

Brief synopsis of the book Le BAL

Alfred and Rosine Kampf live with their 14 year-old daughter in a large Parisian flat. They had lived in much humbler surroundings until shortly previously when Alfred made a great deal of money on the currency market. They now wish to establish themselves in Parisian High Society.

Madame Kampf decides to hold a grand ball in their flat. About 200 guests will be invited. Alfred favours those who can help him in his business. Rosine likes titled people. It is obvious from their discussions that many have doubtful pasts. Antoinette will have to go to bed at nine and will be hidden away. She will not be allowed to attend the ball which will start at 10.

The invitations are written. Antoinette delivers one by hand to her music teacher. The rest are entrusted to "Miss Betty", Antoinette's English governess to post. When Miss Betty meets Antoinette outside the music teacher's flat to accompany her home, Antoinette sees that she has a boyfriend. To give the couple a little privacy, Miss Betty has the bright idea of asking Antoinette to post the invitations on their way home as she had not done so. Antoinette, however, in a fit of adolescent jealousy and angry at her treatment by adults and her mother in particular, tears the invitations up and throws them into the river Seine.

The night of the sumptuous ball arrives. The author gives us all the details of the expense of meeting fashionable expectations. Antoinette's music teacher arrives on time. She, however, is the only guest to arrive. Antoinette manages to hide and sees her mother's despair as she becomes a laughing stock. Her revenge is complete.

	Description of activity and suggested uses	Skills covered
Activity 1	The students are asked to write a newspaper report based on pages of the text for "Scandales de Paris", a fictitious newspaper. Students have a mind map with speech bubbles filled in with some details answering Who? Where? When? Why? What happens? as the basis of their article. This task has a printed work-sheet containing the mind map.	Reading skills. Ability to sort and prioritise information. Writing a newspaper report with a limited number of words. Accuracy/ grammar. Teachers or peers will need to correct/ improve students' versions. The task can be discussed orally before writing commences and afterwards during the evaluation.

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Activity 2	This game depends on students' ability to distinguish accurately true statements from false ones in a quick-fire multiple choice type of game. The 20 individual tasks are not very difficult but the student needs detailed accurate knowledge of the whole book. The game presents 10 choices at random.	Reading skills – ability to understand then distinguish between very similar statements. The correct sentences can be discussed and their relevance discussed.
Activity 3	Placing events in chronological order. Students are required to place ten statements in the correct order. A printed resource which can be cut into cards for each individual sentence is also supplied.	Reading, sorting and writing skills. This can be an individual, whole class or group activity (e.g. groups competing against each other). The correct sequence will give students a good idea of the chronology of key events during the book..