

Syllabi for French classes

In all French classes students learn grammar skills through a variety of oral and written activities. Most of the class work is oral. Students have a written assignment to complete every night except the night before a test, when the homework consists in reviewing.

A typical class period includes the following:

- correction of the previous night's homework
- oral practice of last grammar point studied or of vocabulary and/or
- presentation of new material with oral practice
- short reading, discussion of cultural topic, word game

All oral drills and activities are tailored to the class and often draw on students' lives and experiences for examples. The class also makes extensive use of role-playing. Students sometimes work in pairs on dialogues or other linguistic tasks (writing and deciphering a riddle, responding to each other's letters...)

In order to keep up, it is very important that students do the homework daily. Students must correct the assignments during daily class corrections in order to get full credit. Late homework receives half credit until the day before the test, no credit after that date. Homework done on time but not corrected properly in class receives partial or no credit, but can usually be redone for partial credit. Students who are absent for one or more days can work out a schedule to make up homework without penalization.

Homework is collected daily and returned to the students a day or two before the test so they can review it and ask for clarifications if necessary. Students are encouraged to keep a homework portfolio until the final exam.

Homework usually is a handout prepared by the teacher or a composition often focusing on a specific grammar point or the use of thematic vocabulary. In addition, at each level, there are several more long term projects involving some research as well as a graphic and oral presentation of the findings. The due dates for longer projects are determined in collaboration with the students to ensure minimal conflict with important assignments in other classes.

Students take a written test at the end of each lesson. The time necessary to complete a lesson varies. Oral assessment is ongoing.

French I

Introductory course to French language and culture and to the French-speaking world.

Course goals and objectives

Acquisition of beginning basic grammar structures.

Development of the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, with an emphasis on accurate oral communication.

Awareness of cultural and social context.

Vocabulary/idioms.

At the end of French I students should have mastered the following points:

- Conjugation of regular verbs (ER, IR, RE) in the present tense
- Conjugation of irregular verbs ETRE, AVOIR, ALLER, FAIRE
- Idiomatic phrases with Avoir
- Noun-adjective agreement (gender and number) and position of adjectives
- Comparatives
- Possessive and demonstrative adjectives
- Stress pronouns for emphasis and after prepositions
- Use of definite articles (introduction to partitive articles)
- Prepositions A and DE combined with definite articles LE and LES
- Indefinite article in negative sentences
- Questions: EST-CE QUE, inversion
- Interrogative words and phrases
- Negative sentences
- Introduction to forms of Passe Compose

They should have mastered the following communicative skills:

- Use appropriate greetings and introduce oneself.
- Ask and give information about time, date, weather, schedule, age...
- Make simple oral and written declarative statements in present tense.
- Engage in simple unscripted dialogue (questions, answers, negative sentences...).
- Use thematic vocabulary (weather, clothes, stores, places...) as well as basic general vocabulary.

Assignments

Fall semester: handouts.

End of semester project: presentation of a French speaking country in English.

Spring semester: handouts and a few paragraph-long compositions (the apartment building, my family...)

Project: a famous building in Paris in English.

Instructional Materials

Discovering French, Nouveau! Bleu, Level 1, High School McDougal Littell

Realia (different documents)

Variety of additional texts: children's books in French, dialogues, easy readers

Movies

Assessment

Regular testing to assess mastery of grammar points and vocabulary (30% semester grade)
Written assignments (homework, special projects) (20% semester grade)
Oral grade based on effort and quality of participation (25% semester grade)
Comprehensive final exam (25% semester grade)