

Math Kangaroo Camp 2009 – France

The Math Kangaroo Camp in France was an unforgettable experience. There were very many different countries involved (Canada, France, Bulgaria, Poland, and Kazakhstan). The Canadian group was the largest and had 14 people. Every day, we were given some math problems to solve. At night, after dinner, someone that had solved a problem would present their solution. We visited many castles and other interesting places in Paris and Tours. The camp was directed by Jean-Christophe.

On the first day, July 11, the Canadians arrived in Paris. The Bulgarians joined us and we walked around the city looking at beautiful churches and famous universities. Then, we went to have a picnic, where we met the groups from Poland, France, and Kazakhstan. After the picnic, we took pictures outside of Cathédrale Notre Dame de Paris. We walked through the Jardin des Tuileries and then continued on to the Louvre. We didn't go inside, but we had time look at the Louvre Pyramids. We walked to the Arch of Triumph and then to the Eiffel Tower. We had another picnic and then we rode a bus to our hotel.

The next day, we left Paris and began to ride towards Tours. We stopped in Blois and visited the Château Royal de Blois. We had a picnic and then we went to the Musée de la Magie. We watched a very good magic show and then we had a little bit of time to explore the museum. After that, we took a bus to the centre Technique Régional Omnisports (where we were going to live for the rest of the camp). At 7:30, we had a warm dinner and then we went to a room to solve the daily math problems. After the problems, we played an interesting game about languages. Teams were made so that there was at least one person from each country in each team. We had to translate some words into different languages (French, Bulgarian, Polish, and Kazakh). Unfortunately, my team didn't win the game, but we still had lots of fun.

On Monday, July 13, we had breakfast and then we drove to the Musée de Compagnonnage. We looked around the museum and then we went for a walk around the city of Tours. After that, we visited the Jardin Botanique. Here, we saw a lot of beautiful flowers, plants, and animals. We looked around the Tours Défilé Place Jean Jaurès. Then, we drove back to the CTRO, had dinner at 7:30, and then solved the daily problems.

On Tuesday, after breakfast, we visited the Château d'Azay-le-Rideau. We had a picnic and then we went to a place near the castle to play a math game. The game was called "sandwich game". Each group (country) was a team. For each person, there were two pieces of paper that you had to hang on your neck with some string. There were two different numbers (or a number and a sign) for each person but only one of the numbers (or signs) could be seen at a time. One of the directors of the camp would write a number on a board and then show it to all the teams. Each team had to put some of the members in order so that they made the answer (example: if the written number was 70, you could organize the members of a team to say "10x7". You couldn't simply organize the members to say "70" because the 7 and the 0 were on the same person.). We all had a great time playing the sandwich game. After the game, we rode back to the CTRO and started the chess tournament. Late that night, we went to watch fireworks because July 14th is Bastille Day and the French celebrate with fireworks each year.



The next day, we ate and then went to La Gloriette Accrobranche. Here, there were challenging courses through the trees. All of us got split into groups and, one at a time, the groups went through the courses. While a group was climbing, the other groups were able to play lots of fun games (each game could be played by two people). After all of the groups had had a turn on the courses, we all had time to play the games. There were also volleyballs and Frisbees, and some people started a game of volleyball. Everyone was allowed to join. After all those games, the directors took bottles of different fruit juices (but didn't label the bottles). We had to get into small groups, taste the juices, and try to guess which fruit juice they were. After that, we were given t-shirts with the Math Kangaroo symbol on them. We wore these shirts when we were taken to the City Hall (l'hôtel de ville) to meet the mayor of Tours. He was very nice to us and we found the City Hall very beautiful. We returned to the CTRO and continued the chess tournament.



On Thursday, we had breakfast and then rode to Amboise. We visited the house where Leonardo Da Vinci lived. This was very interesting for everyone since Leonardo Da Vinci was very famous. Then, we had a picnic and took some group pictures. There was a tournament for the little two-player games that everyone played the day before at La Gloriette Accrobranche. After that, we rode the bus back to the CTRO in Tours, had dinner, and finished the chess tournament.

Friday was the last full day of the camp. In the morning, we had breakfast and then we stayed at the Centre Technique Régional Omnisports to make bread. This was a fun activity. We were each given some ingredients that we had to mix with water. Then, we had to shape the bread into a recognizable shape so that we could find it later. We left it for a few hours and then came back to reshape it. After this, we put it into the oven to bake. For almost the rest of the day, we had free time in which we could either walk around Tours or stay at the CTRO to play games and practice for the Talent Show. When everybody returned to the CTRO, we had dinner early (and we were given our finished bread) and then we went to a room for the Talent Show. Every country had to do something. Canada sang our national anthem and did some juggling and gymnastics; Bulgaria showed a PowerPoint of their country; Kazakhstan sang their national anthem and told everyone some interesting facts about Kazakhstan; Poland made a fun quiz about their country; France danced the can-can. Everyone gave each other small gifts.

The last day, July 18, we left Tours at 6:15 and rode back to Paris.

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