

Letters

French Mnemonics for the Periodic Table

Recently in this *Journal* (1), Michael et al. proposed some “Multilingual Mnemonics for the Periodic Table”. The example languages were Spanish, English, and German. Memorizing chemical names and symbols can be relatively easy, although the exact horizontal and vertical positions of these symbols in the periodic table is often more difficult to remember. Using mnemonics can help make this task a little easier.

In this letter, we continue the international trend of the previous letter by providing French mnemonics (in the form of sentences) to help young chemists.

The following mnemonics can aid recall of periods 2–5:

2. **Lily Bêchait Bien Chez Notre Oncle François Nestor.**

Lily was tilling the soil well at our uncle François Nestor's.

3. **Napoléon Mangeait Allègrement Six Poulets Sans Claquer d'Argent.**¹

Napoleon would gleefully eat six chickens without burning money.

4. **Kroutchev Carambola Scandaleusement Tito. Valentine Cria Magnanime. F(e)ait pas le Corrompu Nikita! Avec ton Cuir en Zinc Galvanisé, tu Gènes Assurément le Seul Brasseur du Kremlin.**²

Krushchev collided outrageously with Tito. Valentine shouted magnanimously. Don't act as a corrupted Nikita! With your galvanized zinc leather, you're definitely bothering the Kremlin's only brewer.

5. **À Rubis Sur Yttres, Zorba, Nonobstant, Moulait des Tank(c)s Russes sur le Rhin Pendant qu'Agacée,**

Candy Insistât sur Son Sbire Tellement Inquiet et Xénophobe (ou Xylophage).

In Ruby-Sur-Yttres, Zorba, nevertheless, was grinding Russian tanks on the Rhine, while, harassed, Candy was stressing her so worried and xenophobic (or wood-eating) henchman.

We hope that these sentences will help French-speaking students learn element names and periods more easily.

Notes

1. Note that Ar is the symbol for argon in French as in English, and that the word “silver” in French (“argent”) is also the French word for money.

2. A more politically incorrect mnemonic for this sentence is available from the authors via email.

Literature Cited

1. Hara, Jaclyn R.; Stanger, Gordon R.; Leony, Denisse A.; Renteria, Sandra S.; Carrillo, Alejandro; Michael, Katja. *J. Chem. Educ.* 2007, 84, 1918.

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