

Course Overview

Course Objectives

- To have students become proficient in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, in preparation for the AP French Language Exam
- To expose students to varied contexts in all skills areas of the language
- To enrich the students' cultural knowledge, experience and appreciation of the francophone world

Course Planner

September

Grammar

- Review of regular and irregular present tense verbs
- Review of passé composé and imparfait ; plus-que-parfait

Oral/listening

- AP picture sequence: describe pictures and answer questions as a class or in small groups (weekly)
- Miscellaneous speaking activities (group discussions on miscellaneous topics, describe picture to a partner, find the errors, picture sequencing, Taboo, etc.)
- Listening exercises (rejoinders and/or dialogues from *AP French* or Barron's); video clips from tv5

Reading

- *Antigone* (Jean Anouilh)

Assessments

- Rédactions with corrigés, interro sur la grammaire, interro sur *Antigone*, weekly vocabulary quizzes

October

Grammar

- Review of conditional and future tenses and "si" clauses, futur antérieur, conditionnel passé

Oral/listening

- AP picture sequence: describe pictures and answer questions as a class or in small groups (weekly)
- Miscellaneous speaking activities (group discussions on miscellaneous topics, describe picture to a partner, find the errors, picture sequencing, Taboo, etc.)
- Listening exercises (rejoinders and/or dialogues from *AP French* or Barron's)
- Song *Lucky Luke* : cloze exercise, re-write the song in proper French, sing along and explore the cultural aspect of comic books in France

Reading

- Comic books
- Miscellaneous news/magazine articles or readings found on internet
- AP readings from *AP French*, Barron's or Amsco's *French FourYears*

Assessments

- Rédactions with corrigés, interro sur la grammaire, weekly vocabulary quizzes, individualized vocabulary quiz, oral presentation on a comic book with written summary and description of main characters

November/December**Grammar**

- Review of the present and past subjunctive

Oral/listening

- AP picture sequence: describe the pictures and answer questions as a class or in small groups (weekly)
- Miscellaneous speaking activities (group discussions on miscellaneous topics, describe picture to a partner, find the errors, picture sequencing, Taboo, etc.)
- Listening exercises (rejoinders and/or dialogues from *AP French* or Barron's)
- Situation de survie: problem solving
- French songs that correlate with the grammar: students listen to various songs that use the subjunctive, then have to write their own song or poem using subjunctive constructions
- Video *Le Retour de Martin Guerre*: after reading *Le voyageur sans bagage*, students compare and contrast the two

Reading

- *Le voyageur sans bagage* (Jean Anouilh)

Assessments

- Rédactions with corrigés, interro sur le subjonctif, weekly vocabulary quizzes, performance of subjunctive song/poem, interro sur la lecture and interro comparing/contrasting the book and the movie

December/January**Grammar**

- Review of personal and relative pronouns

Oral/listening

- AP picture sequence: describe the pictures and answer questions as a class or in small groups (weekly)
- Miscellaneous speaking activities (group discussions on miscellaneous topics, describe picture to a partner, find the errors, picture sequencing, Taboo, etc.)
- Listening exercises: rejoinders and/or dialogues from *AP French* or Barron's, video clips and/or songs from tv5 and *Génération 4 ou 5*, video

Reading

- AP readings from *AP French*, Barron's and/or Amsco
- Articles from French newspapers

Assessments

- Rédactions with corrigés, interro sur les pronoms personnels et relatifs, weekly vocabulary quizzes, individualized vocabulary quiz, oral presentation and written summary of news articles, mid-term exam

February

Grammar

- Review of prepositions and verbs with prepositions

Oral/listening

- AP picture sequence: answer questions –recorded in the lab, graded with teacher feedback (weekly)
- Miscellaneous speaking activities (group discussions on miscellaneous topic, describe picture to a partner, find the errors, picture sequencing, Taboo, etc.)
- Listening exercises: rejoinders and/or dialogues from *AP French* or Barron's, songs, video clips

Reading

- *Huis clos* (Jean-Paul Sartre)

Assessments

- In-class rédactions, interro sur les prépositions et les verbes avec prépositions, weekly vocabulary quizzes, interro sur la lecture, AP picture sequence speaking

March

Grammar

- Review of all tenses

Oral/listening

- AP picture sequence: answer questions –recorded in the lab, graded with teacher feedback (weekly)
- Miscellaneous speaking activities (group discussions on miscellaneous topics, describe picture to a partner, find the errors, picture sequencing, Taboo, etc.)
- Listening exercises: rejoinders and/or dialogues from *AP French* or Barron's, video clips

Reading

- AP readings from *AP French*, Barron's and/or Amsco
- articles from French magazines, newspapers and/or the Internet

Assessments

- In-class rédactions, interro sur tous les temps, weekly vocabulary quizzes, individualized vocabulary quiz, oral presentation of articles, AP picture sequence speaking

April

Grammar

- AP function word and verb fill-in practices, general grammar review

Oral/listening

- AP picture sequence: answer questions –recorded in the lab, graded with teacher feedback (weekly)
- Miscellaneous speaking activities (group discussions on miscellaneous topics, describe picture to a partner, find the errors, picture sequencing, Taboo, etc.)
- Listening exercises: rejoinders and dialogues from *AP French* or Barron's

Reading

- AP readings from *AP French*, Barron's and/or Amsco

Assessments

- In-class rédactions, two full AP exam practices (released exams), weekly vocabulary quizzes, AP picture sequence speaking

Teaching Strategies

When planning instruction, every effort is made to have students actively practicing all skill areas every week if not every class. I try to expose students to as many different types of language exercises as possible: formal writing, reading, speaking, listening, but also informal exercises such as looking at comic strips, listening to songs, reading/telling jokes, practicing “virelangues,” etc. which are rich in vocabulary and cultural illustrations.

To develop vocabulary acquisition, students are given the lists of thematic vocabulary from the *AP French* book and are responsible for one list a week on which they are tested from French to English. In addition to this, students choose their own vocabulary from the readings and any activity that we do. They keep a vocabulary journal in which they write the word and its definition. Each week they need a minimum of ten vocabulary words. Twice each quarter they have an individualized vocabulary quiz (English to French) in which they have to accurately use the vocabulary words in sentences. This allows students to work with vocabulary they personally need.

Essays, readings, AP exams function word and/or verb fill-ins are regularly used as a spring board to review/reinforce certain grammar points that may not be part of our review units.

Starting in April we do more AP-specific training. At the beginning of the year students are given a copy of the REA *AP French Language* to take home and practice. The exercises from this book are strictly for home preparation, but students can bring questions to class to share and discuss. In March/ April, students take two full released AP exams under similar conditions to the regular exam.

Technology is readily available to provide students with a variety of activities: we have laptop computers for the department, VCR/DVD players, cassette-tape players, a language lab, in-focus projector, vid unit and in each classroom a TV and a screen.

Reading

Reading is a daily or almost-daily activity, with some done in class, but most done at home. Texts come from a variety of sources: literature, magazines, newspapers, textbooks, the Internet, lyrics of songs, released AP exams and other non technical writings.

To build reading comprehension, various strategies are used: activation of prior knowledge, cognates/false cognates, familiar words, deriving meaning from context, and making inferences as well as the occasional use of reciprocal teaching. Reading is always followed by discussion and sometimes by writing assignments. Now and then students write their own questions to ask the group, give an oral reading summary, or have a discussion panel/press conference where each student takes on the personality of one of the characters from the play/novel.

In the course of the year we read at least three novels/plays out of the following: *Antigone*, *Le voyageur sans bagage*, *Huis clos*, *Les jeux sont faits*, and *Pierre et Jean*.

Writing

Students write full-length compositions on a three-week cycle. The first semester these essays are written at home and students have a choice between two topics. They are returned to the students with coded errors and comments. Students are then required to return a corrected copy by the following week. Both copies are graded, the initial copy being given an AP grade as well as a regular grade. Students are encouraged to keep a tally of the kinds of errors they make to work more specifically on those that occur regularly. They are strongly urged to use idioms, transition words, and a variety of tenses in each of their essays.

In the second semester, the compositions are written in class under the same conditions as during the AP exam: 40 minutes, no dictionaries or notes available. All topics used for the essays are taken from former AP exams or from the *AP French* book.

Other smaller writing assignments are given throughout the year and generally focus on vocabulary we have learned, on a reading we have done, or to practice certain grammar structures. All tests on readings are short-essay questions with one or two opinion question(s).

Listening:

Communication in the AP French Language class is carried out almost exclusively in French (exception being only to clarify a particularly difficult grammar concept or reading passage), and students' class participation grades reflect a strong requirement that they use only French in the classroom. As a result, at the most basic level, listening is being practiced every day in class.

Students are also exposed to a variety of recorded material on an every-other-day basis at minimum. Most listening activities come from *AP French*, Barron's and TV5 website. As of the 2007-2008 school year we will also have access to the television programs of TV5. Other materials such as music CDs and various DVDs are used as well. For TV5, music, and videos, miscellaneous activities are used (i.e. cloze exercises, listening to sound of a movie and guessing the type of movie; count how many times a certain tense is used.) Another example would be that after learning the fairy tale vocabulary, students listen to various fairy tales on tape and guess which is being narrated. Most students have access at home to the French-Canadian channel and are highly encouraged to view it as often as possible. Occasionally, students are required to select a program, view it, write a summary of it and report to the class.

Whenever the opportunity presents itself, guest speakers are invited as they are a wonderful source of French and provide an opportunity for the students to hear voices and accents of people other than the teacher's. In the past we have had members of our community (grandparents of some of our students), an Amity teacher from Senegal, a storyteller from Picardie, a French visitor, and foreign exchange students come and talk to our students. Occasionally, we have the opportunity to take field trips to the local college to watch a play performed in French, in which case we read the play –or at least an excerpt - beforehand.

Speaking

The course includes numerous partner and small group activities so that more students speak more often. These activities can be discussions of the readings, describing a picture to a partner who has to draw it, playing a game of Taboo, debating on a cultural topic such as the controversy of the wearing of the veil in France or the presidential elections, practicing tongue-twisters, playing family feud, putting a series of six pictures in a logical sequence (each student has one picture he/she needs to describe to others without showing it), using video clips from TV5 to predict what is going to happen, etc. Using a large assortment of speaking exercises

exposes students to a variety of language structures, and especially to a broad spectrum of vocabulary.

From the beginning of the year, students use pictures and questions from *AP French*, Barron's or past AP exams on a weekly basis to practice speaking. At first, the pictures are described and questions answered in groups or as a whole class to help with vocabulary and to make students feel more at ease. Some of these pictures and/or questions are used as a springboard for further discussion. After mid-term exams, using CDs/tapes from released AP exams, *AP French*, or Barron's, students record their timed answers on tape in the lab just like they would for the AP exam. These tapes are graded using the AP speaking rubric.

Textbooks

Ladd, Richard, and Colette Girard. *AP French: Preparing for the Language Examination*. 2nd ed. SFAW, 1998

Amiry, Laila. *How to prepare for the AP French*. Barron's, 1998

Blume, Eli, and Gail Stein. *French Three Years*. Amsco, 1994

Shein, Françoise. *French Four Years - Advanced French with AP Component*. Amsco, 2006

Knauer, Ellen Valtry. *AP French Language – The Best Test Prep for AP French*. (with three audio CD) Research & Education Association, 2006.

Literature

Anouilh, Jean. *Antigone*. La Table Ronde, 1999

Anouilh, Jean. *Le voyageur sans bagage* suivi de *Le bal des voleurs*. Folio, 1991

Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Huis clos* suivi de *Les mouches*. Folio, 1999.

Sartre, Jean-Paul. *Les jeux sont faits*. Folio, 1999.

Maupassant, Guy de. *Pierre et Jean*. Pocket, 1998.

Web sites

Newspapers: www.onlinenewspapers.com/france.htm

Dictionary/other:

www.academie-francaise.fr

www.paroles.net

Magazines:

www.phosphore.com/index.jsp

www.france.diplomatie.gouv.fr/label_france/index.html

blog.okapi-jebouquine.com

Televisions/radios:

www.tv5.org

www.tf1.fr

www.antenne2.fr

www.rfi.fr

www.radiofrance.fr/chaines/france-info/depeches