

Step Up to French A Level

at Sir John Cass & Red Coat



How to learn French?

When learning a language, the saying that “practice makes perfect” is very appropriate. You develop a higher level of comprehension (listening and reading) if you expose yourself to the language every day. The simplest of actions can help you develop vocabulary e.g. putting on French subtitles on your favourite programme, changing the language settings on your email account to French, etc.

This second set of activities focuses on the kind of things you can do regularly to develop these habits and to develop a great level of French.

Transition Activities:

Preparing for A Level French

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

1. Sentence structure /grammatical accuracy
2. Cultural awareness (- *exposure to French language music and culture*)
3. Vocabulary development + conceptual awareness (- *the how and why of things*)

Task 1 – Sentence structure / Grammar

Complete a story on Duolingo every day

<https://stories.duolingo.com/>

Duolingo Stories is a way to practice your listening and reading comprehension using bite-sized interactive stories. By completing one every day you will get to revise and improve lots of language you have been learning so far in French. Each task takes around 5-10 minutes.

You can complete Duolingo stories on the internet or on a mobile app.

When you first register (select the free account), you will take a quick test which will help the app to tailor the work set to your level.



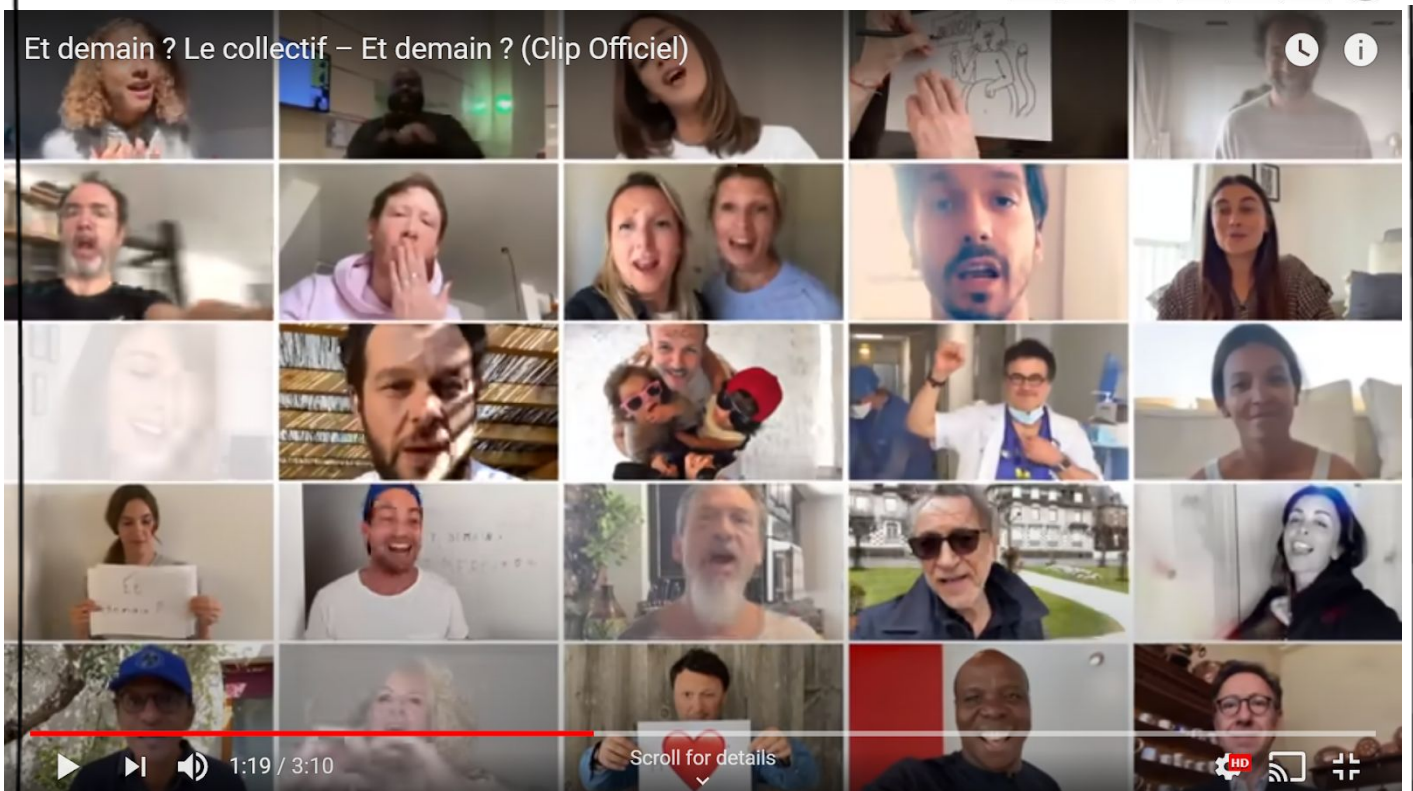
Task 2 – Cultural awareness

As part of the speaking exam at A level, you will learn how to analyse texts and to infer meaning. Sometimes people imply meaning rather than saying things directly and when you understand the culture, this can further help to improve your comprehension.

We are going to look at a song by a large group called “le collectif”. Complete the following tasks:

- a) Go online and find out as much as you can about the song and the ensemble of artists and personalities involved in le collectif. Why was the song made? What was the impact of the song?
- b) Watch the video for the song “*et demain?*” (link on next page). Does the video help you to understand what the message of the song might be? If so, what do you think the message is?

BOMBA ESTÉREO



Or click on the link - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eY803uik2BY>

Et Demain?

Il a fallu en arriver là pour nous rassembler
Prendre conscience de l'importance de
l'humanité
Ce combat c'est le monde entier qui doit le
mener
Car y a pas de couleur ni de religion pour être
confiné
Il a fallu en arriver là pour les remercier

Ces héros du quotidien qui sans compter
Sacrifient leur vie au nom de notre santé
Ces mêmes qui criaient dans la rue "venez vous
aider"
Et demain on fera quoi?
On recommencera l'homme est comme ça
Et demain, ça sera nous les maîtres du jeu, un
point c'est tout

S'aimer encore, danser encore
 Sourire encore, s'embrasser plus fort
 Pleurer encore, souffrir encore
 Et tenir encore, et chanter plus fort
 Ça fait du bien
 Il a fallu en arriver là pour qu'on se parle
 Qu'on recommence à s'amuser avec que dalle
 Pour qu'on s'appelle, qu'on se dise "je t'aime",
 "est-ce que t'as mal?"
 Avec le temps, on retrouvera le temps et la
 morale
 Et demain on fera quoi?
 On recommencera l'homme est comme ça
 Et demain ça sera nous les maîtres du jeu, un
 point c'est tout
 S'aimer encore, danser encore
 Sourire encore, s'embrasser plus fort

Pleurer encore, souffrir encore
 Et tenir encore, et chanter plus fort
 Ça fait du bien
 S'aimer encore, danser encore
 Sourire encore, s'embrasser plus fort
 Pleurer encore, souffrir encore
 Mais tenir encore, et chanter plus fort
 S'aimer encore, danser encore
 Sourire encore, s'embrasser plus fort
 Pleurer encore, souffrir encore
 Mais tenir encore, et chanter plus fort
 Ça fait du bien

- c) Have a look through the lyrics for the song + highlight any sentences that help explain what the song is about.
- d) Now read through an article from "Le Parisien" answer a couple of questions. This article is written about the song and how it was made.



"ET DEMAIN?", LE CLIP DU COLLECTIF

Ils sont 350 artistes, personnalités, réunis dans un clip et une chanson au casting vertigineux. Tout le monde ne chante pas, loin de là, mais chacun a envoyé, confiné depuis chez lui, un petit message vidéo pour remercier le personnel soignant. Ils sont rassemblés sous la forme d'un impressionnant kaléidoscope qui défile pendant un peu plus de trois minutes. Une démarche au profit de la Fondation Hôpitaux de Paris/Hôpitaux de France, complétée par un [appel aux dons sur les réseaux sociaux](#).



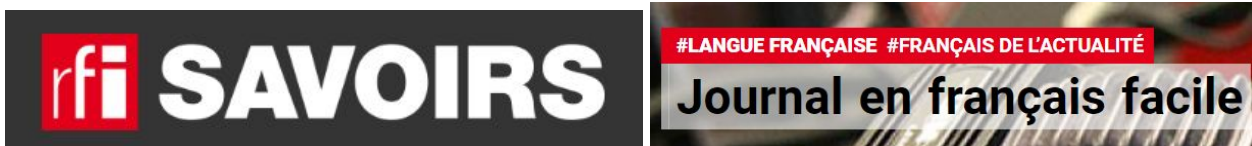
- e) Highlight parts of the text that support your view on what the song is about. Also, what does the last phrase tell you about the objective of the song?

Task 3 – Vocabulary development + conceptual development

When covering all the General Topic Areas for A level French you will encounter a wide range of vocabulary. Knowledge of a wide range of vocabulary is a key feature of high attainers at French A level. This is a skill that you can develop independently by having regular contact with the language. An easy way of doing this is checking headline news and working out meanings. At the same time this helps you to develop greater awareness of issues and concepts and to develop your own views which is another important element of A level French.

In Task 3 you will look at news and current affairs websites and work out what some of the articles are discussing. This will help you to develop your cultural awareness of what is happening in France and other French-speaking communities.

It is generally best to start with international news as you will be more familiar with what is going on. Use the following two websites:



<https://savoirs.rfi.fr/fr> - part of the Radio France International website dedicated to French learners

<https://savoirs.rfi.fr/fr/apprendre-enseigner/langue-francaise/journal-en-francais-facile> - News bulletins in “easy” French with transcripts posted alongside the bulletin

HUFFPOST

<https://www.huffingtonpost.fr/international/> - international section of the French language news site

Go to one of these websites and select a headline. To work out what the article is discussing you may want to use an online dictionary. Use the following: www.wordreference.com – this is used by professional translators and is one of the best.

Once you have selected your headline, pick out the key words, look up ones you do not know and produce a summary in English.

Example 1:

This is taken from the *RFI savoirs* website:

The headline is asking what should be done about the statues of former slave owners and slave traders which appear throughout France.



Example 2:

This is taken from the <https://www.huffingtonpost.fr/international/> website:

L'Angleterre rouvre ses pubs pour la suite du déconfinement

Les Anglais revivent mais loin d'être vaincu, le coronavirus qui a tué 44.000 personnes dans le pays a repris de la vigueur à Leicester.

The headline talks about the easing of lockdown restrictions and the reopening of pubs in the UK while cases of Coronavirus are increasing in Leicester.

- Do this at least once a week and keep a record of the new vocabulary.
- Learn the new words as you go along.

Support materials

The best online translator is www.wordreference.com

Another very useful website is www.linguee.com/French-english

Avoid Google Translate. This is not a very accurate tool and is best avoided unless it is for single words. Use WordReference and Linguee instead. The above websites also exist as free apps for your phone.

