

GCSE FRENCH -EXAM PREPARATION



What you have achieved so far:

60% of your GCSE!

Year 10 Speaking (15%)

Year 11 Speaking (15%)

2 pieces of writing (30%)

What you still have to do:

Listening exam – Foundation or Higher (20%) – May 2016

Reading exam – Foundation or Higher (20%) – May 2016

How you can best prepare for the reading and listening:

The keys to reading and listening are vocabulary and practice. In order to help you prepare thoroughly, there are numerous resources which you can refer to and use.

Vocabulary support

Context homework booklets – your context homework booklets are the first stop for vocabulary. You will have learnt some of the vocabulary for tests in class but not all of it. Start by ticking off the words you know on each page to reduce the amount of vocabulary you still need to learn.

AQA GCSE French full vocabulary list – if you want a full vocabulary list, it is available on Moodle to download or use online. Reduce the list to make it manageable by highlighting words you already know. Remember you need to recognise the words and translate from French to English.

Online vocabulary resources – There are a large number of online resources for learning vocabulary:

Memrise – set up a free account, look for AQA GCSE French vocabulary and start playing. Earn points by successfully learning the words. Play online wherever you are!

Duolingo – not directly linked to the course but a great free way to learn generic vocabulary and revise the basics.

Linguascope – get the login details from your teacher. Intermediate level is aimed at GCSE but Beginner level is also good for revising the basic words and phrases you will need.

cRaMIT – app available from the App-Store or Google Play. It isn't free but it is sponsored by the exam board.

BBC Bitesize French – free listening and reading practice with exam-style questions.

NOTE

You could do 2 papers of the same tier (foundation/higher) or a mix.

NOTE

All homework booklets can be found on Moodle.

Vocabulary learning strategies

Cover-test-check, write them out, read them out loud, get somebody to test you, use an online app on your phone or tablet (on the bus?, when you're bored?), record yourself saying the words and play them back.

See overleaf for more detail.

Develop your reading and listening skills

There are many ways to develop your skills in reading and listening so that you can understand recordings and texts more easily. Here are a few strategies to get you started:

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- 1) Revise the grammar** – while the emphasis is on vocabulary, it is essential to be able to recognise verbs in different tenses, understand prepositions and pick out meaning from the structures used. Use your notes in your exercise book to revise and connect to www.languagesonline.org.uk to practise.
- 2) Tune your ear in to the language** – playing the radio in the background, without even focusing on it, is a great way of tuning your ear in to the language. Find an online radio station in French (google ‘French radio stations’) and play it while doing other things. Most stations play a good mix of French and English music and while the presenters speak quickly, the listening exam will seem slow in comparison!
- 3) Read things which interest you** – remember, languages are not just a school subject, they are being used to write about everything and anything. Find articles online about things which interest you in French (music, cinema, sport, fashion...) and read about them in the language. Note down new words and ask your teacher about the more challenging bits. Your vocabulary knowledge will soar!
- 4) Review your homework booklets** – go back over reading texts in homework booklets as this will help you to pick out topic specific structures and phrases.
- 5) Past papers** – your teacher will guide you towards past papers when it is the right time for you to try them (i.e. when you have covered the topics). Always make sure you do them in exam conditions and then go over them to find out where you went wrong and how you can avoid errors in future.
- 6) Use a revision guide** – there are a number of revision guides available to purchase for AQA GCSE languages. Make sure you get the A* - G guide as the 9-1 guide is for the new course which you aren't doing. Ask your teacher for advice.

Vocab learning strategies

Clouds & Categories - Divide your vocab list into categories (e.g nouns, adjectives, verbs, topics or any other random way that you find helps you remember). Give each ‘cloud’ a name.

Cover & Say - Read your vocab list to yourself a few times in both languages. Cover the English words then say what you think the target language means. Check.

Cognates & Reminders - You need 3 columns: Target language word, English word, Cognate/Reminder. Go through the vocab list and identify which words are easy to remember – write same/similar in the Cognates column. If the word isn't the same, come up with your own reminder, no matter how crazy that may be – the key is that you remember the words.

Write it down - Read the whole vocab list then cover the English. Write down the meaning, then check to see if you are right.

Partner testing - Take turns to see how many words you can get right in the space of one minute

Post-it notes – put difficult words on post-it notes and stick them around your house / room

Spider-diagrams / mind-maps - group words in a way that helps you remember them.

Highlight - this will help you sift out the words that always cause you problems; keep going through your AQA list until you feel in control of all of the vocabulary.