

DIDACTIC UNIT: THE 25 EUROPEAN UNION COUNTRIES

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DIDACTIC UNIT: THE 25 EUROPEAN UNION COUNTRIES

1. JUSTIFICATION

1.1. TOPIC IN CONNECTION WITH THE AGE

Although the Didactic Unit has been designed for FIRST CYCLE SECONDARY school students, it could also be applied to any level depending on the difficulty of the activities we propose.

On April, 17th 2003 the Athenian Acropolis took the presidents of 25 European countries in. And that is a good reason to introduce our third cycle primary school students the ten new countries which will join the European Union on May, 1st, 2004. We do not have to forget that at this age topics developed in class should be related to their own experiences and living environment. By means of this topic we will be able to awake our students' natural curiosity and enthusiasm for the new ten countries, mostly unknown by them, which before long will join the European Union.

2. FINAL TASK

With the help of a map of Europe, the students will orally talk about the fifteen E.U. countries and their capital cities. Although the emphasis is mainly placed on the E.U. countries, we want our students to get familiar with the new ten European Union members

* It is advisable to record the final task on video to be shown to other classmates in the future to show them what they have to learn, and to be watched by the students themselves.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE DIDACTIC UNIT

- 3.1. The students will be able to understand specific oral language related to the 25 E.U. countries and their capital cities, as used by the teacher and the other classmates.
- 3.2. The students will be able to use oral language fluently and competently, using linguistic and non-linguistic resources, related to the 15 E.U. countries and their capital cities, showing respect for and interest in understanding and being understood.
- 3.3. The students will be able to read a text related to the current 15 E.U. countries, the 10 new future European Union countries and extract specific information.
- 3.4. The students will be able to produce brief and simple written texts about the current 15 E.U. countries and the 10 new European Union countries.
- 3.5. The students will be able to use autonomous learning strategies developed from previous language learning experiences, related to other language study methods.

3.6. The students will be able to recognise and appreciate the communicative value of foreign languages, and their own capacity to learn and use them, encouraging spontaneity, overcoming their sense of the ridiculous and showing understanding and respect towards other languages, their speakers and their cultures.

3.7. The students will be able to establish links between the meaning, pronunciation and the spelling of the current 15 E.U. countries and the 10 new European Union countries, not forgetting rhythm and intonation.

*Before we design all the activities which are to be developed in class in order to achieve the didactic unit objectives, specified above, we will have to keep in mind the didactic consequences which are determined by from the psychoevolutionary stage the 1st cycle of secondary education students are in, and the methodological principles established in the official curricula.

4. TABLE OF CONTENTS (APPENDIX A)

5. RESOURCES

5.1. A map of Europe

5.2. A map of the Aragonese autonomous Community

5.3. Two photocopies of the map of Europe for each student

5.4. A photocopy of the chart with all the questions related to the Aragonese autonomous Community

5.5. If we want to record the final task, a TV set, a video recorder and a video tape will be required.

5.6. A computer

5.7. A video projector

5.8. The programmes: Word 2.000, Hot Potatoes, PowerPoint

6. TIMING

Three 50-minute lessons will be devoted to completing this Didactic Unit.

7. ASSUMED KNOWLEDGE

7.1. The alphabet. Spelling words out

7.2. Phonemic transcriptions

7.3. Prepositions of place

7.4. The points of the compass

7.5. The 17 Spanish autonomous communities.

7.6. The 15 E.U. countries and their capital cities

8. ANTICIPATED PROBLEMS

- 8.1. Difficulty in spelling words out
- 8.2. Difficulty in reading phonetic transcriptions properly
- 8.3. The 17 Spanish autonomous communities
- 8.4. The 15 E.U. countries and their capital cities

9. ACTIVITIES

9.1. FIRST TEACHING PERIOD: How to get and hold our students' attention? We will start by introducing the topic we are going to talk about to our students, but before we start we will ask them to tell us everything they know about Spain:

Where is Spain with respect to Portugal, France, ...? What's its capital city? What is Spain made up of? Where are Asturias, Galicia, and Aragón? What are the three main rivers in Spain? Which is the longest river in Spain? What's the name of the King of Spain? What's the title given to the son of the King and Queen of Spain? What's the name of the political party which won the last elections? What's the name of the President of the Spanish Government? What's the population of Spain? What's the name of the leader of the Socialist Party?

<u>QUESTIONS about Spain</u>	<u>ANSWERS</u>
Where is Spain with respect to Portugal, France, to Europe?	
What's its capital city?	
What is Spain made up of?	
Where is Asturias, Galicia, Aragón, ...	
What are the three main rivers in Spain?	
Which is the longest river in Spain?	
What's the name of the King of Spain?	
What's the title given to the son of the King and Queen of Spain?	

What's the name of the political party, which won the last elections?	
What's the name of the President of the Spanish Government?	
What's the population of Spain?	
What's the name of the leader of the Socialist Party?	

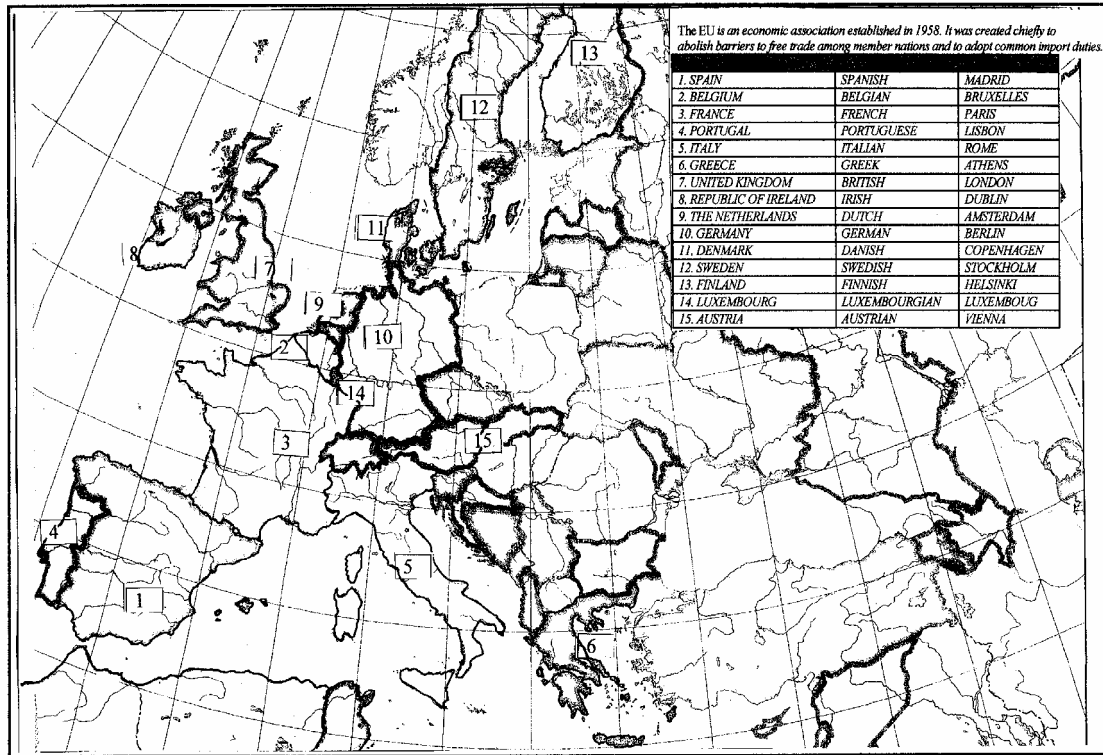
Once we have written all the answers on the blackboard, the students are given a photocopy on which they will have to write all the answers. In order to do this properly, they will have to associate the questions given in the first column of the chart and the answers written on the blackboard. (Whole class work activity, individual work activity).

If there were 16 students the class could be divided up into groups of 4, and they would check their answers in groups. Once they had finished filling in the answers, the class would be reorganized again and each student of each group would be the representative of their group in the other groups. They would check their answers again and, if there were any changes, these would be explained to the others. Finally, at random, one from each group will be the speaker and as a whole class activity the questions will be corrected.

The teacher will connect the previous activity to the next one by saying: "*So there are 17 autonomous communities in Spain, and you know that Spain has been a member of the European Union since 1985*". And we will go on to talk about the E.U. countries.

What do you know about the European Union? What is the European Union made up of?

Once they know that the E.U. is made up of 15 countries, we ask them, with the help of the map of Europe, to tell us their names. We point at all the countries they name. They are supposed to name some of them in Spanish, and if they are right we will say their names in English and then they will repeat them aloud. We will write the initials of each country on the blackboard. While they continue to name them, we point at the ones named on the map and they repeat their names. We'll pay attention to location and pronunciation.

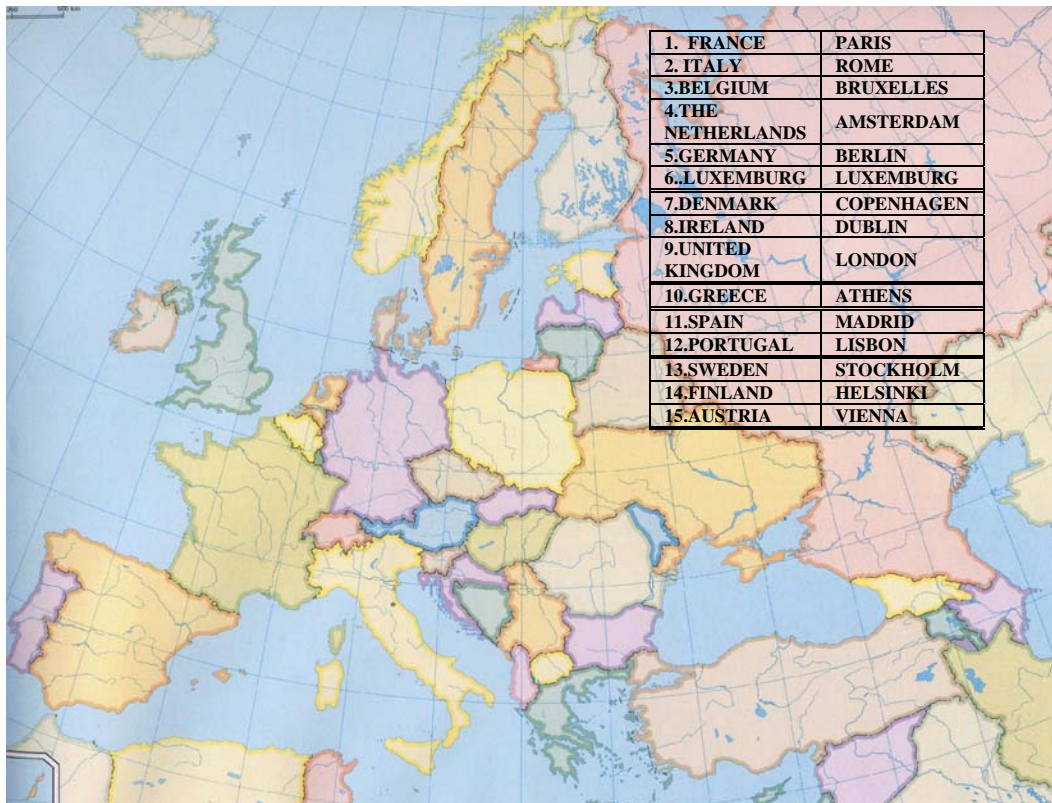


EU COUNTRIES	SYMBOL	CAPITAL CITIES	SYMBOL
1. S	/eɪ/	1.	/ɪ/
2. B	/e/	2. B	/ɒ/
3. F	/a:/	3. P	/æ/
4. P	/ɔ:/	4. L	/ɪ/
5. I	/ɪ/	5. R	/əʊ/
6. GREECE	/i:/	6. A	/æ/
7. U. K.	/ɪ/	7. L	/ɒ/
8. R. OF I.	/aɪ/	8. D	/ɒ/
9. THE N.	/e/	9. A	/æ/
10. G	/ɜ:/	10. B	/ɪ/
11. D	/e/	11. C	/eɪ/
12. S	/i:/	12. S	/əʊ/
13. FINLAND	/ɪ/	13. H	/e/
14. L	/ɒ/	14. L	/ɒ/
15. A	/ɔ:/	15. V	/e/

SECOND TEACHING PERIOD: Once we think they know how to locate the fifteen E.U. countries and pronounce them correctly, they are asked to name their capital cities of all the members of the E.U. If they are wrong we will point out this to them. We'll continue to write down the initials of all the capital cities next to the countries they are connected with.

EU COUNTRIES	SYMBOL	CAPITAL CITIES	SYMBOL
1. S	/eɪ/	16.	/ɪ/
2. B	/e/	17. B	/ʌ/
3. F	/ɑː/	18. P	/æ/
4. P	/ɔː/	19. L	/ɪ/
5. I	/ɪ/	20. R	/əʊ/
6. G	/iː/	21. A	/æ/
7. U. K.	/ɪ/	22. L	/ʌ/
8. R. OF I.	/aɪ/	23. D	/ʌ/
9. THE N.	/e/	24. A	/æ/
10. G	/ɜː/	25. B	/ɪ/
11. D	/e/	26. C	/eɪ/
12. S	/iː/	27. S	/əʊ/
13. F	/ɪ/	28. H	/e/
14. L	/ʌ/	29. L	/ʌ/
15. A	/ɔː/	30. V	/e/

“So Madrid is the capital city of ...”. We ask the students as many times as necessary until we make sure they all have learnt the fifteen E.U. countries, their capital cities and their pronunciation. Now we give them a photocopy with the map of Europe with the 15 E.U. countries and their capital cities in the top right hand side corner.



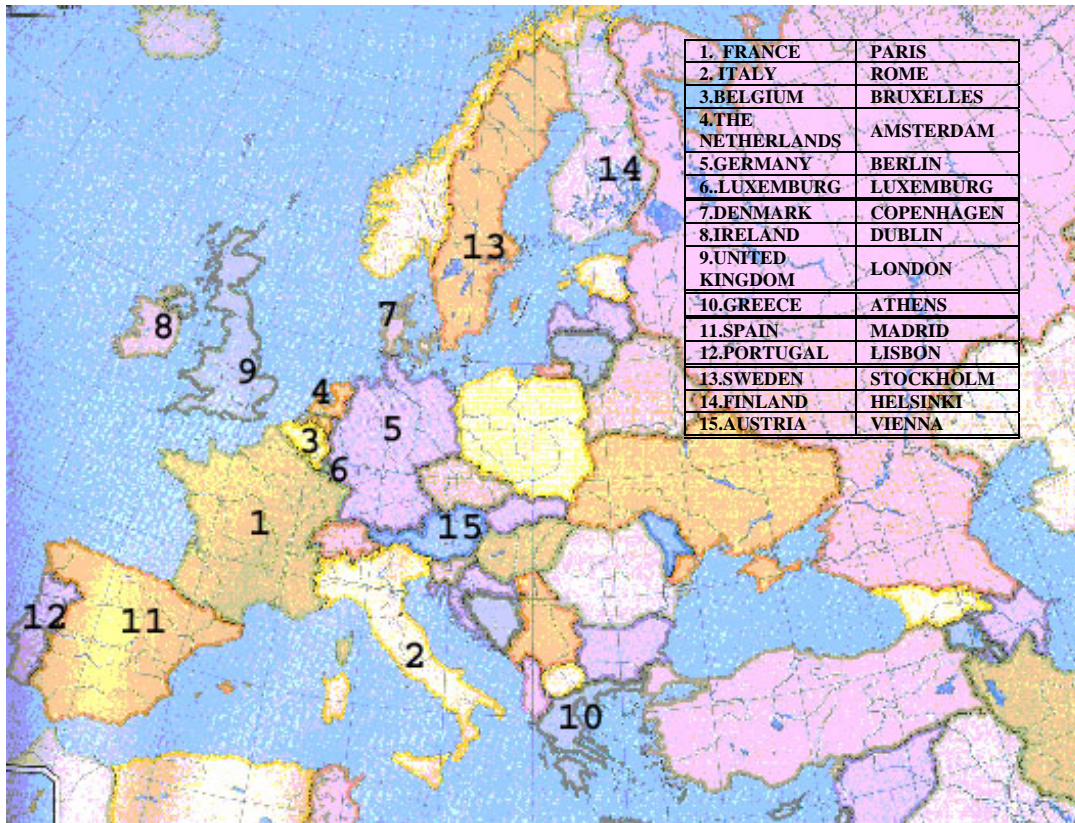
First, individually, the students will fill in the map with the numbers given for each country. Then, in groups of four, they will check their answers. For each group the teacher will correct a quarter of the information about the countries and then the class will be reorganized again and each student of each group will be the representative of their groups in the other groups. The teacher corrects all the exercises and then the numbers they wrote down on their maps are erased and each country is coloured according to the line it is in. We revise the countries, their capital cities and, above all, their pronunciation.

First, all the students are asked individually the location of the countries: “*Where’s Denmark?*” “*It’s over here.*” Presumably all the students are going to know the location of all the E.U. countries. If there is someone who doesn’t know the answers, someone else will help them to find them.

Secondly, the teacher points at each country separately and each student says the names: “*What’s this?*” “*It’s Finland.*” Presumably all the students are going to know the location of all the E.U. countries. If there is someone who doesn’t know the answers, someone else will help them answer.

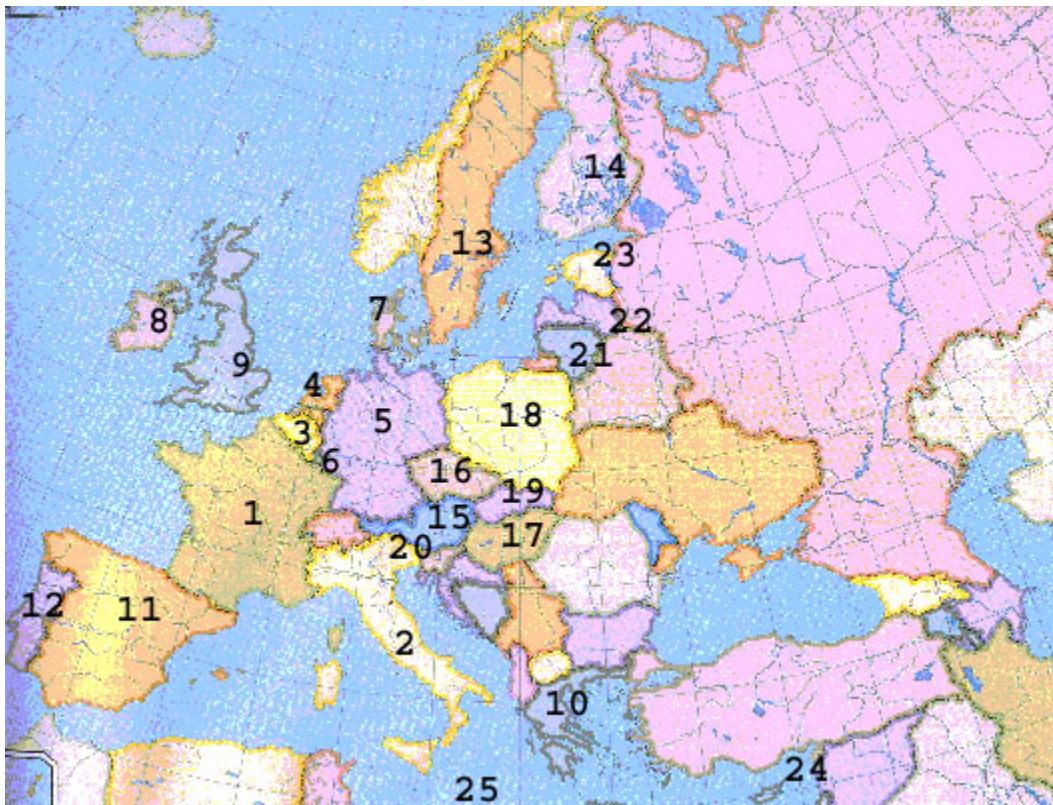
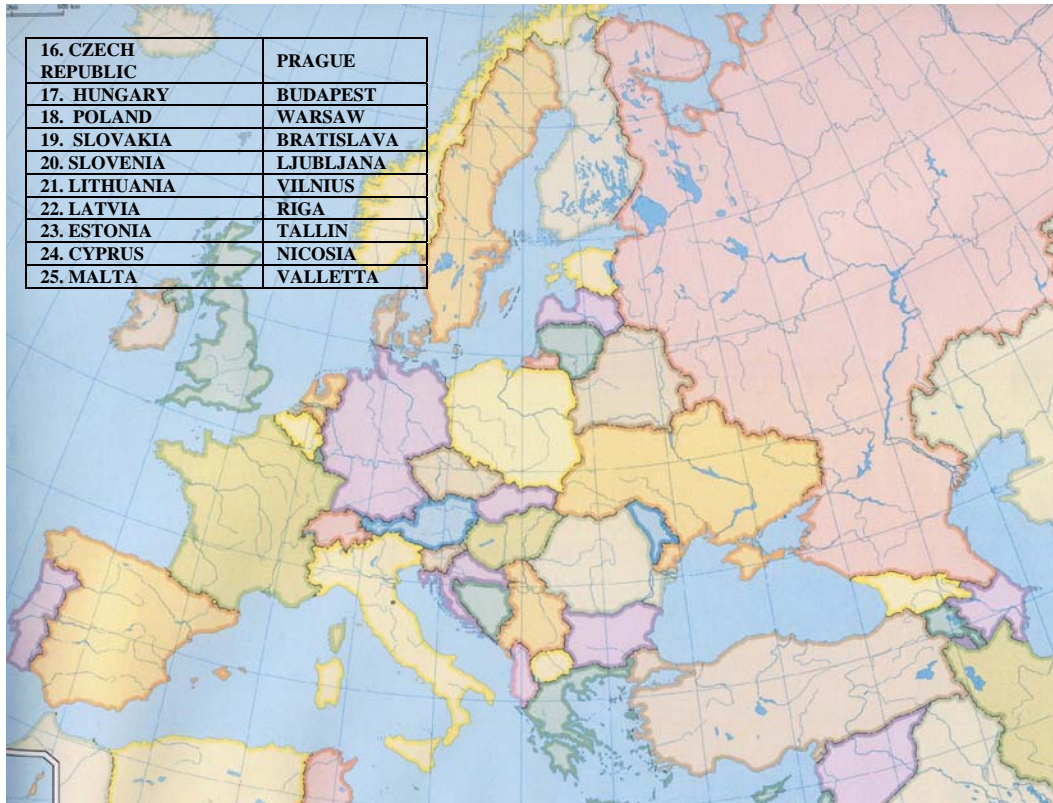
Thirdly, each student names the fifteen E.U. countries associating them with their capital cities: “*This is Sweden whose capital city is Stockholm.*” Or “*Stockholm is the capital city of Sweden.*”

We will pay special attention to pronunciation. The final task will be recorded.



THIRD TEACHING PERIOD: Once our students know the fifteen European Union countries, we will let them know something about the meeting which was held in the Athenian Acropolis on April, 17th, 2003. The Acropolis took the presidents of 25 European countries in. The students will be told that ten new European countries will join the European Union on May, 1st, 2004.

With the help of the map of Europe they will be asked about everything they know about that piece of news they have been informed. The same steps will be followed as the 15 E.U. countries were presented above. We want our students to get familiar with these ten new future members of the European Union.



10. ASSESSMENT

Apart from evaluating the Didactic Unit as a whole, and above all the final task, it is important to evaluate every single component the didactic unit is based on; including

suitability of the objectives, timing, linguistic and non linguistic resources, presentation of the activities, interaction of the teacher with the SS and among the SS, involvement of the SS, interest in the topic on the part of the SS, etc. We do not have to wait for the end of the didactic unit to evaluate it. In Primary Education it is important to evaluate through direct observation.

Evaluation is going to help us to improve our lessons, and, above all, to help our SS learn individually. Evaluation is a fundamental element in getting information about the way the teaching-learning process is developing. It must provide constant feedback during the whole process of teaching and learning. For effective evaluation must include initial evaluation, to get information about the situation of the students with respect to the topic, a constructive evaluation throughout the process in order to show us how the group works and the relevant difficulties, and finally summative evaluation, to know if the didactic objectives have been achieved

Activities in this context allow the teacher to observe and collect information, enabling him or her to reflect on the learning and teaching process. Therefore, instead of designing activities solely to evaluate, we propose to select activities which, as well as being a part of our didactic units, allow us to observe and collect different information about:

1. using rhythmic patterns
2. quality of pronunciation
3. applying the appropriate socio-communicative rules in specific situations
4. level of oral comprehension
5. level of oral production
6. attitudes (collaboration with the other participants of the group, assessment of student's own learning and attitude to the English language, etc.);
7. types of activities and their appropriateness for the group.

The information collected by means of these activities will allow us to reflect on our students' learning processes and results, and to make decisions about:

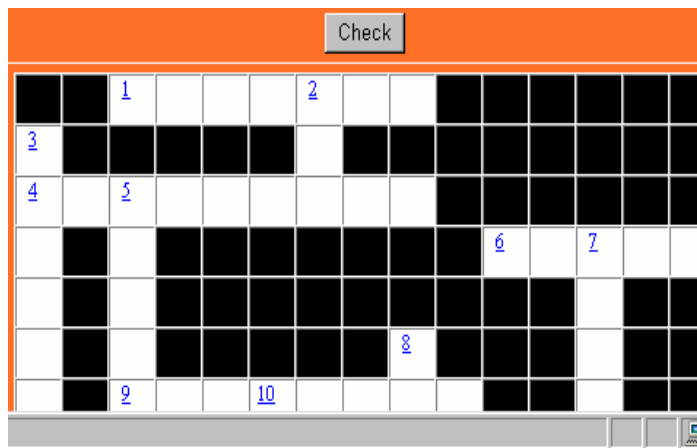
The point at which to intervene didactically and how.

Students who require more direct and systematic pedagogic assistance.

Different learning strategies to assure the desired understanding by the whole group.

The planning of new ideas or proposals which include linguistic or formative elements requiring greater attention.

Evaluation is not only a question of results. The entire teaching-learning process needs to be continually assessed. The development of classes as a whole, the achievement of objectives, and individual learning progress and attitudes are evaluated. Special emphasis should be placed on acquiring strategies and attitudes to develop self-evaluation as well as mutual evaluation processes on the part of the teacher as well as the pupils. In order to develop our students' self-evaluation I will propose some materials elaborated with the help of the programme Hot Potatoes. I recommend crosswords which include the vocabulary presented in class and matching exercises.



EUROPE

Matching exercise

1. SPAIN	ATHENS
2. BELGIUM	VIENNA
3. FRANCE	STOCKHOLM
4. PORTUGAL	HELSINKI
5. ITALY	LISBON
6. GREECE	COPENHAGEN
7. UNITED KINGDOM	LUXEMBURG
8. THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND	BERLIN
9. THE NETHERLANDS	ROME
10. GERMANY	PARIS
11. DENMARK	MADRID
12. SWEDEN	BRUXELLES
13. FINLAND	AMSTERDAM
14. LUXEMBURG	LONDON
15. AUSTRIA	DUBLIN

Match the items on the right with the items on the left.

11. REINFORCEMENT ACTIVITIES

For all SS who haven't achieved the Final Task, new activities will be presented, adapted according to the needs of the SS.

11.1. GUESS WHERE.

All the students are told to write down on a piece of paper where they would like to go on holiday. They are told that nobody is allowed to see the country they have chosen, because it is going to be a secret.




One of the students who did not achieve the objectives mentioned is asked to stand by the blackboard, and he/she is asked by his/her classmates the place he/she chose: *“Are you going to The United Kingdom?” “No, I’m not. I’m not going to the United Kingdom.”* They continue to ask him/her until someone guesses correctly. The one who guesses is given 1 point, and he takes the place of his/her classmate. One of the rules they have to follow is that a country cannot be repeated twice.

12. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

And for all SS who have achieved the final task satisfactorily some new tasks will be given.

12.1. EUROPEAN UNION FLAGS. HANGMAN

The students are given a chart in which they have to complete the 15 E.U. countries and their capital cities. Once they have completed the chart they have to find their flags and to draw and colour them in the third column. When they get to know the flags of every country they work in pairs by asking their mates the connection between the countries and their flags. *“Which country does this flag belong to?”* Every time one makes a mistake, a line is drawn to complete the game “hangman”. The one who hangs the other first is the winner.

<u>E.U. COUNTRIES</u>	<u>CAPITAL CITIES</u>	<u>FLAGS</u>
GERMANY	BERLIN	

AUSTRIA	VIENNA	
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*All the boxes can be cut out and mixed up. Then a competition could be held: READY, STEADY, GO. All the students individually or in groups might be asked to reorganize all the boxes.

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14. APPENDIX A: Table of Contents

It is clear that if we want our SS to learn properly, we as teachers will have to use the appropriate procedures, which will help them acquire concepts and, above all, develop positive attitudes.

Contents depend on the objectives we want to attain. The contents must fulfill a series of requisites. They must be valid (useful to attain the objectives), significant (they must have a logical internal structure), suitable (adapted to the cognitive competence of the students). They may refer to three different fields: conceptual, procedural and attitudinal. Conceptual contents are concepts, events and principles; attitudinal contents include values and rules. They foster favourable attitudes towards learning and facilitate social relationships inside and outside the classroom; procedural contents activate mental strategies and work techniques to develop the learning process. Procedures are the basis of all the activities. The same didactic material can be worked in different levels following different procedure. The activities will vary according to the procedure we use.

	PROCEDURES	CONCEPTS	ATTITUDES
ORAL AND WRITTEN COMPREHENSION	Oral receptive procedures: 1. To recognize phonological, non-linguistic and semantic elements 2. To decode symbols 3. To match 4. To carry out instructions	1. related to the 15 E.U. countries together with their capital cities 2. associated with the map of Europe 3. the E.U. countries numbered from 1 to 15 in the map of Europe with their capital cities 4. which will help our students develop all the steps necessary to complete all the activities related to the E.U.	showing respect and interest in understanding. recognizing the importance of reading as a source of information, enjoyment and leisure, and as a means of access to other cultures.

	<p>5. To understand a questionnaire</p> <p>6. To associate images and sounds</p> <p>7. To analyze specific oral information</p> <p>8. To infer meaning</p> <p>Written receptive procedures</p> <p>9. To associate images and written information</p> <p>10. To understand a questionnaire</p>	<p>countries</p> <p>5. related to Spain</p> <p>6. related to the 15 E.U. countries together with their capital cities</p> <p>7. related to Europe</p> <p>8. related to the topic of Europe by using non-linguistic elements</p> <p>9. referring to Europe</p> <p>10. related to Spain</p>	<p>recognizing the communicative value of foreign languages to communicate with people from different cultures, and to participate in different international contexts.</p> <p>recognizing the richness offered by different languages for the understanding of our experience and interpersonal relationships.</p>
ORAL AND WRITTEN PRODUCTION	<p>Oral productive procedures:</p> <p>1. To reproduce sounds, rhythm and intonation</p> <p>2. To share information</p> <p>3. To link</p> <p>4. To practice what they have learnt</p> <p>5. To make sentences from the initials</p> <p>6. To speak through symbols and</p>	<p>1. related to the topic of Europe</p> <p>2. about Spain and Europe with the teacher and the other classmates</p> <p>3. the 15 E.U. countries and their capital cities</p> <p>4. from a map of Europe</p> <p>5. referring to the E.U. countries and their capital cities</p>	<p>showing respect and interest in understanding and being understood.</p> <p>recognizing the importance of writing as a source of information.</p> <p>recognizing the communicative value of foreign languages to communicate with people from different cultures, and to participate in different international</p>

	<p>drawings</p> <p>7. To transfer what they have assimilated and practiced to new communicative situations</p> <p>Written productive procedures</p> <p>8. To reproduce everything they have learnt</p> <p>9. To practice</p> <p>10. To transfer what they have assimilated and practiced to new communicative situations</p>	<p>6. referring to the E.U. countries and their capital cities</p> <p>7. presented in the section extension activities</p> <p>8. referring to the E.U. countries</p> <p>9. referring to the E.U. countries and their capital cities</p> <p>10. presented in the section extension activities</p>	<p>contexts.</p> <p>recognizing the richness offered by different languages for the understanding of our experience and interpersonal relationships.</p>
<p>SOCIOCULTURAL ASPECTS</p>	<p>1. To analyze</p>	<p>1. the countries which form the E.U. Community and the new ten members which will join the European Union in 2004.</p>	<p>showing curiosity and respect for the other members of the Community, and recognizing the communicative value of foreign languages to communicate with people from different cultures, and to participate in different international contexts.</p>

15. APPENDIX C: ASSESSMENT REPORTS

DIDACTIC UNIT ASSESSMENT REPORT

	1 (-)	2	3	4	5 (+)
1. MOTIVATING					
2. SUITABILITY OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF TIME					
3. ADEQUACY OF THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER					
4. ADEQUACY OF THE ROLE OF STUDENTS					
5. CLASSROOM ATMOSPHERE					
6. SUITABILITY OF OBJECTIVES					
7. SUITABILITY OF THE FINAL TASK					
8. INTERACTION TEACHER - STUDENTS					
9. INTERACTION STUDENTS - STUDENTS					
10. ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES					
11. INTEREST IN THE TOPIC ON PART OF STUDENTS					
12. INVOLVEMENT OF STUDENTS					
13. APPROPRIATENESS OF ACTIVITIES					

INDIVIDUAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

	1 (-)	2	3	4	5 (+)
1. ACHIEVEMENT OF FINAL TASK					
2. LEVEL OF ORAL COMPREHENSION					
2.1. RECOGNIZES THE PHONEMES, RHYTHMS AND PATTERNS OF ENGLISH					
2.2. CAN GRASP THE OVERALL SENSE OF SIMPLE MESSAGES IN CONTEXT					
2.3. CAN FOLLOW SIMPLE ORAL INSTRUCTIONS IN CONTEXT					
2.4. CAN IDENTIFY SIMPLE DETAILS IN ORAL TEXTS					

2.5. CAN GRASP THE OVERALL SENSE OF LESS CONTEXTUALIZED MESSAGES					
3. LEVEL OF ORAL PRODUCTION					
3.1. CAN REPRODUCE BRIEF MESSAGES WITH APPROPRIATE PRONUNCIATION AND INTONATION					
3.2. CAN USE SIMPLE SOCIAL EXPRESSIONS					
3.3. CAN REPRODUCE SHORT, MODELLED ORAL MESSAGES AND DESCRIPTIONS					
3.4. CAN PRODUCE ORIGINAL ORAL MESSAGES					
4. LEVEL OF READING COMPREHENSION AND WRITTEN PRODUCTION					
4.1. CAN INTERPRET THE WRITTEN CODE 1) AT WORD LEVEL, AND 2) AT SIMPLE PHRASE/SENTENCE LEVEL					
4.2. CAN GRASP THE OVERALL SENSE OF BRIEF WRITTEN TEXTS					
4.3. CAN EXTRACT SPECIFIC INFORMATION FROM BRIEF WRITTEN TEXTS					
4.4. CAN FOLLOW SIMPLE WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS					
4.5. CAN PRODUCE MODELLED WRITTEN INFORMATION 1) AT WORD LEVEL, AND 2) AT PHRASE/SENTENCE LEVEL					
4.6. CAN PRODUCE ORIGINAL WRITTEN TEXTS					
5. SOCIO-AFFECTIVE SKILLS					
5.1. GETS INVOLVED IN THE CLASS DYNAMICS					
5.2. SHOWS POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE TOPIC					
5.3. PARTICIPATES ACTIVELY					

5.4. COLLABORATES					
5.5. SHOWS POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE					
5.6. SHOWS RESPECT FOR HIS/HER CLASSMATES					
5.7. SHOWS RESPECT FOR OTHER LIFESTYLES					
5.8. SHOWS INTEREST IN OTHER LIFESTYLES					

ATTAINMENT TARGETS

	1 (-)	2	3	4	5 (+)
1. LEARNING SKILLS					
1.1. CAN WORK INDEPENDENTLY OF THE TEACHER					
1.2. CAN REFLECT ON AND ASSESS OWN PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS					
1.3. CAN MAKE USE OF REFERENCE SOURCES					
2. SOCIAL SKILLS					
2.1. PARTICIPATES ACTIVELY					
2.2. COLLABORATES					
2.3. SHOWS RESPECT FOR OTHER LIFESTYLES					
2.4. SHOWS INTEREST IN OTHER LIFESTYLES					
2.5. SHOWS RESPECT FOR HIS/HER CLASSMATES					
2.6. SHOWS POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE					

3. LEVEL OF ORAL COMPREHENSION					
3.1. RECOGNIZES THE PHONEMES, RHYTHMS AND PATTERNS OF ENGLISH					
3.2. CAN GRASP THE OVERALL SENSE OF SIMPLE MESSAGES IN CONTEXT					
3.3. CAN FOLLOW SIMPLE ORAL INSTRUCTIONS IN CONTEXT					
3.4. CAN IDENTIFY SIMPLE DETAILS IN ORAL TEXTS					
3.5. CAN GRASP THE OVERALL SENSE OF LESS CONTEXTUALIZED MESSAGES					
4. LEVEL OF ORAL PRODUCTION					
4.1. CAN REPRODUCE BRIEF MESSAGES WITH APPROPRIATE PRONUNCIATION AND INTONATION					
4.2. CAN USE SIMPLE SOCIAL EXPRESSIONS					
4.3. CAN REPRODUCE SHORT, MODELLED ORAL MESSAGES AND DESCRIPTIONS					
4.4. CAN PRODUCE ORIGINAL ORAL MESSAGES					
5. LEVEL OF READING COMPREHENSION AND WRITTEN PRODUCTION					
5.1. CAN INTERPRET THE WRITTEN CODE 1) AT WORD LEVEL, AND 2) AT SIMPLE PHRASE/SENTENCE LEVEL					
5.2. CAN GRASP THE OVERALL SENSE OF BRIEF WRITTEN TEXTS					
5.3. CAN EXTRACT SPECIFIC INFORMATION FROM BRIEF WRITTEN TEXTS					
5.4. CAN FOLLOW SIMPLE WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS					
5.5. CAN PRODUCE MODELLED WRITTEN INFORMATION 1) AT WORD LEVEL, AND 2) AT PHRASE/SENTENCE LEVEL					

5.6. CAN PRODUCE ORIGINAL WRITTEN TEXTS					
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