

## How will my child benefit by studying French as a second language?

In Ontario and throughout Canada, many jobs require skills in both French and English. Even when French is not a mandatory requirement, it can be an asset in any profession that involves interacting with the public. Students gain significant advantages when they speak more than one language. In addition to expanding employment options and the potential to earn a higher income, learning French as a second language helps to strengthen first-language skills and establishes a solid foundation for learning additional languages. Studies have shown that learning more than one language has a positive effect on the development of problem-solving and creative-thinking abilities. Additional personal benefits include a heightened appreciation for French culture in Canada and around the world, a broadening of global perspectives, and increased opportunities for international travel and study as well as a general understanding and acceptance of diversity.

## How can I prepare my child for learning French as a second language?

Children are not expected to know any French prior to beginning Core French, Extended French, or French Immersion. Even if they do not know French themselves, parents can encourage their children to take an interest in French in various ways. Children might enjoy noticing and examining how French is used in their environment—for example, on packaging of food and household items. Some children might also enjoy listening to French programming, videos, or movies, counting in French, or singing the alphabet in French. A positive experience can provide a strong foundation for a positive experience in FSL.

## How can I help my child succeed in learning French as a second language?

Being a positive role model can have a powerful influence on children. Showing your child that you value the learning process can help them stay motivated. You can do this by periodically listening to French audio books with your child, watching French television or movies together, and talking about the many communities in Ontario, throughout Canada, and around the world in which French is spoken. Another way of showing that you value French is by learning along with your child. You may also find it useful to take part in social activities for learners of French or to join a parent group that supports FSL education. Such experiences can increase your child's interest in learning.

Because literacy skills acquired in one language will transfer to another, seeing their parents reading in English or their first language can motivate children to read on their own, thus developing literacy skills in the languages they are learning. Taking children to the library, reading together, and encouraging them to read in French as well as English are further ways for parents to support the development of

Some children may be eager to share at home what they have learned in French at school, while others may feel uncomfortable. Encouraging children to demonstrate their skills, such as through a presentation or a demonstration of what they know, whereas encouraging children to read books and magazines in French, their own French compositions, or French labels on packaging shows that you value their French-language skills. You could also explore opportunities for your child to take part in



## What should my child consider when choosing FSL courses at secondary school?

Grade 8 students should reflect on their strengths, interests, and goals as they consider the course descriptions and expectations contained in the Ontario curriculum documents Secondary FSL Curriculum. Students may also find it helpful to discuss their choices with their current elementary FSL teacher and where possible a secondary FSL teacher.