

L'introduction du français au niveau A-Level.



How to prepare for French at A Level

You have some time in which to really prepare for your A Level in French. The leap from GCSE to A Level is significant. This booklet contains links to a huge range of media, most of which is available for free online as well as tasks to complete before the start of term. In order to keep pace, it is important that you try to work through some of these tasks. Little and often is best... 😊

Watch...

TELEVISION

- <http://www.tv5monde.com/> Watch this channel to gain access to the last episodes of all of their TV shows. Check out their 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.
- Download an app called *6play* on your iPad – search in the App Store for M6. This is a popular French TV channel. Not all programmes are available outside of France, but there is a good selection and these help with listening skills.

MOVIES

- La Haine
- Au Revoir les Enfants, dir. Louis Malle (1987)
- Chocolat, dir. Claire Denis (1988)
- Cléo de 5 à 7, dir. Agnès Varda (1962)
- La Vie en Rose, dir. Olivier Dahan (2007)
- Les Choristes, dir. Christophe Barratier (2004)
- Les 400 Coups, dir. François Truffaut (1959)

LISTEN TO THE RADIO

The great thing about listening to the radio is that you can get on with something else at the same time. Listen live using the *Radio France* or the *Europe 1*. It sometimes takes a while to buffer though...

- Radio France (www.radiofrance.fr)
- Europe 1 (www.europe1.fr)
- Le mouv (www.mouv.fr) (this is the French equivalent to Kiss FM or Capital)
- Europe 2 (www.europe2.fr)

Read...

Keep your own vocabulary book for new expressions you come across. You could order it alphabetically, by topic area based on what we are going to study or just use it as a diary and scribble away your French development in it.

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

Read a foreign language newspaper – Le Figaro is available in larger paper shops. Le Figaro has its own website <http://www.lefigaro.fr/> so that you can read the paper online. You do not have to read the paper cover to cover, just scan the headlines and pick out ONE article that grabs your attention.

This website gives you access to newspapers all over the world. Here is the link to a range of French papers. <http://www.mediatico.com/en/newspapers/europe/france/national/>

This website is a more light-hearted newspaper which covers global stories as well as gossip. <http://www.20minutes.fr.> Also try <http://www.20minutos.fr/tv/> . This is the TV Channel for this newspaper.

In France, there is also a news website for young people: www.l-eco.fr . It has sections on the Internet and Mobile Technology; Science and Wildlife; Education; Culture; Sport; Society and Health. A glance today contained articles about Facebook, video games and bullying to name but a few.

To catch up on the latest gossip and to see what the celebs are wearing, take a look at www.elle.fr.

Websites

Switch to French browsers such as and <http://fr.yahoo.com/> or www.yahoo.fr as well as www.google.fr. This way, you will read French every time you log on and it will become part of your everyday activity.

Look at the BBC website <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french/tv> for links to French programmes available on line.

Language skills: this website is free after 4pm and really comes into its own with its A level section. Watch news video clips, find theme related vocabulary and do listening and reading comprehensions. Find it here

<http://zut.languageskills.co.uk/advanced/year12.html>

Websites for research

Once you actually start your A Level in September, you will realise that you are almost completing a Sociology A Level in French. It is fascinating and you will learn all about the history and culture of French speakers. Here are some websites bursting with information about France and Francophone countries. Always start your research with these websites as it is easy to get bogged down when looking for help on the internet.

If you are searching for information, try switching to the French www.fr.wikipedia.

Remember that anyone can write on Wikipedia so you must validate your research elsewhere and never quote from it! It is a good place to start though.

A French government run website:

<http://www.gouvernement.fr/>

A website in English with some great links to various

topics: <http://french.about.com/>

British Council support available from <http://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/> Keep your eyes peeled as they often have trips to France for free! You have to apply for them but they are an amazing opportunity to build your French skills. There is no better way to learn a language than by spending time in that country.

On-line dictionary

A good on-line dictionary is: <http://www.wordreference.com/>



TOP TIP: Don't look up every word you are not sure of when reading an article/book

Yes... you read that right. When you are reading articles etc, try not to look up every word as it will take you forever. Skim and scan the text to get the gist. Remember to use the context or the article, cognates and common sense to figure out what the article is saying. Pick out a couple of words that you like the look of, that you feel may be real hurdles to getting the idea of the text, look them up carefully and add them to your vocab booklet. The aim at this stage is to get the gist of the article, not be able to translate it completely. Translation is a whole different ball game and you will learn it soon enough.

You will be surprised how much more enjoyable reading will be if you really pay attention to this tip.

What should I know by now?

This is a common question asked by students about to start their A level. You should be able to:

TOPIC	CONTENT
Recognise and use a range of tenses with regular verbs.	Regular –RE, -ER, -IR verbs: Tenses: Present Passé Composé Imperfect Near Future (form of aller + infinitive) Future (eg. Sera) Conditional (eg. serait)
Recognise and use a range of tenses with irregular verbs.	Common irregular verbs: être, avoir, aller, pouvoir, vouloir Tenses: Present Passé Composé Imperfect Near Future (form of aller + inf.) Future (eg. Sera) Conditional (eg. serait)
Give opinions with reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A range of opinion expressions• Positive and negative reasons for opinions• To be able to agree and disagree

Links to Grammar Practice Exercises

- Languages on line: The Grammar Revision resources on www.languagesonline.org.uk are great as you can then select what tense you want to revise, read the explanations and complete the exercises. You can do these as often as you like and it gives you a percentage. Another useful tactic is to translate the examples and exercises into English to ensure you understand the meaning of each tense.

The screenshot shows the top section of the website. At the top, there are two French flags and the word "Français" in purple. Below this, a message states: "All units in this section are designed and written by Andrew Balaam. If you spot a mistake or have any comments, please send me an e-mail." A Babel logo is on the left, and a search bar contains the text "Learn new languages, online." with a "Start learning today" button. Below the search bar is a "Quick Links" section with the following items: Primary Vocabulary, Encore Tricolore 1 Topics, Encore Tricolore 2 Crosswords and Quizzes, Tricolore Total 4 AS Resources, and Grammar A2 Resources.

...then choose to practice your grammar

- Conjuguemos: a great website for practicing your verb conjugations. Find it here: <https://conjuguemos.com/>

The screenshot shows the top section of the Conjuguemos website. The header features the word "Conjuguemos" in a large, stylized font. Below it, there are three speech bubbles containing the words "olá", "hallo", and "hola". A navigation menu includes "Tutorial", "Getting Started", "FAQs", and "Contact Us". A blue banner on the left says "Start by using the Conjuguemos library". Below this, there are sections for "French" (French verbs, French vocab (book), French vocab (theme), and "New! French grammar") and "German" (German verbs, German vocab (book), German vocab (theme)). A green frog character is visible on the left side.

Click here to access the French verb exercises.

What is Conjuguemos?

Think of Conjuguemos as an online workbook for your Spanish, French, German, Italian, Portuguese or Latin language students. The site stores a large amount of practice activities, with more exercises added during the year by our users. Teachers can also create their own activities.

- Language skills: this website is free after 4pm and really comes into its own with its A level section. Practise your verbs, pronouns, do practice translations and review other grammar points. Find it here <http://zut.languageskills.co.uk/advanced/year12.html>.

Possible Tasks

1. Create a Memrise account – your name or something that is very recognisable as you. You should aim to achieve 100,000 points by the first lesson – prizes for those who achieve it!
2. Summarise, in French, 2 articles (that were in French!) that you have read from one of the websites/ papers above and say why they interested you. If you cannot print the article, make a note of the website. Try and make these related to one of the topics we will study (listed below).
 - Changes in family structures, attitudes towards marriage, couples and the family.
 - The education system and problems facing students today.
 - Working life, attitudes to work, the right to strike and equality of the sexes.
 - Changes in music and its impact on popular culture
 - Freedom of expression in the media, written and online press and its impact on society and politics
 - Festivals and traditions of France and francophone countries.
3. Translate the blurb for *Entre les Murs* before watching it. Bring this along with you on paper to your first lesson:

François Marin est un jeune professeur de français dans un collège difficile du 19e arrondissement de Paris. Il n'hésite pas à affronter Esmeralda, Souleymane, Khoumba et ses autres élèves, souvent impétueux, dans de stimulantes joutes verbales, faisant très souvent de la langue française un véritable enjeu. Mais l'apprentissage de la démocratie dans une salle de classe peut parfois comporter de vrais risques, et François, comme les collègues qu'il croise dans la salle des

professeurs, se retrouve parfois débordé par des conflits ou des débats qu'il ne maîtrise plus. Les rencontres avec les parents se révèlent pleines de surprises, certains d'entre eux ne parlant pas français...

4. Choose a Francophone country and prepare a short presentation on an aspect of culture – this should last no longer than 5 mins. You can create a PPT if you want, but try and use headings rather than too much prose on the slide.
5. Look out for any items in the English or French media relating to topics we will study – as above so that you have points to make in a discussion and opinions to give.
6. Go onto www.languagesonline.org.uk . Complete 10 exercises. Each exercise takes less than 5 minutes. Note down the exercise you did and your score.
7. Read through the AQA A-Level French course overview so that you have an idea of what we will be studying.
8. If you find any other websites/ links/ twitter feeds that you think are worth sharing, note them down too.
9. Each time you pass a second hand shop, pop in and see whether they have any large dictionaries or any French books – either fiction or grammar. You can find old French dictionaries worth £35 on sale for less than £5!

You are not expected to do absolutely everything on this list! Grammar is really important, and would be a great place to start, perhaps with one of the media options that you like the look of, adding in other options as you gain in confidence. We would love to keep in contact with you and hear about your progress, and can answer any questions that you may have, or if you just want to discuss anything further - we are always just at the end of an email 😊

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Appendix 1: Grammar self-assessment

	I DO NOT KNOW	NEED TO LEARN	QUITE CONFIDENT	FULLY CONFIDENT	My notes/comments
Nouns: gender, singular and plural forms					
Articles: definite (le, la...), indefinite (un, une)					
Partitive (de, du...)					
Adjectives: agreements (fem, pl...)					
Position/word order					
comparative and superlative (plus, la plus..)					
comparative and superlative irregular (mieux...)					
demonstrative (<i>ce, cet, cette, ces</i>)					
indefinite (<i>chaque, quelque</i>)					
possessive (mon, ta...)					
interrogative (<i>quel, quelle...</i>)					
Adverbs: comparative and superlative					
interrogative (<i>comment, quand</i>)					
Quantifiers/intensifiers (<i>très, assez...</i>)					
Pronouns: Subject (je, tu...)					
object: direct and indirect (le, lui...)					
position and order (je la lui donne)					
reflexive (me, te...)					
relative (<i>qui, que,</i>)					
relative: <i>lequel, auquel, dont</i> (R)					
object: direct and indirect					
disjunctive/emphatic (moi...)					
demonstrative (<i>celui...</i>) (R)					
indefinite (<i>quelqu'un</i>)					
possessive (<i>le mien...</i>) (R)					
interrogative (<i>qui, que</i>)					
interrogative (<i>quoi</i>) (R)					
use of <i>y, en</i> (+ word order)					
Verbs: modes of address (<i>tu, vous</i>)					
impersonal verbs (pleuvoir...)					
verbs + infinitive					
verbs + infinitive + preposition					
Verbs + à (je m'intéresse à)					
Verbs + de (je viens de)					
dependent infinitives (faire, laisser réparer) (R)					
negatives (ne..plus, pas...)					
Interrogative [question] forms (avez-vous...)					
Present (regular)					
Present (irregular)					
Perfect with avoir					
Perfect with être					
Perfect with reflexives					
Imperfect					
Future					

	DON'T	NEED TO LEARN	QUITE CONFIDENT	FULLY CONFIDENT	My notes/comments	
Conditional						
Future perfect (j'aurai fini...) (R)						
Conditional perfect (je serais parti...) (R)						
Pluperfect (j'avais eu...)						
Past historic (j'eus...) (R)						
Passive voice present (il est élu..) + others (R)						
Imperative (vas-y)						
Present participle (ayant...)						
Subjunctive mood (how to form it)						
Subjunctive mood (when to use it)						
Indirect speech						
Inversion after speech (R)						
Prepositions: à, au...						
with countries, towns, places						
with month, dates, time						
depuis, venir de						
Number, quantity and time						
Conjunctions						

REFERENCES:

Internet

- www.languagesonline.org.uk general site with an A Level section & GCSE revision (grammar very good)
- www.s-cool.co.uk/a-level/french good site with lots of materials & downloads (need to register but free)
- <http://french.about.com> a really good general site for grammar
- www.verb2verbe.com site which translates any verb in any form (F>E & E>F)
- www.alevelfrench.com click on: **move up to A Level transition**
- www.frenchexams.org interactive revision materials
- www.lepointdufle.net a very comprehensive search engine for French grammar
- www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french interesting site especially the **French slang** section

Reference books

- Élan grammar workbook** Oxford
- Easy learning French grammar** Collins
- Practice in French grammar** Nelson Thomas
- Help yourself to French grammar** Longman

(R) recognise only

partir	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	part					
vouloir	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
voir	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Fill in the blanks with the correct form of the infinitive

1. Si j' (avoir **PLU**) _____ le temps, j'y (aller **PC**) _____
2. En me (lever **PR PART**) _____ ce matin je me (faire **PERF**) _____ mal
3. S'il (pleuvoir **PR**) _____, je (rester **F**) _____ chez moi
4. (s'asseoir **IMPER**) _____ vous et (ouvrir **IMPER**) _____ vos cahiers
5. Je (aller **PC**) _____ en France mais il (faire **IMP**) _____ trop froid
6. Il (falloir **-PR**) _____ que je (faire **S**) _____ mes devoirs ce soir
7. Je (faire **C**) _____ le tour du monde si je (gagner **IMP**) _____ au loto
8. Je (devoir **PR**) _____ finir ma rédaction car j' (devoir **PC**) _____ la rendre hier
9. Je (regarder **IMP**) _____ la télé quand on a (sonner **PERF**) _____ à la porte
10. Je ne (savoir **F**) _____ jamais apprendre le chinois car c' (être **PR**) _____ trop difficile
11. Je (partir **F PERF**) _____ dans deux heures
12. Il (sortir **PERF**) _____ en (courrir **PR PART**) _____ car il (oublier **PLU**) _____ qu'il (devoir **IMP**) _____ travailler aujourd'hui
13. Je (regarder **IMP**) _____ la télé quand mon copain (sonner **PERF**) _____
14. J' (devoir **PC**) _____ payer ma carte de crédit à temps
15. Il faut que tu (savoir **S**) _____ que je (aller **PR**) _____ arriver en retard mais j' (vouloir **CP**) _____ être à l'heure car je n' (aimer **PR**) _____ pas me dépêcher
16. En (essayer **PR PART**) _____ de perdre des kilos en plus, elle (se rendre **PERF**) _____ très malade alors elle ne (faire **PR**) _____ plus régime maintenant
17. S'il (conduire **IMP**) _____ avec prudence il (avoir **C**) _____ moins d'accidents
18. Nous (rester **PC**) _____ plus longtemps
19. T' (se taire **IMPER**) _____ et (faire **IMPER**) _____ ton travail
20. Je n' (comprendre **PLU**) _____ pas _____ ce qu'il (dire **IMP**) _____

What I need to revise
