

AP French Language and Culture 2011 – 2012

Mme. R. MINYARD

Brief Description of Course

As in the French courses leading to the Advanced Placement course, you will be tested on the four language skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking). The AP philosophy and methods of teaching will be incorporated into the teaching of each skill. The baseline goal of this class can be best compared with a third-year college course. At the end of this course, according to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines, the student should be "intermediate-high" level speakers. *The AP French Language and Culture Course is therefore conducted almost exclusively in French, except as needed to explain grammatical concepts.* Besides class discussions, students are encouraged to practice the language after class with peers and/or on the internet via authentic French websites or chat rooms. Students are encouraged to listen to music, films, and news reports on their own to improve listening comprehension skills. Students will give oral and written presentations in French on a variety of topics, including book and movie reviews, as well as reports of current events. Instructional Materials: In order to help students prepare for the difficulty level and variety of topics included on the AP Exam, it is important for the instructor to use diverse instructional materials.

Course Overview and Learning Objectives

- To have students become proficient in interpersonal, interpretive and presentational communication in preparation for the AP French Language and Culture Exam instead of AP French Exam.
- To stress reading, writing, speaking and listening through each of the three modes of communication.
- To enrich the students' cultural knowledge and experience with the Francophone world through a comparison with their own cultural experience of the six course themes.

The class curriculum will consist of close reading and extensive discussions (*conducted exclusively in French*) of the texts with particular attention to stylistic analysis: character development, theme, structure, style, and overall interpretation. Students will be given comprehension questions, to be completed as homework, which will enable guided discussion and textual analysis in class. The in-class discussions, which are solely in French, will encourage students to think critically and to express their opinions in a more spontaneous manner. These discussions will enable students to scan key passages for content, style and grammar, as well as to discuss course themes and their relevance to current issues. The discussions also provide a forum for students to make comparisons between the Francophone world and their own. Assessment of the students is done informally, on a daily basis, through the students' participation in class discussion and their efforts to use French exclusively.

Formal assessment involves students writing both expository and persuasive compositions in French that demonstrate both their control of French grammar and vocabulary, as well as their competency in applying the techniques of literary analysis. Students are graded on various non-literature writing assignments that help them demonstrate the connections to the work and culture in the target language. Students also practice the AP exam format through multiple-choice reading and listening comprehension questions, speaking prompts and essay writing. Practice tests taken from AP exams also serve as formal assessment of student progress.

Assessment

Oral performance will be based on regular informal in-class participation along with interpersonal speaking assessments and oral presentations on cultural topics, graded using the AP scoring

guidelines; written performance will be based on in-class essays and interpersonal writing assignments, also graded using the AP scoring guidelines; and reading and listening performance will be based on both informal (comprehension and vocabulary quizzes) and formal (multiple-choice passages in the format of the AP exam) assessments given at regular intervals.

Instructional and Teaching Strategies

The following sections demonstrate the variety of activities and strategies that support and extend understanding and mastery of the target language within and beyond the three modes of communication [*Interpersonal, Presentational and Interpretive*].

Writing:

- Write an informal essay in a journal entry. These entries will be based on topics provided by the teacher and thematic in nature. [*Presentational*]
- Every three weeks students will write a formal, well organized essay of at least 200 words on a topic designated from the AP examination workbook. These essays will be assessed using the AP rubric and evaluated for content, organization, rich vocabulary and grammatical accuracy [*Presentational*]
- Identify main points and concrete details from an authentic text and express them in written format and express opinions about the text. [*Interpretive*]
- Write a well organized essay outlining the key concepts after listening to an audio text. [*Interpretive*]
- Maintain an ongoing dialogue with a French teacher or another French student via the interactive website www.nicenet.org [*Interpretive/Presentational*]
- Write various types of letters in response to literature. [*Presentational*]
- Write speeches about cultural issues discussed in class. [*Presentational*]

Reading:

- read a variety of articles from a francophone magazine or newspaper and summarize the key points of the article in writing or in class discussion [*Interpretive*]
- read and comprehend francophone news articles accessed on the Internet and summarize key points of the article in writing or in class discussion. [*Interpretive*]
- read, comprehend, analyze and discuss a novel from the Francophone world [*Interpretive*]
- read a short story in French and respond accurately to questions on theme and story content [*Interpretive*]
- read, comprehend, analyze and discuss a poem from the Francophone world [*Interpretive*]

Speaking:

- speak only French in the classroom
- speak spontaneously on a given topic using appropriate vocabulary and accurate grammar
- both initiate and participate in a conversation on everyday topics.
- improvise orally, based on a series of cues
- make an oral presentation on a prepared topic using notes
- paraphrase/summarize a reading passage
- discuss in French the materials read in class and videos
- participate in a discussion based on an oral presentation
- form and defend his/her view in an oral debate on a given topic
- deliver a speech on a given topic
- present on a given topic

- practice directed conversations with practice exercises from AP workbook

Listening:

- Listen to a short lecture in French and respond to oral/written questions on the material
- Comprehend oral questions and respond appropriately and quickly
- Summarize orally or in writing after viewing a news report in French
- Summarize orally or in writing to the key points of a lecture given in French
- Respond appropriately to a variety of questions based on a brief oral narrative
- Respond spontaneously to a variety of questions posed in class
- AP Practice activities from AP workbook

Culture and Technology

- Visit to the High Museum of Art to view and evaluate French art and artists followed by oral or written presentations in which students describe a particular artist's work [*Interpretive, Presentational*]
- Video excerpts from French and Francophone films, news clips, media that are not related to the texts read in class, followed by class discussions and oral or written presentations in which students describe the materials viewed [*Interpretive, Presentational, Interpersonal*]
- Internet review, using websites for grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension (the commonly used websites are listed below in supplementary resources) [*Interpretive*]
- Web based research is assigned in class as a method to make authentic sources of text (news articles, current events, etc.) readily available for students. Once research has been completed (informally by the student), a formal assessment (either written or oral) is completed for a grade [*Presentational*]

Sample course activities that integrate the modes of communication and the course themes:

• **In-class presentation and peer review.** While classmates are presenting, all other students take notes in order to provide feedback to the speaker. In addition, all audience members formulate questions over the presented scenario. Thus, the class works to improve speaking and listening proficiency, along with enhancing their vocabulary and grammar usage. (*Presentational, Interpersonal*)

• **Literary/ textual analysis.** For all works of literature (poetry, short story, novel, etc.), students are asked to do the reading of the text on their own, or aloud in class. The reading exercise is followed by written activities, either with a partner or individually, in order to stress the importance of reading comprehension and effectively expressing one's opinions through grammatically and stylistically appropriate writing and dialogue. (*Presentational, Interpretive*)

• **French in text and audio art.** Students are presented with various songs, poems or short stories through recordings in order to use authentic materials to improve listening proficiency. (*Interpretive, Presentational*)

»» While listening to the text, students are asked to complete the passage's script (cloze activity) where key words have been omitted, to write a summary or to perform a dictée. Once students are familiar with the excerpt or piece of literature, they study it as a written text. In order to enhance their analytical reading skills, students are required to analyze French texts for theme, symbolism, poetic devices, etc., as well as to make valid cultural comparisons to the work.

»» One unit of study with which this works very well pertains to the fables of La Fontaine. Students listen to recordings, perform cloze activities and then move to a formal, in-class discussion, in French, over the images, theme(s), style, etc.

Students are asked to write a modern version based upon a La Fontaine fable. Upon completion of the final draft of the new fable, students present these orally to lower level French classes, thereby allowing them to work on pronunciation, public speaking and intonation in French. Students also study the artistic representations of artists, such as Manet, in order to further expand their appreciation of the relationship between the text and art. After studying the various artists, students will give an oral presentation about one work of art, incorporating the numerous elements they have studied.

- **Internet/ primary source based cultural research.** Depending on current events or student interest, students are asked to research and present their findings. Previous topics have included comparing America and France with respect to such practices and perspectives as traffic safety, voting involvement and environmental concerns. Depending on the scope of the contemporary topic, students are asked to present orally their comparison, to participate in a debate over the topic or to present a visual representation of their findings. Consequently, students enhance their reading, writing and speaking skills in an integrated format. (*Presentational, Interpretive, Interpersonal*)
- **French in art.** Students are asked to create and present an original art project in a style reflective of various art movements. This often coincides with the viewing of art exhibits and allows students to prepare a project that familiarizes them with a cultural topic and enables them to develop their speaking skills with regards to a broader variety of discourse. (*Presentational, Interpretive*)
- **Letter writing.** Students choose an author from a current event article, music write a letter or email. This project works as both an extension of research and as a method for students to express themselves through various writing styles. Students gain confidence in their writing through the informal email or letter rather than the formal explication de texte. For Francophone authors, students use this project as a means of increasing their knowledge of the author's country of origin, thereby extending their appreciation of French as a world language. (*Interpersonal*)

Integration of Authentic Materials and Course Themes

The course is designed in such a way to use various literary and cinematic works to allow students to develop the three types of communication while exploring the six cultural themes. The academic year is divided into units based upon major works of literature or collections of more modern excerpts. Within each unit, students work to improve their competency through formal and informal reading, writing and listening activities (note that these have been explained in the instructional and teaching strategies section).

Candide

- Global challenges – war and peace, diversity, health
- Families and Community – family structure, customs and ceremonies, friendship and love
- Personal and Public Identity – beliefs and values, alienation and assimilation, nationalism, language and identity, multiculturalism
- Beauty and Aesthetics – ideals of beauty, world artistic heritage
- Contemporary Life – education, travel, rites of passage

Douze Contes de Maupassant

- Families and Community – family structure, customs and ceremonies, friendship and love
- Personal and Public Identity – beliefs and values, alienation and assimilation, nationalism, language and identity, multiculturalism
- Beauty and Aesthetics – ideals of beauty, world artistic heritage

Music (again not limited to the following examples)

MC Solaar (Sauvez le Monde)

- Global Challenges – environmental, human rights
- Science and Technology – social impact of technology, ethical questions
- Families and Community – citizenship, friendship and love

Gérald DEPALMAS (Marcher dans le Sable)

- Personal and Public Identity – alienation and assimilation, beliefs and values, Multiculturalism
- Personal and Public Identity – beliefs and values, language and identity, multiculturalism
- Global Challenges – diversity, economic, human rights
- Families and Community – customs, citizenship

Course Calendar
First Semester

August – September

Weekly grammar review
Reading and Writing skills seminar
Douze Contes de Maupassant, Maupassant
AP style essays #1-4

October – November

Weekly grammar review
Candide, Voltaire
Current events unit, lemonde.fr
AP style essays #5-7

Second Semester

January – February

Weekly grammar review
La Négritude Unit
Film – *La Rue Case-Nègres*
Haïti – les actualités
Current Events Unit, lemonde.fr
AP style essay #8-10

March – April

L'Étranger, Camus
Current Events Unit
Literary Excerpts (as unit) with cinematic representations
Intensive review for the AP exam

The 4th quarter concludes with a thematic review of works and topics discussed throughout the year. Students are thus required to bring all pieces they have studied into one body of knowledge wherein they can demonstrate their level of mastery of the various types of communication. Class time is also devoted to AP exam specific practice.

Course Materials and Resources
Primary textbooks

- *AP French*, Pearson 2012
- *Face à Face*, Vista 2011
- *En bonne forme*, 7th edition, Houghton Mifflin 2001
- *Reprise*, college edition, NTC, 1993

Supplementary Texts & Resources

- Released AP exams
- *Trésors du temps*, Glencoe 2005
- Internet (grammar & auditory tools)
www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french
www.toutelapoesie.com
www.tv5.org
www.lemonde.fr
www.youtube.com
www.ljournalactu.com
www.voki.com
www.françaisfacile.com
www.tfl.fr
www.tf5.fr
www.quizlet.com/subject/ap-french
www.franceinter.fr
www.nicenet.org
www.m6bonus.fr