

Introduction

What is *Kaffee und Kuchen*, other than a pleasant late afternoon ritual enjoyed by German speaking people on high days and holidays and, in fact, just on days when they feel like it?

It can also be a major role-play, which involves pupils realistically practising their German in a meaningful context without having to go to a German-speaking country.

This book aims to show you how to set up a role play which can greatly enhance pupils' knowledge and skills and can give them an important insight into a specific cultural aspect of the language they are studying.

Beginnings

It all started when an enthusiastic art teacher colleague of mine was asked to teach German to Y9 pupils. She had no language teaching methodology at her finger tips, she was a native speaker of German and sometimes forgot how little her pupils knew, but she did bring a great deal of enthusiasm and fun to her German lessons. We dry linguists learnt from the artistic approach.

Then came the Christmas party! Soon pupils, parents and teachers were being persuaded to bake Sachertorte and Apfelkuchen. Lunchtime sessions were spent stretching strudels across tables in the Food Technology rooms. Even a cabbage strudel was produced for the young music teacher who disapproved of sweet foods. The orchestra rehearsed their Viennese waltzes. Resources produced an OHT of the Riesenrad in Vienna, and this was projected against the wall of the Lecture Hall. Some pupils donned black and white and waited on fellow pupils, staff and parents. Tables were beautifully decorated. There was an enormous spread of delicious cakes and pastries. We all thought we were in a Viennese coffee house at Christmas time.

That first occasion has continued to inspire me! It probably lacked a large foreign language input, and the linguist in me sought to rectify that. That was the first innovation. Every time afterwards when I organised a "Kaffee und Kuchen", there had been an added element. Every one has been different. "Kaffee und Kuchen" has been a small after school affair, worked on for just a few hours, but nevertheless offering the opportunity to assess Attainment Target 2 MFL and making a small amount of money for cancer research. It has been part of a European Day, including all 180 pupils who learn German in a particular school - "performed" in the hall, with 300 people visiting. The latest innovation has been to invite pupils to formally apply for the various jobs included and to include two referees. References have been chased!

"Kaffee und Kuchen" is hard work. It is also great fun. It does give a chance for pupils to use their German in an authentic situation without having to travel to Germany. I hope you will be inspired to have a go! Happy baking!