A Level French

A transition guide for Year 11 students

AQA

FRENCH A LEVEL

The move from GCSE to post-16 language learning can seem challenging as well as exciting. To help with the transition to Sixth Form study, please see below for ideas about what you can do to prepare for the course.

There are four main sections:

A. **Useful GCSE revision**
B. **Preparation for Sixth Form French studies**
C. **Studying languages post 18**
D. **A task to do before starting the course in September**

A. GCSE revision

In addition to your own GCSE notes you may find the following websites useful:
S-cool Revision www.s-cool.co.uk
BBC Bitesize www.bbc.co.uk/gcsebitesize
GCSE revising and revision www.gcse.com
Top Marks www.topmarks.co.uk
The Revision Centre www.revisioncentre.co.uk
Languages Online www.languagesonline.org.uk
https://senecalearning.com/en-GB

Main suggestions

1.KNOW YOUR VERBS
You will not be expected to know all of these perfectly but if you have a fairly good idea how to form each tense and the meaning in English, it will really help you settle in easily to Sixth form work. After all, the verb is the main part of any sentence.

A. **ER/IR/RE REGULAR VERBS in these tenses:**
   Present

   Perfect/Imperfect/ Pluperfect

   Immediate Future/Future/Conditional

B. **REFLEXIVE VERBS in the above tenses**

   Daily routine

   For relationships

C. **COMMON IRREGULARS in the above tenses**

aller/avoir/boire/connaître/devoir/dire/écrire/être/faire/mettre/

partir/pouvoir/prendre/savoir/sortir/venir/voir/vouloir

D. **NEGATIVES**
Use of ne…pas and other negatives such as never/nothing/nobody/no longer/only

E. **USE OF INFINITIVES**
The second verb is usually in the infinitive form. Some verbs take à, some verbs take de and some take no word before that infinitive to link it to the first verb

F. **Imperatives**
Used often in class in the "tu" or "vous" form to tell someone what to do.

2. PRONOUNS

Knowing the terminology will speed up Sixth Form study

Subject pronouns

Reflexive pronouns

Direct object pronouns

Indirect object pronouns

Emphatic (disjunctive) pronouns

3. Adjectives

Remember they mostly go after the noun. Most students know they have to agree with the noun, but often forget

Basic adjectives

Comparative adjectives

Superlative adjectives

Adjectives of nationality

Possessive adjectives

4. QUESTION WORDS

Was a vital part of GCSE speaking exams and part of the rubrics in reading, listening and writing exercises

5. ADVERBS

Made from the feminine form of the adjective + “ment”.

There are some irregulars.

6. PREPOSITIONS

Used to talk about position. Look back at your GCSE notes or text book to revise them.

7. OPINIONS/CONJUNCTIONS/TIME PHRASES/WEATHER PHRASES

You will have been told to include many examples of these in your writing and speaking at GCSE.

Look back at your notes to remember the most common examples. It is really useful to know lists of these to use naturally and frequently in your day to day work.

8. NUMBERS/TIME/DATES/THE ALPHABET

All of these were taught in the early years of learning a language. They are incredibly useful even at Sixth Form level.

B. PREPARATION FOR A LEVEL FRENCH STUDIES

At A Level you will be exploring topics already studied in more detail and looking at wider issues concerning society and the world around us. It is important and of course an interesting part of your studies to have thoughts and opinions on as many of these areas as possible. You are not expected or required to be experts however!

YEAR 12	YEAR 13
Traditional and modern values Different family structures/trends in marriage/relationships between the generations	Aspects of French-speaking Society Benefits of a diverse society
Cyberspace	The marginalised
Gender equality	Treatment of criminals
Artistic culture in the French-speaking World Heritage and its preservation	Aspects of Political Life in the French-speaking World Right to vote and political engagement
Contemporary French music	Unions, demonstrations, future of politics
French cinema	Politics and immigration

A LEVEL FRENCH WITH AQA

To learn more about the course structure and exams please see:

https://filestore.aqa.org.uk/resources/french/specifications/AQA-7652-SP-2016.PDF

For past papers please go to:

https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/languages/as-and-a-level/french-7652/assessment-resources?f.Resource+type%7C6=Question+papers

How will your work be different?

You will be expected to work more independently and take responsibility for your own learning. In study periods when you are not in timetabled lessons, and for homework, you will sometimes need to research topics, form your own opinions and develop a much wider vocabulary.

Skills Required

Below are some of the skills that are needed to be successful at A Level. You may already be competent in some of these, whilst your A level course will help you to develop others further.

- To be well-informed
- To be able to express opinions and justify them
- To research information
- To broaden your vocabulary, including recognition of cognates
- To use the target language spontaneously and with increasing fluency
- To use formal as well as informal language
- To use accurate pronunciation and appropriate intonation
- To show knowledge of, and the ability to use, a range of structures

Ideas on how to prepare for the new work

1. Keep a file of newspaper or magazine articles on anything you find which concerns the country and language you are going to study. Your GCSE topics were mainly limited to personal matters and experiences. The next step is to develop a broader knowledge of the target language country's society, government, history, fashion, art, music and lifestyle. Use these as headings and try to find at least five people or things connected with each.

2. Read a "quality" newspaper in English, not only for factual information but also to see how a good writer plans logically, draws arguments together and defends views and beliefs. The same applies to watching TV programmes such as the news or debates/discussion-style programmes.

3. Access foreign newspapers and magazines – these can be read online.

4. Read guide books to gain an understanding of topics such as the geography, main cities and towns, culture and food.

5. Access specimen A Level papers to see exactly what is involved in the course.

6. Keep and refer to your GCSE work. Remember to keep vocabulary lists, dictionaries and revision guides and notes.

7. Tune in to radio broadcasts and music from the country whose language you are studying. This will not only sharpen up your listening skills, but you will hear names of people who are important.

8. Watch TV programmes and films in the target language. The BBC website has links to online programmes in a wide range of languages.

9. Do you have a contact in the country you will be studying? If so, keep in touch.

10. Make a list of opinion phrases. They will be invaluable in lessons in September.

11. Internet sites are obviously an excellent way to gain insight into other cultures.

Information	**French**
Search Engines	www.google.fr www.fr.yahoo.com
Government departments	www.Diplomatie.gouv.fr
Culture	www.frenchculture.org
Museums and Libraries	www.Bnf.fr
Media	www.Liberation.fr www.Radio-france.fr www.bbc.co.uk/languages/
Language	www.francophonie.org
Opinion Polls	**Opinion Polls**
Regional information	www.Region-bretagne.fr
Tourism	www.Franceguide.com

C. STUDYING LANGUAGES POST 18

Even if you aren't planning to continue your language learning at university in the form of a specialist degree, you may want to combine language learning with another subject or continue with or start a new language in your own time.

Beginners/ab initio

If you have basic skills in a language or want to start a new one there are many opportunities for beginners (ab initio learners) at university in less widely taught languages such as Russian, Arabic, Portuguese or Japanese.

Degrees

Many universities offer specialist language degrees where you focus on one language. The majority of these are four year courses which often involve a compulsory year abroad.

Combined and Joint Degrees

If you want to continue learning a language or start a new one, but don't want to specialise too much, a combined or joint degree may be right for you. This is an excellent way to combine a language with another subject area to give you a complementary set of skills for your future career. More unusual combinations can help to make you stand out in the graduate employment market.

International Opportunities

Studying or working abroad as part of your university studies is a fantastic way to build on your language skills, immerse yourself in the culture, meet new people and add to your CV. **Most universities provide opportunities to study or work abroad. Other subject areas may involve a work placement and many universities allow you to do this abroad. This is an opportunity to use a language you have previously studied but not continued with at university, or to learn a new one.**

Careers

Language skills can open up all sorts of exciting career opportunities. For example:

- Journalism • The Diplomatic Service
- Medicine • The Armed Forces
- The Secret Service • Hotel management
- Importing • Airline work
- Customer services • Cruise ship work
- European patent work • Tourist information service
- International law • Tour operating
- The European Commission • Exporting
- Immigration • International marketing

Employers regard language skills as very important and your earning power may also be greater than those without language skills.

More information

The **'Why Study Languages?'** website contains resources and information regarding the advantages of language skills and information about studying at university. *www.whystudylanguages.ac.uk*

CILT, the National Centre for Languages, holds a wide range of information regarding all areas of language learning
www.cilt.org.uk

The AimHigher website contains general information and advice about studying at university along with information about specific universities and courses
www.aimhigher.ac.uk

The University and Colleges Admission Service (UCAS) website holds information about all university courses available at UK universities
www.ucas.com

D. TRANSITION TASK TO COMPLETE BEFORE SEPTEMBER

Create a power point in French with 30 details/points of interest. You will have the chance to present this in a lesson in September. Choose one option from the following:

1. A French painter – his/her life, work and importance
2. A region of France – its important people, places and traditions
3. A French-speaking country – its important people, places, traditions