**Course Overview**

The goal of this course is to improve students’ reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in the French language in preparation for the French Language and Culture AP Exam. As this course is intended to be the equivalent of a third-year college course, students use French in ways that reach a high level of proficiency. The emphasis for all class activities is on authentic practice and usage in interpersonal, presentational, and interpretive modalities.

Students are expected to read and understand authentic French texts, including but not limited to literature, newspaper and magazine articles, blogs, and letters. They must listen to and understand a variety of authentic auditory media, such as conversations between native speakers, news reports, films, and plays. Writing activities are typically linked to the reading and/or listening materials that are being covered in class. Students write on a variety of topics and in a variety of formats that require them to employ proper grammar, vocabulary, rhetorical devices, and structure depending on the nature of the assignment. Students must also discuss class material orally, participate in debates, hold conversations in groups, describe images, and give presentations where they must present cultural topics. Throughout the course, students are exposed to and expected to accurately use new vocabulary and grammatical structures. In addition, all activities are designed to deepen students’ understanding of French and Francophone culture. They are expected to analyze how these cultures and societies compare to their own. Students’ speaking, writing, and comprehension abilities will be assessed throughout the course. The course is taught entirely in French, and students are not permitted to use English.

An invaluable resource for cultural knowledge, as well as for interpersonal speaking and writing, is the classroom in Thionville, France with which we correspond. The students in the class in France can provide first-hand knowledge of French life, such as preparing for the BAC, daily activities, planning for the future, use of technology, etc. I plan to hold live video Skype conversations with the class as much as possible, and it is my hope that the students in the class in France correspond with my students through social media.

Students are expected to turn in all materials on time and to complete reading assignments within the given time-frame. The AP exam is Tuesday, May 15 at noon.

**Course Materials and Resources**

**Textbooks**

*Trésors du temps*

*Une fois pour toutes*

**Other Sources and Materials**

*Kit Pédagogique, pour une utilisation de documents audiovisuels dans les cours de français* (Un projet éducatif par TV5 Monde, RFI, et le CLEMI)

French Media websites (TV5, RFI, Le Monde, La Libération, Le Figaro, BBC Monde, etc.) for listening and reading comprehension

Online texts (Giono; Maupassant; Molière;, etc.)

Music and music videos

**Course Unit Planner**

**Families and Communities (August/September)**

* Review/brainstorm family and community vocabulary
* Review basic grammatical structures (le présent, les temps du passé, les articles, les pronoms objets, les adjectifs)
* Interpersonal speaking : Interview a partner about his/her family (past and present). Discuss the makeup of their families, roles of certain family members, challenges, successes, etc.
* Presentational speaking: Synthesize their interviews and introduce partner to the class.

Project– pick a community in France/French-speaking country (music scene, industry, military, young people, dance, etc.). Do comparative research with a similar American community. Orally present facts/opinions with pictures/video clips, etc.

* Interpretive reading: “Les pères changent” from website *Internet Actuel* <http://podcasts.shelbyed.k12.al.us/pbarrett/2011/02/21/ap-french-4-221/internet-actuel-les-peres-changent/>. Complete comprehension questions.
* Presentational writing: How were you raised? What were the roles of your parents when you were younger? How has that changed as you have gotten older? Compare the role of your father with the changing roles of fathers presented in the article.
* Interpretive audio: RFI

**Science and Technology (October/November)**

* Review/brainstorm science and technology vocabulary
* Review essay format and rhetorical devices
* Grammar: Demonstrative pronouns (Une fois pour toutes)
* Interpersonal speaking: Ask a parent/other adult about the technology that was available when he/she was in high school. Discuss findings with a partner in class. Then, discuss as a whole class.
* Presentational speaking: Research a technological innovation that was invented by a French person. If it was an older invention, explain class how this invention has influenced modern technology. If a newer invention, discuss future implications of its use. Present orally to the class.
* Interpretive reading: Read and discuss blog post “Bonheur d’autrefois, Bonheur d’aujourd’hui” <http://lancien.cowblog.fr/bonheur-d-autrefois-bonheur-d-aujourd-hui-2547579.html>
* Interpretive audio/visual: Complete any listening activities from Sept Jours sur la Planete that correspond with science and technology.
* Interpersonal writing: Write an email to a pen-pal in France discussing technology that you use in your daily lives. Describe the benefits and problems that arise from its use. Ask if he/she uses this technology and how it helps him in his daily life.
* Presentational writing: In class essay. “Dans la dernière décennie les avancées technologiques ont changé la manière dont nous interagissons avec nos relations. Les réseaux sociaux et les téléphones intelligents nous permettent d’être toujours en contact avec les autres. Comment est-ce que ces innovations ont changé les relations familiales ? L’amitié ? Est-ce que ces changements sont pour le bien ou le mal ? Donnez votre opinion et soutenez-le avec des exemples.”

**Contemporary Life (December/January)**

* Review, brainstorm vocabulary dealing with future studies, careers, quality of life
* Grammar: Review object pronouns and possessive pronouns, past tense with infinitive, present participles, subjunctive
* Presentational speaking: Find a French advertisement in a magazine or online and discuss who the audience is and how the advertisers intend to attract that audience’s business.
* Interpersonal speaking: Video Skype conversation with class in France. Students prepare questions regarding the BAC test and what it means for students in France. My students also explain what it takes for them to pass high school and continue to pursue work/higher education after high school.

In-class discussion to talk about the differences in the systems in education in France and in the United States.

* Interpretive reading: Excerpts from “L’enfant noir.”

Read and discuss short online article on the topic the topic of qualité de vie: “Qualité de vie: La France toujours en tête.” <http://www.slate.fr/story/15321/classement-france-pays-mieux-vivre-bonheur-living>

* Interpretive audio/visual: Watch documentary “L’école ma liberté” and discuss. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PJIeEESFYX8>

Listen to song *Travailler* by rap group TTC and complete exercises <http://coerll.utexas.edu/chansons/index.php?ch=12>

* Interpersonal writing: Write a letter to a student in France asking about what it takes to plan a career. What studies are necessary to accomplish your goals? Is it difficult to find a job in France? At what age are you expected to decide on a career path?
* Presentational writing: Essay. Given the differences in the American and French school system, which do you think provides students with the best education? Which do you think prepares students most for the workplace?

Second possible writing topic: Do you think you have a good quality of life? What factors do you believe contribute to a good quality of life? Use materials from class to support your opinions.

**Personal and Public Identities (February)**

* Grammar: Passé du conditionnel, negations, pronoms relatifs
* Interpersonal speaking: Class discussions about racism, stereotypes, multiculturalism, and forming identities. Draw useful vocabulary from these discussions.

Speaking exercise: \*Exercise: “A me voir, on pourrait croire que je suis \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, mais en réalité, je suis \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”

* Presentational speaking: Research immigration issues in France and in the US and present to class.
* Interpretive reading: « Le racisme expliqué à ma fille » par Tajar Ben Jelloun
* Interpretive audio/visual: Complete any listening activities from Sept Jours sur la Planete that correspond with multiculturalism in France.
* Presentational writing: What makes you who you are? What factors form your identity? How can these factors be beneficial/problematic?
* Interpersonal writing: Write email/Facebook message asking students in partner class in France to comment on the French law banning the Muslim veil in French schools.
* Discuss how language, including slang, can contribute to your identity. Talk about different registers of speech – soutenu, informel, etc – and what is/isn’t appropriate in certain situations, whether speaking or writing.

**Global Challenges (March)**

* Review and brainstorm vocabulary dealing with the environment and conservation.
* Grammar: Si clauses, les pronoms accentués, review of adverbs, review of comparatives and superlatives
* Presentational speaking: Students choose a global challenge facing France and/or the francophone world to research and present to the class. They may choose from: health, human rights, nutrition, war, political challenges, the economy.
* Interpersonal speaking: Discuss in class global challenges that are facing us as Americans. We will use the website of “Un monde solidaire” to facilitate environmental discussions.

What can we do as individuals to reduce our environmental impact? Calculate your carbon footprint here <http://www.futurenergia.org/ww/fr/pub/futurenergia/chats/carbon_imprint.htm> and discuss where you can improve.

Hold Skype conversation with partner class to talk about challenges (economy, job market, environment) facing students in France.

* Interpretive reading: *L’homme qui plantait des arbres* by Jean Giono
* Interpretive audio/visual: Watch and discuss short film *L’homme qui plantait des arbres.* <http://dotsub.com/view/2d7b8a37-4f64-4241-8019-642e965d124f>

Complete any listening activities from Sept Jours sur la Planete that correspond with environmental and/or economic issues.

* Presentational writing: Given the global challenges discussed in class, choose one to discuss and present solutions to the problems. What challenges may these solutions face?

**Beauty and Aesthetics (April)**

* Brainstorm and review vocabulary dealing with fine art, poetry, music, theater, literature, and film.
* Grammar: Identifying the passé simple, plus-que-parfait review, adjective review
* Presentational speaking: Students choose a French artist from any discipline or a genre of art to present to the class.
* Interpersonal speaking: Look at influential works of French art by artists such as David, Seurat, Monet, Matisse, etc. and discuss as a class.

Debate controversial topics in the arts such as violence, censorship, stereotyping, etc.

Discuss perceptions of beauty and the role of art in society.

* Interpretive reading:

Poetry: « Ode à Cassandre » by Ronsard, « Hymne à la Beauté » by Baudelaire, « Le bateau ivre » by Rimbaud, « Le pont Mirabeau » by Apollinaire

Literature : Excerpts from *La Chanson de Roland*, *Les Misérables, La Peste*

Theater : Excerpts from *El Cid, L’Ecole des Femmes, Huis Clos*

* Interpretive audio/visual: Songs from a variety of influential French artists including Edith Piaf, Georges Brassens, Jacques Brel, Mc Solaar, etc.

Watch previews of French movies

* Presentational writing: Choose an influential piece of French visual art and describe it, analyzing how/why it could be considered beautiful given the class’s discussions of beauty.
* Interpersonal writing: Discuss music, films, books, etc. with students in class in France. Do they like the same things? What are some reasons that they enjoy certain forms of art?

**Review and Practice tests (end of April-May)**