



Step Up to French A Level

at Sir John Cass & Red Coat

Why French?

Congratulations on selecting French A Level. You have opened the door of opportunity! Studying French will enrich your life, giving you opportunities to travel abroad and to learn about different cultures and different ways of life. Studying a language will also enhance your life chances, as universities and employers tend to prefer candidates who can speak more than one language.

Did you know that linguists are better communicators and writers and have a better understanding of their own language too? Students who study languages do better in tests and learning a language will improve the functionality of your brain and improve your memory skills.

French is currently spoken by approximately 300 million people in a huge range of countries. Knowing French means you could communicate with a huge number of speakers around the world!



Studying A Level French will enable you to learn the French language and you will also gain an in-depth insight into the cultural, social, political, and artistic aspects of the French speaking country/countries you will study.

A Level French – Introduction to the course

At A Level, we follow the AQA syllabus.



What will I learn?

During this course you will develop your linguistic skills alongside your understanding of the culture and society of the countries where French is spoken.

You will study:

- technological and social change, looking at the multicultural nature of Francophone society.
- highlights of Francophone artistic culture, French regional identity and the cultural heritage of past civilisations.
- aspects of the diverse political landscape of the Francophone world.
- the influence of the past on present-day Francophone communities.

Throughout your studies, you learn the language in the context of Francophone countries and issues and influences which have shaped them. You will study texts and film and will have the opportunity to carry out independent research on an area of your choice.

Course structure

The AQA A level in French comprises three units.

Paper 1: Listening, reading and writing

Paper 2: Writing (Essay on a novel + a film)

Paper 3: Speaking (involving discussion on a topic of your choice)

General Topic Areas for A level French

The topics you will cover are as follows:

Year 1

Aspects of Francophone society

- Modern and traditional values
- Cyberspace
- Equal rights

Artistic culture in the Francophone world

- Modern day idols
- French regional identity
- Cultural and Linguistic heritage

Year 2

Multiculturalism in Francophone society

- Immigration
- Racism
- Integration

Aspects of political life in the Francophone world

- Today's youth, tomorrow's citizens
- Political engagement across generations
- Popular movements



Transition Activities:

How can you prepare for A Level French?

You are to be set three tasks. These are linked to skills you will need at French A Level. We will focus on:

1. Use of key language structures for A Level
2. Analysis of a film
3. Understanding how to research a French-language topic

Key Language Structures for A Level Transition:

High Frequency Verbs

avoir **pouvoir**

être **devoir**

aller **vouloir**

faire **savoir**

Create a wall chart displaying these verbs in all their forms and in the following tenses:

- present tense
- perfect tense
- imperfect tense
- simple future tense
- conditional tense

Memorise these verbs thoroughly and test yourself regularly.

Sentence Starters

Ce qui me frappe le plus...What strikes me the most is...
 Ce que je ne peux pas supporter...What I cannot bear is...
 Je m'inquiète beaucoup car...I worry very much because...
 Ce qui est bien c'est qu'on peut...What's good is that you can...
 L'avantage c'est qu'il y a...The advantage is that there is...

Write 3 sentences using each of these sentence starters. Give your opinion on:

- Immigration and multicultural society
- Changes in society
- French culture

Complex Connectives

Ce que je trouve étonnant... - What I find astonishing...
 Comme je n'aime pas le conflit... - As I don't like confrontation...
 Puisque ce sera difficile... - Since this will be difficult...
 Grâce à... - Thanks to...
 À cause de... - Because of...
 Dès ce moment, j'ai décidé de... - From that moment, I decided to...
 Pendant que j'étais là - While I was there.
 Malgré - despite
 À la suite de - As a result of/following

Write 3 sentences using each of these connectives.

Research other connectives online and create a list.

Learn about other linking words from this website:[no website given?]

<https://www.frenchtoday.com/blog/french-vocabulary/linking-words>

Subjunctive mood

Autant que je sache..
 As far as I know...
 Il est important que je sois clair...
 It's important that I am clear...
 Il est nécessaire qu'on fasse ce qui est important dans la vie.
 It is necessary that we do what's important in life.
 Afin qu'on puisse... In order that you can...
 Il faut que je sois honnête... I must be honest
 Bien que je sache que ce n'est pas évident...
 Although I know it's not obvious...

Write 3 sentences using each of these subjunctive mood sentence starters.

Follow the link to this website and complete some research on subjunctive mood.

<https://www.frenchtoday.com/blog/french-verb-conjugation/understanding-french-subjunctive>



Task 2

Write a film analysis. The film is "l'Ascension" by Ludovic Bernard starring Ahmed Sylla.

Work through the following to complete task 2:



Watch the trailer:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=go9zvQcq5Jo>

Watch:

L'Ascension (Title in English = The Climb) – film by Bernard Sylla (Age rating 15. This film is currently available on Netflix + you can add English subtitles)

Can you find the French for the following vocabulary relevant for this film?

Comedy	Determined	Stubborn	Landscape
Friendship	courageous	Incredible	Script/screenplay
Poverty	Journey	Intrepid	Special Effects
Love Story	Self discovery	To prove yourself	Shot (camera angle)



To write your summary use the following bullet points:

1. **Introduction:** Title of the film, director and say who the main characters (*personnages*) are:

- Sami
- Nadia
- La Mère de Sami

Example: *Le film s'appelle « l'ascension », c'est un film français, réalisé par Ludovic Bernard. Les personnages principaux sont...*

2. **Characters (personnages):** Find adjectives in French to describe the main characters:

Example:

Chaque personnage est différent. Je dirais que Sami est

3. **Favourite character (personnage préféré):** Describe your favourite character and explain why:

Example:

Mon personnage préféré, c'est Parce qu'il/elle est

Mention age/personality/appearance/humour

4. **Themes (thèmes):** What would you say the film is highlighting as social issues?

Example:

La thème principale, c'estune autre thème importante, c'est...

→ *l'amour*

→ *la pauvreté des familles d'origine Sénégalais*

→ *L'amitié*

→ *L'ambition*

→ *L'espoir*

5. **Cultural links (les liens culturels):** This film is a comedy with a French-Senegalese protagonist. What can you find out about the links between Senegal and France? Why is there a connection between the countries? What other French language comedies can you find? Make a list of 3 to watch.

6. **La Conclusion :** Say what you thought overall of the film.

Example:

Pour conclure, je dirais que ce film est

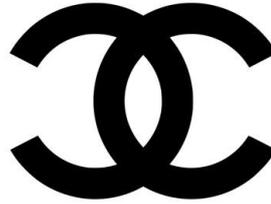




Task 3 - Individual research project plan (Speaking)

As part of the speaking exam at A level, you talk about a topic of your choice. This has to be based on an area of interest linked to the French-speaking world. It is best to do this on an area of interest to you. In previous years students have chosen the following:

- Francophone African Dance Music
- Paris St Germain football club and Fifa Fair Play
- Tensions between Police and ethnic minorities in France
- The traditions of French Fashion Design
- Muslim identity and Islamophobia in the French Republic
- The impact of right wing populist politics in France



These were all chosen by students based on their own areas of interest. The idea is that you should be an expert on your chosen topic.

Task 3 is to prepare a presentation on an area of interest to you that is linked to the French-speaking world. This would be a spoken presentation, however for this task it will be written.

1. Think of something that interests you e.g. sport, music, identity politics, etc.

Example: Music

2. Narrow this down to an example of this in a French-speaking country. You will need to research this online.

Example: La Musique Hip Hop Francaise

3. Find out about the origins of your topic and compare with today.

Example: The origins of this music; how it has grown in popularity; the exploration of social issues through rap, etc.

4. Prepare bullet points in French. You can use phrases from your research. Make sure you understand what they all mean.

Example:

- Le rap français et son influence culturel
- La médiatisation du rap pendant les années 1990
- Le clivage entre le rap « populaire » et « alternatif »

A lot of the A level course is about expressing opinions, defending your opinions, and justifying your point of view. Start to think about your opinions on your topic area. You may change your opinions as you start learning about the issue.



LA FRANCE AU RAP FRANCAIS

