

La Connection Francaise

Sydenham Public School, Kingston, Ontario | Winter 2016



Bonjour! I am always striving to increase communication with parents and families about the French program and our class activities. This newsletter, our Twitter feed and notices on the Sydenham website aim to keep you informed and to further encourage the use of French outside the school. As always, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to visit me at the school or leave a message with the office. Merci!

~ Monsieur B. Emmerton

The Sydenham French Program

Our students are fortunate to begin studying French in grade 1. Although the Ontario curriculum mandates the beginning of French in grade 4, the Limestone District School Board piloted a primary French program in many schools, and has recently extended this program to all schools in the board.

Our students receive 200 minutes of French instruction during each 5-day cycle (usually four 50-minute periods). Class activities are centered around four areas of learning (see below). While all classes have a strong focus on listening and speaking, we use reading and writing activities more regularly in the junior and intermediate grades.



La compréhension orale

(listening for understanding)

Students listen to and process the meaning of spoken French to develop comprehension and recognition of vocabulary, language structures, and pronunciation.



La production orale

(speaking to communicate)

Students create and interact using spoken French to communicate their ideas, feelings, and observations, and ask and answer questions in real-life situations.



La compréhension écrite

(reading for understanding)

Students read and process the meaning of a variety of text forms (books, magazines, short stories, websites) to develop an understanding of language structures, reading strategies, and recognition of the vocabulary they have used when listening and speaking.



La production écrite

(writing to communicate)

Students create pieces of writing to communicate their ideas, and respond to texts to which they have listened and read.

Benefits of Learning French

- Learning French strengthens the learning of English. We use many of the same literacy strategies as we develop speaking, reading, and writing skills.
- Students can communicate with French-speaking people in Canada and around the world.
- Students learn about Canada and Canadian culture through both its official languages.
- Learning another language helps students to appreciate and respect the diversity of other cultures, promoting understanding, patience and open-mindedness.
- Students who can communicate in French may experience expanded career opportunities in the future.
- Research has shown that learning a second language can increase mental flexibility and improve problem-solving skills.

(source: The Ontario Curriculum: French as a Second Language. Government of Ontario, 2013)



French: A Language of Communication

Over the past few years, there has been a deliberate move to focus French instruction around a strong basis of oral fluency – being able to communicate.

At Sydenham, every class focuses on activities for students to communicate in French – primarily by listening and speaking. We often introduce new vocabulary and expressions by demonstrating their use, and then working in small groups to practice what we have heard. This can be as simple as partners asking each other, “*qu’est-ce que tu as fait pendant la fin de semaine?*” (what did you do this weekend?). For example, this would allow us to explore expressing actions in the past tense: “*j’ai visité mon ami, je suis allé au cinéma, j’ai joué aux jeux vidéos*”.

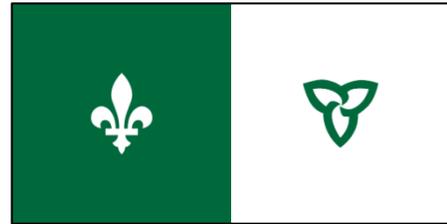
“Listening and speaking skills are the springboards to reading and writing. If students hear it, they can say it. If students can say it, they can read it. And if students can read it, they can write it.”

(from the Ontario Curriculum: French as a Second Language)

Worksheets, conjugating of verbs, and learning vocabulary still have a role in learning French, however we use these strategies after we have *listened to and spoke* to one another using the expressions, vocabulary and verbs.

Visit the French section of the Sydenham website to follow our Twitter feed, find links for practicing French at home, and read Class announcements.

Follow us on Twitter:
@SYD_French_LDSB



The Franco-Ontarian flag was first unveiled in 1975, and made official in 2001 to recognize the French-speaking people of Ontario. The green and white colours represent the diversity of our province’s climate (summer and winter). The lily represents French people of the world, while the trillium is the floral emblem of Ontario.

Yes, you can speak en français!

Here is an activity you can do at home to share the French you know, and make goals to speak more. The following are some of our important learning goals for speaking and listening (expressed in “I can statements”). For each goal, discuss if you and your child are: starting (Je commence), continuing (Je continue), or bumping up (J’avance).

- ✓ I can use basic greetings and expressions. (Bonjour, au revoir, comment ça va?)
- ✓ I can say the month, days of the week, the year, the seasons.
- ✓ I can count. (1 à 20, 20 à 100, 100 à 1000)
- ✓ I can say the alphabet.
- ✓ I can sing a song (O’Canada, Alouette)
- ✓ I can briefly describe me and my family. (je m’appelle, j’ai un frère)
- ✓ I can describe where I live. (J’habite à Kingston)
- ✓ I can understand basic questions about myself and my family. (quel âge as-tu?, as-tu une soeur?)
- ✓ I can say what I like and what I don’t like. (J’aime.... Je n’aime pas)
- ✓ I can introduce others. (Je vous présente mon ami)
- ✓ I can say when I don’t understand. (Je ne comprends pas)
- ✓ I can express my basic needs (Est-ce que je peux aller aux toilettes?)
- ✓ I can ask for something I need. (Est-ce que je peux avoir un crayon?)
- ✓ I can understand others’ simple instructions. (Ouvre la porte, donne-moi la gomme)
- ✓ I can act out the meaning of sentences. (je danse, je lance la balle)
- ✓ I can recognize important words in a story or song.
- ✓ I can ask others about their preferences. (Est-ce que tu aimes...?)
- ✓ I can answer questions on simple topics. (les couleurs, les dates, le temps, les animaux)