



Steven and Emmanuelle

Steven. First of all what happened was, I got them to write down their ideas in French so we can... easily we can find what they wanted to see changed when they were adults. I said, look at the world today and just imagine yourself at twenty-one years old and what would you like to see changed. And so they started writing down and I said 'Now write it down in French'. Then we had a round robin. Everybody read what they wrote down and we found that people were writing down the same things. Then we just started building a song from there and then with the kids we started to create words that were easy for them to understand and easy for them to announce. That's how we came up with the song.

Rob. Now just remind us. The class is cinquième ?

Emmanuelle. Yes.

Rob. What age are they?

Emmanuelle. Twelve.

Rob. They're twelve, OK, so their English is.....

Emmanuelle. Basic.

Rob. And did you notice any change in their English or their attitude to

learning English through this ?

Steven. With me I felt that they were receptive to me because I'm not a teacher. I came in with a guitar and we didn't sit down in a normal classroom setting. We actually moved the tables away. I felt that, when I spoke in English they were more willing to try to respond to me in English. They wanted to try to do it rather than maybe with Emmanuelle. They probably feel a little bit more frustrated, a little bit more ' I'd better get this right immediately or I'm gonna fail'. With me it was kind of, they'll ask me 'Did I say that correctly '. I'll say 'OK, well repeat after me this is toi-let, toi-let. You know what I mean. I, I really felt they were really easy to work with.

Rob. Did you speak entirely in English with them ?

Steven. My French is really not all that good so.... I spoke some broken French at times, but the majority, I'd say eighty-five percent of the time I spoke just English and if I really needed to drive home a point Emmanuelle was there or Olivier Kal(?) the bass player who is, uh, French, he's from Martinique. He kinda stepped in and helped me, but for the majority they understood what I was saying specially when I needed them to sshh, sshh, sshh.

Rob. Emmanuelle (?) do you think this project worked to help the kids speak more English ?

Emmanuelle. Well, I think they're very enthusiastic about this project and I think that the kids that already like English, I think they will like English even more after that. And what I find interesting is, some kids are very, at this age, very shy very introverted and I saw, there's this kid, the first time he had to sing, he cried. When, when um, Steven told him to go to the mike, he just.... he was behind the mike and he started crying. I have.... . he had a panic attack, you know? And, and he actually sang after that and he, what do you say, he came over his fear? And....

Steven. He overcame his fear.

Emmanuelle. He overcame his fear. Sorry about that. It's a French thing, you know, we have this fear failing and of people looking at us and judging us. And thanks to Steven and his energy, I think this is, this is the most interesting about this project for me.

Rob. It's as much about self-confidence as much as it's about the language.

Emmanuelle. Yeah exactly.

Steven. I can see myself in these kids. Everybody is timid, everybody's shy, everybody has their thing that they feel that they can't do. But that's the thing, you know, we try to bring out confidence within this little song because the song is about their future. The text is 'the future is not behind, it's in front of you. The future is in your hands, now make you plans'. That's the chorus .

Rob. They sang about the future. Are there future plans for this group or this project ?

Steven. I would like to take the project and kind of let other schools see it and maybe try to get this song on the radio. Why not?

Rob. OK.

Emmanuelle. There's a concert as well at the school on the 24th of March

Rob. Just remind me which the college is?

Emmanuelle. Collège Victor Vaserey à Collinée.

Rob. Steven and Emmanuelle, thank you very much indeed.

