

FACTFILE: GCSE FRENCH SPEAKING



SPEAKING

Learning Outcomes

You should be able to:

- communicate and interact effectively in speech for a variety of purposes;
- take part in short conversations, asking and answering questions, exchanging opinions and producing extended sequences of speech;
- speak spontaneously, responding to questions, points of view or situations and sustaining communication, as appropriate;
- express information and narrate events coherently and confidently, using and adapting language for new purposes;
- make appropriate and accurate use of a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures;
- make creative use of the language, as appropriate, to express and justify your own thoughts and points of view; and
- use accurate pronunciation and intonation that would be understood by a native speaker.

These lists are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

Skills

Communication.
Using ICT.
Self-management.
Working with others.
Managing information.
Being creative.

Preparation

Be aware of the specification requirements. There are three Contexts for Learning: each of them is equally important.

Context 1: Identity, Lifestyle and Culture

Context 2: Local, National, International and Global Areas of Interest

Context 3: School Life, Studies and the World of Work

Develop a good knowledge of vocabulary and structures related to the topics on the Specification.

Learn vocabulary under topic areas as set out in the Vocabulary List in the French Specification (Appendix 5) which is available on the CCEA website.

There is often a useful Vocabulary List summarising important words and structures at the end of a unit in your textbook.

Try to learn vocabulary in phrases and sentences to gain confidence when you are using it.

Complete as many past paper role-plays as possible - this will help you become familiar with the type of questions posed in the exam.

Manage your time effectively – do not leave preparation for this examination until the last minute!

Look up the mark scheme in the Specimen Assessment Materials and make sure that you know what is required for top marks.

Assessment Format

Be aware of the assessment format and grade boundaries of this component of the GCSE examination. Remember that this unit is untiered – this means that you have access to the full range of marks and grades for this Unit.

Your teacher will have more detailed information on the format of the speaking examination but below, you will find a brief overview of the exam.

There are three elements to the speaking examination:

1. You must complete two role-plays (lasting a maximum of 2 minutes each). Both role-plays will be taken from the same Context but from different topics within that Context. You will have had 10 minutes to prepare these role-plays before you begin your examination.
2. You participate in Conversation topic 1 for no more than 4 minutes. This will be the CCEA pre-release topic and you will have had one hour of formal preparation time earlier in the school year to prepare for this section of the speaking examination. During this hour, you will prepare your Candidate Preparation Sheet. Your teacher will have collected this Sheet and will return it to you at the start of this section of your speaking examination.
3. You participate in Conversation topic 2 – for no more than 4 minutes.

In total, your speaking examination should last between 7 and 12 minutes.

In the role-plays you should expect to encounter the following elements:

- You must ask **one** question during the set of role-plays i.e. 1 in 10.
- You will be asked just **once** to give **two** details – i.e. 1 in 10.
- You must respond to **one** element in ten using a past time frame.
- You must respond to **one** element in ten using a future or conditional time frame.

Practice

Be familiar with topic-based vocabulary and phrases related to the topics within the specification and develop a bank of topic-based vocabulary lists.

Build up a bank of phrases useful for role-play and

general conversation. Remember to learn question words!

Work through role-plays in the Specimen Assessment Materials. Devise your own method to make the best use of the 10 minutes preparation time for the role-plays – do you want to write everything down? Do you want to write down key words/key phrases?

Conversation 1 and 2

Write out well-developed answers to CCEA sample questions which are found in the French Specification in Appendix 3. Think of ways to improve your answers – eg by including adjectives, using conjunctions, connectives, time phrases, negatives etc. Try to include opinions and justifications in your answers, where appropriate. Include idiomatic language, where appropriate.

If possible, try to volunteer additional information when answering a question.

Pay attention to the tense used in the question and respond accordingly.

Ask your teacher for feedback on your sample answers. Learn as many of these answers as possible.

If possible, look at sample answers to see how different tenses have been used and to identify opinions and justifications.

Practise phrases which can be incorporated to give some thinking time, as well as phrases to give a natural flow to the conversation.

Do not rush the conversation as this impedes natural flow and fluency of the language.

Identify areas of weakness that you need to work on e.g. pronunciation, word order.

Listen carefully to others speaking the target language (television, podcasts, webcasts, films with or without subtitles) and follow the transcript, if you have access to it.

Practise reading aloud at home to gain confidence and fluency. Record yourself to identify how to improve your intonation and accent. Pay attention to the rhythm and tone of your spoken language.

Take every opportunity to speak in French – in class, with your teacher, with the language assistant, with friends, with any other speakers that you know. Regular practice will help you to remember the language and structures common to the themes. Always try to speak clearly, fluently and with confidence.

If you have access to a textbook, complete as many speaking activities as possible from it.

Always ask for help when you need it!

Revision

Think about your learning style (ie. do you learn by writing and repeating or by listening to yourself?). Do you prefer using mind-maps/word clouds etc?

Organise your resources. Keep your folder or notebook in good order, dividing material into topic areas and ensure that all role-play scenarios and general conversation questions and answers are filed together. Keep all electronic work backed up and remember to create folders for each topic area. Practise a variety of different topic-based scenarios.

Reduce your answers to small colour coded index cards and carry these around with you as the time for the speaking examination approaches.

Prepare key phrases to explain that you do not understand the question or to ask your teacher to repeat the question.

Always take into account any feedback from your teacher and/or language assistant to identify areas for improvement.

Create a mind map for the questions with useful words written to prompt you with answers.

When revising, try to revise your answers in a different order.

Due to the unique nature of language-learning, all skills are inter-connected so any material that you prepare for speaking will help with listening or reading or writing or translating.

