



# A-LEVEL French

## Transition

# Transition from GCSE to A-Level Workbook



*Le Palais de Versailles*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Transition to A-Level Workbook

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# Transition from GCSE to A-level

## What is transition work?

Transition work is independent learning to consolidate what you already know and begin to accumulate new knowledge in preparation for the A-level course. The main aim is to keep practising your language regularly – little and often is the key. This way, it won't feel like such a big step up in September.

## What does independent learning look like?

There are huge amounts of resources available to you in order to keep your language going, many of which will be referenced in this booklet. As well as preparing you for the A-level, independent learning is a major opportunity to further explore the French language through a range of activities tailored to your own interests:

- You choose what you do, where, when and why
- A chance to make your learning fun by choosing material which really interests you
- You taking responsibility for your own progress and achievements
- Working on the language skills you have identified as a particular area to work on
- Developing your confidence about learning new languages in the future
- Developing your effectiveness as a learner
- Making effective use of free time to find new ways of learning that keep you interested
- An opportunity to work constructively with friends



## Where should I start?

This booklet contains a range of different suggestions of activities to complete independently as well as some grammar activities and research tasks to give you some background knowledge to some of the topics on the A-level course.

Remember that A-level builds on what you already know from GCSE (the French language is still the same!) so why not start by working through your GCSE Grammar and Translation book (if you have one) or looking online for the A-level equivalent?

# Useful Resources



## Watch...

### TELEVISION

- If you have Netflix or Amazon Prime, try searching for “French language films” or “French language TV”. Many English language films/programmes also have a French audio or subtitle option
- <http://www.tv5monde.com> Watch this channel to gain access to the latest episodes of all of their TV shows. They also have a French language learning section at <http://apprendre.tv5monde.com> where you can watch clips and answer comprehension questions on what you have seen with accompanying grammar exercises.
- <https://www.tf1.fr/programmes-tv> You need an account to watch videos from this channel but signing up is free and just requires an email address and a French postcode (use 44400 – this is where Mr Farrell used to live!). You can then access a variety of series on their ‘Replay’ section.
- <https://www.6play.fr/> This is another popular French TV channel. This is also available as an app to download (6play). Not all programmes are available outside of France but there is still a good selection of things to watch.
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french/tv/> The BBC website has some useful links to French TV programmes online as well as tips for how to get the most out of it.

### FILM

- As well as those available with subscriptions like Netflix, there are also a range of French films available to rent, buy or view for free on YouTube, or of course you can order a DVD online. Here are some film suggestions you may like to try:
  - La Haine
  - La Vie en Rose
  - Intouchables – the original version of the recent American re-make: The Upside
  - Amélie
  - Les Choristes
  - Les 400 coups
  - Bienvenue chez les Ch’tis
  - Au Revoir les Enfants – this is the film we will study in Y12

### INTERNET

- [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) Search for videos on topics that interest you and see if you can find any channels to subscribe to. YouTube is also a great research tool and there are lots of informative videos in English on things like French politics, culture or geography.
- <https://www.1jour1actu.com/> This site aims to explain the world to French children, one question at a time. Because it is aimed at children, the videos are short, full of pictures to

help the explanation and relatively accessible – though they do talk quite fast, but you should be able to slow the video down if you need to.

## Listen...

### RADIO

- Listening to French radio is a great way to expose yourself to more French easily. Have it on in the background while you are doing something else!
  - Radio France ([www.radiofrance.fr](http://www.radiofrance.fr))
  - Europe 1 ([www.europe1.fr](http://www.europe1.fr))
  - Le mouy ([www.mouv.fr](http://www.mouv.fr)) (this is the French equivalent to Kiss FM or Capital)
  - Europe 2 ([www.europe2.fr](http://www.europe2.fr))
- Download an app to stream a whole range of French radio stations. My particular favourite is called “France Radio” which offers hundreds of different stations to choose from. It also has a ‘sleep timer’ so you can play it as you go to bed and it will turn off automatically after a set period of time.

### MUSIC

- Look up current French artists in the French music charts and listen to some of their music on YouTube. The suggested videos down the side or underneath are often a good way of discovering new music – and don’t forget to ask others for their recommendations.
- [www.lyricstraining.com](http://www.lyricstraining.com) Use this website to listen to French music while improving your listening skills. Listen to a song with the accompanying YouTube video and fill in the missing words in the lyrics underneath. There are 4 difficulty levels and two settings – multiple choice mode or typing mode.

### OTHERS

- Don’t forget that many language learning websites including BBC bitesize have specific listening materials aimed at school-age learners. If you bought a GCSE revision guide this should have links to listening passages. Rather than completing GCSE style comprehension questions, why not use the audio files in a different way – try to transcribe the passage you are listening to in French.
- <https://www.newsinslowfrench.com/> This podcast is also available as an app – just search for ‘News in slow French’. Although you need a subscription to access all material, there is a section for free content which contains a new podcast each week.

## Read...

### NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

- <http://www.lefigaro.fr/> Like many French newspapers, Le Figaro is available to read online. You don’t have to read the full paper cover to cover, just try to find one article that grabs your attention.

- <https://www.fluentu.com/blog/french/learn-french-news/> This blog post contains a bit more information about 6 of the most popular French newspapers with links to the online versions of each one.
- <http://www.20minutes.fr> This is a more light-hearted newspaper which covers gossip as well as global news stories. There is also a video section <https://www.20minutes.fr/dossier/video>
- [www.l-eco.fr](http://www.l-eco.fr) This is a news site aimed at young people. There are many different sections including Internet and Mobile Technology, Education, Science and Wildlife, Culture and Sport.
- For the latest gossip and to catch up on the most recent celebrity fashion trends try [www.elle.fr](http://www.elle.fr)

## OTHER WAYS TO READ

- Change the language on your phone to French – eventually you will be reading in French without even realising it (and it's a great way to get a head-start on the technology topic)
- Set your default internet search engine to [www.google.fr](http://www.google.fr) instead of the English version.
- Use a different search engine such as <http://fr.yahoo.com/>. Setting this as your homepage will make you read French every time you log on and it will become an easy part of your daily routine.
- Keep your own vocabulary log. Have an entire exercise book or notebook dedicated to this that you have with you every time you read, watch or listen to something in French.

## Surf...

## OTHER USEFUL WEBSITES

- <http://zut.languageskills.co.uk/advanced/year12.html> The Language Skills website is free after 4pm and has a great section dedicated to A-level learners with videos, grammar, vocabulary and lots more
- [www.memrise.com](http://www.memrise.com) – invaluable for learning French vocabulary. The site is designed in such a way that if you stick with it and use it regularly, reviewing past vocabulary items as well as learning new vocabulary, it automatically sticks in your long-term memory
- <http://wikipedia.fr/> Use the French version of Wikipedia when researching topics. It makes picking up the vocabulary much easier! Bear in mind though that anybody can edit Wikipedia so don't take everything you read as fact! Still a good starting point though.
- [www.wordreference.com](http://www.wordreference.com) A really useful online dictionary. Don't forget to use the conjugate tool for online verb tables too!
- <http://www.gouvernement.fr/> The French government website
- [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com) If you haven't got a Twitter account, I would suggest signing up for one. Start by following Emmanuel Macron (@EmmanuelMacron). Because of the character limit, you never have too much to read!
- <http://french.about.com/> A website in English for all things French – including very clear, concise grammar explanations.



# Grammar Checklist



## What should I know by now?

Good news – you have already covered a lot of the A-level grammar at GCSE! Use the checklist below to remind yourself of what you have already covered and RAG-rate (Red, Amber, Green) yourself on how confident you are for each grammar point. You will then know which grammar points to spend more time re-capping. Following the checklist is a list of some suggested websites you can use to revise or practise your grammar.

	I HAVE NO IDEA	I NEED TO REVIEW THIS	CONFIDENT WITH THIS
<b>Nouns:</b> gender, singular and plural forms			
<b>Articles:</b> definite ( <i>le, la, les...</i> ) and indefinite ( <i>un, une...</i> )			
<b>Articles:</b> partitive ( <i>du, de la...</i> )			
<b>Adjectives:</b> agreement			
<b>Adjectives:</b> position and word order			
<b>Adjectives:</b> possessive adjectives ( <i>mon, ma, mes...</i> )			
<b>Adjectives:</b> comparative adjectives ( <i>plus ... que</i> )			
<b>Adjectives:</b> superlative adjectives ( <i>le plus...</i> )			
<b>Adjectives:</b> interrogative adjectives ( <i>quel, quelle...</i> )			
<b>Adjectives:</b> demonstrative adjectives ( <i>ce, cette...</i> )			
<b>Adjectives:</b> indefinite adjectives ( <i>chaque, quelque...</i> )			
<b>Quantifiers and intensifiers</b>			
<b>Adverbs:</b> comparative and superlative adverbs			
<b>Adverbs:</b> interrogative adverbs ( <i>comment, quand...</i> )			
<b>Adverbs:</b> adverbs of time, frequency and place			
<b>Pronouns:</b> subject pronouns ( <i>je, tu...</i> )			
<b>Pronouns:</b> emphatic pronouns ( <i>moi, toi...</i> )			
<b>Pronouns:</b> relative pronouns ( <i>qui, que</i> )			
<b>Pronouns:</b> direct object pronouns ( <i>me, le, les...</i> )			
<b>Pronouns:</b> indirect object pronouns ( <i>me, lui, leur...</i> )			
<b>Pronouns:</b> <i>y</i> and <i>en</i>			
<b>Interrogatives:</b> forming questions			
<b>Prepositions</b>			
<b>Conjunctions:</b> coordinating conjunctions			
<b>Conjunctions:</b> subordinating conjunctions			
<b>Verbs:</b> present tense – regular verbs			
<b>Verbs:</b> present tense – irregular verbs			
<b>Verbs:</b> present tense – reflexive verbs			
<b>Verbs:</b> present tense – modal verbs			



	I HAVE NO IDEA	I NEED TO REVIEW THIS	CONFIDENT WITH THIS
<b>Verbs:</b> using the infinitive			
<b>Verbs:</b> the perfect tense with <i>avoir</i>			
<b>Verbs:</b> the perfect tense with <i>être</i>			
<b>Verbs:</b> the perfect tense – reflexive verbs			
<b>Verbs:</b> the imperfect tense			
<b>Verbs:</b> perfect or imperfect tense			
<b>Verbs:</b> the near future tense			
<b>Verbs:</b> the future tense (simple future)			
<b>Verbs:</b> the conditional (present conditional)			
<b>Verbs:</b> the imperative			
<b>Verbs:</b> the pluperfect tense			
<b>Verbs:</b> the present participle			
<b>Verbs:</b> the perfect infinitive			
<b>Verbs:</b> the past conditional			
<b>Verbs:</b> the subjunctive mood (present subjunctive)			
<b>Verbs:</b> negatives			
<b>Verbs:</b> impersonal verbs			
<b>Verbs:</b> the passive voice			
<b>Verbs:</b> using <i>depuis</i>			
<b>Verbs:</b> Using <i>si</i> in complex sentences			

## References

Here are some websites which may be useful for revising and practising grammar:

- [www.languagesonline.org.uk](http://www.languagesonline.org.uk) general site with an A level section (very good grammar)
- <http://french.about.com> a really good site for clear grammar explanations
- [www.verb2verbe.com](http://www.verb2verbe.com) great online conjugation tool – you can test yourself too
- <https://www.vatefaireconjuguer.com/> French-only verb conjugations (no English translations)
- [www.bbc.co.uk/languages](http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages) interesting site, lots of revision, great French slang section
- [www.lepointdufle.net](http://www.lepointdufle.net) comprehensive search engine for French grammar
- <https://www.s-cool.co.uk/a-level/french> great revision materials – need to register but it is free
- <https://www.lawlessfrench.com/> another good site for interactive grammar activities

You may also want to consider purchasing a grammar workbook to accompany the A-level. This Oxford publication is available on Amazon for £7.99 and covers the whole A-level course:

[https://www.amazon.co.uk/AQA-Level-French-Translation-Workbook/dp/0198415532/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1527182094&sr=8-1&keywords=french+grammar+a-level](https://www.amazon.co.uk/AQA-Level-French-Translation-Workbook/dp/0198415532/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1527182094&sr=8-1&keywords=french+grammar+a-level)





# Tenses Workout



Can you identify the tense (or mood) in the sentences below? Use the letters from the list, then translate the sentences into English.

1. J'ai dû y aller hier \_\_\_\_\_
2. Je **voudrais** aller au Maroc \_\_\_\_\_
3. Elle **a** de la chance \_\_\_\_\_
4. J'ai réalisé que j'**avais oublié** mon passeport \_\_\_\_\_
5. Il **arriva** chez lui vers dix-huit heures \_\_\_\_\_
6. Il faut que je **fasse** un effort \_\_\_\_\_
7. Il **arrivera** en retard comme toujours \_\_\_\_\_
8. En **arrivant** je suis allé directement aux toilettes \_\_\_\_\_
9. **Allez-y** ! \_\_\_\_\_
10. Il **aura fini** son travail demain \_\_\_\_\_
11. J'**aurais voulu** voir ce film \_\_\_\_\_
12. Je **jouais** au foot quand j'**étais** plus jeune \_\_\_\_\_
13. Il **va regarder** la télé ce soir \_\_\_\_\_

<b>A</b> Present	<b>B</b> Imperfect	<b>C</b> Perfect (le passé composé)	<b>D</b> Conditional (present)
<b>E</b> Past conditional	<b>F</b> Future	<b>G</b> Future perfect	<b>H</b> Near future
<b>I</b> Past historic			
<b>J</b> Subjunctive (present)	<b>K</b> Pluperfect	<b>L</b> Present participle	<b>M</b> Imperative

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the verb given in brackets.

1. S'il (pleuvoir **A**) \_\_\_\_\_, je (rester **F**) \_\_\_\_\_ chez moi.
2. En (regarder **L**) \_\_\_\_\_ l'addition, j' (avoir **C**) \_\_\_\_\_ un choc.
3. Si j' (avoir **K**) \_\_\_\_\_ le temps, j'y (aller **E**) \_\_\_\_\_.
4. (s'asseoir **M**) \_\_\_\_\_-vous et (ouvrir **M**) \_\_\_\_\_ vos cahiers.
5. Je (aller **C**) \_\_\_\_\_ en France mais il (faire **B**) \_\_\_\_\_ trop froid.
6. Je (faire **D**) \_\_\_\_\_ le tour du monde si j' (avoir **B**) \_\_\_\_\_ l'argent.
7. Je ne (savoir **F**) \_\_\_\_\_ jamais apprendre le chinois car c' (être **A**) \_\_\_\_\_ trop difficile.
8. Il (falloir **A**) \_\_\_\_\_ que je (faire **J**) \_\_\_\_\_ mes devoirs ce soir.
9. Je (regarder **B**) \_\_\_\_\_ la télé quand on (sonner **C**) \_\_\_\_\_ à la porte.
10. Je (arriver **G**) \_\_\_\_\_ dans deux heures.
11. S'il (conduire **B**) \_\_\_\_\_ avec prudence il (avoir **D**) \_\_\_\_\_ moins d'accidents.
12. Il (sortir **C**) \_\_\_\_\_ en (courrir **L**) \_\_\_\_\_ car il (oublier **K**) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ qu'il (devoir **B**) \_\_\_\_\_ travailler aujourd'hui.
13. Il faut que tu (savoir **J**) \_\_\_\_\_ que je (arriver **H**) \_\_\_\_\_ en retard mais j' (vouloir **E**)  
\_\_\_\_\_ être à l'heure car je n' (aimer **A**) \_\_\_\_\_ pas me dépêcher.

Fill in the grid with both the *je* (1<sup>st</sup> person) and *il/elle/on* (3<sup>rd</sup> person) forms of the verb.

INFINITIVE	PRESENT	PERFECT	IMPERFECT	FUTURE	CONDITIONAL	SUBJUNCTIVE
<b>jouer</b>	__joue__ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	__jouerai__ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
<b>manger</b>	_____ _____	_____ _____	__mangeais__ _____	_____ _____	__mangerait__ _____	_____ _____
<b>arriver</b>	_____ _____	__suis arrivé__ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
<b>finir</b>	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	__finisse__ _____
<b>vendre</b>	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
<b>aller</b>	_____ _____	_____ _____	__allait__ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
<b>avoir</b>	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
<b>être</b>	_____ _____	__a eu__ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
<b>faire</b>	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
<b>pouvoir</b>	_____ _____	__ai pu__ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
<b>vouloir</b>	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	__voudrais__ _____	_____ _____
<b>devoir</b>	_____ __doit__	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
<b>prendre</b>	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
<b>venir</b>	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	__vienne__ _____
<b>partir</b>	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____
<b>savoir</b>	__sais__ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____	_____ _____

# Research Tasks

Below are some suggested tasks to complete in preparation for studying some of the A-level topics. Some of the tasks are aimed at gaining a greater knowledge of French culture in general whereas others are directly linked to one of the modules on the A-level course.

Keep a log of all of the tasks you complete and don't forget to record your sources (e.g. books used, websites visited and the date). It may be useful to set up a folder to record all of the work you complete (see Appendix 2: Setting up an Independent Learning Log).

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## PERSONNAGES IMPORTANTS

Pourquoi ces personnes sont-elles connues?



Charles de Gaulle



Emmanuel Macron



Napoléon Bonaparte



Marie Curie



Coco Chanel



Jean Marie Le Pen



Georges Méliès



François Truffaut



Louis Pasteur



Édith Piaf

## LA POLITIQUE FRANÇAISE

Qui est le président de la France? \_\_\_\_\_

Il a été élu quand? \_\_\_\_\_

Il représente quel parti politique? \_\_\_\_\_

Qui est le premier ministre? \_\_\_\_\_

Faites des recherches sur les partis politiques principaux. Ils sont de gauche ou de droite ? Quelles sont leurs politiques?

En Marche!



Les Républicains



Le Parti Socialiste



Mouvement Démocrate



Le Front National



## FILM AND BOOK CONTEXT RESEARCH

Both the film (*'Au Revoir les Enfants' – Louis Malle*) and the book (*'Un sac de billes' – Joseph Joffo*) that you will study at A-level are set during the Second World War.

It would therefore be useful to do some research into France during this period of history:

- Research the history of WWII from a French perspective
- What happened to France during this time?
- What was life like in France during WWII?

Use the questions below to guide your research.

1. Which country was the dominant power in Europe in 1939 (at the outbreak of WWII)?	
2. What were Hitler's reasons for wanting to expand Germany's territory?	
3. What happened to France in 1940?	
4. What was the outcome of this for France?	
5. What were the implications on daily life for French people?	

## ADDITIONAL TASKS

In Year 13, you will be asked to conduct an Individual Research Project where you will research a topic of your own choosing relating to a French-speaking country and present your research as part of your speaking exam. The following tasks will enable you to develop your research skills in preparation for this as well as give you a range of topics you may be interested in researching further at a later date.

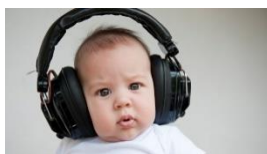
- Research the different regions of France. How is the culture or geography different between the different regions? Choose one region to focus on in more detail and find out about the typical customs, traditions, festivals, foods etc. from this region.
- Research the wider French-speaking world. How many countries in the world speak French? Choose a country other than France to research in more detail. Find out about the history, music, politics and general culture. How is it different from France?
- Research a time in France's history that you don't know much about. Do you know why the following dates are significant for France?
  - 1789
  - 25<sup>th</sup> August 1944
  - May 1968
  - October-November 2005
  - 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015
- Research a variety of francophone music styles and artists. The list below gives some ideas of styles/artists you may not have heard of or know much about:

○ le gwoka	○ Céline Dion	○ Le slam
○ le mouvement yé-yé	○ Touré Kunda	○ Tiken Jah Fakoly
○ le zouk	○ Édith Piaf	○ Anaïs
○ la kadans	○ Rokia Traoré	○ MC Solaar
○ Stromae	○ Camille	○ Johnny Hallyday
○ Serge Gainsbourg	○ Kassav	○ Yannick Noah
○ Magic System	○ Compagnie Créole	○ Nolwenn Leroy
- Cinema in France is referred to as "le septième art". What does this mean? Research some of the cinema movements, film-makers, directors and actors below:

○ La Nouvelle Vague	○ Luc Besson	○ Gad Elmaleh
○ le cinéma du look	○ Marion Cotillard	○ Audrey Tautou
○ Les Frères Lumière	○ Dany Boon	○ François Ozon
○ Georges Méliès	○ Catherine Deneuve	○ Gérard Depardieu
○ Marcel Pagnol	○ Juliette Binoche	○ Jacques Tati
○ Jean Renoir	○ Omar Sy	○ Romain Duris
○ François Truffaut	○ Mathieu Kassovitz	○ Jean-Pierre Jeunet
○ Marcel Carné	○ Louis Malle	
○ Jean-Luc Goddard	○ Jean Reno	

Use the hints and tips over the next few pages to find different ways of practising different skills in ways that you find effective and interesting. Keep a record of everything you read, watch and listen to as well as any written work or grammar activities you complete.





# LISTENING



## Possible activities:

- Watch films and write a review or notes (just watching passively won't help your language as much as doing something productive as well). You can search Netflix or Amazon Prime for "French language films" or "French language TV" and you can even rent French films on YouTube.
- Watch French TV online – certain French TV channels stream live online or have an archive of videos from some of their programmes available to watch – try watching the news in French regularly and using the News Grid in this booklet to help you make notes
- Listen to online radio
- Listen to French music – YouTube is a great source of French music and you can normally find a version with subtitles to sing along! (or at least follow the lyrics on screen)
- Try [www.lyricstraining.com](http://www.lyricstraining.com) for a fun way to improve your listening skills with French music

## 10 hints when listening in a foreign language:

1. Listen to a DVD, audio CD or online streamed video/audio whenever possible. Although viewing live TV can be fun and helps train your ear, using recorded material presents two major advantages: you have a much greater choice of subject and you can Pause and Replay the material.
2. Think about the subject before you start. Make a list of words and phrases you expect to hear, and tick them off (bingo style) as they come up.
3. Listen actively – always have a pen and paper handy to note interesting vocabulary etc.
4. Take notes in French. When listening to normal speech you do not have time to translate everything. Working only in French will train your brain to think in French.
5. Don't worry if you can't understand everything. Concentrate instead on what you do understand.
6. The first time, listen to the whole item without stopping. This will give you a better understanding of the overall context before concentrating on more precise details.
7. For more detailed work, concentrate on quite short sections, e.g. a single news item.
8. Pause and Replay recordings when these features are available.
9. If a transcript is available, try not to look at it until the end of your listening activity. Use it after listening to find any unknown vocabulary.
10. Enjoy it! Try finding something that you love watching or listening to that you are more motivated to keep coming back to. Having French music or radio on in the background while you're doing something else is a great way to keep up your exposure to the French language.





# READING



## Possible activities:

- Search the internet for things you are interested in (try [www.google.fr](http://www.google.fr) for better results)
- Read novels, magazines, newspapers
- Most French newspapers have a free online version as well as a mobile app
- Keep vocabulary lists and look up new words when reading something in French
- If you are researching something for another subject, try using the French Google to search for the topic in French first

## 10 hints when reading in a foreign language:

### Before Reading:

1. Look at the title, introduction and contextual clues such as pictures. What do you think the text is about? Finding a topic you are interested in means you are more likely to persevere with it.
2. Make a list of any relevant vocabulary you can think of.



### First Reading:

3. Read the text once without stopping – some of the meaning will become clearer as you read through it.

### Second Reading:

4. Underline words and expressions you don't know. Don't look them up immediately.
5. There should be one main idea per paragraph. Summarise each paragraph in one sentence.

### Vocabulary:

6. Don't look up every word.
7. First look at the context – do you need to know this word to understand the overall meaning? (*Often a rough idea is enough e.g. a type of tree, a positive or negative emotion etc.*)
8. Try to guess the meaning: is it a noun/adjective/verb? Is it similar to a word in English?
9. Choose a maximum of 10 words or expressions to look up in a good dictionary. Try to select vocabulary with a common theme to help you remember it.
10. Instead of simply writing the meaning of a word in English, try to include new vocabulary in a sentence in French to demonstrate its use in context.

# WRITING



## Possible activities:

- Translations
- Summarise in your own words a text you have read or a film/news item you have seen
- Writing a letter to a penfriend/magazine editor/employer
- Use new vocabulary in a sentence
- Whatever type of activity you are doing, make vocab notes. Use index cards, keep a vocab book, use Memrise or anything that works for you, but make sure you are learning vocabulary regularly. You should keep a record of vocabulary you have learned – why not use an unused notebook as a Vocabulary Learning Log?

## 10 hints when writing in a foreign language:



### Before starting to write:

1. What is your purpose in writing (*e.g. to inform/to persuade/to request*)?
2. Who is your intended reader? Are you writing a letter to a penfriend or a formal article? Keep an appropriate tone throughout your writing.
3. Who is your intended reader? Will your writing interest them?

### While writing:

4. Will you address your reader directly in the second person (*e.g. writing to a penfriend*)? If quoting, will you use reported speech or direct speech?
5. When recounting events, are you going to use the present tense for greater immediacy (*e.g. describing the plot of a film*) or a past tense (*or past tenses*)?
6. Write directly in French without drafting in English first – translating is harder than writing!

### Checking your work:

7. Are your ideas well-organised and linked in a logical structure?
8. Are you being repetitive? Is there another way of saying something?
9. Have you written concisely or could you communicate your message effectively using fewer words?
10. Check your verb endings, tenses and forms. Have you been consistent in your use of tenses? Use your grammar notes or workbook to remind yourself of verb endings – you can also use the conjugation tool on WordReference to look up verb tables. Check adjectival agreements, gender, accents, spelling and word order.



# SPEAKING



## Possible activities:

- Practise speaking with other members of the class over the phone or Face Time.
- When reading, read the text aloud to yourself first, or if you have the transcript to something you are listening to, read along to check your pronunciation.
- Record yourself speaking in French to work on your pronunciation – your teacher can give you feedback on audio recordings as well as written work.
- After watching the news, write and record your own script for the news items you have seen.

## Other ways to develop speaking skills:

- Listen actively to authentic speech. Note in particular the little words and expressions that are used to link ideas, start sentences, give opinions, change the subject etc.
- Repeat phrases or whole sentences when listening, attempting to imitate exactly the pronunciation, intonation and speed of the original. Record yourself so you can compare.
- When there is a transcript available, mark where stresses fall, then after listening several times read the whole script aloud, again trying to mimic the original.
- Don't be afraid to talk aloud, either to yourself or as a recording. Let go of your inhibitions.
- Although it is important to work on your pronunciation in order to be understood, never be ashamed of your accent and don't be afraid to make mistakes – most people make mistakes even when talking in their own language.
- Many problems of understanding are actually caused by poor intonation or misplaced stress. When listening and repeating, pay particular attention to the rise and fall of the voice and stressed syllables and words.





# GENERAL TIPS



## Vocabulary:

- When you come across a new word, try to deduce its meaning from context or from the structure of the word.
- Does the word appear in other sentences which may help you work out the meaning?
- You are more likely to remember something you've worked out for yourself – try to resist rushing straight for the dictionary
- Try a monolingual French dictionary first – can you work out the meaning from its definition in French?
- Keep track of new vocabulary:
  - French/English
  - French/French definition
  - Colour-coding for masculine/feminine or adjectives/verbs
  - New sheet/page for different topics
  - Example sentence using the word/phrase in context
- Learn vocabulary regularly:
  - Look, cover, write, check
  - Find/Create a course on Memrise

## Dictionaries:

- Familiarise yourself with the abbreviations used (*e.g. adv for adverb, vi for intransitive verb etc.*) and be aware of the function of the word you are looking up
- To ensure you have found the right word, look it up the other way round (French-English, English-French)
- Take note of genders of nouns and types of verbs
- WordReference is an excellent online bilingual dictionary and has a free mobile app

## Grammar:

- Familiarise yourself with grammatical terms in French and English. This will help you when learning about a new grammar point or looking up particular types of word in a dictionary.
- There are many websites available with online grammar practice – a quick Google search will provide you with hours of independent study.
- Don't be ashamed of completing 'beginner level' grammar activities – it is always good revision and can help improve your accuracy.



## Appendix 1: Understanding the news in French

### **General tips:**

Take notes and keep them in a notebook/folder

Make it easy for yourself – a bit at a time in your own time and at your own pace

Make a regular time slot to listen to or watch the news in French

Be realistic about what you will get out of it – you won't understand everything! It could be something as simple as getting into a routine of regularly hearing the language, training your ear to the way it sounds or picking out a couple of words.

### **Before watching:**

Select a story that suits your interests and time requirements.

International news and universal issues such as the environment, the economy, science, technology and sport may be easier to understand than complicated domestic issues that require prior knowledge of French society, politics etc.

You may find text versions or transcripts of the story elsewhere on the site. Make a note of key words and look up any you don't know.

If you have time to do so, look up the story on an English site first to find out a bit about the detail.

### **Viewing:**

Start by just watching the headlines. They tend to go very fast and might be difficult to grasp. Try watching through before stopping and going back to watch in smaller parts.

Watch more than once. It may take a while to get used to hearing the language – particularly at that speed!

As you watch, use the News Grid to pick out particular information each time rather than trying to understand it all at once. You will probably find that you understand the material better by following this process.

### **Using the News Grid:**

Complete it vertically, filling in one or two columns for each viewing. Work on the headlines first, and then on the full stories to complete the final columns.

Using the headlines:

- Fill in 'Type' and 'Who' for each story
- On a 2<sup>nd</sup> viewing, complete 'Where' and 'When' etc.

The other columns may need further viewing including the main stories. Try to write as many of your notes as you can in French.

### **After viewing:**

Choose a particular news item which has caught your interest and re-write your notes as it for a newspaper, including a headline.

Keep a record of your session including a link to the video so you can re-watch at a later date and compare notes.

Write your own script for a chosen story and record yourself acting as a newscaster.



## News Grid

### Watching/Listening to the News in a Foreign Language



Use this grid when watching or listening to the news from the internet.

Refer to the 'Understanding the News' sheet in your Independent Learning Portfolio Guide for guidance on how to complete this grid.

You may wish to create your own grid using the same headings to give yourself more space to make notes.

#### Complete in the target language

	<u>*Type</u>	<u>Who</u>	<u>Where</u>	<u>When</u>	<u>What</u>	<u>Why/How</u>	<u>Comments/Notes</u>
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							

\*Type – e.g. *politics, economics, social issues, international, sport, technology, health etc.*

**Hint:** Complete columns vertically.

1. Watch all headlines together scanning only for **Type** and **Who**
2. Stop and re-watch doing the same again for the next couple of columns, etc.
3. Finish the remaining columns by adding details from the main stories





## **Appendix 2: Keeping an Independent Learning Log**



### **What should go in it?**

- When you begin the A-level, you will be asked to keep your own Independent Language Learning Log – so why not start it now? Have a ringbinder set up where you can keep examples of your work between now and beginning the course. You can then add to this over the 2 year A-level course.
- Your Independent Language Learning Log is like a personal diary, so keep it up to date, add to it regularly and put a date on each entry. Use the grids on the following pages to keep track of activities completed.
- Keep a record of all your learning activities, even things with no physical ‘proof’ such as speaking practice with a partner or listening to the radio.
- Reflect on whether different activities have been useful or not once completed. If a certain type of activity is proving less effective, is there something else you could try?
- Keep examples of completed work that you can look back through. You may want to include:
  - Samples of homework and tests you are proud of (once we begin the course)
  - Things which are useful for revision such as vocab lists and grammar notes
  - Articles you have read with your summary or notes
  - Summaries of films you’ve seen
  - Print-outs of online grammar activities
  - Notes on films and programmes you have watched/listened to including completed News Grids
  - Translations of texts you have chosen yourself
  - Research into some of the topic areas for the A-level course



# Journal d'apprentissage de la langue française



Date	Activity	Skill (✓)					Time Spent	Comments
		Receptive			Productive			
		A/V	R	Gr	Sp	Wr		

Receptive skills:    A/V – Audio/Visual    R – Reading    Gr – Grammar  
Productive skills:    Sp – Speaking    W – Writing



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