

### Group Activity for a Post-Holiday Class

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In this activity, students write about what they did during a holiday or long weekend. They will use their past tense(s) in a personal way and be motivated to move beyond the predictable, limited vocabulary that they usually use.

Here I explain the activity as I use it in a French class with students who are familiar with the formation and uses of both *le passé composé* and *l'imparfait*. It can be simplified for lower level classes or modified for different languages.

#### Instructions

- Students sit in groups of three or four.
- Each group has at least one French/English dictionary.
- Each student chooses three action verbs and one adjective to describe what he/she did during the holidays.
- Verbs should come from three different groups: one conjugated with *avoir*, one conjugated with *être*, and one reflexive verb.
- Each student in the group must use different verbs (i.e., only one person may use the verb “to go”; only one person may use the verb “to sleep”). Students will have to negotiate with one another and use dictionaries to find the necessary vocabulary.
- No two students in the group may use the same adjective.
- Students write a short paragraph of three or four sentences about their holidays. They will use their verbs (*passé composé*) to describe something they did and write one descriptive sentence (*imparfait*) using their adjective.
- Students read their paragraphs to the class. If the class is too large, have students read their finished paragraphs to the group, and ask each group to select the most unique holiday experience to read aloud to the whole class.

This is a wonderful Pre-AP activity because it gives students practice in narrating a past event, provides writing practice, and reminds students to “show off” a richness of vocabulary—something of great importance on the free-response section of the AP Exams.