Carolyn Conrath
Lesson Plan— French class to present skit to the rest of the 8th grade American History students.
Level: 8th grade French.

Material covered in previous two classes:

- Explanation of the court of Louis XIV of France
  1. Childhood of Louis XIV
  2. Basis of fears of Louis about rebellion and reasons for building of Versailles
  3. Louis as the Sun King, the pivotal center of his court
- Court etiquette
     ISBN 0-06-443268-8 (book is out of print—found on Amazon)
  2. Read and discuss the King's Lever (2 hour morning dressing routine)
  3. Additional “rules”: scratching at the door with pinkie fingernail to gain admittance, picking up the king’s handkerchief, bowing to food as it passed, dining rituals, hunting description.
Description of activity: Role playing of the Grand Lever du Roi followed by the visit of Benjamin Franklin, l’étranger sauvage (the “Noble Savage”), to thank His Majesty for French support of the American Revolution.

NOTE: As I do not teach American History, I spoke with the 8th grade gentleman who does. He assured me that after the study of the American Revolution, the students would have sufficient information to convincingly portray Monsieur Franklin in our skit.

Procedure: Following roles need to be filled:
- King Louis XIV
- Benjamin Franklin (student needs to be good speaker—will need to plan his presentation to Louis)
- Valet de Chambre
- King’s Nurse
- First Physician
- Royal Barber
- Mirror holder
- Royal Chair carriers (carry out covered chamber pot)
- 3 men of special honor to pass the clothing from one to the other until finally presented to Louis by the “most favored” courtier
- 1 “most-favored” courtier

Costumes: For all except Louis and Benjamin: students should dress in capris and knee socks, blazer, fancy shirts (if possible!) and best shoes.
1 girl in long dress to portray the Nurse.
Louis: (from costuming for drama department): shorts (for sake of modesty), dressing gown, lace shirt, breeches, knee-high stockings, fancy long coat, sword, gloves, plumed hat, handkerchief, cane, and Cordon Bleu (blue sash)
Franklin: simple long coat and breeches made out of cotton/corduroy, plain white shirt, white knee socks, dress shoes, coonskin cap, cane
Props: curly wig, large mirror, straight-edge razor, china bowl with cover, desk clock, black/brown briefcase for physician
Procedure: Based on our study of the King’s Lever, students are to organize and present an almost “speechless” skit that portrays the following:

- Sleeping king
- Awakening by First Valet
- Greeting by Royal Nurse
- Visit by First Physician to check on his majesty’s health—look in mouth, eyes, listen to heart sounds
- Shave by Royal Barber
- Placing of wig
- Exit of chamber pot
- Clothing passed “up the line” to “most-favored” courtier
- Dressing of the king

All students need to understand the emphasis on tall posture, head up high, and profuse bowing as each action is performed.

When Louis is finished dressing, Ben Franklin is admitted to his presence. Ben must remove his hat and bow upon arrival. Ben must begin by heaping praise on the King, his court, and his wonderful country. He will then proceed to thank the King for supporting the American cause against the British. Reasons as to the wisdom of this decision need to be given, as well as an explanation of the anticipated alliance between France and the freed colonies. Ben must speak slowly, eloquently, and include many compliments.

Afterwards, Louis will speak about the anticipated defeat of the arch-enemy of France, and how pleased he is to assist. Audience will applaud Franklin and all bow as Louis exits the audience to attend morning Mass.
Bibliography


Secondary sources:


Novelguide: [http://www.novelguide.com/a/discover/eemw_06/eemw_06_01168.html](http://www.novelguide.com/a/discover/eemw_06/eemw_06_01168.html)