd. in Lyons 57).

La tradition orale est très importante dans la littérature et dans la culture acadienne. La tradition évoque un style familier et est le style de la conversation.

Considérez le titre *L'Oursiade*.

Quel est le sujet de cette histoire?--*les ours*

Maintenant, coupez le titre en deux parties. L'OURS-IADE

Connaissez-vous un titre en anglais qui est similaire?--*the Iliad*

Pensez un peu à *L'Iliade*. Quel genre de littérature est cette histoire?—*épique (adjectif) ou l'épopée (substantif)*

*If students are unable to identify the genre, a definition of an epic may facilitate the answering of this question.*

### **ep·ic**

*n.*

1. An extended narrative poem in elevated or dignified language, celebrating the feats of a legendary or traditional hero.
2. A literary or dramatic composition that resembles an extended narrative poem celebrating heroic feats.
3. A series of events considered appropriate to an epic: *the epic of the Old West*.

*adj.*

1. Of, constituting, having to do with, or suggestive of a literary epic: *an epic poem*.
2. Surpassing the usual or ordinary, particularly in scope or size: “A vast musical panorama... it requires an epic musical understanding to do it justice” (Tim Page).
3. Heroic and impressive in quality: “Here in the courtroom... there was more of that epic atmosphere, the extra amperage of a special moment” (Scott Turow).

*L’Iliade de Homer est de la tradition orale de la Grèce. Antonine Maillet considère L’Oursiade épique aussi. C’est une épopée du folklore, qui exprime les idées ou les traditions d’une nation ou d’un peuple. Connaissez-vous d’autres histoires qui sont de la tradition orale?*

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### **Vocabulaire**

*As a Skimming/Scanning exercise, divide the following vocabulary list so that each group has an equal number of words and have the students work together to find and underline these vocabulary words in the text. The students will then try to derive the meaning of the words from their context in the story. Finally, have the different groups present their definitions to the rest of the class. Any definitions they were unable to come up with or any incorrect definitions will be discussed as a class. The following includes a list of words that the students at this level will most likely not know the meaning of, along with their definitions and page numbers in the text. This exercise is beneficial in that it targets all three of the Communication Standards by engaging the students in conversation with each other in order to obtain and exchange information, getting the students to understand and interpret unfamiliar words in the text, and giving the students an opportunity to present the information they acquired to the rest of their classmates.*

Liste de Vocabulaire-*L'Oursiade*, pages 12-16, Éditions Grasset & Fasquelle

<b>Le mot</b>	<b>La Définition</b>
<b>indigne (p. 12)</b>	<i>qui n'est pas digne, qui ne mérite pas; qui inspire le mépris</i>
<b>en marge (p. 12)</b>	<i>en dehors</i>
<b>les langes (p. 12)</b>	<i>les rectangles de tissu pour un bébé</i>
<b>lièrres (p. 12)</b>	<i>les plantes qui grimpent</i>
<b>carabine (p. 12)</b>	<i>un fusil</i>
<b>chique (p. 12)</b>	<i>un morceau de tabac à mâcher</i>
<b>l'original (p. 13)</b>	<i>le cerf aux bois aplatis, l'élan du Canada</i>
<b>le chevreuil (p. 13)</b>	<i>un cerf, un daim</i>
<b>son benjamin (p. 13)</b>	<i>l'enfant le plus jeune dans une famille</i>
<b>à la cueillette de brindilles (p. 13)</b>	<i>ramasser des branches</i>
<b>la charogne (p. 13)</b>	<i>le corps d'un animal mort</i>
<b>berceau (p. 14)</b>	<i>le lit d'un bébé</i>
<b>ne badinait pas (p. 14)</b>	<i>ne plaisantait pas</i>
<b>poulain (p. 14)</b>	<i>un jeune cheval</i>
<b>le museau (p. 14)</b>	<i>la partie antérieure, allongée et plus ou moins pointue de la face de certains animaux</i>
<b>un châtiment (p. 14)</b>	<i>une punition, du verbe "punir"</i>
<b>au pied du moïse (p. 15)</b>	<i>au pied du berceau</i>
<b>bessons (p. 15)</b>	<i>les jumeaux</i>
<b>centenaire (p. 15)</b>	<i>très vieux, ancien</i>
<b>hors-la-loi (p. 15)</b>	<i>quelqu'un qui par ses actions se met hors la loi; un bandit</i>
<b>progéniture (p. 15)</b>	<i>les enfants de quelqu'un</i>
<b>la fringant (p. 16)</b>	<i>très animé, vif et de fière allure</i>
<b>(l'œil) narquois (p. 16)</b>	<i>moqueur</i>
<b>interdite (p. 16)</b>	<i>pas permise, défendue</i>

**Après la lecture:**

*As with the first model, this activity is designed as a quick check for comprehension. It also includes Standard 1.2 by demonstrating that the students understand and interpret written language.*

**Choisissez la réponse correcte avec le lettre ci-dessous.**

1. Simon le Métis... \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. est le fils de Marguerite
  - b. habite dans une grande ville
  - c. est d'une grande famille
  - d. est orphelin de naissance
  
2. Ozite... \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. n'a jamais eu d'enfants
  - b. ne comprend pas les animaux de la forêt
  - c. est centenaire
  - d. a un rapport avec les chiens
  
3. Le seul parent que Simon connaît est... \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. Ozite
  - b. son père
  - c. sa cousine, Marguerite
  - d. sa sœur, Marie
  
4. Simon le Métis aime... \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. sa cousine, Marguerite
  - b. Ozite
  - c. les ours

d. Loup-Joseph

### Questions pour la discussion

Pourquoi est-ce que j'ai choisi les pages 12-16 pour votre lecture? Quel sont les thèmes importants dans ce passage du texte?

*la généalogie, le rapport avec la nature, et la connexion entre les gens d'une communauté marginale*

Pensez-vous que ces thèmes correspondent aux valeurs culturelles des Acadiens? Pourquoi ou pourquoi pas?

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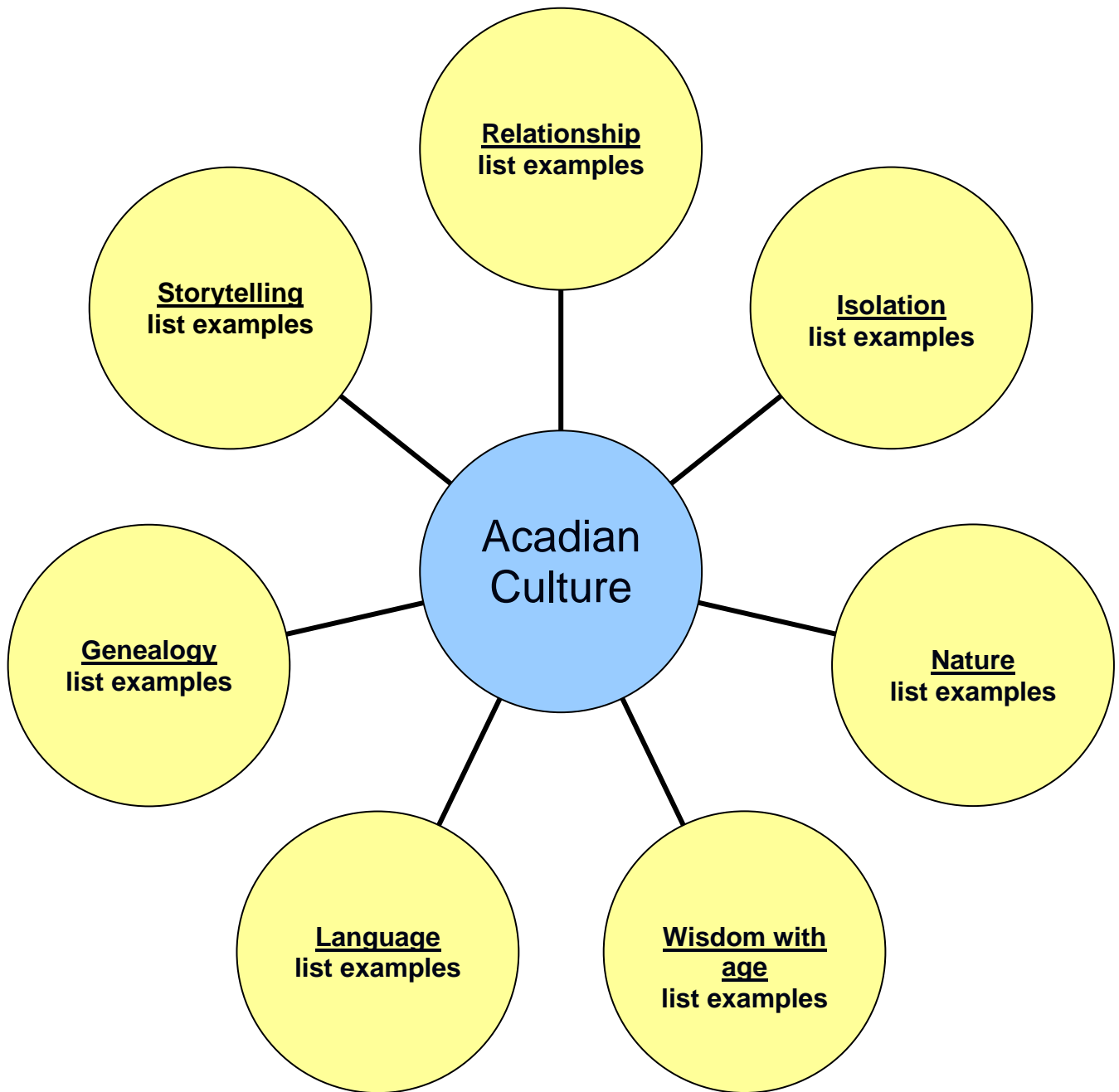
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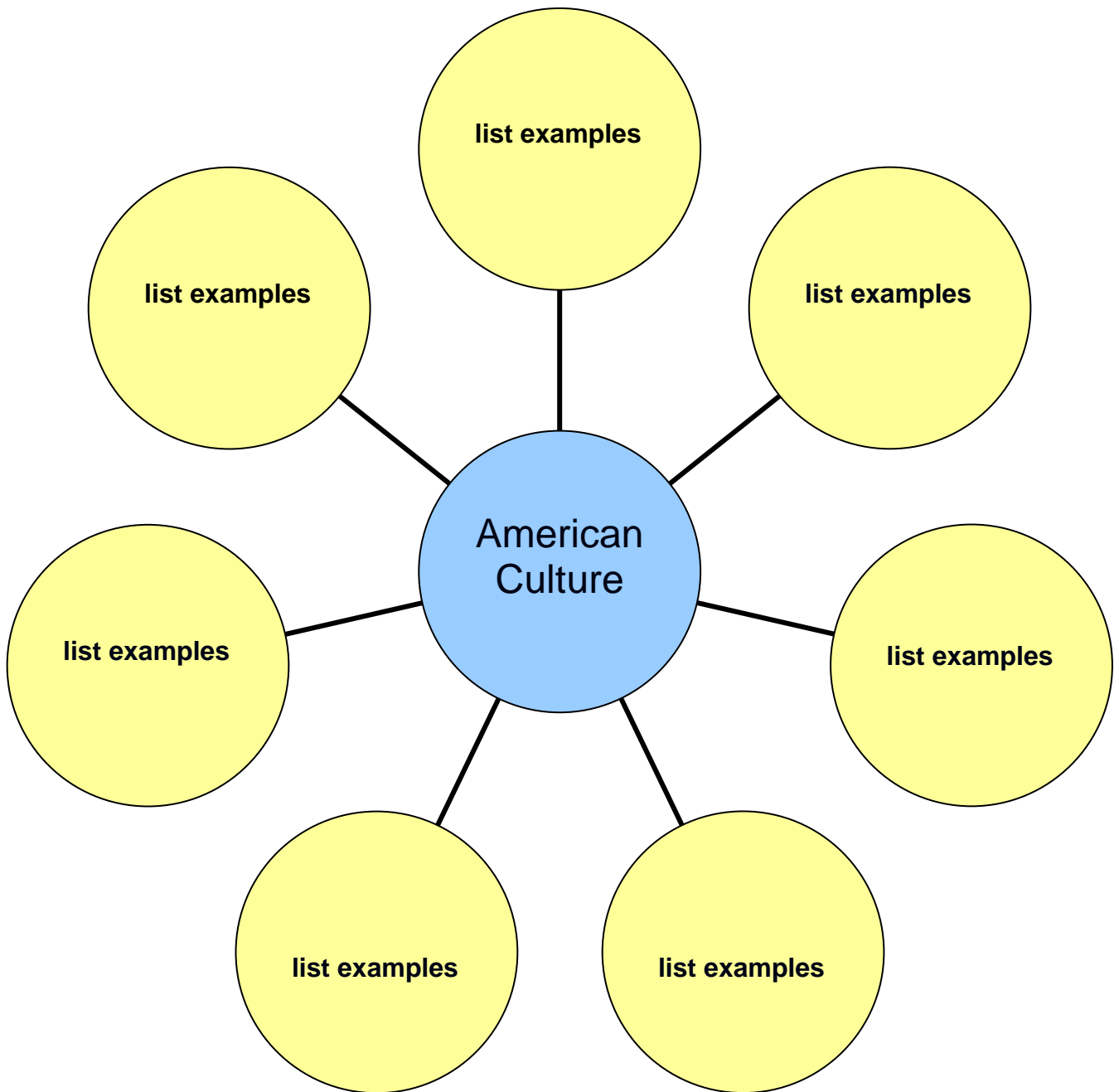
Maintenant, en groupes de deux personnes, considérez les deux personnages Ozite et Simon le Métis. Parlez un peu de chaque personnage. Puis, choisissez un personnage que vous voulez explorer. Écrivez un paragraphe qui décrit le personnage que vous avez choisi, et puis lisez le paragraphe à votre partenaire. Utilisez des exemples du texte pour soutenir votre description.

*After the students have had time to prepare their descriptions and share them with their partners, have a few volunteer to share what they have written with the class. Draw two columns on the board, one for Ozite and one for Simon le Métis. Keep a list of what the students have found to be important about the characters. Then have them think about what Maillet might be trying to convey about her culture through her characters. This exercise is designed with many goals in mind. The character analysis exercise will begin engaging the students in conversation, providing and obtaining information, and exchanging ideas. They will also demonstrate how they have understood what they have read and have an opportunity to present their written information to each other. This encompasses all three of the Communication Standards. The second part of the exercise which asks the students to think about what kind of cultural information can be found by exploring these characters brings in the Cultures Standards by allowing the students to demonstrate the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture. They will be using skills which are emphasized in the Connections Standards in that they are furthering their knowledge of the literary discipline through their reading of the Acadian text in French. They are also acquiring information that is only available through the language and culture itself.*

### **Concept Map of Acadian Culture and American Culture**

*In this final activity, students will be given a blank concept map of Acadian culture, and a blank concept map of American culture. Based on the short passage that they have read, they will list examples of important values or aspects of each culture. For example, on the Acadian map, they would list nature, genealogy, relationships, isolation, storytelling, the importance of living together, etc. On the American map, they would list things that they think are values or important aspects of American culture. This would lead to an interesting discussion, incorporating the Comparisons Standards by demonstrating that the students understand the concept of culture through the comparison of Acadian culture and American culture. This type of discussion will also hopefully lead to Standard 5.2, showing evidence of the students becoming lifelong learners by using French for personal enjoyment. Examples of concepts maps are given in the following pages.*





## CONCLUSION

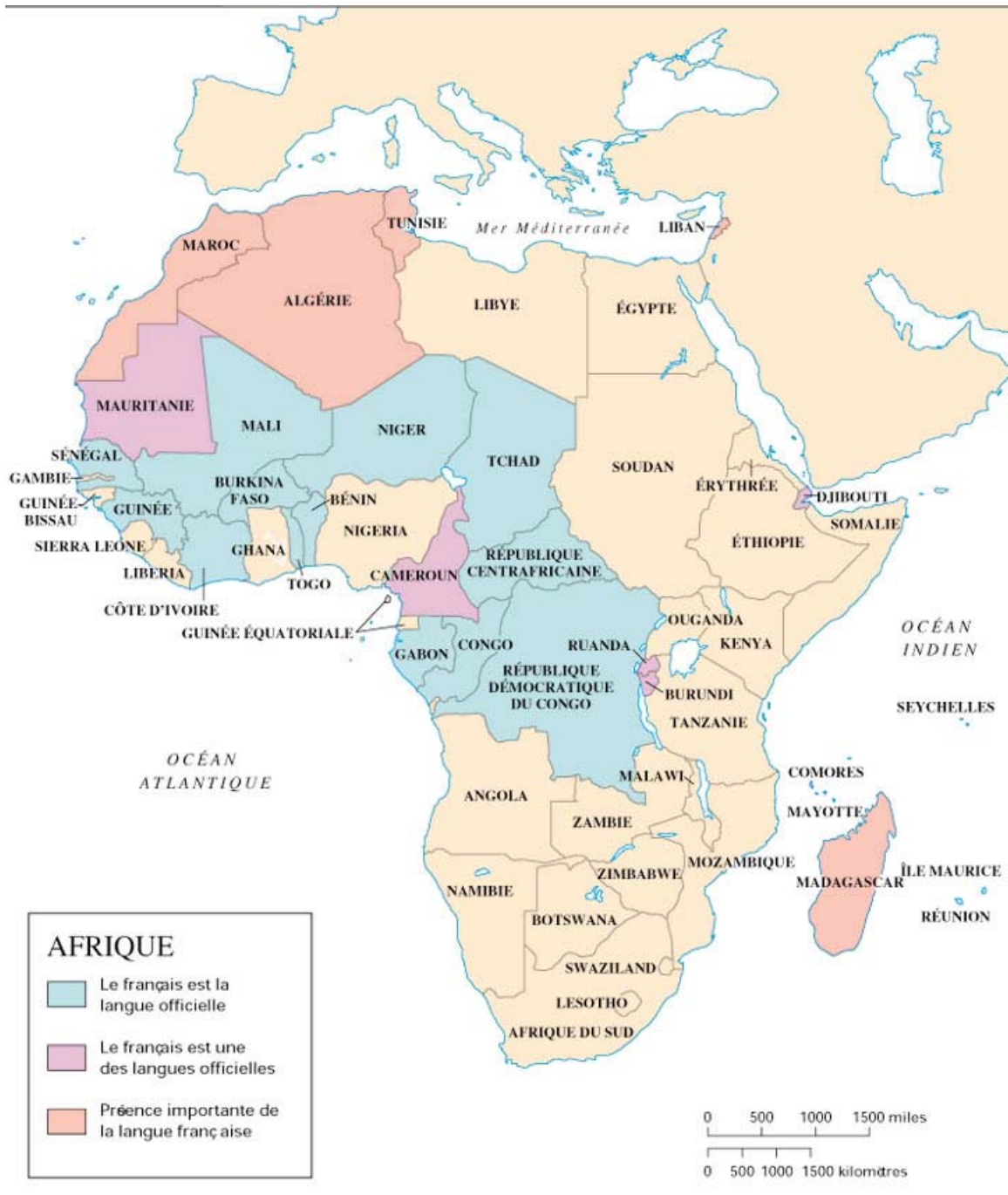
Culture has long been a neglected aspect of instruction in the foreign language classroom particularly at the beginning/intermediate level. In order for students to gain proficiency in a second language, culture must be integrated at an earlier stage of instruction. The French language classroom has often neglected the other rich francophone cultures of Africa and Acadia as well. There exists a clear need to provide diversity in the French language classroom so that cultural instruction is not limited solely to the culture of France. The goal of these instructional models is to offer a means by which French language instructors of high school or college students at the beginning/intermediate level can begin to integrate a wider variety of francophone culture into the classroom with the literature of these regions as a learning tool. By exposing students to a wider variety of francophone cultures, students will be more likely to achieve proficiency in their language study.

By using literature from these African and Acadian regions that is folkloric in nature and therefore contains both universal and cultural elements, it is hoped that students will have greater success in understanding and responding to the literature and in gaining openness to the cultural aspects to which they are being introduced. Perhaps if students are exposed to literature and culture at an earlier level of their French language instruction, they will be more likely to develop a greater interest in furthering their language study, which will encourage them to go on to advanced courses which will build upon that to which they have already been introduced. It is hoped as well that by integrating cultural study through the use of authentic literature, students who do choose to go on to advanced French literature and culture courses will not feel overwhelmed

because they have already had experience working with and analyzing authentic literary texts in the target language. The instructional models presented in this project have been created as a tool for implementing and expanding upon francophone cultural instruction and for offering a learning opportunity for students and French language educators alike.

## APPENDIX A

## Map of Francophone Africa



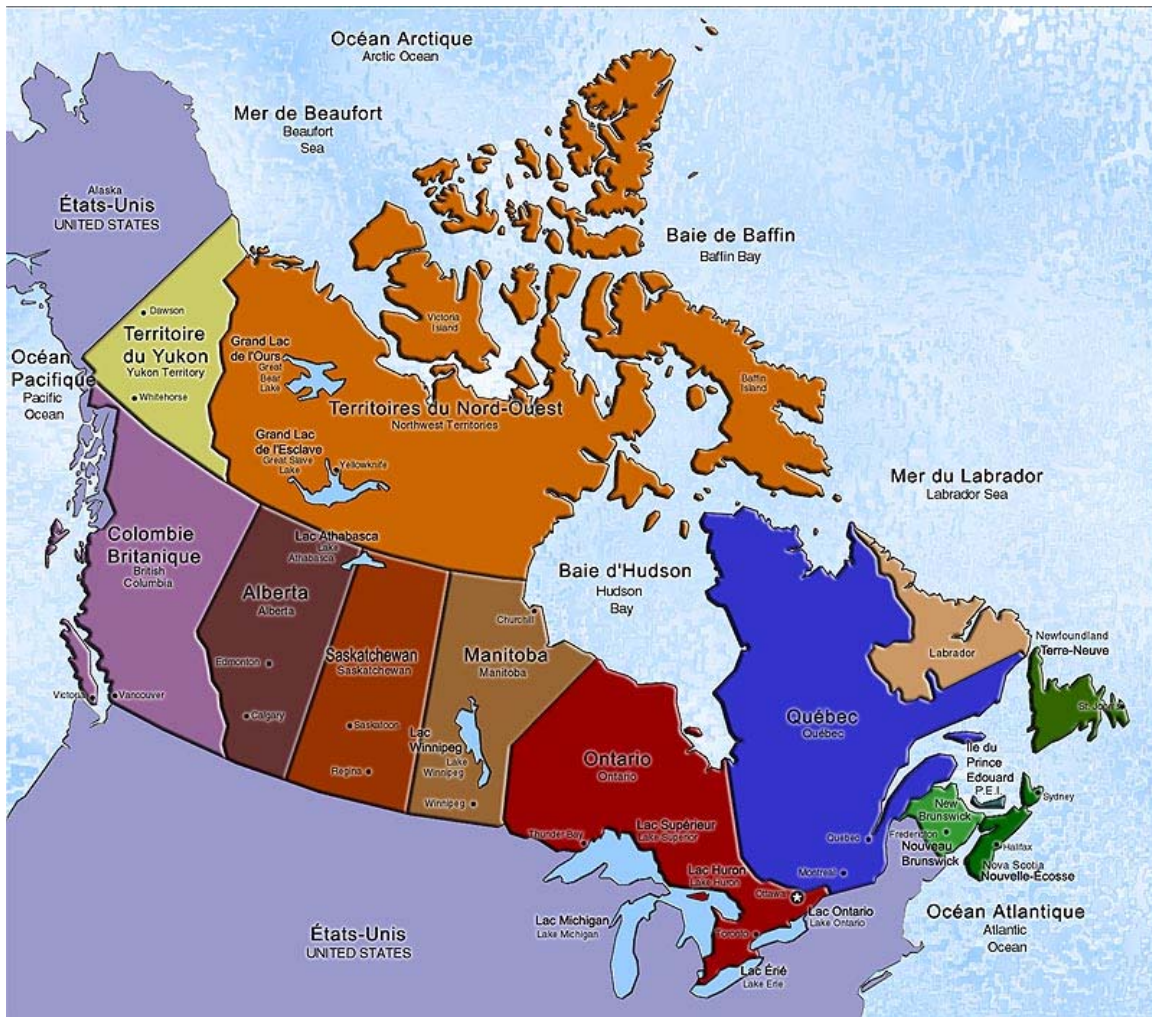
## APPENDIX B

## Map of Senegal



# APPENDIX C

## Map of Canada



APPENDIX D

Map of New Brunswick



## APPENDIX E

## Standards for Foreign Language Learning

**Communication***Communicate in Languages Other than English*

- Standard 1.1:** Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.
- Standard 1.2:** Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.
- Standard 1.3:** Students present information, concepts, and ideas to an audience of listeners or reader on a variety of topics.

**Cultures***Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures*

- Standard 2.1:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the practices and perspectives of the culture studied.
- Standard 2.2:** Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied.

**Connections***Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information*

- Standard 3.1:** Students reinforce and further their knowledge of other disciplines through the foreign language.
- Standard 3.2:** Students acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures.

**Comparisons***Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture*

- Standard 4.1:** Students demonstrate understanding of the nature of language through Comparisons of the language studied and their own.

APPENDIX E  
Standards for Foreign Language Learning, continued

**Standard 4.2:** Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.

**Communities:**

*Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home and Around the World*

**Standard 5.1:** Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting.

**Standard 5.2:** Students show evidence of becoming lifelong learners by using the language for personal enjoyment and enrichment.

*Standards for Foreign Language Learning 1996: 9.*

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