

6th grade French
2025-26 Course Syllabus

Teacher: Madame Lamontagne

LamontagneB@region-12.org

Room Number: B11

Course Description: Sixth graders participate in one semester of French and one semester of Spanish, so they may choose which language to pursue the following year. This introductory course is the initial phase of the IA course. Students will develop beginning skills in the four language skill areas: listening, reading, writing and speaking. Emphasis will be placed on vocabulary acquisition drawing on story-based units and classroom discussion using the Teaching Proficiency through Reading and Storytelling (TPRS) method. In this course, students begin to explore the application of the Shepaug Learner Outcomes of Defending Conclusions and Judgments and Engaging in the Creative Process. Above all, we hope that students develop a love of language and the study of cultures. ***Please Note: Course content and pace may be modified based on student need and interest. This syllabus will be updated as needed to reflect these changes.***

Last Update: 9/2025

A Vision of Language Instruction
at Shepaug Valley School:

- **Our Goal:** To develop each student's language proficiency and communicative competence.
- **Approach:** Proficiency oriented, performance based and communicative.
- **Emphasis:** What students can do in the target language.

World Language Standards: This course is designed in alignment with the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages World Readiness Standards. While the course explores all standards, the following are specifically addressed and assessed throughout the course:

1.1 Interpersonal Communication - *Learners interact and negotiate meaning in spoken or written conversations to share information, reactions, feelings, and opinions.*

1.2 Interpretive Communication - *Learners understand, interpret, and analyze, what is heard, read or viewed on a variety of topics.*

1.3 Presentational Communication - *Learners present information, concepts, and ideas to inform, explain, persuade, and narrate on a variety of topics using appropriate media and adapting to various audiences of listeners, readers, or viewers.*

4.2 Cultural Comparisons - *Learners use the language to investigate, explain, and reflect on the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own.*

5.2 Lifelong Learning - *Learners set goals and reflect on their progress in using languages for enjoyment, enrichment, and advancement.*

Essential Questions of Language Acquisition: The following questions guide all courses of study in the World Language Department at Shepaug Valley School. Students continue to deepen their understanding of each through each course as they increase their progress towards proficiency.

1. How do I develop proficiency in a second language?
2. How do I use another language to communicate with others?
3. What does it mean to communicate effectively?
4. How do I understand what others are trying to communicate in another language?
5. How do I present information, concepts, and ideas in another language in a way that is understood?
6. What is culture? How can I develop a multicultural perspective?

Enduring Understandings of Language Acquisition: The following statements represent core ideas that are essential to success in studying a world language.

1. Proficiency in a foreign language is a vehicle to gaining knowledge that can only be acquired through that language and its culture.
2. Reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills are critical for learning and communicating.
3. Language learning involves acquiring strategies to effectively communicate through the application of acquired vocabulary and grammar.
4. Learning a language is an ongoing, continuous process that is represented by an individualized path towards proficiency.
5. Proficiency in a foreign language is a vehicle to gaining knowledge that can only be acquired through that language and its culture.
6. Global citizenship requires an ability to communicate in more than one language.
7. An ability to communicate in another language fosters a better understanding of one's own language and culture.

Course Outline / Units of Study:

Unit #1 - TPRS introduction		
Unit Duration: 3 weeks	Unit Theme/Focus: Language basics	Proficiency Target: Novice-Low

Vocabulary Content:

- Cognates
- Numbers/alphabet
- Classroom commands and objects
- Prepositions
- Introductions & greetings
- Place of origin

Grammatical Content:

- Idiomatic expressions (Il y a...)
- Stating location through prepositional phrases
- C'est un(e) + object/person
- Je m'appelle/il s'appelle + name
- Je suis de + town/country

Cultural Content:

- Flags of Francophone countries
- Traditional French names
- Differences between French and English syntax

Activities:

- Listening strategies -- Students practice attentive listening skills to recognize the French alphabet, objects, prepositions and commands.
- Writing--Through repetitive writing, students gain familiarity with new vocabulary.
- Speaking strategies--Students practice repeating words and performing their assigned gestures to connect meaning to newly acquired vocabulary.
- Decoding -- Students work with a partner to decode simple sentences in the target language.
- Storyboard/Writing -- Students create a simple storyboard based on a reading assignment.

Summative Assessments

1. Mini-summative which assesses ability to listen to letters of the French alphabet and record them to form words as well as reading, recognizing and decoding a series of classroom commands used daily in the target language.

Unit #2 - Chapter 1, “le jeune berger”		
Unit Duration: 6 weeks	Unit Theme/Focus: Contemporary Life: <i>Family</i>	Proficiency Target: Novice-Low

Vocabulary Content:

- Family unit
- Emotions and feelings
- Location
- Units of time
- Chronological order of events

Grammatical Content:

- 1st person singular (present tense) in reading and writing
- 3rd person singular and plural (present tense) in reading and writing
- Agreement of nouns and adjectives (in gender and number) in speaking and writing
- Use of être, first and third persons
- Correct syntax for feminine/masculine, singular and plural nouns

Cultural Content:

- Life in Rural France

Activities:

- Gestures--Creation of PHYSICAL gestures that can reinforce memorization of new structures
- Decoding--Student prepares written translation of story (or section of story)
- Questions--Students answer and/or create questions about a story

- Narrative voice shift--Students convert a narrative form 1st person to 3rd, or vice versa.
- Write, draw, pass--Students use images and written vocabulary to produce a series of new images and/or original sentences which are later shared and decoded to compare their evolution (academic version of “Telephone”)
- Compare/contrast--Students discuss cultural similarities and differences in language and lifestyles

Summative Assessment:

1. Unit test which includes listening, reading, writing, and speaking activities with the vocabulary, structures and grammar concepts taught in the unit and to date.

Unit #3 - Chapter 2, “le renard et le corbeau”		
Unit Duration: 6 weeks	Unit Theme/Focus: Contemporary Life: <i>Emotions</i>	Proficiency Target: Novice-Low

Vocabulary Content:

- Stating hunger
- Describing emotions and feelings
- Stating where one lives
- Discussing practical jokes
- Responding to comical situations
- Storytelling
- Describing units of time
- Stating chronological order of events

Grammatical Content:

- 1st and 3rd person singular (present tense) in reading and writing
- 3rd person plural (present tense) in reading and writing
- Agreement in gender and number of nouns and adjectives
- Definite and indefinite articles when used with nouns
- Prepositional phrases.
- Use of être
- Use of avoir
- Indirect object pronouns.

Cultural Content:

- The fable “Le renard et le corbeau”

Activities:

- Gestures--Creation of PHYSICAL gestures that can reinforce memorization of new structures
- Decoding--Student prepares written translation of story (or section of story)
- Questions--Students answer and/or create questions about a story
- Narrative voice shift--Students convert a narrative form 1st person to 3rd, or vice versa.
- Storyboard activity--Students complete a series of activities based on teacher’s ORAL delivery of a story using targeted vocabulary, including listening, drawing, and dictation tasks.
- Story writing--Students use target vocabulary and past tense structures to write a story with a partner

Summative Assessment:

1. Unit test which includes listening, reading, writing, and speaking activities with the vocabulary, structures and grammar concepts taught in the unit and to date.

Unit #4 - La famille		
Unit Duration: 2 weeks	Unit Theme/Focus: Contemporary Life: <i>Family and Personal Identity</i>	Proficiency Target: Novice-Low

Vocabulary Content:

- Naming members of the family
- Discussing family relations
- Stating age
- Describing hair and eye color
- Identifying personality traits

Grammatical Content:

- Present tense conjugations for 1st and 3rd persons singular
- Use of avoir + years to state a person's age
- Use of être + adjective to describe a person
- Agreement of noun and adjective when describing people

Cultural Content:

- Immediate and extended family in France
- Family rituals and traditions in America and in France

Activities:

- Sentence completion -- Students create sentences in first and third person singular, using adjectives in the masculine and feminine form
- Compare/contrast--Students discuss cultural similarities and differences between two French families (as depicted in film) and their own
- Family tree template practice -- Students analyze a sample family tree and describe in the target language the relationships between members represented visually
- Project research--Students use the Internet to choose "family" members to represent three generations in both genders

Summative Assessment:

1. An electronic slide presentation for an imaginary family, spanning three generations, represented through a family tree, photographs of chosen celebrities and simple descriptive sentences.

What is language proficiency?

Language proficiency is the degree to which an individual is able to function in a language within the three different modes of communication: interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational as well as the four skills of language: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The figure on the right shows how a student's proficiency level grows over time.

The American Council on Teaching Foreign Languages (ACTFL) has developed proficiency guidelines that allow teachers to provide valuable feedback to students about their path to language proficiency. By aligning assessment practices, and therefore grades, with these proficiency guidelines and benchmarks, a student's grade will be more reflective of their progress towards proficiency as well as their performance in specific skill areas. The grade will serve as an indicator of what the student can do within the target language.

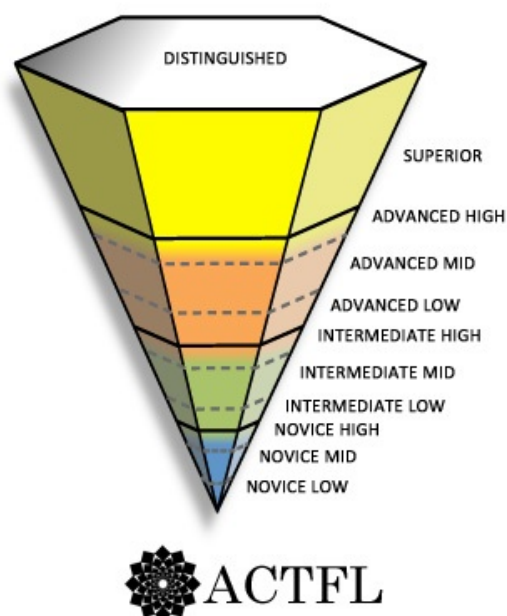


Figure from ACTFL Performance Descriptors For Language Learners ©2012

How will the student's performance and developing proficiency be reflected in Powerschool?

The use of formative and summative assessment practices will continue as they are rooted in sound instructional methodology. Assessments will continue to be delivered in the formats that students are familiar with: decoding, visual representation of understanding, responding to questions, etc.

In PowerSchool, the following categories will be used to highlight student performance: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. The weight of each category will be dependent on the course level and proficiency level of the students. This will allow all students, teachers, and families to easily identify skills that are students strengths and skills that should be targeted for improvement.



Progress



towards Proficiency Benchmarks



The chart below shows the proficiency benchmarks for each course level. While the proficiency benchmark may remain the same, the content will increase in difficulty throughout the year.

Benchmark

Level I (*and MS courses)	Novice Mid
Level II / II Honors	Novice High
Level III / III Honors	Intermediate Low
Level IV Honors	Intermediate Mid
AP Language & Culture	Intermediate High

Time as a critical component for developing language performance

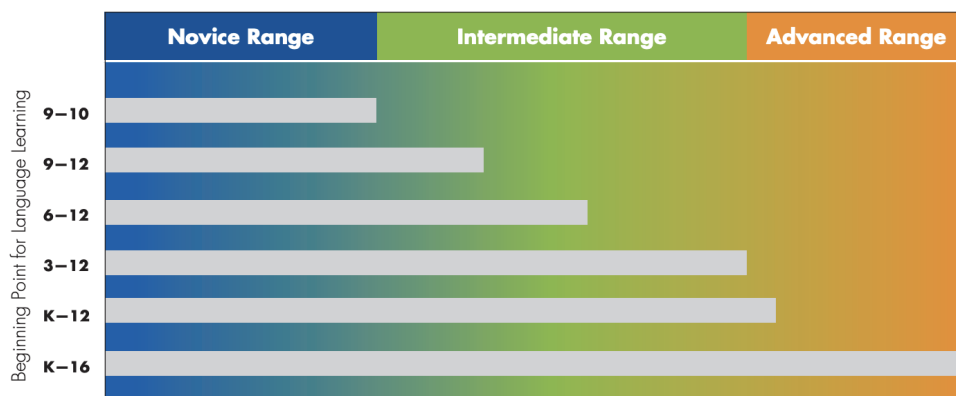


Figure from ACTFL Performance Descriptors For Language Learners ©2012

Letter Grade	Performance Descriptor
A	Student independently and consistently exceeded progress towards proficiency expectations.
B	Student met progress towards proficiency expectations.
C	Student met progress towards proficiency expectations, though consistency and/or independence were below expectations for this level.
D	Student met progress towards proficiency expectations, with notable need for improvement in consistency and independence,
F	Student did not meet progress toward proficiency expectations/Insufficient evidence of meeting expectations.

(+ and - added for work above, below, or between descriptors)

Grading Structure

In each course there will be three grading categories: Interpretive, Interpersonal, and Presentational. Within these categories will be listed assignments of varying point values that allow students to demonstrate the achievement of these different skill sets. Please view the chart below for information about the weighting of the different categories in each level. The weighting has been determined using the ACTFL Proficiency

Guidelines and Can-Do statements in alignment with the goal of representing the development of skills along with proficiency growth.

	Listening	Reading	Speaking	Writing
Level I (*this includes MS courses)	40%	40%	10%	10%
Level II	35%	35%	20%	10%
Level III	30%	30%	20%	20%
Level IV	25%	25%	25%	25%
AP Language & Culture	25%	25%	25%	25%

Assessments that are aimed at measuring student progress towards proficiency will be evaluated using rubrics from ACTFL and modified for student use so that students may receive helpful feedback in the development of their proficiency skills.

Resources

[ACTFL Performance Descriptors for Language Learners](#)

[ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines](#)

[NCSSFL - ACTFL Can-Do Statements](#)

[Shepaug Valley School Revised Grading Practices](#)

Make-Up Work Due to Excused Absence

1. The student must schedule make-up work directly with the teacher on the day he/she returns to school.
2. Incomplete work after one calendar week will result in a grade of zero unless extended, alternate dates have been assigned by the teacher.
3. If a long-term project was assigned earlier in the marking period, the project is due on the pre-assigned date or the date the student returns to school. (If a *long term* excused absence occurs prior to the due date of the project, please see item number 5.)
4. In the event of a pre-arranged absence to go on a field trip, the student must speak with the teacher before the absence; homework is expected on the return day.
5. Students should always consult Google Classroom to see if there is homework they can do while at home and before returning.
6. In the event of a longer excused absence, the student and parent must consult with the guidance counselor who will help to arrange a make-up schedule which must then be followed. The counselor may call for a parent-teacher meeting to help with this process.

7. For the school's policy regarding make-up work for vacation days taken during the school year, please see the *Academic and Grading Policy* folder shared on the Shepaug website under the *Academics* tab. Please note: vacation days are not considered an excused absence.

Submission of Late Work

Students must make every effort to submit work on time. Late work impacts the entire class since teachers cannot discuss answers/ideas until all work is submitted. In addition, students who hand in their work late have additional time and opportunity that has not been afforded to other students.

As a general rule, late work, *excluding* homework assignments, will be penalized 5% for each day late, up to five school days. The acceptance of late homework is at the teacher's discretion. Since teachers often review the homework answers in class, it is not possible to accept homework after answers are given. Teachers will share their homework policy with each class.

Please note: Late arrival or early dismissal is not an acceptable excuse for late submission of a pre-assigned project./assignment. If a student is in the building on a specific day, he/she has an obligation to submit a pre-assigned project/assignment to the appropriate teacher(s). In addition, if a student reports to the nurse instead of a class, he/she has an obligation to submit any pre-assigned project/assignment to the appropriate teacher. **If a student arrives late to school, leaves early, or reports to the nurse instead of a class, he/she must submit pre-assigned projects/assignments to the appropriate teacher(s) or the late work policy will apply.**

Materials Required:

- *Textbooks, novels, handouts, and other links will be provided to students*
- *Binder (or a dedicated section of a binder) with loose leaf paper and dividers for notes & classwork, homework, and assessments*
- *Pen/Pencils*
- *Highlighter*
- A French-English dictionary is not necessary as www.wordreference.com is a recommended site for *single-word* translations. *Reminder: multi-word phrase/sentence/paragraph translations are prohibited!*

Classroom Policies and Practices

In addition to the Shepaug Valley School policies (you may find the Student Guidebook at www.region-12.org), the following policies are upheld:

1. Extra help is available before and after school, as well as during our Spartan period, and by appointment.
2. Students must come to class prepared each day with materials, Chromebook and homework completed. *They will not have the time to leave class to go to their lockers.*
3. Students should arrive to class on time. Late arrival will result in progressive discipline beginning with warnings, lunch detentions, then after school detentions.
4. Students should not use cell phones in class unless directed to do so by the teacher. Students are required to leave cell phones in their lockers.
5. Speaking French is of vital importance to the learning/acquisition of the language. Therefore it is required that each student speaks as much French as possible (taking their level of ability into consideration) during the class period. Failure to do this may be reflected in a Class Participation grade.
6. Technology: Plan ahead! Due dates apply regardless of technological difficulties. You must plan your work accordingly. *Unless a DL, do not email print assignments -- you are responsible for printing out any assignments prior to the beginning of class!*

7. Plagiarism Policy: Please note that it is the policy of the **World Language Department** that any use of an online translation system is considered plagiarism, and the student will receive a score of 0, with no opportunity to make up the credit. (Please see the Student Guidebook online for the academic dishonesty policy).
8. The success of all students is the priority of this class -- any behaviors that compromise this goal will be dealt with accordingly.