MULTIPLE LEVELS IN BASIC FRENCH

The Importance of Basic French

Manitoba's *Basic French Guidelines: A Handbook for School Divisions/Districts* discusses the importance of second language learning:

> Basic French is an optional subject area within the English program in Manitoba. However, given research in children's cognitive development, the role of French in Canada yesterday and today and its place in the global environment, Basic French should be included as part of effective programming in the schools of Manitoba.
>
> The latest research has revealed that not only do students who have studied a second language possess more cognitive flexibility and abstract thinking capabilities, but that "knowing a second language can help students in reading, writing, and math as well as in helping them accept other cultures"[1], thereby reducing racism and intolerance for others.
>
> Knowledge of a second language is now recognized as a necessity in all countries where there is a need to understand the language of one's neighbours, whether to become acquainted with their culture or to facilitate various kinds of trade which require increasing mobility. This is particularly true of French, which is used daily in numerous countries around the world.
>
> Cultural and economic exchanges within and beyond Canada are enriched by the knowledge of French. French is a major avenue of communication in Canada. By learning a second language, students develop a new network of references through which they can better understand the world around them. On another level, the study of a second language helps students get a better understanding of the underlying principles of language as a medium of communication.
>
> The classroom is an ideal place to acquire proficiency in the basics of French as a second language. The learning acquired there serves to support students' interest and confidence, while providing the groundwork for advanced study in later years.
>
> (Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, *Basic French Guidelines: A Handbook for School Divisions/Districts,* 2004, p. 2)

The handbook also provides a number of recommendations for teaching Basic French (see p. 26), all of which assume ideal conditions that do not exist in all schools. It is a good idea for teachers to be aware of these suggestions, which they can adapt to their specific teaching environment. In the case of multilevel classrooms, many adjustments are required.

Further Reading

Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. *Basic French Guidelines: A Handbook for School Divisions/Districts*, Winnipeg, Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2004. Available online at: <www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/docs/support/b_french/>.

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[1]   Taken from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. "Foreign Languages, Learning to Communicate in the Real World", *Curriculum Update,* Winter 1998.

3. Recommended Time Allotments

The Basic French curriculum should provide minimum daily instruction as set out in the table below.

Grades	Recommended Instruction Time	Percentage of instruction time in French
4 to 6	30 minutes	10%
7 and 8	35 minutes	10.6%
9 to 12	110 hours of instruction per credit	11%

The number of contact hours constitutes one of the most important factors in attaining the Basic French learning outcomes.

A recommendation for schools offering Basic French is to re-allocate a small portion of English Language Arts time for this purpose. This recognizes that some language concepts are transferable and should assist schools to accommodate the Basic French grant requirement. In order for students to achieve the Basic French learning outcomes, it is preferable that daily instruction be provided. Daily contact with the French language reinforces material learned previously. Furthermore, an instructional period of not less than 30 minutes will enable the teacher to engage students in meaningful activities. At the senior years level, a student may earn a Basic French credit by undertaking and successfully completing a course of study designed for a minimum of 110 hours of instruction.

4. Teacher Knowledge of Language and Methodology

The attainment of the learning outcomes hinges upon well-prepared teachers who are working in a supportive environment. It is important for teachers to communicate effectively in French and possess a rich knowledge base related to the subject matter. At the same time, teachers need to incorporate a repertoire of strategies and approaches that assist in selecting, sequencing, presenting, and evaluating instructional content.

5. Appropriate Learning Resources

The use of BEF recommended material is necessary in order to attain the Basic French learning outcomes as well as to implement an effective methodology.

6. Classroom or Locale

To enable students to participate fully in a variety of activities, schools should set aside a classroom or locale where the teacher can create a French atmosphere that is textually, visually, aurally and culturally rich and have ready access to necessary materials.

7. Professional Learning Opportunities for Basic French Teachers

Provision should be made for teachers to attend in-services provided by the BEF and to participate in other related professional development activities in order to upgrade their skills and to be informed of developments in second language learning and teaching.

(Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, *Basic French Guidelines – A Handbook for School Divisions/Districts,* 2004, p. 4–5)

Two Models for Teaching Basic French

Classroom Teacher

If the Basic French teacher is the classroom teacher or a specialist with his own classroom, it is very important to use the space effectively to encourage student participation. The classroom should provide students with areas where they can work in groups or independently, as well as a place where they can come together as a class. It is suggested that the classroom furniture be arranged to create different areas, some of which are a bit more private, so that the students can split into groups and work quietly without disturbing those around them. (See "Tips for Classroom Layout" on p. 28.)

Itinerant Teacher

What about the teacher who has to bring all of his resources with him because he does not have a dedicated Basic French classroom? The cart brimming with teaching tools that he pushes from room to room is in fact his "classroom on wheels". In such cases, the teacher finds a room in which to keep the Basic French material. But how does he organize it? It is advisable to have a large, sturdy cart on which to place plastic tubs or bins.

The classroom teacher could also share his room by providing a shelf and one of his bulletin boards for prominently displaying French projects. The itinerant teacher who pushes a cart needs to use every means possible to help him provide effective Basic French instruction (See the article "Travel Tips for Itinerant Core French Teachers" on p. 31.)

Further Reading

Anderson, Bev, et al. *Effective Literacy Practices in FSL – Making Connections.* Toronto, Ontario, Pearson Education Canada, 2008, p. 34.

Tips for Classroom Layout

1. Begin by setting up the front of the classroom near the blackboard, as it will be used for providing group instructions to the students.

2. Place the teacher's desk so that it does not take up too much room.

3. Set up a smaller "*mini-enseignant*" desk for self-correction.

4. Create an open whole-class gathering space.

5. Install a table or shelf for exploration and manipulation activities.

6. Determine where to post the code of conduct.

7. Group the students' desks in clusters.

8. Post the enrichment centre rules at the back of the class.

9. Gradually create the areas required for different enrichment workstations, as the need arises.

10. Set up a workstation or learning centre near the front of the classroom (or on the sides near the front).

11. Plan wall space for posting subject area references, approaches and learning strategies ("how to learn")

12. Also set aside locations for more technical postings, where students can easily find the information they require with respect to classroom life:
    - homework and lesson board;
    - list of birthdays;
    - calendars and the weather;
    - news and public affairs area;
    - weekly or cycle timetable;
    - daily agenda;
    - work plan indicating "What I must do" (*Ce que je dois faire*);
    - enrichment board indicating "What I can do" (*Ce que je peux faire*);
    - bulletin board for displaying class achievements, work or productions ("*Nos réalisations*", "*Nos œuvres*", "*Nos productions*").

The permanence of these display areas, where and when things are displayed and the esthetic appeal of the displays enhance the effectiveness of these visual references for students.

Special instructions:
- Use the existing furniture.
- Think of different ways to arrange shelves, filing cabinets and tables.
- Try to use space as effectively as possible.
- Do not overlook the functional aspect of the various elements.
- Remember that the quiet areas should be as far away as possible from the noisier ones.
- Additional student desks can be used both for workstation or storage areas.

Desk Cluster* Variations

Cluster of 2
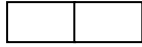
13 clusters of 2
26 students

Cluster of 3

9 clusters of 3
27 students

Cluster of 4

6 clusters of 4
24 students

Special-shaped Clusters

Half circle

12 students

8 students

6 students

26 students

Double U

17 students

10
students

27 students

V with pairs
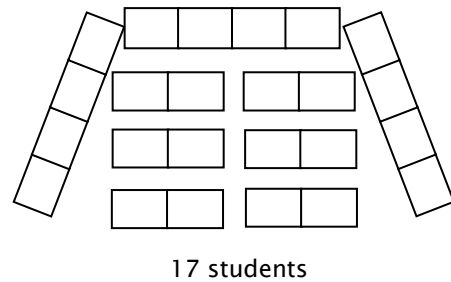
17 students

Clusters using Different Combinations

Clusters of 4 with clusters of 2
(for students with different
behavioural maturity levels)

Clusters of 4 with clusters of 3

Adapted and translated from Caron, Jacqueline. 1994. *Quand revient septembre.* Montréal,QC : Chenelière.
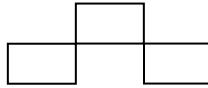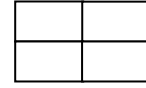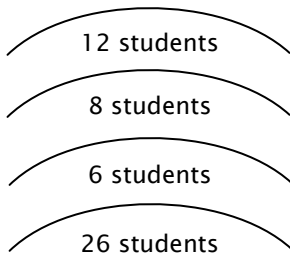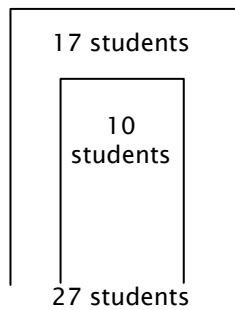p. 431. Reproduced with the permission of Les Éditions de la Chenelière inc. All rights reserved.

* cluster = group of desks

Physical Arrangement of an Elementary Classroom

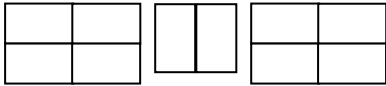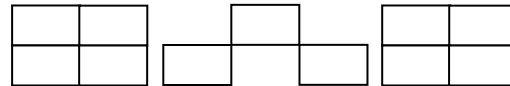|			
Science workstation	Educational games station	Personal project area	Class rules and consequences

Shelves for material

Bulletin board (left side, vertical)

Enrichment board (right side, vertical)

17 students

10 students

Blackboard (left side, vertical)

Self-correction (left side, vertical)

Door (left side, vertical)

Area for required or optional workshops

Work table

Manipulatives and exploration materials (right side, vertical)

Teacher's desk

Blackboard	Code of conduct

Travel Tips for Itinerant Core French Teachers

(Source: Roberts, Christine. "Travel Tips for Itinerant Core French Teachers", *Communication*, Summer 1999. Adapted with the permission of Christine Roberts. All rights reserved.)

The workplace reality of many Core French teachers is that of moving from room to room perhaps on multiple levels of a building and out to portables, teaching up to and over 200 students using materials which must be shared while coping with a new curriculum and assessment expectations. The keys to maintaining sanity and health are planning and organization.

Organization and materials:
Determine how you will store the many components of your program and your resources. Some suggestions:
☞ Large laminated envelopes:
- to hold flashcards, wordcards, gamecards, project samples for a particular unit of your program;
- to organize materials on a theme, vocabulary or grammar topic.

Before laminating, reinforce edges and tape three sides of one half sheet of acetate film on outside to make a see-through pocket. Insert index card listing related materials not found in envelope.)

☞ Binders:
- to organize worksheets on particular topics (verbs, music, report cards)
- to store extra, "homemade" worksheets for commercial programs
☞ Magazine file boxes:
- to hold sets of song booklets, enrichment cards, activity cards (old laundry soap boxes are sturdy and may be cut to size)
☞ Cardboard paper boxes, Rubbermaid plastic tubs:
- to store large units, particularly seasonal themes which may require long periods of storage between use
☞ Large sleeves/folders:
- to store posters, vocabulary lists, project samples, big books (Label and laminate two sheets of Bristol board, then tape and/or staple together. Store large files lying flat in a cupboard or standing in a box.

Odds'n ends:
☞ Keep a length of laminating plastic film. Instead of always laminating charts, tape the film over it, write on it, clean it off and reuse.
☞ Tape recorder counter book. This is initially time–consuming, but pays off quickly! In an exercise book, assign a page for each side of a cassette tape used in your commercial program. List each song or activity on the CD.
☞ When creating games on Bristol board, use both sides.

Organization for each class:
✏ An alternative to keeping a large, bulky daybook is to provide a plastic report cover with a clear front for each class or grade. Inside each folder keep the lesson plans, class lists/evaluation sheets, observation sheets, master/teacher copies of current or future worksheets, overhead acetates, etc. At intervals, file lesson plan sheets in a large binder labeled with the school year.
✏ If the teacher's manual is bulky, photocopy a single unit as necessary and place in duotang folder. This also allows you to make notes and write examples in the manual. Store with the other unit materials when finished.
✏ Provide an envelope for each class for completed student work to be evaluated.
✏ Provide a large folder for each class to store posters and large projects.
✏ Make a small monitor/reminder board for each class. Copy student names on small cards for monitor posting.
✏ Include a notebook for yourself, "Cahier de l'enseignant", to keep an extra copy of each worksheet. This will save time retrieving and copying sheets for the student who always loses his/hers. It is also an easy reference for students who have been absent to check for missed work.
✏ Ask for hall bulleting board space to display student work, photos, projects, etc. *It is important to maintain a high profile.*

⇨

Student work and conduct:

✍ Take inventory of the kinds of activities you wish to try with your students. Then make a list of the procedures which they will need to follow to successfully participate in these activities. Think about such things as: collecting/returning work, when work is late, getting the class attention, dismissal, when work is finished early, etc. Send your list or code of conduct home in a letter after you have discussed the contents with your students. Ask the parents and students to sign and return it.

✍ Establish rules of treatment of **student work folders**: No doodling, stickers on inside cover only, replaced by student if damaged or destroyed, etc.

✍ Instead of posters displayed in the class, provide **reference sheets** to be kept in students' notebooks. These may be photocopied on a particular colour to signal their importance and to simplify location in the notes. Unless otherwise instructed, students are encouraged to refer to their notes during games, oral activities or whenever they feel the need.

(In September, review important concepts and vocabulary from the previous year. Complete coloured reference sheets and place in front of notebook. This review may be helpful in assessing your students' needs and setting long-range plans for the year.)

✍ Establish one recess time and one classroom where students may meet you for detentions, extra help or to complete work.

✍ **Assign class monitors**. Choose two students each week to help with collection and distribution of work, supervision of games and points, setting up and packing up of teacher materials, marking of sample exercises, retrieval of materials, etc.

✍ If you teach difficult students who may need to be removed from class, plan in advance to have a selection of appropriate activities which they can complete at the office. For example, a dictionary page based on current vocabulary in which they must record the page number, part of speech, and definitions.

✍ Decide if students will keep notebooks and texts in their desks or if you need tubs for storage on a shelf. Discuss storage needs with the homeroom teacher.

Rewards and motivation:

It is difficult to set up teams when you travel and have to accept someone else's seating arrangement. However, you should not feel that you have no control over the physical environment. I often make arrangements with individual teachers, particularly when trying to teach split grades in classes where the students are randomly placed. I also feel it is my right to make recommendations about seating to the homeroom teacher.

In the case of junior classes, I usually have some sort of point system in place for motivation. I call it the "Bravo" system.

☺ Tickets are copied, cut and stored in a baggy on the cart. Each class has a bucket in the homeroom.

☺ "Bravos" are awarded for good behaviour, good answers, following directions promptly and/or well, as points in games, for coming to attention quickly, for returning homework or tests promptly, etc.

☺ Monitors distribute tickets according to teacher instructions.

☺ The student signs and places the tickets into the bucket.

☺ Every Friday or alternate Friday, five different names are drawn for a treat of some kind.

☺ Tickets are recycled each week (students erase previous owner's name) until they are too worn.

Consider other rewards such as:

✓ earning privileges (game time, computer time, choice of activity…);

✓ working toward a class goal such as a movie (*en français!*) or party.

(*Now and then I like to treat the whole class If their behaviour is particularly good. I also play certain games as myself against the class. If I lose, I treat everyone!)

Portables:

Portables can make itinerant teachers' lives very difficult.

☹ **Before Labour Day**, check the availability of CD players, overhead projectors and screens, storage and display space.

☹ If you plan to use a hanging pocket chart, affix hooks or nails in the wall above the blackboard or whiteboard.

⇨

☺ **When you are familiar with the class**, choose two reliable students to be "go-fers". Familiarize them with you office/cart and materials. Send them to retrieve forgotten items or fetch materials you were unable to carry out yourself in one trip.
(*Student should not carry overhead projectors or any audio-visual equipment.)

☹ If you wish to send small groups to practice presentations in the school, make an arrangement with the secretary to keep an eye on students in the foyer, or check with your librarian.

☺ **Transporting your materials**: a large briefcase with brown legal accordion folders or large envelopes. Exchange folders as you change classes. Carry an open tub for each class, or a see-through Rubbermaid case, and/or an art portfolio for games and charts.

☺ Make use of student monitors to set up and take down charts, transport materials to your office or from portable to portable, etc.

Working from a cart: As difficult as it is, it is not impossible to provide a good program on the run. You need to be extremely organized and ready to change gears quickly. I recommend having all lessons and materials prepared a week at a time. If an activity takes less time than you had planned, be ready to move to something from tomorrow's lesson or change the order of the presentation. Overplanning will ensure that you are never caught short and time is never wasted.

Your cart should include:
- ✏ a bin for each class
- ✏ teacher's pencils, pens, overhead markers, tape, magnets, stickers, Post-it notes
- ✏ several dictionaries
- ✏ scrap/blank paper, extra worksheets/activity pages
- ✏ CD player
- ✏ side basket for large games and charts (tape a shallow cardboard box to one side of the cart)
- ✏ pocket chart
- ✏ bin of extra activities for students who finish early

Each class bin should include:
- ✏ the lesson plan
- ✏ program components: manual, tapes, flashcards…
- ✏ evaluation materials
- ✏ student work

I like to decorate my cart with a flashing bicycle light, horn and seasonal decorations!

There is a cart now on the market specifically designed with itinerant language teachers in mind. Its features include sturdy bins, a light-weight frame with good maneuverability, a removable easel with ledge and white board, and adjustable hooks for hanging chartpaper. I have found the white board very useful because I always have writing and display space even when the homeroom blackboards are full. This cart can be ordered from the Louise Kool catalogue, B & B School Supplies and Scholar's Choice. For more information on FSL carts, contact Copernicus Educational Products Inc. (Telephone: 1-800-267-8494, fax: 519-848-5516, or website: <www.copernicused.com>.)

Providing activities for early finishers:
Either on your cart or in an easily accessible tub or box, you should have prepared a range of activities to occupy students who have completed their work. This can also be used as a "treat" on a day when you are worn out or need a change of pace. Some possibilities:
- ☐ sets of small cards for matching games
- ☐ *Pot-pourri* sheets, especially seasonal activities
- ☐ *Le français sans souci* sheets
- ☐ *Bibliobus* – set limit for the month, i.e., student must have read and completed activities for 10 stories
- ☐ file folder games
- ☐ *Boggles Jr.*
- ☐ laminated "Where's Waldo" type sheets or puzzle pages from *Owl, Chickadee* or *National Geographic World* magazines. Write instructions and list of items in French, attach to illustration and laminate. Supply water soluble markers and handi-wipes or dry-erase markers
- ☐ laminated word searches, dot-to-dots, crosswords, etc. Supply markers and wipes
- ☐ Bingo – especially small sets from *Bien joué* kit

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Travel Tips for Itinerant Core French Teachers (cont'd.)

Last but certainly not least:

Supply Teacher Folder
If you know about an absence in advance, plan in detail for your supply teacher. However, it is best to have a back-up plan in place BEFORE you get sick!

Label a magazine file box and leave it in the office and inform your secretary or principal of its whereabouts.

Leave materials and suggestions that *do not* depend on having a French-speaking replacement.

Your folder should include the following:
- your schedule (updated regularly)
- map of the school, with your classes labeled including staff room, staff washrooms, French office/storage area
- yard duty schedule and rules
- emergency procedures
- class lists
- emergency lesson plans and materials

*Ask a friend on staff to look out for your supply teacher and check on him/her during the day.

Some suggestions for emergency work:
☺ Colouring sheets with colour code ready for posting on board (primary)
☺ Easy crafts to supplement current theme (primary)
☺ An extra wordsearch for each unit's vocabulary
☺ A language analysis sheet for a familiar reading passage or song, i.e., list five cognates, verbs, adjectives, synonyms, etc.
☺ *Pot-pourri* sheets
☺ Review sheets for numbers, weather, alphabet, grammar, previously taught vocabulary
☺ Dictionary search sheet, i.e., look up page #, part of speech and definition for list of vocabulary related to current theme
☺ Blank wordsearch page to complete and trade with classmates – *Always include an answer key!*

The effort you put in organizing now will pay dividends later. Bon courage! ■
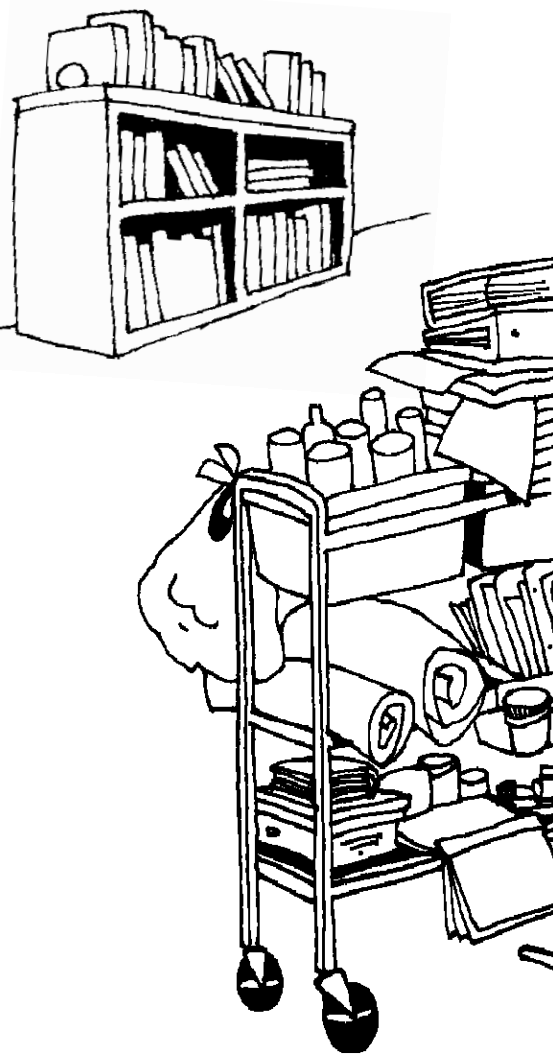
Encouraging Independence

How can students be encouraged to become independent? According to the multilevel classroom teaching philosophy, learners become autonomous. Marvin Marshall, in his article entitled "Promoting Positivity, Choice and Reflection", suggests a strategy for creating a positive learning community:

> These three simple practices can make school a place where teachers and students want to be.
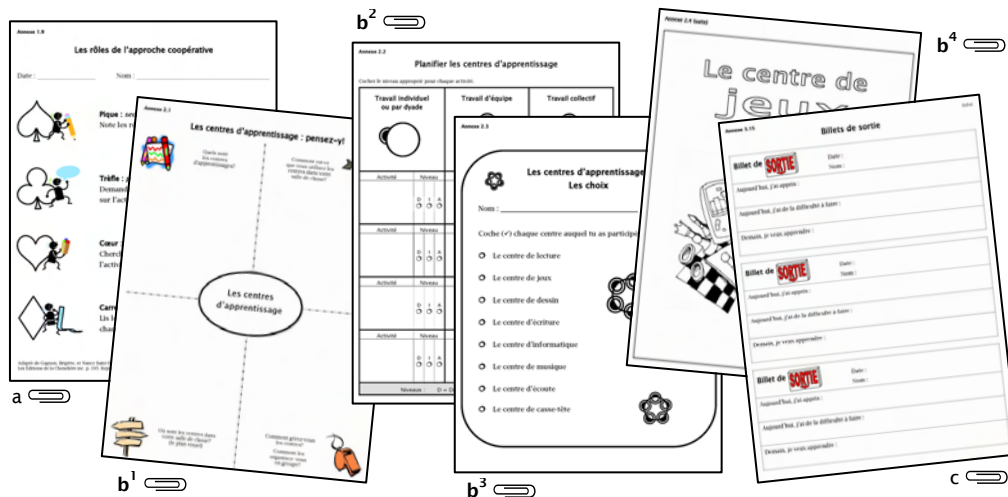>
> **P** – Am I sending a POSITIVE message?
> **C** – Am I offering CHOICES?
> **R** – Am I encouraging REFLEXION?
>
> (Marshall, May-June 2005)

All of the suggestions below also help to create a non-threatening environment.

- Believe in the students' autonomy and cooperation by discussing the role of respect in the classroom and valuing all opinions.

- Explain and practise classroom routines and how groups work (show/facilitate/guide).

- Write the timetable on the board.

- Manage time, routines, strategies, choices, resources and the physical environment.

- Choose activities that make use of the multiple intelligences.

- Name monitors (in rotation) who are responsible for classroom "jobs", using playing cards. (See p. A14, *Annexe 1.9* "*Les rôles de l'approche coopérative*".)   a ▭

- Create learning centres (p. A15-A18, *Annexes 2.1-2.4*), explain and demonstrate how to use them.   b ▭

- Explain and use the self-assessment blackline masters and exit slips (p. A40, *Annexe 3.15*) included in the annex section in order to check comprehension.   c ▭

- Divide the class into small groups that change, depending on the purpose of the activity. (See "Overcoming the challenges of teaching Basic French in a multilevel classroom", p. 18-21, as well as *Independent Together,* p. 4.7-4.11, for more information on group management.)

- Let the students wear the "teacher hat" (take turns being *mini-enseignant*).

Starting the Year Right

At the beginning of the school year, the Basic French teacher should talk with the students in order to develop a learning community built around the multilevel teaching philosophy.

It is important to:

- Establish routines (how the teacher will manage the class with student feedback);

- Determine with the students how the classroom is organized: tables, desks, centres, students' responsibilities, materiel, etc. (see layout suggestions on p. 28-30);

- Address how the groups, pairs (partners) and the learning centres work;

- Choose the themes and think of ideas that integrate the themes at all three levels;

- Choose learning outcomes that apply to all three grade levels;

- Begin student observations to develop a better understanding of their needs and learning styles;

- Plan activities that highlight the different multiple intelligences and levels (beginner, intermediate and advanced);

- Include experiential, hands-on activities that allow the students to be independent;

- Discuss the learners' role in the classroom and the role of their parents;

- Write a letter to parents to explain the Basic French philosophy and expectations (see p. A13, *Annexe 1.8*);

- Begin cooperative learning activities;

- Teach self-assessment;

- Encourage feedback (students' reflections on self and a partner).
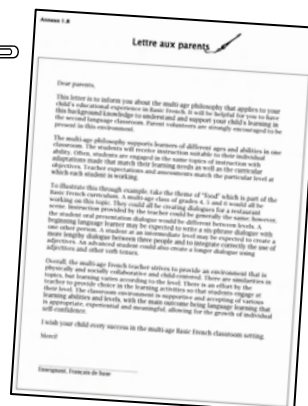
Planning

To organize a multilevel Basic French classroom, a number of questions need to be asked and answered.

> What do the students need most? What can these students achieve in the time available? Which of those needs can I cover, given the limitations of the class? What objectives are reasonable to set and hope to have fulfilled? What progress will be shown in order for the students and me to judge this class to have been a success?
>
> (Bell, 2004, p. 31)

Once the teacher has determined the answers to these questions, he can make connections with the Basic French curriculum guide for Grades 4 to 6. Fortunately, the learning requirements apply to themes that span the three consecutive years. The teacher may also divide the themes into three years as shown in the table, in order to cover all the program's fields of experience. (See p. A7,

	année n° 1	année n° 2	année n° 3
l'alimentation	X		
les animaux			X
l'école	X		
l'environnement		X	
l'exercice physique			
les fêtes et les célé'			

Annexe 1.2.) This system only works if a teacher keeps the same class for the three years. Otherwise, it is suggested that the school's teachers plan the unit choices together.

The best way to go about selecting a theme is to choose one that is of interest to the students or one that the students themselves propose. Themes provide an opportunity for teachers to explore the students' interests. These ideas put Basic French teaching in an authentic context that is relevant to the students' life experiences. Moreover, themes allow teachers to present initial material to the whole class all at once. If learners have the opportunity to take part in generating and choosing a theme, they tend to work better because they have ownership of that theme.

Once the theme has been chosen, it is important that the teacher first realizes that there is no single text for teaching Basic French in a multilevel classroom. Second, the students do not always go through the same stages at the same time and they progress at their own pace. Lastly, because the perfect class does not exist, it is impossible to please everyone all the time. Slowly, the students will come to realize that they can solve problems and work out their concerns on their own. However, to acquire these skills, it is necessary to teach the vocabulary needed to work effectively in a group. Examples include *Bravo! Bonne idée! Tu as raison!* (See p. A51, *Annexe 4.1.1 "Le vocabulaire du jeu"*.)

To meet the needs of students from multiple levels with different learning styles, it is important to find a wide range of materials and activities.

It is also important to identify the elements that the three levels (beginner, intermediate and advanced) have in common. These common elements can guide the teacher in his choice of activities. Does the activity involve the whole class, small groups or learning centres? Do the activities reflect the learning outcomes for speaking, listening, reading and writing?

Lesson plans as well as the teaching approach and methodology are outlined in the unit "*L'alimentation*" on p. 43.

Tout le monde à table (English version)
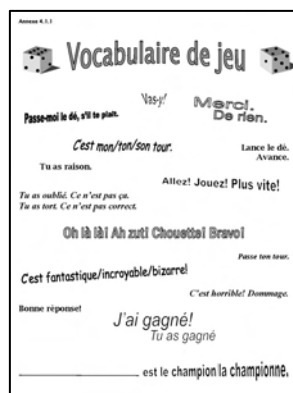
Assessment

> The ultimate goal of assessment is to help develop independent, lifelong learners who regularly monitor and assess their own progress.
>
> (Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2006, p. viii)

Setting Criteria

The current notion of assessment has changed and today's teachers understand that assessment and teaching take place at the same time. They no longer evaluate only at the end of a specific timeframe, such as at the end of a unit, with the purpose of assigning a mark to give to parents. Assessment is an ongoing process throughout the year.

Students and parents are now involved in the assessment process using self-assessment strategies, peer assessment and student-led parent conferences. The aim is to help students move forward and to assist the teacher in the practice of differentiated instruction. Students need to know where they have been successful, what they need to improve and what they need to do differently in order to succeed. In making all of these observations, the teacher can modify the students' work and meet their needs as learners.

There are three components in assessing students in combined or multilevel classrooms:

Observations

Conversations / Assessment \ Portfolios
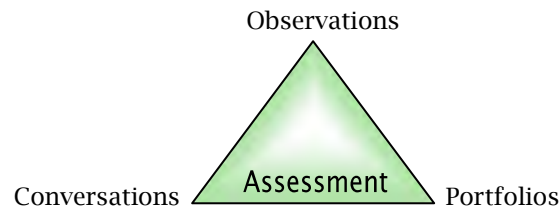
- **Observations** – Assessment *for* learning:
  Teachers observe the students' learning with the students' involvement. They determine descriptors that most accurately describe the student's learning. (Examples: cooperative learning activities, class discussion, contributing to a Venn diagram during a brainstorming session, role-playing or presenting a play or dialogue, oral questions and answers, singing, memory game, bingo game, interviews, etc.)

- **Conversations** – Assessment *of* learning:
  This formative assessment consists of a series of conversations about the student's learning shared between peers, between the teacher and student and between the teacher, parents and student. (Examples: using assessment grids or checklists for self-assessment or peer assessment)

- **Portfolios** – Assessment *as* learning:
  The portfolio is an accumulation of evidence of the student's learning that involves the process (a rough copy) and final product, or a combination of the two. The work can be in paper or electronic format and the portfolio can include texts, multimedia (audio or video), data and graphics. Each sample is accompanied by a self-reflection explaining the student's learning. Teachers sometimes use the name progress portfolio to demonstrate how the student has moved forward. Students reflect by choosing their work - the product - that they wish to include in the portfolio. These are copies or samples that reflect the individual progress of each student (e.g., a story written by the student, a drawing accompanied by a description, a word search, tests, etc.)

In the multilevel classroom, these three components are essential for a balanced and fair assessment. Prior to commencing an activity that will be evaluated, it is important that the students are aware of all the objectives, the type of assessment and the criteria. Students can add their own assessment criteria. When the teacher involves the students, they become active participants who are interested in their progress. They are more willing and able to stay on task.

The assessment should also contain the most recent material and the teacher should keep copies of this work. This is the reason why the portfolio is such an essential tool.

For group work, individual marks are given rather than a group mark since it is the learning, rather than the assessment, that is cooperative. A group mark does not reflect individual responsibility.

> In short, the effect of assessment for learning, as it plays out in the classroom, is that students keep learning and remain confident that they can continue to learn at productive levels if they keep trying to learn. In other words, students don't give up in frustration or hopelessness.
>
> (Stiggins, 2002, p. 758-765)

It is recommended that assessments use clear criteria and a variety of methods, approaches and tools. (See the annexes on assessment, p. A26-A50 and p. A80-A92):

- Classroom observations;
- Teacher feedback;
- Anecdotal records;
- Student checklist of tasks;
- Differentiated assessment;
- Assessment of authentic tasks;
- Self-assessment (p. A50, *Annexe 3.25*), student's reflection regarding his own learning;
- Continuum;
- Observation records;
- Assessment forms and rubrics;
- Peer assessment;
- Teacher-student conferences to assess progress and needs;
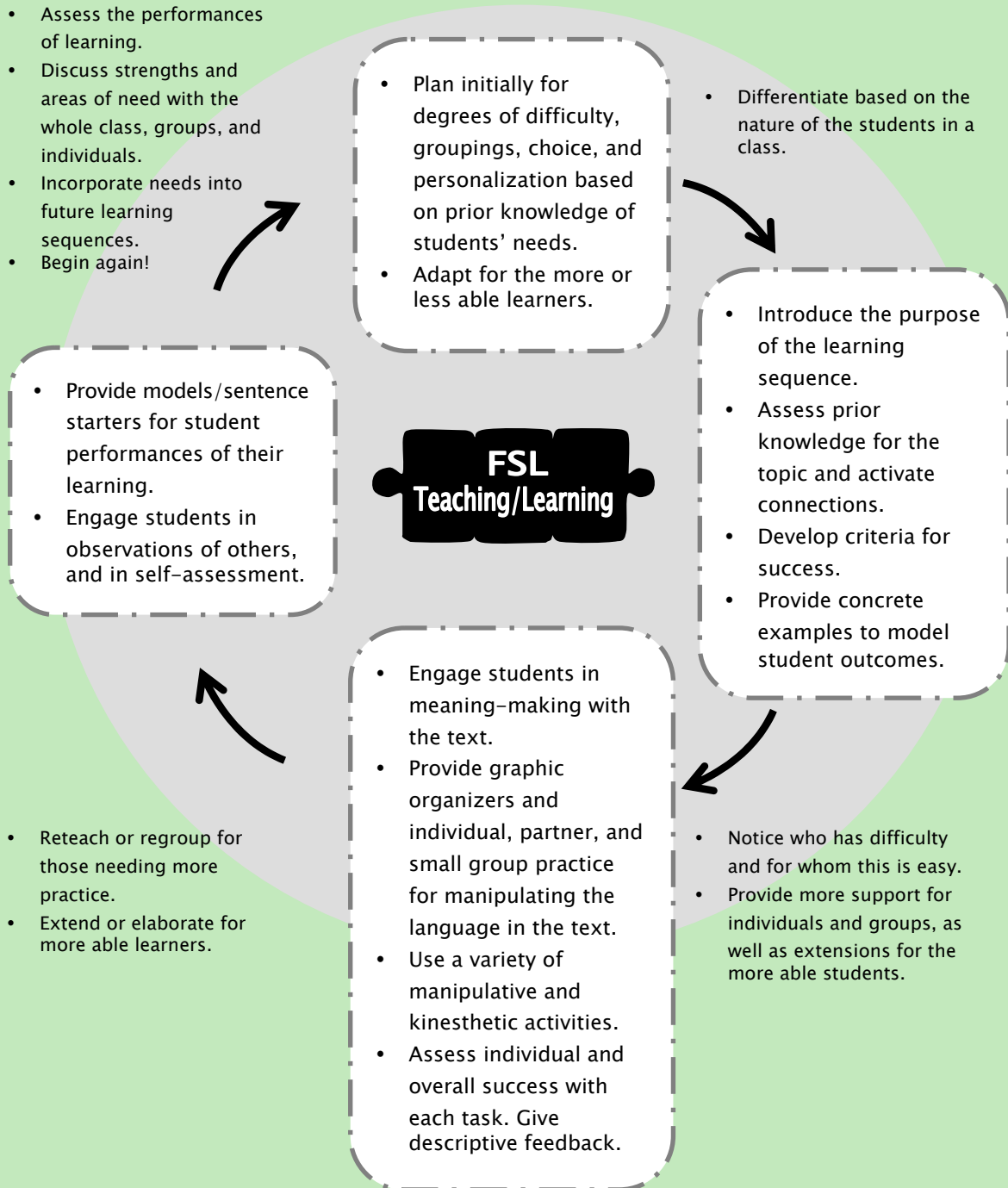- Portfolios (shared with parents at student-led conferences).

The table "Summary of planning Assessment of Learning" taken from the document *Rethinking Classroom Assessment with Purpose in Mind: Assessment **for** Learning, Assessment **as** Learning, Assessment **of** Learning*, provides a summary of the three assessment methods.

Summary of Planning Assessment *of* Learning

	Assessment *for* Learning	Assessment *as* Learning	Assessment *of* Learning
Why Assess?	to enable teachers to determine next steps in advancing student learning	to guide and provide opportunities for each student to monitor and critically reflect on his or her learning, and identify next steps	to certify or inform parents or others of student's proficiency in relation to curriculum learning outcomes
Assess What?	each student's progress and learning needs in relation to the curricular outcomes	each student's thinking about his or her learning, what strategies he or she uses to support or challenge that learning, and the mechanisms he or she uses to adjust and advance his or her learning	the extent to which students can apply the key concepts, knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to the curricular outcomes
What Methods?	a range of methods in different modes that make students' skills and understanding visible	a range of methods in different modes that elicit students' learning and metacognitive processes	a range of methods in different modes that assess both product and process
Ensuring Quality	• accuracy and consistency of observations and interpretations of student learning • clear, detailed learning expectations • accurate, detailed notes for descriptive feedback to each student	• accuracy and consistency of student's self-reflection, self-monitoring, and self-adjustment • engagement of the student in considering and challenging his or her thinking • students record their own learning	• accuracy, consistency, and fairness of judgements based on high-quality information • clear, detailed learning expectations • fair and accurate summative reporting
Using the Information	• provide each student with accurate descriptive feedback to further his or her learning • differentiate instruction by continually checking where each student is in relation to the curricular outcomes • provide parents or guardians with descriptive feedback about student learning and ideas for support	• provide each student with accurate descriptive feedback that will help him or her develop independent learning habits • have each student focus on the task and his or her learning (not on getting the right answer) • provide each student with ideas for adjusting, rethinking, and articulating his or her learning • provide the conditions for the teacher and student to discuss alternatives • students report about their learning	• indicate each student's level of learning • provide the foundation for discussions on placement or promotion • report fair, accurate, and detailed information that can be used to decide the next steps in a student's learning

(Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2006, p. 65)

Assessment and Differentiation Cycle

- Assess the performances of learning.
- Discuss strengths and areas of need with the whole class, groups, and individuals.
- Incorporate needs into future learning sequences.
- Begin again!

- Plan initially for degrees of difficulty, groupings, choice, and personalization based on prior knowledge of students' needs.
- Adapt for the more or less able learners.

- Differentiate based on the nature of the students in a class.

- Provide models/sentence starters for student performances of their learning.
- Engage students in observations of others, and in self-assessment.

FSL Teaching/Learning

- Introduce the purpose of the learning sequence.
- Assess prior knowledge for the topic and activate connections.
- Develop criteria for success.
- Provide concrete examples to model student outcomes.

- Engage students in meaning-making with the text.
- Provide graphic organizers and individual, partner, and small group practice for manipulating the language in the text.
- Use a variety of manipulative and kinesthetic activities.
- Assess individual and overall success with each task. Give descriptive feedback.

- Reteach or regroup for those needing more practice.
- Extend or elaborate for more able learners.

- Notice who has difficulty and for whom this is easy.
- Provide more support for individuals and groups, as well as extensions for the more able students.

(Anderson, et al., 2008, p. 57)

Further Reading

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