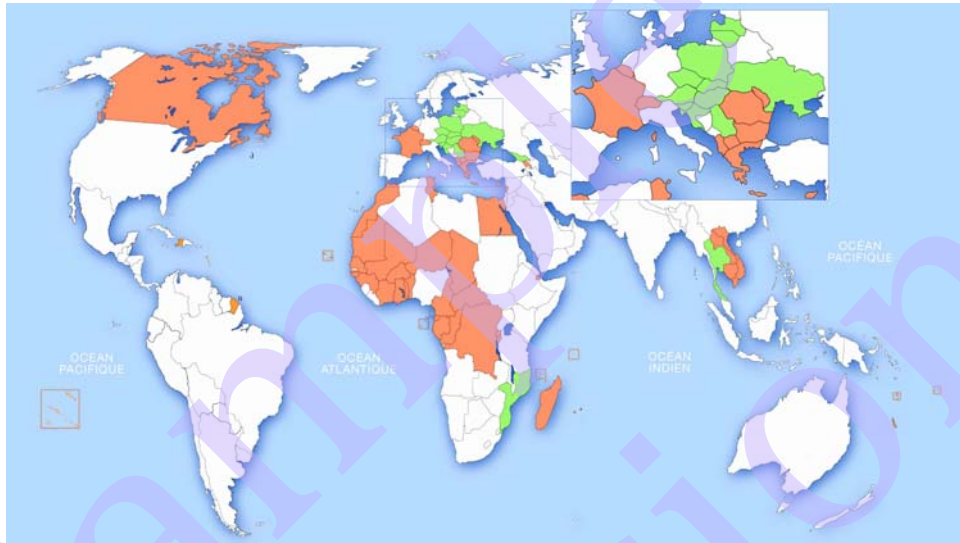


WELCOME to French Class! 20__ -20__



http://www.francophonie.org/pix/oif/carte_francophonie_2008bis.pdf

The World Speaks French

BIENVENUE à la Classe de Français!

French __ Room _____

M./Mme _____

Dear parents,

Bonjour et bienvenue (Hello and welcome)! I am excited to kick off the new school year (*la rentrée*). This will be a special year in which your child will be learning not only to speak, read, and write the French language but will also be learning about French people and their culture. Below you will find many ways in which your child will grow through the study of French culture and language. You will also learn about many of the fun activities your child and you too, if you choose to participate in them, can anticipate during this school year.

Your child has made a wise decision in choosing to study French. French is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. With French, one can be understood in 55 countries across 5 continents by over 200 million people. Studying French helps one to communicate better with the Francophone world. In addition, it will help improve one's understanding of his or her own language as one develops a rich knowledge of French vocabulary. French provides the base for more than 30% of modern English vocabulary. It will also help prepare for success on college entrance exams and in classes at the university. French is used in many professions and knowledge of French greatly enhances travel experiences in French-speaking countries.

Activities in our class this year will include participation in National French Week in November, a Mardi Gras celebration in February, and the National French Contest in March. We will also be making French pastries, *crêpes*, and student-designed French motif t-shirts.

We have a very active French Club, and our president _____ is eager to organize numerous fun activities such as: field trips to French plays, movies, and restaurants, our annual *pétanque* tournament, and our French competition called le Tour de _____.

There are many ways in which YOU, too, can participate in your child's linguistic and cultural development. Here are just a few of them:

- Chaperone a field trip
- Be a guest speaker (share a personal French experience: travel, business, au pair, etc.)
- Recommend a potential speaker on French culture, travel, business, etc.
- Help in class with special projects

Letter to Parent at the Beginning of the School Year, Response Form

- Help in some way with classroom materials
- Help with fundraising
- Support our French program. We encourage parents to contact us to become a part of our very own French Booster Club.
- Share your ideas for special field trips with us.
- Share your talents with us (for example, sewing berets for the club, creating costumes for historic presentations or plays)
- Support the French program in a different way (share your ideas here)

This is just a sampling of ways you can help support your child and at the same time the French program at our school. If you can help out in any of these areas during the class day, or at the end of the school day right after school or in the evening, please let me know by completing the form below and returning it to me via your student or by mail. Your child and I hope that you will join and participate in as many activities as your extracurricular schedule will allow.

Merci beaucoup for your time and assistance!

Email address: _____

The Parent Response Form is found on the following page

Parent Response Form

I would like to be involved in the following ways: (Check all that apply)

- Chaperone a field trip
 - Be a guest speaker (Share a personal French experience: travel, business, au pair, etc.)
 - Recommend a potential speaker on French culture, travel, business, etc.
 - Help in class with special projects
 - Help in some way with classroom materials
 - Help with fundraising
 - Support the French program. (We encourage all parents to contact us to become a part of our very own French Booster Club. Perhaps you have contacts with local newspapers to publicize our event.)
 - Share my ideas for special field trips
 - Support the French program in a different way (Share your ideas here)
-

_____ I have studied French. (Provide details if you wish.)

_____ I have never studied French.

Name (please print)

Parent of (please print)

_____ Period _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Letter to Parent at the Beginning of the School Year, Response Form

Please return this form by _____ to me by means of your child or, if you prefer, drop me a response via Email. Here is my address:

***Merci encore une fois* (Thanks again) for any help you can give your student's class**

Madame/

Monsieur _____

Sample
Version


Creating a Teacher Biography

An important part of connecting with your students and families is giving them an idea of who you are. Consider placing a brief, friendly biography on your school's web page and including it with your beginning-of-the-year parent materials for parents. Include some of the following:

- Name
- School
- How long you have been teaching at your school
- Previous teaching positions
- Degrees earned
- Study abroad experiences
- Professional organizations
- Interests
- Family
- Teaching philosophy
- Photograph

Example:

Chers amis (Dear friends),



My name is Suzette DuPont, and I have been a French teacher at Robertstown Central High School for the past five years. Previously, I taught French at West High School in Smithville and at Robertstown East High School. I graduated with my B.A. from State College in French Studies and completed my M.A. in French Literature at The University of Centerville. I then completed my M.Ed. in Secondary Education at Jones University. My family is originally from Paris, where I spend a week or two every summer. I am active in the American Association of Teachers of French (AATF), where I enjoy exchanging ideas with French colleagues across the state. I live here in Robertstown with my husband Bob, daughter Sophie, and two dogs, Buster and Chloe. I love studying other languages (I'm going to take Japanese this semester!) and believe that language learning is a way to see the world and myself from a new perspective, as well as connect with wonderful people whom I would otherwise never meet. I also play the French horn in the Smithville Civic Orchestra, so look for me after the concerts! I'm glad to be a part of the Central High School family and look forward to meeting each and every one of you this year!

À bientôt (See you soon)!

Mme DuPont

10 Reasons to Study French

With French, you can --

1. **Communicate with French speakers around the world.**

Spoken by over 200 million people on 5 continents, French has the status of official language in 32 countries and governments and is the only language beside English taught as a foreign language in every country.

2. **Boost your academic skills.**

The largest number of English words derives, not directly from Latin, but from French, which provides at least one out of three words used in English. Those who study French for several years will improve their standardized test scores.

3. **Become proficient more quickly than with most world languages.**

French is one of the languages that require the fewest instructional hours in order for an English-speaking learner to reach a high level of speaking proficiency. French is also a natural choice for speakers of Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese because of their common roots in Latin.

4. **Increase options for undergraduate and graduate studies.**

Students with an interest in a variety of disciplines can take advantage of complementing their studies and doing research in a French-speaking country when they know French. Most graduate schools require knowledge of at least one foreign language, and French is a popular choice for many fields of study.

5. **Connect your future to cutting-edge fields in science and technology.**

French-speaking countries have been at the forefront of medical research in fields such as HIV virus research, medical genetics, and reconstructive surgery. They have also been on the cutting edge of scientific discoveries and technological innovations in nanotechnology, nuclear energy, voice compression, fiber optics, microchips, video gaming, aerospace technology, and high-speed rail services.

6. **Invest in your career.**

French speakers are in demand in banking and finance, hotel management, international trade, journalism and media, aviation, national security, health care, tourism, and law enforcement. Knowing French helps a person gain valuable understanding of cultural and business practices in other places.

7. **Enjoy special leisure-time activities.**

In the US, 50% of foreign films watched and 30% of foreign books read are in French. Sports enthusiasts can follow their favorite events and athletes in sports popular in the French-speaking world: cycling (Tour de France), tennis (French Open), motorcycle racing and Formula 1 automobile racing (24 Heures du Mans), and baseball and hockey (Canadian teams).

8. **Benefit more from travel experiences.**

Every continent offers French-speaking destinations, which are enjoyed more when the traveler can interact with the local residents in their language. While France is the most visited country in the world, destinations closer to home include Quebec, New Brunswick, St. Pierre and Miquelon, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Haiti, St. Martin, French Guyana, Maine, and Louisiana.

9. **Appreciate Francophone contributions to world culture.**

French-speakers have made a remarkable impact on literature, philosophy, cuisine, fashion, and the arts. Learn more firsthand about Camus and Césaire (literature), Sartre and Derrida (philosophy), Renoir and Matisse (painting), Truffaut and Arcand (cinema), to name just a few.

10. **Understand a variety of world perspectives.**

Because French is spoken in more than 56 countries, a person who knows French can work toward global consensus and peace and participate in humanitarian efforts, since French is an official or working language in many international agencies and organizations, including Amnesty International, World Health Organization, International Red Cross, United Nations, and Doctors without Borders.

Sample
Version

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WHY STUDY FRENCH? *What parents say...*

Learning [French] open[ed] opportunities for my daughter Eva to study overseas [in Senegal] giving her a broader appreciation of other cultures and ways of living.

-K. Nanu Shiu, Skokie, IL

Since my daughter is taking French in school, she speaks it at home and she teaches me a bit of it. When I'm at work I can understand some of my co-workers when they speak; it feels great!

-Veronica Guerrero, Skokie, IL

My daughter has been a foreign exchange student to the south of France... She continues to explore other cultures and is taking Chinese in conjunction with her French in college....She will be studying in China and France next year.

-Anna Whiteway, LaGrange, IL

It is spoken on all continents; there are millions of French speakers in North America (Quebec), it is widely spoken in Africa and the Middle East.

-Barbara Parikh, Skokie, IL

French is a culture that we all value and appreciate in our house. It has expanded our horizons!

-Grace Romanelli,
Morton Grove, IL

My daughter is a sophomore at Boston College and her favorite part of learning French in High School was to cook French recipes. This sparked her love of cooking and baking and she is interested in attending French culinary school post-college and eventually opening a pastry shop.

-Mary Rose Gage, La Grange, IL

As an architecture student at Washington University in St. Louis, my son spent 6 weeks traveling through Europe. As he was fluent in French, he found opportunities to speak and understand French as well as enjoy French cuisine, which he knew about from his high school French studies.

-Mary Rose Gage, La Grange, IL

WHY TAKE FRENCH? *What students say...*

I like the way the language flows; it sounds pleasant to the ears. - Liang

The reason why I took French is because it would benefit me in the future as I major in international business.
-Kurt

My favorite subject is Spanish, so I figured because I enjoyed it so much, French would be a good class for me.
-Corianne

I think French is cool!
-Jerry

It is the 2nd most spoken language around... Tony Parker, one of my favorite basketball players, is French.
-Nimaian

I took French because I've always thought it was a pretty language. -Dariya

I'm into fashion and I'm planning to go to France to study fashion. -Sandra

I wanted to take French because I want to spend a year abroad in college, preferably in France, and get to know the world outside the U.S.
-Margaret

I wanted to take French because it is spoken in many places in Europe.
-Meghan

WHY TAKE FRENCH? What students say...

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I wanted to take French because it is spoken in many places in Europe. -Meghan

WHY TAKE FRENCH? *What students say...*

...everyone takes Spanish, so I wanted to be different.
-Senior

I take French because it is a beautiful language to learn.
-Junior

It's an international language.
-Senior

I was learning another language and when I heard French, I really wanted to learn how to speak it. I also love art and France has great museums and art.
-Junior

I decided to take French because my family speaks French but I didn't.
-Senior

Because my parents encouraged me to take a language other than my native language Spanish.
-Junior

Since I already know Spanish, I wanted to do something different and be able to have a third language.
-Junior

I wanted to take French because it's a pretty language and can be useful in the world of business and fashion.
-Junior

I wanted to take a language other than Spanish...Now I love it and am thinking of maybe pursuing a career in it. -Junior

Everyone else was taking Spanish in 7th grade and I decided to be different and take French. I don't regret it!
-Junior

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH FRENCH?

“...It’s been very helpful in volunteer work I’ve done with African refugees from former French colonies and, obviously, speaking French fluently is a requirement for my current job....French has become part of my daily life.”

-Jeanette Jackson, Assistant Director,
French-American Chamber of
Commerce, Chicago

My knowledge of the language was imperative [to] my current job at the French Consulate in Chicago where I am surrounded by native French speakers.

-Claire March, Assistant Press Officer,
French Consulate in Chicago

“...as Coordinator of Research and Development for the City of Chicago Department of Environment...I was asked to attend a meeting (with delegates from Paris) during which we discussed our recycling initiatives...[at] a dinner...hosted by the Paris committee of Chicago Sister Cities International...[I was] seated next to one of the delegates... At the end of the meal, my dining companion turned to me and asked if I was interested in coming to work for the City of Paris... I’ve been in Paris since last July, working for the Direction des Espaces Verts et de l’Environnement.

- Matthew Lagod, former employee of the City of Chicago

I am sitting in Nogent-le-Rotrou France. I graduated in May of 2008 and moved to France to become an English language teacher in primary schools. It is very important for my job that I can communicate clearly in French.... I am the only person in my graduating high school class that works abroad, or even out of the state... -Alexander Hutchins,

graduate of Western Illinois University

It was not a dream...But it still feels like one. ...I have to note a major improvement in my foreign language skills....I still can’t believe it myself.... Four months of studying in Paris did more for my French than three years of studying in Chicago.

-Olya Ermak, graduate of Lake Forest College

I am an Arabic and Italian major... pursuing a minor in French.... During my sophomore summer, I was an intern at the French Consulate General of Chicago. After years of studying French, it is rewarding to finally put French to use outside of the classroom, and ... [it] has proven to me that if I want to use French in the future, I will surely be able to, even if I stay right here in Chicago.

-John Deppe, undergraduate at Georgetown University

I discovered that French is incredibly relevant to my interests. My particular interest in nineteenth-century art and music has been greatly enriched by knowing French. I love soaking up its culture and history and my French is an essential tool to do this.

T
R -Jessica Jacobson, Graduate Teaching
Assistant, U of IL, Champaign-Urbana

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH FRENCH?

I have worked in a non-profit organization with a mission to promote French language and culture in the United States. The fact that I had retained a moderate level of French comprehension from the study of French in high school and college was certainly a plus on my résumé.

- Nora Delaney, Director of Cultural Programs,
Alliance Française de Chicago

I have had the opportunity to work with an international non-profit organization that does humanitarian work where I had the opportunity to speak with both folks in France and in Africa on international projects, like digging wells for communities which don't have clean drinking water . . . I was also a consultant for a while, and one of our big projects that I worked on in Canada happened in Quebec . . . where the working language was French.

Now I'm working with the Quebec Government Office here in Chicago. It's really a great opportunity, especially considering the importance of Quebec and Canada, in general, in the Midwest and in North America. Canada is one of the largest trading partners to the U.S., actually *the* largest trading partner, so French definitely has a role in the relationship between Canada and the U.S.

- Del Phillips, International Relations
Consultant

"Last year I worked in a Congolese Refugee Camp in Zambia...with an American NGO... [With] my familiarity of French ...I did not need a translator... Knowing French allowed me to learn Swahili much easier because the Congolese were so good at translating from Swahili to French. However...I always used French for explaining important financial and organizational matters that required more details. . . I am majoring in Earth Systems but I've continued studying French. I am a tour guide at Stanford and I gave a tour to a group of French entrepreneurs that were visiting. Within a month I was contacted by one of them offering me a job at a Clean Technology business in Paris. I couldn't accept since I still have school to finish but it was pretty cool."

I'm using French in my career as a programmer for Apple. . . When I go to the (Apple developer) conference, it amazes me that French is almost like a second language, there are so many developers that speak French. . . You hear all these words, like Exposé, Bonjour, Rendez-vous. It's because there are a lot of French people at Apple . . . When the Apple employees and other developers find out that you speak French, it allows you to communicate with them on some other, additional level and get a little bit more inside information. . . You bond in a way you probably couldn't have done otherwise because you are able to relate to them on some personal level that they just don't do in English, for example.

- Matthew Taylor, Computer Engineer

WHY TAKE FRENCH? *What others say...*

French speakers are in demand in banking and finance, foreign market analysis, diplomacy, and hotel management, just to name a few fields. -Princeton Review
<http://www.princetonreview.com/Majors.aspx?cip=160901>

Children who speak a second or third language may have a cognitive advantage later in life, according to a Tel Aviv University study released in May. Knowing and speaking many languages may protect the brain against the effects of aging.
-*Language Educator*, Vol 3, Issue 4, Aug 08

...[I]f only for economic reasons, the United States cannot afford to forget Europe, whose combined economy rivals that of the United States and eclipses that of China or India. Moreover, Western Europeans have, on average, a significantly higher standard of living and more disposable income than citizens of most other countries and are therefore highly attractive as potential consumers of American goods and services. -Stephen Brockmann, Professor of German, Carnegie Mellon University

In my experience as a university professor, our students who choose to major or minor in French often elect to study another Romance language as a *third language* and they find that, after having studied French, they can acquire these other languages with ease. - Barbara E. Bullock, Professor of French Linguistics, University of Texas

French tops this year's list (2008) as the language of choice... More students are interested in studying French than any other language. -*The 2008 ACTFL Student Survey Report*, based on responses from over 150,000 foreign language students throughout the U.S.
http://www.actfl.org/files/public/ACTFL_Final_2008_completeLOW.pdf

While a number of our majors choose to enter secondary education as a career, a larger percentage of majors in French combine their language specialization with other studies and pursue careers in business, computer programming and web design, law, public relations, journalism, telecommunications, arts administration, publishing, library science, politics, or public and environmental affairs, to name but a few.

- Department of French and Italian, University of Indiana

<http://www.indiana.edu/~frithome/undergrads/why-french.shtml>

2,800 French companies in US employ 550,000 Americans.
-French Economic Mission-Ubifrance (2009)

...[R]elative to English, French remains the world's second most influential language. - George Weber, *Language Today*, Vol. 2, Dec. 1997

There are over 3,700 American companies in France employing around 750,000 people, 46% of whom work in the manufacturing industry, with 63,000 in sales-related jobs and 21,000 in research centers. (2009)

http://www.invest-in-france.org/uploads/files-en/09-04-27_143056_090424_Rapport_annuel_UK_web.pdf

Bienvenue à l'année scolaire 20__-20__ !
Sample Calendar

CALENDRIER

SEPTEMBRE

Sign up for our trips to Cirque du Soleil and France

Aventure Française Immersion Weekend

OCTOBRE

French Club Homecoming parade and activities

T-shirt contest \$50 prize!

Trip to Cirque du Soleil

French II trip to Cajun Concert

NOVEMBRE

National French Week

Wear your Francophone country t-shirt for extra credit

Our famous crêpe sale- Nutella - Miam! Miam!

French Immersion Day at West Leyden High School.

Make and wear your own béret

Boules Competition

Haiti Food Drive

The French Language Initiative: The World Speaks French
American Association of Teachers of French

DECEMBRE

Holiday Cake-making Contest

Create a “Why Take French” poster

French III Trip to the Art Institute and Lunch at La Crêperie

JANVIER

End-of-semester trip to Pappadeaux Seafood Kitchen

Northwestern University Dictée Competition

FEVRIER

Carnaval and Mardi Gras Celebrations

Mask-making and cooking
Selection of National French contest participants

MARS

National French Contest

International Night

AVRIL

April Fool’s Fish Activity

Pizza Party for National French Contest Winners

MAI

The French Language Initiative: The World Speaks French
American Association of Teachers of French

National French Honor Society Induction Dinner

French I trip to Alliance Française

JUIN

End of the Semester Dinner at La Crêperie

JUILLET

Trip to France

**N'OUBLIEZ PAS.... MONTHLY MOVIE NIGHTS!!!
Entertainment, enrichment, and extra credit!**

Local Resources

French and Francophone Restaurants

- 🍷 Chez Pierre, Ourtown
- 🍷 La Crêperie, Nearville

Bookstores with French Materials

- 📖 Book-o-Rama, Smithville
- 📖 Readers, Ourtown
- 📖 Banks & Smith, Nearville

French Classes and Camps

- 📖 Nearville Community College
- 📖 Alliance Française of Overton
- 📖 Ourtown Library Summer Program

Museums of Interest

- 🌸 Davis Galleries, Nearville
- 🌸 Municipal Museum of Art, Ourtown
- 🌸 Art Institute of Overton

Francophone Clubs & Associations

- ✳ Alliance Française of Ourtown
- ✳ Nearville Pétanque Club
- ✳ Groupe Français of Nearville

Where to Buy French Specialties

- ☆ Tom's Grocery, Ourtown
- ☆ Suzanne's Specialty, Overton

Theaters and Video Stores with French Films



Smithville Cinemas, Smithville



Carl's Video Store, Overton

Fifteen Ways to Compliment your Child in French

As you know, students love to be praised. Here are some ways you can compliment your child and at the same time reinforce her/his knowledge of French. In the left hand column you will find 15 expressions followed in parentheses by English sound groups to help with pronunciation, and in the right hand column, the translations.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1) Superbe! (sue pearb) | Superb! |
| 2) C'est beau! (say boh) | That's beautiful! |
| 3) Magnifique! (ma nyee feek) | Magnificent! |
| 4) Merveilleux! (mar vay yeh) | Marvelous! |
| 5) Impressionnant! (im press ee oh nohn) | Impressive! |
| 6) Chouette! (shoe ette) | Terrific! |
| 7) Bon travail!
(boh- nasal like in « <i>don't</i> » -trah v"eye") | Great work! |
| 8) Très bien fait! (tray bee n- nasal- fay) | Well done! |
| 9) J'adore ça! (jha door sah) | I love it! |
| 10) Je suis fier (fière) de toi!
(jeh swee fee air duh twah) | I am proud of you! |
| 11) Fantastique! (fohn ta steek) | Fantastic! |
| 12) Incroyable! (En -nasal- craw jah bluh) | Unbelievable! |
| 13) Chapeaux! (shah poe) | Congratulations! |
| 14) C'est mieux! (say me eh) | That's better! |
| 15) Formidable! (for me dah bluh) | Wonderful! |

Family-Friendly French Films

Here is a list of some family-friendly films that you may want to suggest to parents to watch with their students:

- ♦ *Le Papillon / The Butterfly* (2001) [Unrated]- A touching story about a little girl and an old man who go on a butterfly hunt and help each other to find what is most important in life.
- ♦ *Le Ballon rouge / The Red Balloon* (1956) [G] A classic, mostly silent short film, that tells the sweet story about a boy's friendship with a balloon.
- ♦ *Le Poulet / The Chicken* (1963) [Unrated] Claude Berri's first film which tells a short story about a boy and a chicken.
- ♦ *Les Vacances de Monsieur Hulot / Mr Hulot's Holiday* (1953) [G] - A slapstick comedy about the barriers between social classes.
- ♦ Jean Cocteau's *La Belle et la bête / Beauty and the Beast* (1946) [G] - According to many, this black and white classic is one of the most beautiful films ever made.
- ♦ *L'homme qui plantait des arbres / The Man Who Planted Trees* (1987) [Unrated] - A beautiful animated short film sure to please conservationists and those who believe that one person can make a difference in the world.
- ♦ *Les Demoiselles de Rochefort / The Young Girls of Rochefort /* (1967) [G] - If you like colorful, silly 1960's musicals, this film is for you.
- ♦ *Être et avoir / To Be and To Have* (2002) [G] - A documentary about a teacher in a one-room school house in rural France.
- ♦ *Emilie Jolie* (2002) [Unrated] - A musical comedy about a little girl and her dream about a coloring book.

French-Related Activities You Can Do with Your Child

1. When walking or driving about town or shopping, look for French names or references. For example, in the grocery store, look for labels written on produce and other products written in French. How many brand names or product names can you spot in French?
2. Look at a map of your state or your region and point out the names that are French. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._place_names_of_French_origin
3. Look at a map of your town and identify the streets, shops, and other places that have a French name.
4. Look at a map of the world and identify the countries where French is spoken. <http://www.francophonie.org/oif/pays/regions.cfm>
http://www.francophonie.org/pix/oif/carte_francophonie_2008bis.pdf
5. Enjoy a meal with your family in a French restaurant.
6. Play a French game, like the card game Mille Bornes or pétanque (like Bocci) or Scrabble in French. Some games are even available on-line and others can be found on-line.
7. Read an age-appropriate French-language story translated into English or a bilingual book. (Search “French Children’s Books”)
8. Rent a French movie or a movie that takes place in France or in another Francophone country. Then, watch and discuss it with your child.
9. Take advantage of special exhibits of French painters, photographers, or sculptors in your local or area museum. An art museum may also have examples of French artists in its general collection, too.
10. Offer your child the opportunity to attend a French ballet, opera, concert, musical or play. Attend a performance with your child of the spectacular Quebec-based “Cirque du Soleil.
11. Listen to French music and sing along to some classics.
12. Search the web for resources to support your child’s learning French. Here is one site to begin your search. http://french.about.com/od/kids/French_for_Kids_French_Resources_for_Children.htm .
13. Share an article found in a magazine, a newspaper, on on-line about a French-speaking area in the US or abroad.
14. Prepare together some traditional menu items or snacks from the French-speaking world, e.g., crêpes, Croque-Monsieur, quiche, fondue, and Moroccan couscous, or bring home items from the supermarket, e.g., croissants, éclairs, maple butter on bread, for a special treat.
15. When planning a vacation, consider taking your child to places where French is spoken, i.e. Montreal, Quebec City, New Brunswick, New Orleans, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Martinique, and Tahiti.

HAVE FUN WITH FRENCH and LEARN ABOUT FRANCOPHONE CULTURES!

Sample
Version

How Can Parents Help their Child Be a Successful French Student?

1. Have your child teach you or another family member what she/he is learning in class. Encourage him/her to speak French to you.
2. Ask about homework each night and check weekly his/her grades posted on-line. Discuss his/her progress.
3. Reinforce with your child good study skills and techniques to put learning into long-term memory.
 - Tactile and visual learners benefit from creating flash cards or using on-line flash cards to study vocabulary and new concepts.
 - Visual learners find using color to differentiate genders of nouns and adjectives or verb conjugations advantageous.
 - Auditory learners benefit from chanting and singing vocabulary words and grammatical concepts.
 - Students can create their own mnemonic devices or learning aids to retain information. Even humorous, surprising, or bizarre images and connections that students originate as personal associations can enhance their retention of content. These aids to memory can be verbal, visual, kinesthetic or auditory.
 - Students should tailor their study and practice to the format of assessment. For example, if assessment will be a written quiz over vocabulary, then, the students must prepare by writing vocabulary until accuracy is achieved.
 - Family members can help reinforce learning by taking some of the student's flashcards (duplicates, perhaps!) and moving them around or hiding them in the home for the child to find unexpectedly (on a pillow, behind a door, or on a mirror).
 - Ask your child to suggest other study strategies that might be helpful. (The French teacher is likely to have described some of these in class.)
4. Once your child has studied for a quiz, you could offer to quiz her/him on the words. Help your child remember to practice by writing the words.
5. Be on the lookout for articles about France or French speaking countries in the newspaper, magazines, or on-line.
6. Share with your child French words or anything French that occurs in your daily routine and help dispel the myth that French is harder than other foreign languages.
7. Point out to your child the names of streets, towns, businesses, etc., in your area, as well as French products in stores, that have a French origin. Have fun reading labels and perusing instruction manuals written in French.
8. Fluency in a foreign language takes time and requires continuous self-motivation. Encourage your child to think of learning French as a process that will continue through high school and into college and beyond!

Study Strategies for Students of French

- ❖ **Make flashcards for vocabulary.**
 - ◆ This can be done in several ways. Visual learners will find it helpful to create flashcards by putting a picture on one side and the French vocabulary word on the other side. Color-coding is also helpful.
 - ◆ There are several online flashcard generators that you can use to type in your own lists and practice on the computer, if you prefer to see things on a screen.
 - ◆ Put words you immediately recognize in a separate pile. The remaining cards are the ones you should focus on. Every so often, shuffle the easy ones back in and quiz yourself on the whole stack.
 - ◆ Bodily/kinesthetic/tactile learners often find flashcards a great way to study.

- ❖ **Tape a card or sheet of paper with verb endings to your mirror, computer monitor, or other obvious location.** This is great for visual learners!
 - ◆ Every time you notice your reminder, practice reciting the verb endings. When you can't remember the endings in class, close your eyes and picture the location.
 - ◆ Have a family member move the card around or hide cards in the house for you to find unexpectedly (under the toilet seat, behind the pantry door, on your pillow, etc.) to jog your memory.

- ❖ **Spend 10-20 minutes each night reviewing.**
 - ◆ It doesn't seem like much, but just a few minutes will help move the information from your short-term memory to your long-term memory.

- ❖ **Find a study partner or group.**
 - ◆ For interpersonal learners, this can make studying fun and productive.
 - ◆ Choose a topic or assignment to go over together and have someone explain the concept to the group. The best way to learn is by teaching others.

- ❖ **Recopy/condense notes.**
 - ◆ It's not second grade punishment! By copying something more than once, you help commit it to memory. You may have been taking notes in class while also listening to the teacher. This gives you time to focus on what it was you actually wrote down.
 - ◆ For bodily/kinesthetic/tactile learners and visual learners, this can be helpful.

- ❖ **Teach someone else what you've learned.**
 - ◆ Your parents, siblings, kids you baby-sit, pets . . . teaching something to someone else is the best way to learn.

- ❖ **Review old material to keep it fresh in your memory.**
 - ◆ You can use any of these methods. Move that information from short-term to long-term memory.

- ❖ **Rent a movie, listen to music, or watch French TV online.**
 - ◆ This helps your listening comprehension and is enjoyable! You may not even realize you're learning. It will also help improve your pronunciation.
 - ◆ Visual, auditory and musical learners may benefit especially.

- ❖ **Ask for help as soon as you get behind.**
 - ◆ The longer you wait, the more difficult it will be to catch up. It may only take a couple of minutes with your teacher to clear things up, and he/she would rather help you now than watch you struggle!

- ❖ **Study in small chunks (10-15 minutes).**
 - ◆ Don't tire yourself out. By studying in smaller chunks, the material won't seem as overwhelming.

- ❖ **Color-code your notes.**
 - ◆ By using different colors (blue for masculine words and green for feminine words, red for verbs, etc.) you can jog your memory.
 - ◆ Visual learners may especially want to do this.

- ❖ **Sing or chant the words.**
 - ◆ Use any style of music or tune you want.
 - ◆ Auditory and musical learners will especially benefit from this.

- ❖ **Use gestures with words.**
 - ◆ Make up different gestures for each word on your vocabulary list.
 - ◆ Use your fingers to draw accents in the air when you spell words aloud.

- ❖ **Ask for extra practice.**
 - ◆ Practice makes perfect! If you're not sure whether you fully understand a concept, you may want to do a few more exercises. There are lots of

online grammar quizzes, or your teacher can photocopy you a few worksheets to make sure you're up to speed.

❖ **Don't be afraid to make mistakes!**

- ◆ We all learn by trial and error. Use homework as an opportunity to find out what you don't know. Once you know where your weaknesses are, you can work with your teacher to find a way to get stronger.

Sample
Version

Web Resources for Students

It is often difficult to know where to begin on the Internet when looking for ways to practice your French. Here are some teacher favorites:

- Go to <http://jt.france2.fr> or <http://jt.france3.fr> and watch the daily news broadcast from France a few times a week.
- Visit the online French dictionary <http://dictionnaire.tv5.org/dictionnaires.asp> (choose Anglais/Français or Français/Anglais at the top for the bilingual dictionary).
- Go to <http://french.about.com/> and brush up on vocabulary, grammar, and other topics. There are hundreds to choose from on this site.
- Go to <http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french/> and watch videos especially created for learning French, organized by level (*French Steps* and *Talk French* are at the beginner/intermediate level).
- For easy French exercises, try <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryfrench/>.
- Go to <http://www.learner.org/resources/series83.html> to watch the PBS TV series “French in Action.” It’s made especially for beginning French students in high school and college. This site requires you to create a log-in, but it’s safe.
- Go to http://www.rfi.fr/lffr/statiques/accueil_apprendre.asp to listen to the “easy” Radio France Internationale news broadcast, “Le journal en français facile.” You can read along with the script to build comprehension. At the bottom of the page are some other resources for learning French, including an interesting bilingual mystery series.
- Sign up for one of the French podcasts available (check iTunes) and put it on your iPod or mp3 player.
- Try to solve a murder mystery at <http://www.polarfle.com>. Choose your level.
- If you like art, try another site especially made for French students by the same teacher who created the murder mystery. Go to <http://peinturefle.free.fr>.
- If you’re an intermediate learner (or higher), try going to the TV5 webpage: http://www.tv5.org/TV5Site/lf/langue_francaise.php. There are videos, games, exercises, tongue twisters, idiomatic expressions, and more!
- View an interactive timeline of French history since the Revolution at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/999717.stm>.
- Learn more about Francophone countries from the CIA World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/>

- Try some grammar exercises online and check yourself: http://www.faculty.virginia.edu/ajmlevine/grammar/a_grammarindex.html

Sample
Version

LE MONDE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

56 ÉTATS ET GOUVERNEMENTS MEMBRES DE L'OIF **14** OBSERVATEURS



L'Organisation internationale de la Francophonie est une institution fondée sur le partage d'une langue, le français, et de valeurs communes.

Elle rassemble **56** États et gouvernements membres et **14** observateurs totalisant une population de **870 millions**. On recense **200 millions** de locuteurs de français dans le monde.

The following information refers to the Map of the Francophone World, provided by the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie.

THE FRENCH SPEAKING WORLD

(Consult the reference map «Le Monde de la Francophonie» in the “French Language Advocacy Kit” or view it on-line at: http://www.francophonie.org/pix/oif/carte_francophonie_2008bis.pdf)

The International Organization of French Speaking Countries (Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie - OIF) was created in 1970 as the Agency for cultural and Technical Cooperation (Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique -ACCT) to bring together countries and regions on 5 continents which share both a common language, French, and similar values. 870 million people from 56 states and governments and 14 observers are presently represented by this organization. Spoken by 200 million people throughout the world as a first or second language, French is either the official language, alone or with other languages in 32 states and governments belonging to the OIF.

LE MONDE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

(Consultez la carte « Le Monde de la Francophonie » dans le « French Language Advocacy Kit » ou regardez-la sur Internet à: http://www.francophonie.org/pix/oif/carte_francophonie_2008bis.pdf)

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Source: www.francophonie.org

THE FRENCH SPEAKING WORLD

Regional lists

The International Organization of French-Speaking Countries (Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie - OIF) was created in 1970 as the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation (Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique -ACCT) to bring together countries and regions on 5 continents which share both a common language, French, and similar values. The 56 states and governments and 14 observer-countries, which represent 870 million people, are part of the OIF. Spoken by 200 million people throughout the world as a first or second language, French is either the official language, alone or with other languages, in 32 states and governments belonging to the OIF.

LE MONDE DE LA FRANCOPHONIE

Listes par régions

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en français

en anglais

Afrique Centrale

Central Africa

Burundi
Cameroun
Centrafrique
Congo
Congo
Gabon
Guinée équatoriale
Rwanda
Sao Tomé et Príncipe
Tchad

Burundi
Cameroon (Republic of Cameroon)
Central African Republic
Republic of the Congo
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Gabonese Republic
Equatorial Guinea
Republic of Rwanda
Democratic Republic of Sao Tomé and Príncipe
Republic of Chad

Afrique de l'Est et Océan indien- East Africa and the Indian Ocean

Comores	Union of the Comoros
Djibouti	Republic of Djibouti
Madagascar	Republic of Madagascar
Maurice	Republic of Mauritius
Mozambique**	Republic of Mozambique**
Seychelles	Republic of Seychelles

Afrique de l'Ouest—West Africa

Bénin	Republic of Bénin
Burkina Faso	Burkina Faso
Cap-Vert	Cape Verde
Côte d'Ivoire	Republic of Côte d'Ivoire (formerly Ivory Coast)
Ghana	Republic of Ghana
Guinée	Republic of Guinea
Guinée Bissau	Republic of Guinea-Bissau
Mali	Republic of Mali
Niger	Republic of Niger
Sénégal	Republic of Senegal
Togo	Togolese Republic

Afrique du Nord et Moyen-Orient – North Africa and Middle East

Egypte	Arab Republic of Egypt
Liban	Lebanon
Maroc	Kingdom of Morocco
Mauritanie	Islamic Republic of Mauritania
Tunisie	Tunisian Republic

Amérique-Caraïbes

Canada
Canada Nouveau-Brunswick
Canada Québec
Dominique
Haïti
Sainte-Lucie

North America-Caribbean Island

Canada
New Brunswick
Quebec
Dominica
Haiti
St. Lucia

Asie-Pacifique - Asian Pacific

Arménie*	Armenia*
Cambodge	Cambodia
Géorgie**	Georgia**
Laos	Laos
Thaïlande**	Thailand**
Vanuatu	Republic of Vanuatu
Viêtnam	Vietnam

Europe - Europe

Albanie	Albania
Andorre	Andorra
Autriche**	Austria**
Belgique	Belgium
Bulgarie	Bulgaria
Chypre*	Cyprus*
Communauté française de Belgique	French speaking community of Belgium
Croatie**	Croatia**
Ex-République Yougoslave de Macédoine	former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia
France	France
Grèce	Greece
Hongrie**	Hungary**
Lettonie**	Latvia**
Lituanie**	Lithuania**
Luxembourg	Luxemburg
Moldavie	Moldavia
Monaco	Monaco
Pologne**	Poland**
République Tchèque	Czech Republic
Roumanie	Romania/Roumania
Servie**	Serbia**
Slovaquie**	Slovakia**
Slovénie**	Slovenia**
Suisse	Switzerland
Ukraine**	Ukraine**

*Membres associés – associate members

** Observateurs – observers

Source: www.francophonie.org

www.francophonie.org/pix/oif/carte_francophonie_2008bis.pdf

or consult the reference map «Le Monde de la Francophonie» in the “French Language Advocacy Kit”

French: An Official Language in 32 States and Governments

Status of the French Language

The International Organization of French Speaking Countries (Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie - OIF) was created in 1970 as the Agency for cultural and Technical Cooperation (Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique -ACCT) to bring together countries and regions on 5 continents which share both a common language, French, and similar values. The 56 states and governments and 14 observer-countries, which represent 870 million people, are part of the OIF. Spoken by 200 million people throughout the world as a first or second language, French is either the official language, alone or with other languages, in 32 states and governments belonging to the OIF.

Status du français

L'Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) créée en 1970 sous le nom de l'Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique (ACCT) regroupe 56 États et gouvernements membres et 14 observateurs. Elle rassemble autour du partage d'une langue commune, le français, et des valeurs semblables, des pays et des régions répartis sur les cinq continents. Parlé par 200 millions de personnes dans le monde comme langue maternelle ou deuxième langue, le français a statut de langue officielle, seul ou avec d'autres langues, dans 32 États et gouvernements membres de l'OIF.

Langue officielle (seul ou avec d'autres langues) – Official language (alone or one of several)

en français

Belgique
Bénin
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Cameroun
Canada
Canada Nouveau-Brunswick
Canada Québec
Centrafrique
Communauté
française de Belgique
Comores
Congo
Congo
Côte d'Ivoire
Djibouti

en anglais

Belgium
Republic of Benin
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Cameroon (Republic of Cameroon)
Canada
New Brunswick
Quebec
Central African Republic
French speaking community of Belgium
Union of the Comoros
Republic of the Congo
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Republic of Côte d'Ivoire (formerly Ivory Coast)
Republic of Djibouti

France	France
Gabon	Gabonese Republic
Guinée	Republic of Guinea
Guinée équatoriale	Equatorial Guinea
Haïti	Haiti
Luxembourg	Luxemburg
Madagascar	Republic of Madagascar
Mali	Republic of Mali
Monaco	Principality of Monaco
Niger	Republic of Niger
Rwanda	Republic of Rwanda
Sénégal	Republic of Senegal
Seychelles	Republic of Seychelles
Suisse	Switzerland
Tchad	Republic of Chad
Togo	Togolese Republic
Vanuatu	Republic of Vanuatu

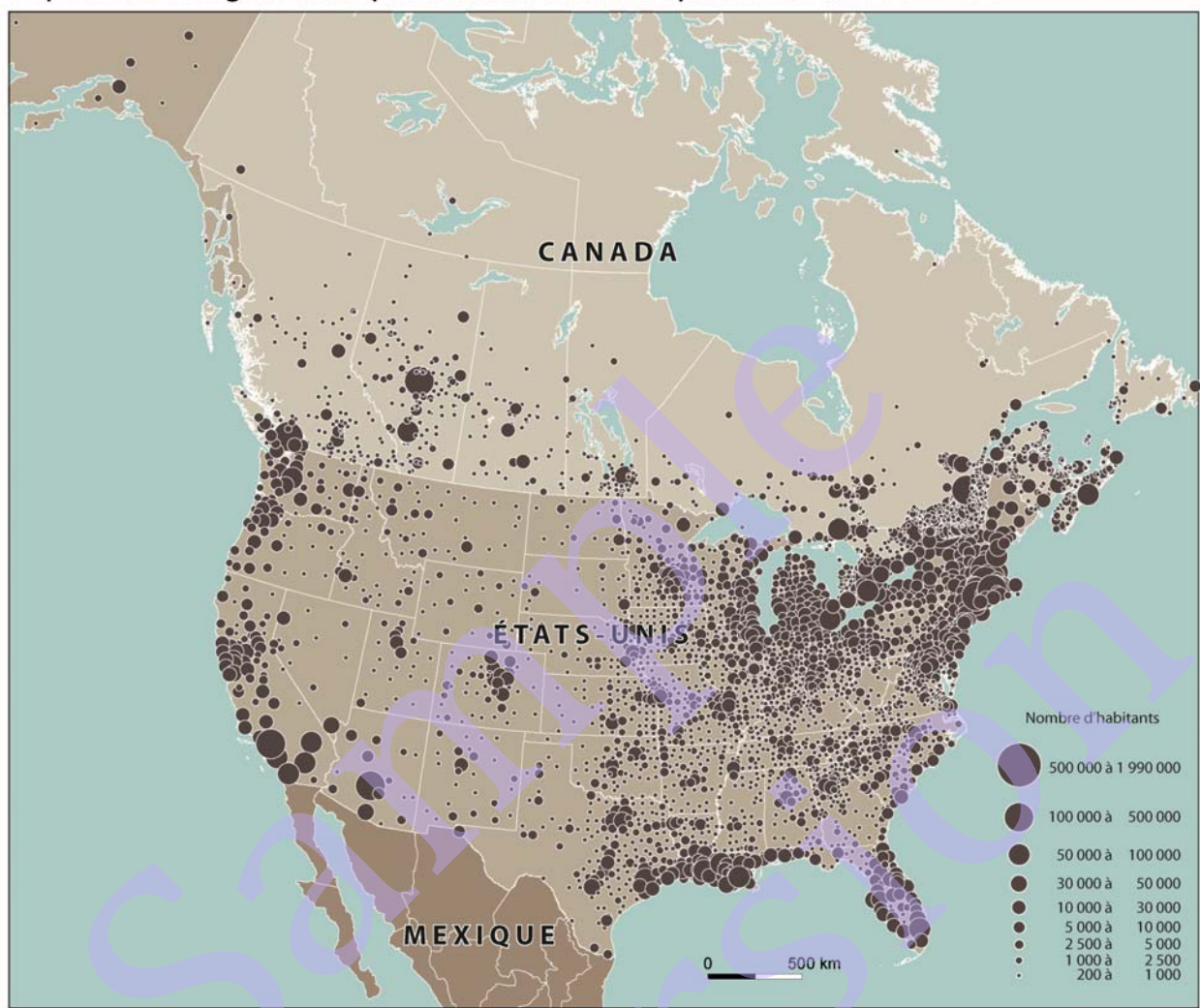
Langue en partage – Shared language

Albanie	Albania
Andorre	Andorra
Arménie*	Armenia*
Bulgarie	Bulgaria
Cambodge	Cambodia
Cap-Vert	Cape Verde
Chypre*	Cyprus*
Dominique	Dominica
Egypte	Arab Republic of Egypt
Ex-République Yougoslave de Macédoine	former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia
Ghana	Republic of Ghana
Grèce	Greece
Guinée Bissau	Republic of Guinea-Bissau
Laos	Laos
Liban	Lebanon
Maroc	Kingdom of Morocco
Maurice	Republic of Mauritius
Mauritanie	Islamic Republic of Mauritania
Moldavie	Moldavia
Roumanie	Romania/Roumania
Sainte-Lucie	St. Lucia
Sao Tomé et Príncipe	Democratic Republic of Sao Tomé and Príncipe
Tunisie	Tunisian Republic
Viêtnam	Vietnam

Source: www.francophonie.org

www.francophonie.org/pix/oif/carte_francophonie_2008bis.pdf

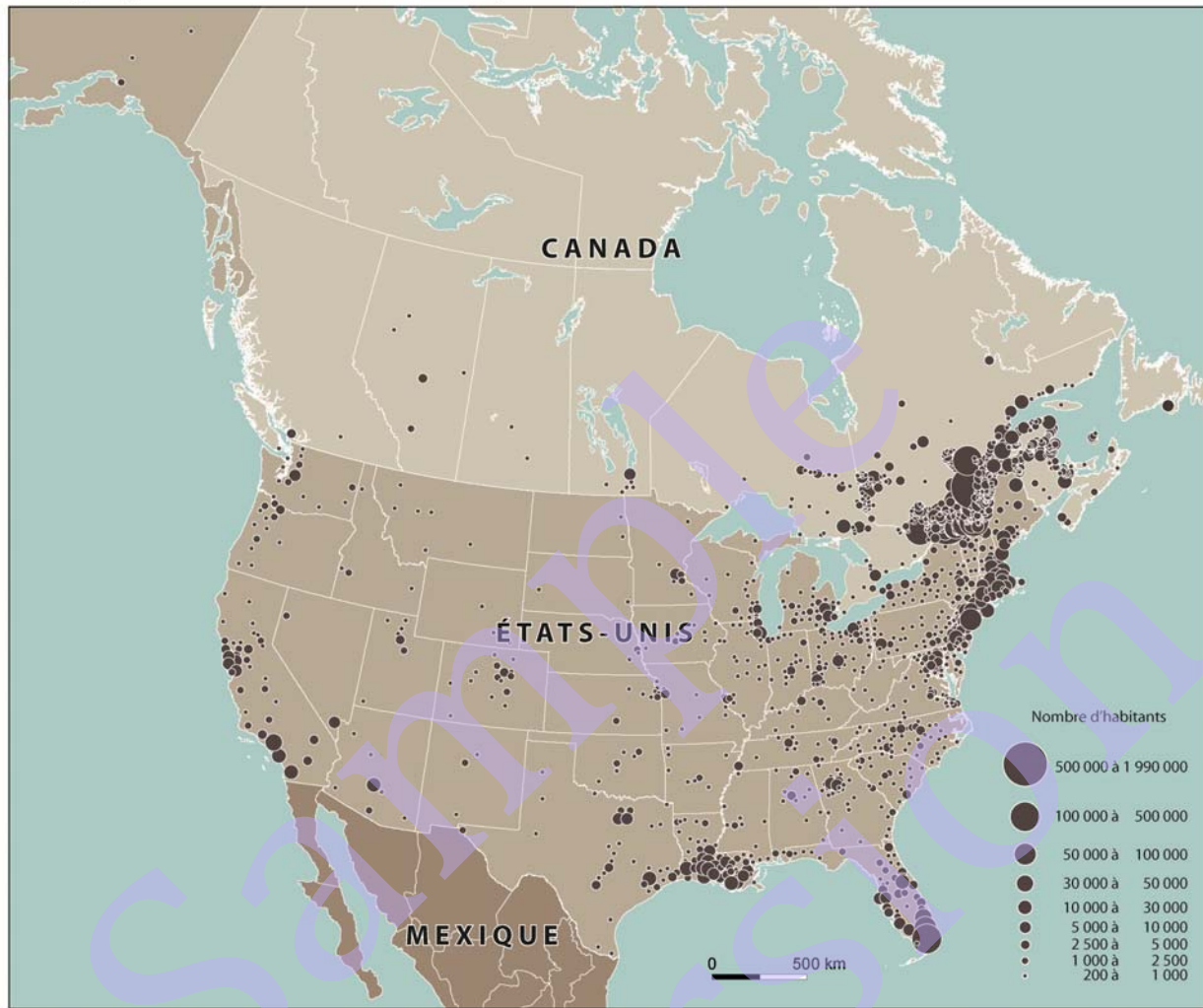
Population d'origine ethnique française en Amérique du Nord, 2000 - 2001



Sources: U.S. Census, 2000, Statistique Canada, 2001 et INSEE France, 1999

Réalisation : Département de géographie, Université Laval.

Français parlé à la maison en Amérique du Nord, 2000 - 2001



Sources: U.S. Census, 2000, Statistique Canada, 2001 et INSEE France, 1999

IF YOU THINK YOU KNOW FRENCH – THINK AGAIN!

40 SURPRISING FACTS ABOUT FRENCH

from *The Story of French*
by Julie Barlow and Jean-Benoît Nadeau

GLOBAL STATUS

- French is second only to English for the number of countries where it has official status – 32 as opposed to 45. And, with 56 members, *La Francophonie* is now larger than the Commonwealth, which has 53.
- French is also the only language, with English, that is taught in every country of the world, with 100 million students and 2 million teachers – 20 % of whom are outside of francophone countries.
- Kinshasa is the world's second largest French speaking city, after Paris, and before Montreal and Brussels.
- The number of French speakers has TRIPLED since 1945 largely since most former French and Belgian colonies kept French as their language of government, education and science after decolonization.
- Between 6 and 11 million Americans speak French, as does half the population of Algeria, and 15 percent of Israelis.
- French is still a working language of the UN, the EU, and dozens of international organizations including the International Red Cross committee, International Labor Organization, Amnesty International, and Doctors without Borders. Francophone countries form an important bloc in the UN, the EU, the African Union, and the Arab League.
- Two G-8 countries (France and Canada) and six European countries (France, Belgium, Switzerland, Romania, Luxembourg, Monaco) are French-speaking countries.

BUSINESS, SCIENCE AND TRAVEL

- France is the most visited country in the world with 75 million tourists every year.

The French Language Initiative: The World Speaks French

- French-speaking scientists and technicians invented the hot air balloon, cinema, radial tires, smart cards, HDTV, the snowmobile, the saxophone, Velcro and more.
- Areva, of Paris, is the world's largest civil nuclear energy company.
- The world's leader in international engineering is SNC-Lavalin of Montreal.
- Toulouse and Montreal, with Seattle, are the world's leading cities in aerospace technology.
- Voice-compression technology, used in a billion cellular phones worldwide, was patented by *Université de Sherbrooke* in Quebec.
- Cotonou, in French Guyana, is home to the launching pad of Ariane space rockets, the world's only commercially viable launcher program.

CULTURE

- The latest edition of the popular comic book *Astérix* was printed in 7 million copies in French alone and translated into 23 languages.
- French film production – at 500 films per year – is number two in the world. In Canada, Quebec films often outsell Hollywood films at the box office.
- The *Agence universitaire de la Francophonie* networks 630 French language universities and more than 350 French faculties worldwide, for a total of 120,000 professors and researchers.
- Many major living French language authors – Milan Kundera, Nancy Houston, Jonathan Littel, Andreï Makhine, Tahar Ben Jeloun, Dany Laferrière, François Cheng – did not speak French as a mother tongue.

LINGUISTICS

- At the time of the French Revolution, 75% of French citizens did not speak French as a mother tongue. Until the 19th century, French was spoken more widely in Holland and Germany than in some parts of France.
- About a third to a half of basic English words come from French, including pedigree, surf, view, strive, challenge, pride, staunch and war.

The French Language Initiative: The World Speaks French

- The origin of French language purism, including the French Academy, can all be traced back to the influence of a single poet, François de Malherbe.
- The French Academy, created in 1635, was the first body ever to rule over a language. Since then, most of the world's main languages have had a similar type of institution and most countries of the world rule over proper language rules, including all Spanish-speaking, Scandinavian, German-speaking, Arabic-speaking countries. English-speaking countries are the only exception.
- French has more than a million words and 20,000 new ones are created every year.
- The *Office québécois de la langue française* receives 50 information million requests for words every year, half of them from Europe: this is 50 times more requests than the French Academy receives.

IN CANADA

- Quebec's language protection measures have been a model for policy in Spain, France, Brazil, and 29 US states.
- In Canada, 300,000 children are enrolled in French immersion programs, and 3 million adults whose mother tongue is not French speak French as a second language.
- Half a million native French speakers live in Ontario and their flag, the Franco-Ontarian flag, is one of Ontario's seven official emblems. The premier of Ontario, Dalton McGuinty, was raised in French by his mother and sent all his children to French school.
- The Acadians had an official flag and anthem a century before Canada. New Brunswick was the first Canadian province to declare itself officially bilingual and remains the only one.
- There are eight million Francophones living in North America, and most are descendents of only 10,000 original French colonists.
- Canada is one of the few countries where Common Law is practiced in French. Lawyers from New Brunswick played an important role in drafting the constitution of Mauritius. The New Quebec Civil Code was influential in the drafting of the new codes of law in Russia and China.

IN THE UNITED STATES

- In the United States, French is the number four native language and the second most taught second language after Spanish.
- Quebec is the United States' 6th trading partner, and over half a million Americans work for French companies.
- Most of the early legendary figures of the American frontier in the early 19th century were French Canadians born in the St. Lawrence valley. They guided Lewis and Clark, colonized New Mexico, assisted the pioneers of the Union Pacific, and discovered gold in California.
- New York, California and Florida have joined Louisiana and New England as the main centers of French in United States.
- In the US, half of foreign films watched, and 30% of foreign books read are in French.
- French is a mother tongue to 1.6 million Americans and 6 to 11 million Americans speak French fluently as a second language. Of the world's 1100 *Alliances Françaises*, 130 are in the United States, which is also home for 55 of the world's 530 foreign French schools.

IN THE COMMONWEALTH

- French is the main foreign language taught in Britain and remains a popular foreign language in most English speaking countries.
- The United Kingdom and Ireland are home to 14 *Alliances Françaises*, more than 50 French clubs and 9 *lycées* and *collèges français*. In all, more than half a million UK citizens are studying French from kindergarten to university level.
- Five Commonwealth Countries have French as one of their official languages: Canada, Cameroon, Mauritius, the Seychelles and Vanuatu.
- Quebec opened its own quasi-diplomatic delegation in London in 1871, shortly after Canada became an independent country in 1867.

Updated 16 July 2009

Celebrities Who Speak French

Have you ever wondered which of your favorite celebrities speak French?

Here are just a few!

- ★ Alex Trebek, television personality
- ★ Ashley Judd, actress
- ★ Gwyneth Paltrow, actress
- ★ John Malkovich, actor
- ★ Brendan Fraser, actor
- ★ Elton John, performer
- ★ John Kerry, politician
- ★ Kevin Kline, actor
- ★ Madeleine Albright, diplomat
- ★ David Sedaris, author and radio personality
- ★ Serena Williams, tennis champion
- ★ Lance Armstrong, cyclist
- ★ Morgan Freeman, actor
- ★ Natalie Portman, actress
- ★ Orlando Bloom, actor
- ★ Meryl Streep, actress
- ★ Elle MacPherson, model
- ★ John Travolta, actor
- ★ Angelina Jolie, actress
- ★ Arnold Schwarzenegger, actor and politician
- ★ Joakim Noah, basketball champion
- ★ Chloë Sevigny, actress
- ★ Johnny Depp, actor
- ★ Madonna, performer
- ★ Maya Angelou, author
- ★ Ted Koppel, journalist
- ★ Anthony Bourdain, chef

★ Tony Parker, basketball champion

Sample
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From the issue dated March 6, 2009

The Study of Foreign Languages Should Not Be a Zero-Sum Game

By STEPHEN BROCKMANN

Last April, the University of Southern California announced plans to eliminate its German department, stating that it wanted to shift resources away from European languages to Asian languages like Chinese and Japanese. The decision was made in view of the growing importance of Asia for the American economy generally and the economy in Los Angeles specifically.

That move, and others like it, has sparked a debate about the relative importance of learning European languages like French, German, and Italian. But much of that debate is governed by false assumptions about the process of globalization, the nature of language learning, and the role of the humanities in higher education.

Moves to eliminate the study of one or more languages in order to shift support to the study of other languages proceed from the assumption that there is a stable, limited, and sufficient amount of money already available for language study. In other words, college administrators seem to assume that global shifts in economic power call for changes in the distribution of their budget for the study of foreign languages and cultures, rather than an increase in that budget as a whole. That misconception, in turn, suggests that administrators see the much-vaunted globalization of the world's economy as a process by which particular countries and regions become more important, while other countries and regions become less important — but in which the importance of foreign countries to our economy remains constant.

But that is precisely what globalization is not. Globalization, which has accelerated over the last two decades, is a process by which the health of any nation's individual economy becomes increasingly dependent on international trade. Today few economies remain self-sufficient, and many are dependent on trade not with one or two other countries, but with a vast network of interconnected economies. Countries like the United States that could once rely on domestic trade for economic growth must now look abroad.

One of the few bright spots in the American economy in the past few years was that the United States was selling more goods and services to the rest of the world (largely thanks to a weak dollar), especially to the well-off economies of Europe. That success partially — although by no means completely — offset the decline in demand at home. Given the economy's deterioration in recent months, sales to the rest of the world have become even more important.

The rise of globalization suggests that the United States needs to radically increase the study of foreign languages and cultures, not just shift resources from the study of some languages or regions to others. Precisely the opposite has occurred over the past several decades. In 1960, 16.1 percent of American college students studied foreign languages; in 2002 only 8.6 percent did, according to a recent MLA report.

Although foreign-language study has become somewhat more popular in recent years, its overall decline remains striking. During the most intensive period of globalization, our country's investment in understanding other countries at the

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postsecondary level has decreased. Yet almost all students in the countries with the world's most successful economies — including China and India — study foreign languages and cultures at some point. It is hard to escape the conclusion that the extensive study of foreign languages is positively correlated with economic and political power.

One reason for the decline of foreign-language study in America is probably the lingering, albeit often unacknowledged, belief that globalization will ultimately lead to a world in which everyone — or everyone who matters — speaks English. The assumption, implicit or explicit, is that as the world becomes ever more closely connected, English will become so dominant that it will be unnecessary for native speakers of English to learn other languages.

There is some truth to the idea that English is now the lingua franca of international business and science. But that may not always be the case, and, moreover, it is probably not a good idea for Americans to assume that a world in which most people understand their language, but they don't understand other peoples' languages, will be a safe or happy one for our nation. A country that merely wants to buy goods and services from other countries, thus accumulating a huge trade deficit, may be able to rely on others' willingness to speak its language. But a country that wants to sell goods and services must learn the languages and cultures of its prospective customers.

It is highly likely that if the United States were to invest more money in understanding foreign languages and cultures, it would be more successful in marketing its goods and services (and its political policies) abroad. In other words, it is not implausible that the chronic U.S. trade deficit, as well as America's lessened prestige abroad, may be connected to our chronic deficit in knowledge of the rest of the world.

As a professor of German, I have my own investment in the study of European languages and cultures. But even if only for economic reasons, the United States cannot afford to forget Europe, whose combined economy rivals that of the United States and eclipses that of China or India. Moreover, Western Europeans have, on average, a significantly higher standard of living and more disposable income than citizens of most other countries and are therefore highly attractive as potential consumers of American goods and services.

Strong pedagogical reasons, too, call for continued support of European languages in American higher education. English is itself a European language, and it is considerably easier for native speakers of English to learn languages like French, German, Italian, and Spanish than Chinese or Japanese. Promoters of the serious study of foreign languages in the United States would therefore do well to recommend that native English speakers wanting to learn an Asian language first study a European language. Any task of great difficulty is best undertaken in stages. Experience and common sense suggest that native English speakers who start their language study with the most difficult languages are far more likely to give up than those who begin with somewhat less difficult languages. One result of a turn from European to Asian languages is likely to be even less foreign-language fluency than there is now — hardly a desirable outcome. The fact is that American college students should study both European and Asian languages. We need to get away from either/or thinking.

I want to make three other points about European languages and cultures. The first and most important is that studying them is crucial to understanding the world as it exists today, which has been largely formed by Europe. When I say this I am sometimes accused of taking a Eurocentric view, but most literate people would probably agree that the world we live in today was shaped, for better or worse, by Europe. Countries like Japan and China have become economically and politically successful over the past century primarily by carefully studying European history and practices. For example, during Japan's Meiji Restoration — the period from 1868 to 1912, when the country's economic and military status rose to the level of European

powers — Japanese leaders emulated Europe's policies from the Industrial Revolution. It is hard to overestimate the impact of Europe's example on the rest of the world.

Another consideration is the relationship between Europe and America. In 1996 the political scientist Samuel P. Huntington published a controversial but important book called *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, in which he suggested that the world consists of eight primary cultures, the most important being that of the West, broadly conceived — i.e., the culture of Western Europe and the United States.

That distinction was sometimes simplified in popular understanding as "the West against the rest," although in fact Huntington's arguments were considerably more nuanced and complex. But one does not need to agree with every point in his book to understand that the cultures of Europe and the culture of the United States have a mutual affinity. Not only did much of American culture emerge out of European cultures, but contemporary Europe consists of stable, prosperous, democratic countries that are strategically and politically allied with the United States, in spite of disagreements over points of policy, such as those that followed America's ill-advised invasion of Iraq. For that reason, an affiliation with Europe continues to be crucial to the United States, and to individual Americans.

Finally, we should not underestimate the importance of ethnic heritage for individual language learners. Although the country's demographic profile is changing, most Americans are of European descent. For reasons of ethnic pride and family heritage, many students choose to study languages spoken in the parts of the world their ancestors came from. There is nothing wrong with that; within limits, it is probably a good thing for Americans to be aware of, and take cautious pride in, their ethnic heritage, as long as such pride is not carried so far that it results in the denigration of other cultures and heritages. Among other things, it helps them to understand that American culture and its worldwide successes are the result of contributions from many different languages and cultures.

At the moment, Americans are understandably focused on our own problems. But those problems have arisen, in large part, because of our failure to understand the rest of the world. We need to encourage all college students to study foreign languages and cultures, and we need to increase budgets for foreign-language departments, not just shift limited funds from one language to another. We can no longer afford ignorance.

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The Ease and Challenges for an English Speaker Learning French

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There is a widespread perception among high school and college students that French is difficult to learn compared to other languages commonly taught in the United States. However, the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center regards French as one of its Category 1 languages. This means that it is among the languages that require the least amount of instructional hours in order for an English speaker, achieving only the minimal required score on the Defense Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB) test, to reach a high level of speaking proficiency.ⁱ

Category I language (French, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish)

Category II language (German)

Category III language (Greek, Hebrew, Moro, Persian-Farsi, Persian-Afghan, Pashtu-Afghan, Russian, Serbian/Croatian, Tagalog, Thai, Turkish, Uzbek, and Vietnamese)

Category IV language (Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean)

Notice that the difficulty of French is on a par with that of the other Romance languages, all of which would require approximately 720 hours of instruction in order for an English speaker to reach an advanced level of speaking proficiency. By contrast, only students who score the highest on the DLAB are permitted to take the Category IV languages and, even then, it takes over 1,000 hours of instruction for them to reach a low level of speaking proficiency in Arabic, Chinese, Japanese or Korean.

Why, then, does the notion that French is hard to learn persist? Why, in particular, is it generally considered to be harder to learn than Spanish? The linguistic response is that for English speakers, French is *no more difficult to learn to speak* than is Spanish. The misperception regarding the difficulty of French likely arises from two sources. First, French has historically been regarded as *the* language of high European culture and this association leads to the faulty assumption that the language of this culture must be more complex and difficult than other European languages. Second, like English, the spelling system of French can take some time to learn.

The difference between Spanish and French from the linguistic point of view, then, likely reduces to the fact that Spanish has a relatively transparent spelling

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system and French a relatively opaque one. (This difference should not be conflated with the ease/difficulty of pronouncing the languages; English speakers struggle equally with the pronunciation of Spanish and French and tend to have persistent foreign accents in either language.) However, there are real advantages for the English speaker in learning French spelling as it actually helps foster correct spelling habits in English. French borrowings in English, such as *bureau*, *cuisine*, *architecture*, *ballet*, *menagerie*, *restaurant*, *trompe l'oeil*, often retain their etymological spelling and this gives the French student a striking advantage in all areas where spelling matters, from writing essays and job application letters to competing in a spelling bee.

In reality, the reputation of French as a difficult language could be easily recast as the very reason for studying it in high school. In my experience as a university professor, our students who choose to major or minor in French often elect to study another Romance language as a *third language* and they find that, after having studied French, they can acquire these other languages with ease. The grammar across Romance languages is fairly constant; the basic vocabularies of the languages are similar; and the gender of noun cognates is, in most cases, identical across these languages. These similarities across the Romance languages also confer advantages on Hispanophones (Spanish speakers) who, at the university level, often choose to study French for their foreign language requirement. Such students tend to advance in proficiency in French very quickly and many university and public schools now offer classes in “French for Spanish Speakers” geared to this growing population of language learners.

The Challenges

It is not easy to disabuse students of the entwined notions that “French is hard” and “Spanish is easy” but there are many practical reasons (that will be elaborated in the conclusion to this essay) to attempt to do so. In that spirit, in the paragraphs that follow, we will elaborate where the true challenges of French for the English speaker might lie and, by contrast, what aspects of the language might be acquired with relative ease and for relative gain. Most of the challenges to learning French are, in fact, the same challenges that face the English learner of Spanish.

1. **Pronunciation:** French has some vowels, such as the phonetic [y] found in the words *tu* and *pure*, which do not exist in English. It is difficult, then, but not impossible for English speakers to learn to consistently make the distinction between pairs of words like *tu~tout* and *pure~pour*. An additional pronunciation challenge that many learners fixate upon as “difficult” in French is the production of the “r” sound. The French (and Spanish) “r” sounds are both produced in a way dramatically different from English.

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- However, the dissimilarity between these sounds across languages actually aids the learner in keeping the “r” of French distinct from that of English.
2. **Stress:** The stress systems of English and French differ. In French, there is only one prominent syllable that normally falls at the end of a phrase. In English, all major words contain one or more stressed syllables. Those that are not stressed can be reduced or deleted. Thus, the word *university* in English has a pattern of alternating strong and weak syllables (‘*university*’) while its cognate in French, *université*, maintains equal prominence on all syllables. Using an alternating English-like accentual pattern in French or in Spanish is one of the strongest indicators of a foreign accent.
 3. **Spelling to Pronunciation:** Like English, the spelling conventions of French were established during a time when the pronunciation of the language was still very much in flux. This makes the spelling system of modern French somewhat difficult for a beginner to acquire. For instance, although the word *eau* is spelled with three letters, it is pronounced simply as an open vowel [o]. However, unlike English, the mapping between spelling and pronunciation in French is still very consistent (for instance, the combination *eau* is always pronounced as [o] in French.) Students can, with time, easily master the mapping from letter combinations to sounds and, as stated above, this may provide them insights into English spelling conventions.
 4. **Gender:** The gender system of French is notoriously difficult for an Anglophone to acquire since there is no foolproof way to know the gender of a word. (Hispanophones have little trouble with gender in French as cognates between the languages have the same gender.) While there are some clues to selecting the gender of a word (for example, all words ending in *-tion* and nearly all of those ending in *-té* are feminine), it is still best to learn and teach noun vocabulary in a context where the gender is clear (for example, *une fleur blanche* rather than merely *fleur*.) On the other hand, native speakers of French are very tolerant when they hear gender (or gender agreement) errors from foreigners and such errors rarely pose an obstacle to effective communication.
 5. **Verbal complements:** Verbs that require a preposition before an object or another phrase can cause learners some difficulty (for example, *se souvenir de*) because the preposition does not carry any meaning for them. Learners should be made aware, though, that similar problems exist for second language learners of English since, for instance, the choice of preposition in expressions like *happy about*, *proud of*, *pleased with* is also simply automatic.
 6. **The Use of the Imperfect Tense:** While French expresses the imperfect tense of a verb by a verbal ending, English expresses the imperfect through various means (*I used to [do]*, *I would [do]*, *I always [did]*). Thus, there is no direct map between a single English verb form and the French (or indeed Spanish) imperfect. The acquisition of the imperfect, then, usually takes some time in

any Romance language because in English the imperfect is a property of the whole sentence rather than a property of the verb.

The Ease

In spite of these challenges (often made to sound more difficult than they really are), the English speaker has numerous advantages when learning French. Several of these do not apply to the learning of Spanish because of the special historical relationship between English and French, dating back to the Norman conquest of England.

1. **Word Order:** The word order of English and French word is strikingly similar: subject–verb–object.
2. **Pronoun Placement:** Once students learn that object pronouns precede the conjugated verb, they rarely make errors with pronoun placement.
3. **Adjective Placement:** English and French differ here in that adjectives generally follow nouns, rather than precede nouns in French. However, students readily accept this difference.
4. **Negation:** Negation in English and French also differ substantially; however, most learners correctly master the placement of the negative element *pas* (*ne* is almost always deleted in spoken French.)
5. **The Subjunctive:** Surprisingly, students learn how to use the present subjunctive in French with relative ease, even though there is no clear correspondent for this form in everyday English. This is because the subjunctive in French is triggered automatically by certain verbal expressions and conjunctions, chief among them by *il faut que*. In this case, acquiring the subjunctive in French is easier than it is in Spanish.
6. **The Use of Pronouns:** Learners of French rarely struggle with the system of French pronouns. They learn quickly to distinguish subject, object, and tonic pronouns and make very few errors in this regard. English learners of Spanish or Italian, on the other hand, have great difficulty mastering the use of subject pronouns since, in these languages, the subject pronoun is usually dropped and only retained when required in particular conversational contexts. English learners of Spanish and Italian, then, overuse subject pronouns, whereas they have no difficulty in French.
7. **Liaison in Pronunciation:** The obligatory cases of liaison of *-s* and *-t* between words (for example, , *les amis*, *les Etats-Unis*, *comment allez-vous?*) are relatively easy for English speakers to learn, even though English has no obvious parallel.
8. **Verb Conjugation:** The challenge with verb forms is mainly in the written language. In spoken French, where the present, the *passé composé*, the

imperfect and the *futur proche* dominate in conversation, many of the verbal endings (final *-t* or *-s*) are actually silent. The highly irregular verbs – *être*, *avoir*, *faire*, *aller* – are so frequently used that their forms are fairly quickly memorized. Aside from these, the regular verbs (in *-er*), which pose no difficulty for learners, dominate among all verbal types. Unlike Spanish, oral French does not employ the simple past, thus there is one less paradigm that learners of French must master.

The Easiest

Finally, English speakers have a clear advantage in learning the vocabulary of French relative to any other foreign language. A conservative estimate holds that one third of the vocabulary of English has been borrowed from French.ⁱⁱ Word borrowing between French and English has a very long history that continues to the present day. Recent borrowings in English include *au jus*, *souçon*, *je ne sais quoi*, *frisson* while anglicisms in spoken French continue to multiply unabated: *email*, *babysitter*, *parking*, *pompom girl*, even from the domain of text messaging, (e.g., *lol* =Laughing Out Loud, pronounced *lolle* in French.)

Studying French enriches the *English* vocabulary of the Anglophone student in immeasurable ways and in many domains that are part and parcel of everyday life. The legal and administrative vocabulary of English is stocked with French words: *people*, *govern*, *chancellor*, *country*, *people*, *conference*, *council*, *judge*, *jury*, *suit*, *verdict*, *contract*, *guarantee*, *crime*, *treason*, *felony*, *ward*, *regal*, *royal*, *majesty* all hail from French. The field of architecture abounds with French terms: *mason*, *carpenter*, *scaffold*, *choir*, *chapel*, *belfry*, even *gargoyle*. Household terms were transported directly from French: *table*, *chair*, *cushion*, *chimney*, *laundry*, *garden*, *arbor*, and specially into the kitchen: *dinner*, *supper*, *dessert*, *flavor*, *sausage*, *pastry*, *tart*, *pork*, *mince*, *purée*, *sauté*, *butter*, *mushroom*, *veal*, *beef*, *bacon*, *mutton*, and so on.

In sum, a very large percentage of the words in English and French have a common and easily identified source. So, while many university-bound students, encouraged by their parents and guidance counselors, assume that Latin will improve their vocabulary in English for the purposes of standardized tests (SAT/ACT/GRE/LSAT), the richest source of learned (academic) vocabulary in English actually derives not directly from Latin, but from French. For instance, Latin *fragilis* entered English through French, first as *frail* (from French *frêle*) then later, as *fragile*, a word the modern languages now share as a cognate. Even those words that may have entered English from Latin by a more direct route, such as *ascend*, are also found in one form or another in French: *ascenseur*. Thus, the

classical word roots of Latin can be acquired by the English-speaking student via French, a living language!

Conclusion

Aside from the social, educational, professional, and even cognitive advantages conferred upon a student who is bilingual in any language, there are concrete reasons why French is a particularly important part of the curriculum in the United States. It should be underlined that French is an *American* language. There are over one million French speakers in the United Statesⁱⁱⁱ alone. Beyond our borders, French shares official language status with English in Canada, where there are currently between six and seven million French speakers, and it is also a language of the Caribbean (Martinique, Guadeloupe, Haiti) and South America (French Guiana). For this reason, French, Spanish, and English make up the official languages of NAFTA. Students wishing to expand their ability to work abroad in the Americas and, certainly, in Africa would do well to study French. And those seeking to work in international humanitarian efforts are served well by French, the official language of Amnesty International, The World Health Organization, The United Nations, The International Olympic Committee, the Red Cross, and Doctors without Borders, among others.

And while there is no doubt that there is a dramatic increase in the study of Spanish as a second language in the United States, this essay should make it clear that the study of Spanish does not preclude the study of French (or vice versa). In fact, our growing population of Hispanophone students may constitute a new population of French language students and, eventually, a highly qualified cadre of French language teachers for the future.

As we move ahead, it may be helpful to insist that French is *not* a foreign language. It continues to be acquired and used as an integral language of our contemporary American cultural, political, and industrial life.

ⁱ Source: *The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center Catalog*, Chapter 2, updated June 2003.

ⁱⁱ Finkenstaedt, Thomas and Dieter Wolff (1973). *Ordered profusion; studies in dictionaries and the English lexicon*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universität.

ⁱⁱⁱ Source: www.ethnologue.com

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Modern Quebec: Cutting-Edge Culture in French

Jean-Benoît Nadeau and Julie Barlow*

Of the 32 million people who live in Canada, nine million speak French. Most of these live in the province of Quebec, where they have built a modern society, linked with the rest of the world. The rest of Canada's French-speaking society, mostly the Acadians of New Brunswick and the Franco-Ontarians of Ontario, is also a part of this dynamic situation thanks to a number of enterprises. The following is an overview of what is going on in French-speaking Canada.

The Arts

The cultural and artistic scene in Quebec is very dynamic, in part because the province's numerous local television and radio stations, newspapers and magazines are voracious consumers of homegrown content. Quebec is the only province in Canada that is a net exporter of cultural products.

Many high-quality television series in Quebec reach audiences of a million viewers, a very high ratio in a market of only nine million viewers. Satirical comedies, like *Les Bougons*, have even hit the two-million viewer mark. Claude Meunier's comedy *La P'tite Vie* even reached an unheard-of four million viewers. *Un gars, une fille* has been translated or adapted in 20 countries including the United States, where it appeared as *Love Bites*. The *Les Bougons* series was such a phenomenon that it was adapted for France and *The New York Times* wrote a feature story on it.

In the movie industry, Quebec has an annual production of about 30 quality films, which is large given the size of its market. Several local films have even outsold big American movies such as *Titanic* at the box office. A number of Quebec directors, including Denys Arcand (*The Decline of the American Empire*, *The Barbarian Invasions*, *Days of Darkness*, *Jesus of Montreal*), have been frequent nominees at the France's Cannes Films Festival and the Academy Awards. Quebec film production was particularly successful over the last decade. Jean-François Pouliot's *Seducing Dr. Lewis* won the Audience Award at the Sundance Film Festival. *The Barbarian Invasions*, by Denys Arcand, won an Oscar as the best foreign film, as well as two awards in Cannes – one for best screenplay – as well as three French Génie Awards. And Jean-Marc Lavallée's *C.R.A.Z.Y.* won the Audience Award at the AFI Fest in Los Angeles and Best Canadian Film Award at the Toronto International Film Festival. In 2009, 20-year-old Xavier Dolan

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created a sensation at Cannes with his first film, *J'ai tué ma mère*, which won three of the four awards at the Directors' Fortnight.

On the music scene, the songs of Marie-Jo Thériault, Malajube, Beau Dommage, Mes Aïeux, Daniel Lavoie, and Daniel Bélanger were all selected by English-speakers to be part of *49 songs from the 49th parallel*, a tribute to President Barack Obama's first visit to Canada. This is a mere sample of the dynamic francophone music scene north of the border, where for 15 years the success of Francophone singers has been unfailing. In Paris, where Quebec musicians have become recognized for their particular sound, musicians like Isabelle Boulay, Garou, and Daniel Lavoie are hugely popular. Composers like Jean Leloup and Ariane Moffat have recently made waves, and the rock musicals of Quebec lyricist Luc Plamondon – *Starmania* and *Notre Dame de Paris* – have made him a household name throughout the entire francophone world. In classical music, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, led by the American conductor Kent Nagano, is regarded as the best in Canada and one of the best in North America.

In literature, Quebec publishers release more than 4,000 titles every year. Quebec authors, who are particularly prolific, have won a number of international literary awards. In addition to Yann's Martel Booker Prize for *The Life of Pi*, these include Marie-Claire Blais (Prix Médicis for *A season in the life of Emmanuel*), Anne Hébert (Prix Fémina for *In the Shadow of the Wind*) as well as Acadian author Antonine Maillet's Prix Goncourt for *Pélagie-la-charrette*. Quebec has many distinguished and prolific authors with international readerships: Réjean Ducharme (*The Swallower Swallowed*), Yves Beauchemin (*The Alley Cat*), Neil Bissoondath (*The Unyielding Clamour of the Night*), Ying Chen (*Ingratitude*), Arlette Cousture (*Les filles de Caleb*), Marie Laberge (*Le Goût du bonheur*), Dany Laferrière (the American autobiography series of 11 books) and Michel Tremblay (*Sisters-in-Law*, *Plateau Mont-Royal Chronicles*) are all translated into dozens of languages.

Thanks to *Cirque du Soleil* and its ceaselessly creative new spectacles, Quebec has become a world-famous producer of circus art. Currently, Cirque du Soleil has 20 shows running simultaneously worldwide, including six in Las Vegas and one in New York City. *Cirque du Soleil* has also spawned productions like *Cirque Éloïze* and *Les 7 Doigts de la main*, as well as a National Circus School and *Cavalia*, a show now touring the world that combines horse-dressage and circus art.

In multimedia arts, the names Robert Lepage and Michel Lemieux stand out, with productions that combine acting, singing and new technologies. Robert Lepage, whom *The New York Times* called a “techno-chemist,” has staged shows ranging from rock artist Peter Gabriel’s tour to Berlioz’ *Damnation de Faust* for the Metropolitan Opera.

In dance, the work of companies like *Marie Chouinard’s Company*, *Lalala Human Steps* and *Les Grands Ballets Canadiens* from Montreal are acclaimed in capitals throughout the world. Thanks to the work of the dance production company *Tangente*, Montreal has gained a reputation as having one of the most dynamic choreography scenes in North America. Edouard Lock, of *Lalala Human Steps*, is credited for having invented a new form of choreographic expression.

Science and Research

Quebec might be famous for the invention of the snowmobile, but present research and development endeavors in the province go far beyond the snow industry. For example, voice compression technology ACELP, patented at the University of Sherbrooke, made the development of modern cell phone technology possible. ACELP is the central component of the three billion cellular telephones being sold by 200 companies worldwide.

In Quebec City, the Institut National d’Optique (INO) produces dozens of inventions every year, a number of which are used by the U.S. Army, NASA, and American industry in fields as varied as fiber optics and food transformation.

Quebec is also at the forefront of the development of nanotechnology. The Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières is currently working on integrating nanotechnologies to develop hyper-sensitive detection papers for the airport security industry as well as infection tests for the prevention of pandemics. It is also working on technologies using wood in the chemical refining industry, particularly in producing wood-based ethanol fuel.

Industry

Quebec’s varied and successful industries are world leaders in a number of domains. They are known for their innovation and cutting-edge approach to problem-solving, whether in high tech areas such as energy and information technology, or in low-tech areas such as fashion.

Thanks to its vast hydroelectric potential, Quebec is the only region in North America that comes anywhere close to meeting the CO₂ targets set by the Kyoto Accord. Some of Quebec's dams, like Manic V and LG2, are among the largest in the world – and are open to visitors. Quebec's SNC-Lavalin was ranked as the world's number one “international engineering company” by the American magazine *Engineering News-Record*.

With Seattle and Toulouse, Montreal ranks in the top three aerospace centers in the world. Quebec accounts for 60% of Canada's Aerospace industry and exports 80% of its production. Its major brands include Pratt & Whitney Canada (jet engines), CAE (flight simulators), Héroux Devtech (landing gear), Spar (satellites), and airplane manufacturer Bombardier, whose Regional Jet and Dash-8 series are used by all U.S. airlines. After creating the Global Express business jet, Bombardier is now in the process of developing a new class of 100-seater airplanes, the C-Series.

In Quebec, 5,000 IT companies employ more than 140,000 people and produce a third of Canada's exports in the field. Quebec companies are household names in the visual effects industry as well as in video games, with the likes of Ubisoft, A2M, and Softimage (*Tom Clancy's Hawx*). Quebec has even opened a National School of Interactive Entertainment.

Montreal is home to half of Canada's industrial designers as well as half of Canada's fashion industry, thanks to its dynamic local manufacturing industry – unique in Canada. For design, this puts Montreal in the league of New York City and Los Angeles. Great names on the design scene include Jean-Claude Poitras, Philippe Dubuc, Marie Saint-Pierre, Marie Dumaine, and Anastasia Lomonova.

Tourism and Entertainment

Quebec has many renowned tourist attractions. Founded in 1608, Quebec City is North America's oldest continual settlement. The ramparts surrounding Old Quebec, now a World Heritage Site of UNESCO, are the only remaining fortified city walls in the Americas north of Mexico. Some parts of Old Montreal have remained unchanged since the city was founded in 1642.

Quebeckers have founded a series of fantastic festivals, including Quebec City's Festival d'été, Montreal's Francolies, and Montreal's International Jazz Festival – the biggest jazz festival in the world, with 3,000 artists from 50 countries playing for some 2.5 million spectators. Montreal's Just For Laughs Festival

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attracts two million spectators each year and has spawned franchises in Nantes, Toronto, and Chicago.

Winter lovers shouldn't miss the Quebec Winter Carnival. Another event, the "Red Bull Crashed Ice" downhill race, which takes place right in the old city, features skaters wearing hockey gear speeding down ice-covered ramps. The spectacle attracts crowds of 85,000. Ice-canoe racing is also growing in popularity: there are now three official races, in which 44 teams compete on the frozen St. Lawrence River, pulling their canoes over huge chunks of floating ice. Spectators and participants then cool off with a drink at Quebec's unique Ice Hotel, a hotel made out of ice!

Between June and August, whale-watchers can view up to 12 species of whales feeding in the St. Lawrence River east of Quebec City, including the beluga, the humpback whale, and blue whale, the world's largest animal.

Montreal is North America's cycling capital, with the highest proportion of citizens who bicycle to work and for fun on the continent. The province's numerous cycling trails all have heavy traffic. Every June, 30,000 cyclists bike around the island of Montreal on the Tour de l'Île circuit, a course geared towards families. Montreal even developed a new concept of self-serve bicycle stations called Bixi, which was listed in Time Magazine as one of 2008's most promising inventions: the concept will be implemented in Minneapolis, among other cities.

In team sports, the Montreal Canadiens hockey team, which celebrates its Centennial in 2009, is the most famous professional hockey team in the world. The Bell Centre arena is the second largest in North America and is perhaps the world's busiest. The Montreal Alouettes are one of Canada's best-known football teams. Soccer has recently displaced hockey and baseball as the most popular children's sport in Quebec, and Montreal recently built a new soccer stadium for its local team, the Impact.

Language and Society

Quebec French is as varied as the French spoken in France. It has its own slang (called *joual*) and its own formal speech variety, which can be heard on state-run radio and television Radio-Canada. The difference between Quebec French and French from France is similar to the difference between American English and British English. Quebec French is neither older nor more archaic than European French; it simply evolved in a different way over the centuries.

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Because of Quebec's rich production in the arts and in industry, many of Quebec's linguistic novelties have entered the mainstream of international French or are widely enough known not to need any explanation. Quebec was the first francophone society in the world to feminize job titles and functions, a practice that has been adopted by both Switzerland and Belgium and that is progressively entering the mainstream in France. Quebec's *Grand dictionnaire terminologique* provides on-line translation for roughly a million English technical terms in hundreds of fields, and receives 50 million information requests per year, half of which come from Europe – meaning it is consulted online 25 times more than the French Academy site is!

Each year, Quebec welcomes 20,000 foreign students, mostly to its universities. Tuition fees are very competitive, and Quebec university diplomas are universally recognized.

Quebec devotes a lot of attention to its educational system of primary and secondary schools, which are free and open to all. Students of primary and secondary levels regularly get top ranking in reading, writing, and math according to studies by the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development).

Thanks to universal health care and social programs in the province, Quebecers have higher life expectancy than Americans and one of the lowest child mortality rates in the world. Health services in Quebec are universal and free: Quebec's Medicare (*Régie d'assurance maladie*) is one of the models currently being examined by President Obama for the creation of a universal health program in the United States.

Quebec has also created a unique model of subsidized daycare that provides families with full-time childcare for seven dollars per day, per child. In Ontario, where 500,000 Franco-Ontarians live, the French school councils are considered a model for helping ethnic minorities succeed. In addition, 300,000 English-speaking Canadian children – about 10% of the country's students – are enrolled in French immersion programs.

Finally, as far as its cuisine is concerned, Quebec's culinary production, while strongly influenced by French cuisine, has gained international renown on its own. In Montreal, chef Normand Laprise of *Toqué!* has created a whole new culinary school using local farm products. Many chefs have followed in his

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footsteps, using quality produce from Quebec's dynamic farm industry, and even contributing to the creation of creating specific produce like Charlevoix lamb and dozens of award-winning brands of cheese that are the envy of chefs even in France – Quebec accounts for 62% of Canadian cheese production. Martin Picard of *Au Pied de cochon*, invented a new recipe called *poutine au foie gras* (a dish consisting of French fries topped with fresh cheese curds, covered with brown gravy and foie gras). His TV series *Martin sur la route*, available on DVD, is also rehabilitating certain game meats like moose and snow goose.

International Affairs

Quebec is the only province in Canada that has developed its own international diplomatic service. Quebec has 24 foreign bureaus, including six in the United States, and one in Paris, Mexico City, Tokyo, Beijing, and other cities. Quebec is a founding member of the *Organisation internationale de la Francophonie*, where it sits on a par with the government of Canada, and another Canadian province, New Brunswick.

This was how Quebec came to play a key role in the creation of the UNESCO's Convention on Cultural Diversity. In 2009, Quebec diplomats succeeded in convincing the European Union and the government of Canada to launch negotiations for a free trade accord. Twenty years earlier, the province of Quebec had been the federal government's strongest supporter in the negotiations for a North American Free Trade Agreement that, since 1994, has joined the economies of Canada, Mexico and the United States into the world's largest trade zone.

Francophones in Canada participate enthusiastically in many networks of international aid and advocacy, including Doctors without Borders and *Médecins du monde*, as well as Lawyers without Borders and Engineers without Borders. They are involved in various other international agencies like *L'Association francophone pour le savoir*, *L'Institut de l'Énergie et de l'environnement de la francophonie*, *L'Association internationale des mairies francophones* and even Francopol (the international training network of French-speaking police forces).

Law

Quebec is one of the rare jurisdictions in the world where civil law is practiced in both French and English. This gives Quebec lawyers a particular advantage, since most countries in the world (including most in the Americas) have a codified

system of civil law, mostly influenced by France's Civil Code. Quebec's new civil code has been one of the main models for Russia's and China's new civil codes.

In other Canadian provinces, which use Common Law systems, it is possible to study Common Law in French, notably at the University of Ottawa (the national capital, in Ontario) or at the University of Moncton, in New Brunswick (the center of modern Acadian culture). At McGill University, in Montreal, it is even possible to study both the Civil Code and Common Law in both in French and in English – a unique profile.

Bilingual Canadian lawyers who are trained in both legal systems are in high demand around the world, where they are sought as consultants and experts. Thanks to their expertise in Common Law in French, jurists at the University of Moncton recently helped write the Constitution of Mauritius, one of the most dynamic centers of growth in the Indian Ocean.

French – an American Language

Although the footprint of French in North America is smaller than that of Spanish or English, Quebec's contribution to ideas, invention and creation shows that French is also a language of progress. As an essential tool for anyone who wants to stay ahead of the game, French truly is an American language.

* Jean-Benoît Nadeau and Julie Barlow are journalists and the authors of *The Story of French* and *Sixty Million Frenchmen Can't Be Wrong*.

French Companies and Products in the United States

John Miles

Formerly of Wheaton College (IL), ACTFL, and ETS

With its annual GNP (gross national product) of 2.865 trillion dollars in 2008, the fifth largest in the world, France is a big player in the international market. Not only does it produce and sell large quantities of well-known food and drink items worldwide, but France is renowned for its chemical, pharmaceutical, aeronautical, and electronics industries, with plants and subsidiaries in many countries. There are about 24,000 French companies that export goods and services to the United States. French companies also own or have a major investment in more than 2,800 companies in this country, employing at least 550,000 people. One company, Sodexo, employs 120,000 people in North America in its food and facilities management services. Many of the French companies and their products are household names, and that doesn't just mean kitchen equipment (such as T-Fal, Krups, and Le Creuset) and yogurt (such as Yoplait and Dannon—in France, Danone—produced in the USA under franchise agreements).

In fact, it is hard to get away from French-made or French-inspired products. On your RCA television, you may watch the Sci-Fi Channel or USA Network or Canal+, or see ads for Sanofi-Aventis pharmaceuticals such as Nexium (“the purple pill”) and Allegra or for Maybelline by L'Oréal. In your driveway or perhaps your neighbors' there may be a car built by Nissan (more than 50% owned by French auto giant Renault), while going down the highway you might pass (or be passed by) a Mack truck, that quintessentially American carrier with the bulldog emblem actually owned by Volvo and Renault. You may stop at a Total service station to fill up your car or put air in your Michelin (also Uniroyal and Goodrich) tires. On vacation, you may travel to some interesting destination on Air France or in an Airbus plane possibly made in Toulouse, France, by the European consortium that includes a number of historically French companies. Perhaps you may go to a Club Med resort, take a ride in a Zodiac inflatable boat, or stop off at a Studio 6 or Motel 6, or a more upscale Sofitel or Novotel (all owned by Accor Hotels). Various members of the family might pick up a magazine such as *Car and Driver* or *ELLE, Road and Track* or *Woman's Day* (to mention a few owned by Hachette Filipacci) to read while sipping a Perrier or Evian water or one of the many alcoholic drinks (cognac, whisky, Absolut vodka, even Wild Turkey bourbon and California wines) owned and distributed by the Pernod-Ricard company.

It seems as though the commercial side of France is inextricably entwined with our daily lives. In fact, France has a strong investment in the United States, owning the sixth largest foreign investment in the US stock market, about 8% of the stocks (and US interests hold 10% of French stocks). French banks can be found in every major city. French restaurants are everywhere; some even have French chefs. French cheeses and wines are in every supermarket. Some stores sell baguettes that even taste like French bread (but that's another story!). In your area, you should be able to locate subsidiaries or partially French-owned businesses. In the major cities of all American regions, there is likely to be a French-American Chamber of Commerce, where you may be able to find further information about the French presence in your area.

In the meantime, see how many more names and specialties you can add to this select list of French companies or products in the United States.

• **Automotive:**

Michelin (Uniroyal-Goodrich): tires, online maps, tourism <http://www.michelin-us.com>

Renault-Nissan Alliance: cars, trucks <http://www.nissanglobal.com/EN/COMPANY/PROFILE/ALLIANCE/RENAULT01/index.html>

• **Aviation:**

EADS (European Aeronautics Defense and Space Company, (including **Dassault Aviation, Dassault Group, and Matra**): Airbus, satellites, arms, etc. <http://www.eads.com/1024/en/Homepage1024.html>

Air France-KLM: world's largest airline company http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Air_France-KLM

• **Beauty Products**

L'Oréal USA http://www.lorealusa.com/_en/_us/

Lancôme <http://www.lancome-usa.com/>

Phyto: hair products <http://www.phyto-usa.com/history.asp>

Yves Rocher <http://www.yvesrocherusa.com/>

• **Beverages**

Pernod Ricard: second largest distributor spirits and wine in USA <http://www.pernod-ricard-usa.com/about/>

Perrier: mineral water bottled at source in France, owned by Nestlé of Switzerland <http://www.usa.perrier.com/>

• **Business**

Capgemini: consulting, technology, outsourcing <http://www.us.capgemini.com>

• **Communications Technology**

Alcatel-Lucent: IP technologies solutions (includes Bell Labs) <http://www.alcatellucent.com/wps/portal/aboutus>

• **Consumer Products**

BiC: pens, shavers, lighters, etc. http://www.bicworld.com/index_en.asp

• **Entertainment**

Atari (Infogrames Entertainment SA): online computer games <http://www.atari.com/us/>

Vivendi Universal: media (Canal+), music (Universal Music), publishing, video games (Activision Blizzard), entertainment (20% of Universal Studios), advertising <http://www.vivendi.com/vivendi/Company-history>

Thomson: RCA consumer electronics, GE phones, in-store media, Technicolor, etc. <http://www.thomson.net/GlobalEnglish/Pages/default.aspx>

UbiSoft: computer games <http://www.ubisoftgroup.com/>

• **Hotels/Real Estate**

Accor: Sofitel, Novotel, Ibis, Motel-6, <http://www.accor-na.com/accor/ana.asp>

Louis Dreyfus Property Group:** e.g., Four Seasons, NYC <http://www.louisdreyfus.com/about/overview.html>

• **Household Goods**

Groupe SEB: T-Fal, Moulinex, Krups

<http://www.tfalusa.com/About/Groupe+SEB/Groupe+SEB.htm>

Le Creuset: cast-iron cookware

<http://www.lecreuset.com/en-us/About-Us/>

• **Industrial Products**

Air Liquide: gases for hospitals, industry, and environment

<http://www.us.airliquide.com>

Lafarge: building materials, concrete

<http://www.lafargenorthamerica.com/wps/portal/>

Total: natural gas, petroleum, chemicals, refining, distribution

http://www.total.com/en/group/presentation/home_group/group_presentation_2330.htm

• **Luxury Goods**

LVMH Group (Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy): over 60 prestigious brands (Moët et Chandon champagne, Dior perfumes, Louis Vuitton leather goods, etc.)

<http://www.lvmh.com/>

• **Publishing**

Hachette Filipacchi Media: 18 magazines; books

<http://www.hfmus.com>

Hachette Book Group: books

<http://www.hachette-us.com>

*Note 1 – recent acquisitions and sales may affect the accuracy of this information; additional information (sometimes not up-to-date) can be found on BambooWeb Dictionary, which lists many French companies (<http://www.bamboo.com>)

** Note 2 – Louis Dreyfus SAS is a family-owned conglomerate also dealing in commodities (e.g., grain), energy, and electricity distribution worldwide.

Vous parlez déjà le français, sans doute! **YOU most likely already speak French!**

Even if you think you only speak English, chances are that you already know and use many French words and phrases. More than 30% of the English language is directly or indirectly derived from French. It is estimated that English speakers who have never studied French know about 15,000 French words.*

Here is a list of French words culled from several sources that are used by anglophones. How many of these words do you actively use? How many others have you heard used? Which ones do you need to learn in order to use the words correctly in conversation or in writing?

à la carte	barrette	brochure
à la mode	bâton	buffet
à propos	beau	bureau
adieu	beaucoup	cache
adroit	beaux-arts	cachet
aide-mémoire	beige	café
actrice	belle	café au lait
amour-propre	belle époque	camaraderie
Anglophone	bête noire	canapé
apéritif	bijou	canard
Après ski	billet doux	capable
armoire	biscuit	caprice
art nouveau	bistro	casserole
attaché	bizarre	cassette
au contraire	blanche	carte blanche
au jus	blonde	cause célèbre
au pair	bon appétit	cent
au revoir	bonbon	cerise
automobile	bonjour	C'est la guerre.
avant-garde	bon vivant	C'est la vie.
avenue	bon voyage	chacun à son goût
avoirdupoids	bouillon	chaise longue
à votre santé	boulevard	champagne
baccalauréat	bouquet	charade
bagatelle	bouquet garni	château
bain-marie	bourgeois	chef d'oeuvre
ballet	boutique	chic
baroque	bric-à-brac	cinéma vérité

clairvoyant
clef
coiffure
collage
comme ci, comme ça
commode
communiqué
conduit
concierge
conférence
connaisseur
contretemps
cordon bleu
costume
coup d'état
coup de grâce
coupe
courage
crème brûlée
crêpe de chine
crème de la crème
critique
croissant
croûtons
cuisine
cul-de-sac
débutante
déclassé
décolleté
découpage
déjà vu
de luxe
démarche
demi-tasse
dénouement
de rigueur
dernier cri
dessert
détail
détente
dévoté
discothèque

double entendre
du jour
eau de toilette
éclair
élan
employée
encore
enfant terrible
en masse
ennui
en garde
en route
ensemble
entente
entre nous
entrée
entourage
étagère
étude
fait accompli
faux-pas
femme fatale
fiancé, fiancée
filet mignon
film noir
gamine
gauche
genre
garage
gourmet
grandeur
guillotine
haute couture
hommage
hors d'oeuvre
hôtel
idée fixe
in lieu of
jeu de mots
je ne sais quoi
joie de vivre
laisser-faire

loyal
maître d'hôtel
malaise
mardi gras
matinée
mayonnaise
ménage (à trois)
menu
merci
meringue
montage
morgue
mot juste
mousse
muscle
n'est-ce pas?
née
nom de guerre
nom de plume
nonpareil
nouveau riche
nouvelle cuisine
nuance
objet d'art
omelette
panache
papier mâché
passage
passe-partout
pastiche
pension
photo
petite
pièce de résistance
pied à terre
pirouette
plié
plus ça change
pot-pourri
praline
prêt-à-porter
prix fixe

protégé	RSVP (Répondez, s'il	sauté
purée	vous plaît)	souvenir
qui vive	route	tableau
quiche	routine	tact
raconteur	royal	tête à tête
raisin	sabotage	touché
raison d'être	salon	tour
rapprochement	sang-froid	tour de force
recherché	sans	trompe l'oeil
régime	sans souci	vichyssoise
renaissance	savoir-faire	village
rendez-vous	savoir-vivre	violet
restaurant	soigné	vive la différence
risqué	soirée	vis à vis
roman à clé (clef)	sommelier	Voilà !
rouge	soufflé	
	surface	

Sources:

Cooper, Laurel, Alliance Française de Tucson

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French Words and Expressions in English:

french.about.com/library/bl-frenchinenglish-list.htm

Les mots migrants, semaine de la langue française 2007:

<http://www.semainedf.culture.fr/site2007/MENU/Menu.html>

Winokur, Jon, *Je Ne Sais What ? : A Reader's Guide to de rigueur Frenglish for readers, writers, and speakers.* New York: Dutton, the Penguin Group, 1995.

Et Vous?
Parent's Response to Parent Booklet

Please **REMOVE, SIGN and RETURN** this page to your child's French teacher.

Oui (Yes!), I have read and discussed this booklet with my child (name):

Booklet title

Parent signature

What did you read that was the most interesting? The most surprising?

What information about French would you like that is not included in this booklet?

How do you think your child's life has already been enhanced by studying French? How might it be enhanced in the future?

How do you see your child using French later in his or her education and/or later in life?

What activities have you already provided for your child or intend to provide that will support her or his learning of French?

Comments:

Merci beaucoup!