

MS French I

Curriculum Guide (including Course Objectives, Weekly Content, and Scope and Sequence)

Course Description

Students begin their introduction to French with fundamental building blocks in four key areas of foreign language study: listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing. The course consists of 180 lesson days formatted in an intuitive calendar view, which can be divided into two 90-day semesters. The course represents an ideal blend of language learning pedagogy and online learning. As students begin the course, they construct their own Avatar that accumulates “Avatar bucks”—by performing well on course tasks—to use to purchase materials (clothing, gadgets, scenery, etc.) at the “Avatar store”. Each unit consists of an ongoing adventure story, a new vocabulary theme and grammar concept, numerous interactive games reinforcing vocabulary and grammar, reading and listening comprehension activities, speaking and writing activities, and multimedia cultural presentations covering major French-speaking areas in Europe and across the globe. The course has been carefully aligned to national standards as set forth by ACTFL (the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages).

Course length: Two semesters

Materials: French-English dictionary is recommended

Prerequisites: None

Overall Course Objectives

The Middle School French 1 course helps students:

- Engage in language learning
- Master common vocabulary terms and phrases
- Comprehend a wide range of grammar patterns
- Instigate and continue simple conversations, and respond appropriately to basic conversational prompts
- Generate language incorporating basic vocabulary and a limited range of grammar patterns
- Read, write, speak, and listen for meaning in basic French
- Analyze and compare cultural practices, products, and perspectives of various French-speaking countries
- Regularly assess progress in proficiency through quizzes, tests, and speaking/writing submissions
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Recurring Content

- **Vocabulary Theme**
 - Each unit presents a new set of vocabulary words through various self-correcting activities. A printable vocabulary list, which includes pronunciation, is also provided.
- **Grammar Concept**
 - Each unit introduces a new grammatical pattern. The concept is introduced through sentence comparisons and presented in a printable explanation of the pattern.
- **Reinforcement Activities**
 - A range of interactive games (incrementally increasing in challenge) helps students reinforce vocabulary and grammar concepts. These activities may be completed multiple times so that students can better retain and apply the new information. Students accumulate “Avatar bucks” by performing well on these and other interactive challenges.
- **Diglot Weave™ Story**
 - Each unit students follow a new episode of an immersive Diglot Weave™ story. The story is told several times, each time with more French woven in. (Diglot comes from the roots "di" meaning *two* and "glot" meaning *language*. These stories weave together the students' native language and the target language.) These stories provide a narrative structure to the course as well as a fun and linguistically-rich context for optimal comprehension.
- **“Stretch” Activities**
 - Each unit students work through an inventive and challenging activity to comprehend involved passages in French, or to generate their own sentences in French. Stretch activities include zany performances, core content-based instruction, familiar folktales presented in French, simple narratives that students string together from basic building blocks, and many more. These activities help students work creatively in French to communicate and make meaning.
- **Presentation of Culture through CultureGrams™ and Culture Videos**
 - Each unit students learn about various cultural aspects (e.g. practices, products, and perspectives) of a French-speaking country. CultureGrams™ are multi-media cultural presentations that cover a wide range of topics such as gestures, etiquette, history, food, and more. Culture videos present students with short video explanations about cultural aspects of various French-speaking countries from a native of that country.
- **“Gameshow” Review**
 - Each unit students review material from the unit’s content in a “Gameshow” that builds on the motivations and friendly competition of familiar television game shows. Students are pitted against a virtual opponent and earn “Avatar bucks” as they demonstrate their mastery of the unit’s material. The burden of review for the unit assessment is thus transformed to a fun and engaging game.
- **“Out of Seat” Activities**
 - Several times during the year, students are given opportunities to use the language “outside” the course. These are specific assignments directing students to interact in a genuine way with the French language or French-speaking cultures.

- **Realia**
 - Several times during the year, students work to decipher the key messages and significant details in Realias. In Realias, students confront authentic or semi-authentic texts in real-world, everyday situations. These encounters are neither trivial, nor far beyond a student's comprehension level, but are texts to which students can respond and that move them to a deeper understanding of the target language and culture at the same time. Sample texts include a restaurant menu, a grocery store receipt, a student class schedule, etc.
- **Oral and Written Activities**
 - Each unit, students complete oral and written activities. These activities give students a chance to become more familiar with the speaking and writing patterns of French by applying them in communicative situations.
- **Listening and Reading Comprehension Activities**
 - Each unit contains either a focused listening or a focused reading comprehension practice. These practices help students to develop listening and reading comprehension skills. They are based on the vocabulary, grammar, or culture concepts presented that unit, and follow up assessments challenge students to identify the main ideas and significant details of texts based on everyday communicative situations.
- **Assessments**
 - Diglot Weave™ comprehension quizzes verify that students are following the ongoing immersive Diglot Weave™ story and that they are picking up key ideas and vocabulary as they work along.
 - Focused Listening or Reading quizzes verify that students comprehend the main ideas or significant details of target passages or conversations.
 - Culture comprehension quizzes verify that students have captured facts and understandings from the cultural presentations.
 - End-of-unit quizzes assess students' mastery of the vocabulary words and grammar concept presented that unit, and include an oral or written assessment.
 - Midterm and Semester Exams assess students' mastery of the semester's contents up to their current place on the calendar, and include oral and written assessments.

Course Scope and Sequence

Semester 1

	Vocabulary Topic	Grammar Pattern	"Stretch" Activity*	Culture
Unit 1	Greetings	Parts of Speech Nouns, definite articles & gender Definite articles <i>Tu vs. Vous</i>	<i>Puzzle Sentences</i>	France

Unit 2	School Alphabet Guide to French Rhythm & Accents	Indefinite Articles	Thinking en Français	France
Unit 3	Descriptions Colors	French subject pronouns	<i>The Broken Window</i>	France
Unit 4	Countries and Nationalities Numbers 0-30	Present tense of the 3 major verb groups	<i>Points, Lines, and Figures</i>	Monaco
Unit 5	Common verbs #1	Making compound sentences	<i>Toward Fluency</i>	Monaco
Unit 6	Common verbs #2 Telling Time	The Imperative	<i>The Key of the Key's Kingdom</i>	Switzerland
Unit 7	Common verbs #3 Conjunctions	Simple negative <i>ne...pas</i>	<i>Chatter at a Royal Ball</i>	Switzerland
Unit 8	Days, Months, and Seasons Numbers 30-100	Expressions with <i>Avoir</i>	<i>Toward Fluency</i>	Rwanda

Semester 2

Unit 1	Hobbies	Asking questions	<i>Focus on the Language 1-8</i>	Rwanda
Unit 2	Food (part 1)	"de" and "à" and their contractions	<i>Points, Lines, and Figures</i>	French Polynesia
Unit 3	Food (part 2)	<i>Faire versus jouer</i>	<i>From Word to Discourse</i>	French Polynesia
Unit 4	Family	Selected adverbs	<i>Chatter at a Royal Ball</i>	Canada
Unit 5	Places	<i>C'est versus Il est...</i>	<i>Focus on the Language 9-14</i>	Canada
Unit 6	Animals	Comparatives/Superlatives	<i>Creating Your Own Mini-Story Plots</i>	Mali

Unit 7	Shopping	Expressions with <i>faire</i>	<i>Stringing Together Your Own Narratives</i>	Mali
Unit 8	Weather Expressions	Forms of <i>quel</i> and <i>lequel</i>	<i>Chatter at a Royal Ball</i>	Chad

*For a general description of “Stretch” Activities, see heading under Recurring Unit Content.