



Information for Parents
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Created by Carole Noel,
Jane Bartlett,
Sarah LeBlanc &
Caroline Hackard-Taylor

Grade 3 Entry Point

French Immersion for Everyone!

Bonjour!

You are considering a bilingual journey for your child. French Immersion is an inclusive program for all children wishing to learn a second language. French Immersion has been proven to be a successful program for attaining French fluency without compromising children's first language.

In this newsletter we hope to answer frequently asked questions, inform you of classroom interventions and strategies in place to help a wide range of learners, and finally, give you suggestions on how you can help your child at home during their Immersion experience.



Frequently Asked Questions:

1.) **Why should I choose French immersion for my children?**

French opens up many doors for children, not only in the bilingual country of Canada, but internationally as well. The ability to speak another language increases appreciation and openness for other cultures and traditions. It is also an added skill in the workforce.

2.) **Is French Immersion for everyone?**

French Immersion was created to give every child equal opportunity to learn a second language while maintaining students' first language skills. It is an inclusive program that provides support to children with various needs.

3.) **Will my children learn the same things as their peers in the English program?**

Yes, both programs follow the New Brunswick Department of Education Curriculum Outcomes in all subject areas. Immersion students will continue to receive English Language Arts instruction with the addition of French Language Arts. Methods of delivery, resources, testing, and activities in the classroom will differ depending on the subject areas.

4.) **How competent are graduates in French?**

The goal of the program is to graduate Grade 12 functionally bilingual and be able to study and work in a French environment. The competency level will depend on individual ability, motivation and exposure to the language. Studies in Canada have confirmed the success of the program in producing bilingual students.

5.) **Will my child develop strong English-language skills in a French Immersion program?**

Yes, your child's language skills won't suffer because of French instruction. Studies have shown that "the effect of learning a second language on first language skills has been positive in all studies done. Furthermore, the loss of instructional time in English in favor of the second language has never been shown to have negative effects on the achievement of the first language."¹

Instruction in the classroom

Differentiation in the classroom:

There are different teaching strategies and different methods of delivering information that are designed to reach all learning styles. Here are some of strategies used in class to reach our various learners. These activities will help develop students' oral communication and reading and writing skills in French.

Your child will likely pass through several phases as they begin learning a second language. It is normal, at first, for your child to be a bit apprehensive and unsure. He/she may at times be frustrated, but this feeling quickly changes to determination. Finally, he/she will get to the 'aha' stage. The last three phases may repeat themselves as we cycle through each theme.



Specific classroom instruction strategies used:

Oral - Speaking & Listening	Reading	Writing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Word work (eg. Spelling games, syllables, word scrambles) - Modelling proper pronunciation and expression - Visual support (eg. word wall, images) - Music – songs, poems, rhymes - Role plays/skits - Lots of opportunity to practice repeating sounds - Tongue Twisters - Choral readings - Use of short directives and speaking slowly - Lots of gestures, facial expressions and repetition to support understanding - Gradual increase in complexity of expected student response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading to self - Reading to a partner/group - Teacher led reading - Modelled fluent reading by the teacher in small and larger groups - Different options for books – interests, various genres - Audio books – listening centers - Word Work - Practice frequently used words - Teaching self-monitoring and self-evaluating strategies - Teaching comprehension strategies - Activities that expand vocabulary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Word work - Personal journals - Modelled writing by teacher - Shared writing as a whole class or group - Graphic organizers - Story boards - Picture stories - Story starters - Vocabulary banks - Word wall and visual aids around the room to help with ideas and spelling - Different coloured paper, font size and style changes - Technology - Different materials to write with and write on - Conferencing one-on-one with the teacher or peer helper

Supporting all learners: Example of Patrick's Case

Patrick is currently in grade 2. Within the next few months, his parents will need to decide whether Patrick should enter the new French immersion grade 3 entry program or remain in English.

Patrick has been seeing a speech pathologist since Grade 1 for a speech-sound disorder. He is struggling a little with his reading. His grade 2 teacher is trying to strengthen his fluency by teaching him how to read using punctuation marks as well as providing him with appropriate reading material at his level.

Patrick is a strong student in math. He is well behaved and has many friends. He is a middle child with an older brother and a younger sister.

His mother wants him to learn a second language but his father is concerned about his speech impediment and feels learning another language might not be appropriate for his son. He is also concerned about Patrick's English literacy development and wonders about English instruction in immersion.

Patrick's parents recently attended an information session on the grade 3 FI program, but remain indecisive about whether Patrick should enter the grade 3 FI program.

Supporting Your Child at Home

In order to support your child in French Immersion, it is important for your child to read regularly in English and French. It is important that they talk frequently about what they read –what they enjoyed about the story, what they liked about the main character, what they thought of the ending, what strategies they used to help them read and understand.

Reading for pleasure should be encouraged in both French and English. In this way, your child's English and French vocabulary will be enriched and his/her self-confidence will continue to grow.

In grade 3 Immersion, Patrick will continue seeing his speech pathologist. He will be given reading material at his level in both French and English. In addition, he will continue receiving guided practice to strengthen his reading skills. To help his fluency, his immersion teacher will implement appropriate activities such as Reader's Theatre and books on tape.

Being a strong Math student, Patrick will take the role as peer helper and group leader on many occasions to give him lots of opportunity to speak in a subject he is comfortable with and passionate about.

The teacher will be sure to incorporate Math projects and scientific experiments specifically designed to give Patrick practice in reading about his subject, writing about it, and presenting to a partner or larger groups. He will be assigned tasks in French Language Arts that allow him to work with his peers in solving problems creatively.

One of the teacher's main goals will be to give Patrick as many authentic opportunities as possible to speak aloud in French. Patrick will participate in daily singing exercises, phonics warm-ups with a partner (with specific sounds targeted), and daily practice reading different types of text aloud to the teacher or a partner.

At home, Patrick's parents will want to continue reading with him each night in English, as well as listen to him reading in French. Even though Patrick's parents aren't fluent in French, the reading strategies are the same across the languages.

Patrick's progress will be tracked regularly by the teacher and home contact will take place frequently to keep everyone informed.



Suggested reading resources:

- Folio Benjamin 4 - 8 picture book series, Scholastic
- Logimots 4 - 8 story books, Scholastic
- Coulicou (Chickadee) up to 8 a science and nature magazine, Les Éditions Héritage Inc.
- Babar 7 - 10 stories, comics, and Activities, Bayard Press
- Les belles histoires 7 - 10 illustrated short stories Bayard Press
- Babouche 7 - 10 novel series by Gilles Gauthier, La courte échelle
- Kidpocket 7 - 10 novel series **Éditions Paquette
- J'aime lire 8 - 12 stories, comics, and educational games, Bayard Press
- Hibou (Owl magazine) 8 - 14 science and nature magazine, Les Éditions Héritage Inc.

INTERNET SITES

- Canadian Parents For French National: <http://www.cpf.ca/fra/accueil.html>
- EQAO www.eqao.com information on the Grade 3, Grade 6, Grade 9, and Grade 10 Provincial testing
- Ministry of Ontario <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca> links to French Curriculum
- More French Links <http://www.isu.edu/~nickcrai/frenlinx.html> travel, museums, magazines, education, news and media, music, business, language and literature,
- National Film Board www.onf.ca/jeunesse games on the National Film Board site
- TFO <http://www.tfo.org/> French TV Ontario

How do I help my child read?

Reading comprehension strategies (used in English and French)

1. Making links and connections: What does this story remind you about? What did you already know about this subject? Have you read books or seen movies that have a similar topic?

2. Finding the main idea / summarize the passage: Main ideas are usually located in the titles and sub-titles. They are also usually found in the first sentence of every paragraph, in diagrams and in pictures. What was the story about?

3. Finding key words and find words you already know.

4. Encountering a difficult sentence to understand...keep reading! It is usually explained in the following sentence.

5. Prediction: Can you predict what will happen next? What type of information will be coming up? Was your prediction right?

6. Ask yourself questions while you're reading. Did what I just read make sense? Did I understand the last paragraph?

7. Make a visual image in your head while you're reading.

Questions to ask - non fiction

1. What was the main idea of this passage?
2. What did you already know about the topic before reading?
3. What was the most interesting passage?
4. What did you learn from this passage?
5. What would someone want to learn now that you read this passage?
6. Would you recommend this passage to someone?

Questions to ask - fiction

1. Who were the main and secondary characters?
2. Where does the story take place?
3. What problems did the character face?
4. How do you think the character felt when...?
5. How does this passage end?
6. Which part of this passage did you prefer? Why?
7. Do you think others would enjoy this passage? Why or why not?



There are different types of reading comprehension questions.



1. **"eye" questions:** These are questions that can be answered by finding the answers with your eyes. Example: This student wore a blue dress to school today. What color was the dress? The dress was blue.



2. **"brain" questions:** These are questions that you need to read the text and figure out the answer based on the information given. Example: This little student wore a blue dress to school today. Was the student a boy or a girl? The student was a little girl.



3. **"heart" questions:** These are questions that require your opinion or thoughts.

Tips for helping your child with their reading

- Expose your child to English and French reading material as often as possible. Use a variety of genres (i.e. newspapers, comic books, fiction, and non-fiction).
- Listen to your child read aloud in French and English.
- Show an interest in your child's French reading by praising and asking open-ended questions (i.e. "what is the story about?", "what is your favorite character?")
- Model reading to show that books can be a form of entertainment as well as a source of information.
- Access French books, subscriptions, tapes, games, software, videos, TV.
- Purchase a French/English dictionary for home.