

AMERICAN VILLAGE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT

IN 1994, NACEL OPENED ITS FIRST AMERICAN VILLAGE CAMP IN FRANCE: A LINGUISTIC IMMERSION IN ENGLISH COMBINING THE THREE COMPONENTS OF BILINGUALISM...



NO ACCESS TO THE MOTHER TONGUE

DURATION

PERSONAL IMPLICATION

OUR EDUCATIONAL APPROACH

...as soon as youth enter the camp, they are cut off from the French language for several days. They are surrounded by English speakers from morning to night. Every day, fun and interesting activities are organised for them to participate in. The counselors and the campers must each make efforts to understand one another...

1

A "CARING IMMERSION" EXPERIENCE REQUIRES IMPLICATION

A counselor's attitude has the power to motivate (or de-motivate) the learner.

- Gestures and facial expressions convey benevolent intentions and active listening.
- Counselor involvement in the program is key. In leading by example, even beginners can follow along.

We fervently believe in every learner's ability – regardless of level - to participate fully in the program.

- Counselors choose age-appropriate activities, making them accessible to learners.
- The learner tries to communicate, regardless of mistakes.
- Understanding every individual word isn't always necessary to understand the sense of a message.

2

FROM DAWN TO DUSK, THE COUNSELORS SPEAK IN ENGLISH

Each moment of the day can be an opportunity to try to communicate.

- Only a few designated counselors and the camp director may use French when necessary.

3

THE IMPORTANCE OF PLEASURE AND JOY IN LEARNING

A happy child participates often, overcoming fears over the course of the camp session.

- A positive atmosphere, fun games, and good relationships create an environment that fosters natural learning.
- Different aspects of linguistic interaction can be integrated into many games.

OUR TEACHING APPROACHES AND VALUES

...the teaching approaches used by the American Village counselor are different from those used in school. The aim is to cultivate a «village» atmosphere, not to recreate a scholarly environment. To do so, the following values and approaches are used...

EQUALITY

- Help each child find his or her place within the group.
- Recognize every child's efforts to communicate in English.
- Combat any form of discrimination or violence.

JOY AND IMAGINATION

- Integrate humour and laughter in the learning process.
- Help the learner forget he is learning. Captivate his imagination and thereby promote spontaneous communication during play.

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

- Participate in the campers' activities. Lead by example.
- Adapt your language. Illustrate words with gestures and actions.

SUPPORT

- Cultivate a non-competitive ambiance around English.
- Encourage children to help one another.
- Indicate comprehension and listening through body language.

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

- Correct errors constructively and without judgement.
- Ban grading systems in the classroom.
- Build good relationships with the children.

FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

... a "pedagogical project" is prepared for each American Village camp session. In it, the director details the implementation of these approaches and values during the session. The counselors will prepare an activities program. The games and lessons will evoke Anglo-Saxon culture through a variety of subjects: its geography, history, famous people and sports, for example. Cultural stereotypes or consumer products may be mentioned, but any mention should be limited. At camp, the children will also discover community life and all it contributes to their personal development.

**THIS EDUCATIONAL PROJECT EVOLVES REGULARLY.
CONSTANT EVALUATION ENABLES US TO MAINTAIN
PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND ENSURE IT'S RELEVANCE.
ALAS, THE AMERICAN VILLAGE STORY HAS JUST BEGUN!**