

French 1B (Grades 7, and 8)
2011-2012

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Course Description

French IB is equivalent to the second half of French I at the Upper School. French IB continues to build upon important foundational skills acquired in French IA and continues to focus on communication as the primary goal. Receptive language (listening and reading) and expressive language (speaking and writing) are learned using the immersion approach. Students are exposed to as much of the French language and culture as humanly possible within a classroom setting. This helps students begin to think in French as opposed to translating from English. Students are encouraged to come out of their comfort zones and to use all their senses and multiple intelligences through role-play, dialogue, poetry, song, movement, food, realia magazines, books, and language labs. Through these activities, students learn to listen 'attentively' and 'empathetically' in order to internalize new phonemes and language patterns and, furthermore, to understand meaning within a cultural context that is not their own.

Learning Objectives and Benchmarks

French IB Benchmarks in *Language Recognition Skills* are as follows: 1. Actively listens and discovers meanings of new vocabulary expressions and grammatical patterns in context of visual clues, gestures, and previous knowledge; and 2. Reads dialogues, letters, poems, and paragraphs focusing on familiar words and cognates to discover main ideas. French IB benchmarks in *Language Production Skills* are as follows: 1. Reacts to statements and questions with four- to five-word French phrases in near-native pronunciation; 2. Applies core grammar concepts accurately in controlled oral and written exercises; and 3. Writes coherent sentences and short paragraphs about familiar themes using learned French spelling and grammatical rules.

Preparation for Class/ Course Materials

Discovering French Nouveau Bleu 1 textbook, Bleu 1 Workbook, Bleu 1 Activité pour tous Workbook, DVD's, CD-Rom programs, CD's, realia magazines, songs, poems, dialogue, and foods are all part of the French IB course materials.

Methods of Instruction

The method of instruction for French IB is based on brain research and Gardner's multiple intelligences. For most of us, learning a language other than our maternal language is a challenging endeavor after the age of about eleven, which is when the language centers of the brain have reached maturity and become more fixed. Linguists say that the window for speech recognition starts to close down as early as ten months of age, though the circuitry for picking up syntax stays open until age five or six. The circuits of acquiring vocabulary never close. Fortunately, our brain is malleable and language learning at any age is a worthwhile experience on many levels. It strengthens the brain as new neurological connections are made, and the language areas of the temporal and frontal lobe grow. In order to help create and to build

strong neurological connections for the French language, all of the multiple intelligences are targeted through music, movement, math, stories, songs, poems, pictures, cooperative groups, intrapersonal work, language labs, reading, writing, realia magazines and items from France, current affairs, guests, and food. We create meaningful and emotional connections to the French language and culture in the school environment.

Assessment

Different point values are assigned to all aspects of the student's efforts to attain fluency in the French language. The student's accumulated points in each category of academic performance will be divided by the total points possible at each marking period. Participation in class, staying in French, homework, preparation, materials management, dictations, recitations, quizzes, unit tests, projects, and the cumulative final exam are all areas of formal assessment. Each student maintains a portfolio of their work as a way of demonstrating their growth throughout the year.

Projected Course Schedule

French IB covers the following four major units and builds upon the four units already covered in French IA : Unit 5 - Visiting a French City, Unit 6 - Buying Clothes, Unit 7- Leisure Activities , and Unit 8 - Food and Meals.