

A-Level French

What are the topics at A Level?

1. Social issues and trends

Students must study the themes and sub-themes below in relation to at least one French speaking country. Where France is not specified, students may study the themes in relation to any French-speaking country. Students must study the themes and sub-themes using a range of sources, including material from online media.



a. Aspects of French-speaking society: current trends

- The changing nature of family (La famille en voie de changement)
- The 'cyber-society' (La « cyber-société »)
- The place of voluntary work (Le rôle du bénévolat)

b. Aspects of French-speaking society: current issues

- Positive features of a diverse society (Les aspects positifs d'une société diverse)
- Life for the marginalised (Quelle vie pour les marginalisés?)
- How criminals are treated (Comment on traite les criminels)

2. Political and artistic culture

Students must study the themes and sub-themes below in relation to at least one French-speaking country.

a. Artistic culture in the French-speaking world

- A culture proud of its heritage (Une culture fière de son patrimoine)
- Contemporary francophone music (La musique francophone contemporaine)
- Cinema: the 7th art form (Cinéma : le septième art)

b. Aspects of political life in the French-speaking world

- Teenagers, the right to vote and political commitment (Les ados, le droit de vote et l'engagement politique)
- Demonstrations, strikes – who holds the power? (Manifestations, grèves – à qui le pouvoir?)
- Politics and immigration (La politique et l'immigration)

3. Grammar

A-level students will be expected to have studied the grammatical system and structures of the language during their course. Knowledge of the grammar and structures specified for GCSE is assumed.

4. Literary texts and films

Students must study one text and one film from the specified content list. You will have to write two essays of approximately 300 words each. We have chosen to study the film *La Haine* in Year 12, and you will study a text, *L'étranger*, in Year 13.

All questions will require a critical appreciation of the concepts and issues covered in the work and a critical and analytical response to features such as the form and the technique of presentation, as appropriate to the work studied (e.g. the effect of narrative voice in a prose text or camera work in a film).

5. The individual research project.

The research project will be assessed in Paper 3, the Speaking test.

You will identify a subject or a key question which is of interest to you and which relates to a country or countries where French is spoken. They may bear a direct relation to your other A-Level subjects (i.e. if you're doing Economics, you might want to cover one of the emerging economies in a developing francophone country). For this, you will be able to select relevant information from a range of sources including the internet, and then analyse and summarise your findings so that you can then present and discuss them in your speaking assessment.

Examples of possible broad research areas as suggested by Ofqual include:

- L'école dans le monde francophone (Schooling in the French-speaking world)

- Les provinces, les régions et les DOM-TOM (Provinces, regions, and French overseas departments and territories)
- La laïcité (Secularism/laicity)
- La liberté d'expression (Freedom of expression)
- Sciences et technologie dans la France moderne (Science and technology in modern France)
- La télévision contemporaine (Contemporary television)

How are the lessons divided up?

You will have a total of 11 lessons a fortnight. In addition, you will have a conversation lesson with our French assistant to enable you to work on your oral French linked to the work you have done in class. This will be in pairs/a small group.

What will we do in class?

You will study listening and reading passages from the textbook and many other sources. We will also have grammar lessons as we progress throughout the year. We will use the computers for listening exercises, so you will need a log-in and be able to access all the materials we have online for you.

What will the homework be like?

You will be set listening tasks from the textbook and on-line resources. You will regularly be assigned tasks on-line to further and deepen your knowledge. You will have vocabulary, grammar and comprehension activities linked to the topics, practice exam style questions and practice essays.

What do I have to do to succeed at A-level?

The biggest difference between GCSE and A-level is that you are not a pupil anymore; as you enter Year 12 you become a student! This means that it is up to you to put time in studying and go beyond the minimum. This is because at A-level the questions, fields of vocabulary and grammar are much more open-ended, so it is not enough to simply pay attention in class it is up to you to do more at home. It is very important that you keep up to date with the work set, particularly the topic-related essays. Remember, with Modern Languages, and especially at A-level, you can't rely on 'cramming for the final exams.

Do I need any special equipment?

You will be provided with a text book, grammar exercises and worksheets. You will be given a log-in for the extensive on-line resource package that goes with the course being studied. Keep checking the French Moodle section and your email for updates, i.e. new video files, class-work that you may have missed.

A good dictionary is also essential, and you will need an A4 lever-arch file. This must be solely for French and you should keep it organised.

Will I get to go France?

Going to France or any French-speaking country is the whole point of learning French. Any time you can spend practising your language skills will help you improve. If you have contacts in France (i.e. from previous trips/exchanges) please make use of them and make the most of the opportunity to speak French.

There are companies which organise work experience placements for English sixth formers in French. **These are private ventures and not organised by school.**

Links to Higher Education, Careers and Employment

An A-level in French is an asset which is very highly prized by higher education institutions and by employers. According to the CiLT – the National Centre for Languages:

- 60% of UK trade is with non-English speaking countries
- Customers addressed in their mother tongue are three times more likely to buy

It is no surprise therefore that students with A-levels in French, have improved employability by comparison with their peers who have not studied a language

Nearly all Higher Education institutions offer French either as joint or single honour degree.

For further information please email Steph Wood – Head of MFL / French – wood.s@sggs.org.uk

