**Madeleine de Jacques Brel**

Video with props <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bRCBpMmhrgg>

The words are available at:

<http://www.paroles.net/jacques-brel/paroles-madeleine>

NB. there is a slight difference in the order in which they appear on the Youtube clip, so do check first!

**Exploitation possible on so many levels and in so many ways…**

**The advantages of this song:**

* Authentic French (Belgian), bursting with cultural references (rain, chips, trams, the French ‘chanson’ tradition, often about unrequited love…)
* Lots of repetition of key vocab and phrases with minor modifications, so reinforcing but moving on
* Clear and authentic use of verb tenses – we have to use the imperfect for example, to express what he WAS doing earlier this evening
* Much opportunity to discuss how the music matches the mood, from simply talking about the instruments to analysing how certain instruments (or removal of them) can affect the mood of the verse, and how it complements the meaning/the story
* Pronunciation and fluency practice as an amusing challenge e.g. ‘C'est trop tard pour le tram trente-trois’
* Because of the simple, clear structure and repetition, this can lead to creative speaking/writing activities, e.g. writing a final verse, imagining the dialogue between Jacques and the various cousins, seeing it from Madeleine’s point of view such as turning it into the third person, using the structure of any verse (e.g. the present tense one) and adapting it with different vocab, drawing a storyboard for a film,
* The humour and self-deprecation (maybe a bit advanced for KS3, but I expect they’re discussing these feelings in English literature!) so the teacher and/or pupils provide a series of adjectives that may or may not describe the song/music/story/emotions etc which may lead to justifications of opinions about it

**So depending on the ability of your pupils you can approach this differently…**

* What pre-listening activities would serve as an effective introduction? This will naturally depend on what your learning objectives are, but I have found that they will want to go all the way to full comprehension
* Should they listen to the whole song first, with or without video support?
* Should they have a specific listening task the first time through such as noting words that repeat, noting names/places/time phrases/verbs…? Or just noting anything they have understood/recognised? Or perhaps thinking about the music and what it might tell us about the story, before we even think about the words? Or different groups listening for different aspects? (Oh, the differentiation possibilities!)
* At what point do they see the written version? Do they see it all at once? Do different groups work on different sections? And then share their findings? What elements of the language do you want to concentrate on?