

## Family Shares Passion for French

Over forty years ago I learned French in grammar school, and my love of French continued through my graduation from Northwestern University Law School. My twenty-year-old daughter and twenty-three-year-old son both learned French in grammar school, then took it again in junior high, and both enjoyed French Club and competing in French language contests.

My family believes that our experiences in learning French have positively impacted our lives. First, fluency in a foreign language is a plus when applying to schools as well as applying for jobs. Second, fluency in a foreign language gives one confidence and a sense of accomplishment.

My son's activities in his high school French Club were viewed as positive achievement when he applied to highly selective colleges. As an architecture student at Washington University in St. Louis, my son spent six 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 studies.

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. I attribute my children's exposure to learning French and experiencing the culture as broadening their interests and giving them an appreciation for other cultures.

As for my own experience, learning French and appreciating their culture gave me a love for French fashion. Both my daughter and I are fans of Chanel and Louis Vuitton accessories. All of us also enjoy dining at French restaurants. Our favorite when we are all together and we feel like "escaping" to another culture is Mon Ami Gabi. It's great to be able to figure out the menu because we understand French. Finally, I express appreciation to Donna Czarnecki, my children's French teacher, as she inspired us to love the French language and people passionately.

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