

# How can parents/carers help support students in Modern Foreign Languages?

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Спасибо Dank Gracias  
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## **Modern Foreign Languages GCSE**

As a school and as a Department we are committed to ensuring that your son/daughter achieves his/her full potential in their AS examinations.

I would like to take this opportunity to give you more information about the Modern Foreign Languages A-Level course.

Year 1 in languages introduces learners to advanced language studies and provides an engaging and inviting opportunity to build on their previous study of the language. Year 2 in languages introduces learners to further advanced language studies and continues to provide an engaging and inviting opportunity to build on their previous study of the language.

The opportunity to study literature or a film will allow learners to develop critical understanding of a work and its language structures and to increase cultural awareness as part of an integrated approach to language learning. A strong focus is placed on building learners' confidence and fluency in spoken French using relevant and topical themes.

### **Listening, Reading and translation (Written examination – 2 hours 30) - 50% of qualification**

During the exam, candidates will be expected to demonstrate their competence in listening and responding to spoken passages, reading and responding to a variety of texts, summarizing information from spoken and written sources, translating an unseen passage from the target language to English and from English to the target language.

### **Speaking examination (21-23 minutes including 5 minutes' preparation time) - 30% of qualification**

During the speaking assessment, candidates will be required to present their independent research project and discuss it, to use language spontaneously, ask and answer questions, express thoughts and feelings, present viewpoints, develop arguments, persuade, and analyse and evaluate in speech.

### **Critical response in writing (Written examination – 2 hours) - 20% of qualification**

Two essay questions based on the study of one literary work and film from the prescribed list. Through the study of the chosen work, the learner will develop a detailed understanding of the chosen work in French, be able to respond critically in writing to the work in French.

## **Building independence to improve performance at A-Level**

At home, your son/daughter should be doing a number of the following activities to ensure success in Modern Foreign Languages and these may also be set as homework by his/her language teacher:

- Improving drafts of writing modelled answers to, and beyond, target grade.
- Knowing the exam criteria for all four skills to, and beyond, target grade. This will be provided by the class teacher.
- Learning vocabulary words every week to maximise their performance in their listening, reading and speaking exams in May/June of Year 13
- Completing grammar and translation tasks in the Elan or AQA grammar workbook.
- Making notes from exercise books on vocabulary, grammar structures, and revision tips to show that your son/daughter is building a revision folder at home.
- Doing some wider reading (e.g. newspapers and magazines in the target language) that the class teacher can provide.
- Listening to the radio in the target language. The class teacher can provide names of websites and radio stations.
- Working through a variety of exam papers that are available on Google Classroom.
- Using websites such as BBC Bitesize, [zut.org.uk](http://zut.org.uk), [www.s-cool.co.uk](http://www.s-cool.co.uk) to gain extra information on vocabulary, questions and answers in the target language.

If students do not practise memorising vocabulary and higher structures regularly, and if they have not practised the essential skills of listening, reading, translation and grammar for their final examination, then it is clearly more difficult to achieve a good grade overall.

## Top tips for the listening exam

### Before the exam

1. Build up your personal vocabulary - learn a small number of new words every day
2. Make sure you are familiar with the different types of task you may be asked to do.
3. Be careful! Sometimes there will be words on the tape, or words and pictures in the question that could distract you from the right answer!
4. Ask your teacher for recordings to take home. In the exam you will only hear each item or part of an item twice, but by listening to recordings at home beforehand, you'll build your confidence and train your ear (Go to Google Classroom)
5. If you read through the transcript **before** you listen to the tape, it could help your confidence when you realise how much you understand (Go to Google Classroom)
6. Try not to write when the tape is playing - it is hard to write and listen at the same time - trust your short-term memory!
7. Take every opportunity to listen to longer passages. Focus on the feelings, opinions and attitudes of the speakers.
8. Before you go into the exam, ask your teacher to offer the class a 'warm up' listening session of about 20 minutes - or just listen to a tape of your own.

### During the exam

1. You are in charge of your time in the exam. Use this opportunity to read through the paper before the tape starts. Use this to your advantage by looking right through the paper to see what kind of tasks there are.
2. Look closely! Should you listen for precise information (like train arrival and departure times)? Or should you be listening to the whole passage, in order to draw a conclusion (for example, name the girl who has the best relationship with her parents)?
3. As you read the question, try to predict the sort of information that may be in the passage. It will help focus your mind.
4. Look at the title of the question or section very carefully. Make sure you understand **how** to give your answer. If there is an example, look closely at the answer given - it will show you whether you need to write a single letter, a single word, or more than one word.
5. Have a good look at any illustrations. They could give important clues as to what is coming.
6. Remember, you are **not** expected to understand **every** word - there is probably a lot of 'redundant' language you don't need. Be positive. Concentrate on what you do understand. Sometimes the passage can be difficult, but the questions are easy.
7. Use your knowledge of grammar. For example, it may be important to know whether someone is talking about the past, the present, or the future.
8. Use your knowledge of the countries. For example, if you hear someone was on holiday in Madrid / Paris / Berlin, it is unlikely they spent time on the beach.
9. Don't just listen to the words. The tone of someone's voice may also be helpful - for example in telling you if they are making a statement or asking a question.
10. If you have to write answers in the target language, remember you will be penalised for minor spelling mistakes.

## Top tips for the reading exam

### Before the exam

1. Build up your personal vocabulary by learning a small number of new words every day.
2. Get plenty of regular practice. Use past papers (Go to Google Classroom).
3. Make sure you are familiar with different types of task, for example, multiple choice, filling in a grid, matching, gap filling, answering in the target language, and answering in English.
4. Go over some questions with a friend. It will give you a chance to look at someone else's exam technique. You might learn from each other.
5. Try to find opportunities to read French for pleasure without the pressure of questions and time limits, for instance magazines, language CDs with song lyrics, comics. This will help you build up your vocabulary. (Go online for language magazines or songs)
6. Make sure you know how to use your dictionary to look up any words you don't know, and make a note of them so you can revise them before the exam. Look at the Revision Bite on [Using a dictionary](#) for more hints.

### During the exam

1. Don't panic! You are not expected to understand every word of the text.
2. Take a positive approach to your reading. Concentrate on what you do understand, not on the difficult words and phrases.
3. Have a good look at the title of the text as well as any illustrations. They may give you some important clues.
4. Read the whole text before attempting to answer any questions. It is usually better to read the text twice at a brisk pace, than to struggle along once, slowly.
5. Be clear as to exactly what each question wants. For example, should you be picking out precise details (for example, the date of someone's birthday) or should you be reading the whole passage in order to draw some broad conclusions (for example, a comparison of two people's attitudes to television)?
6. Can you guess the meaning of a difficult word in a sentence if you understand what all the other words mean?
7. Can you find similarities with English words? (eg **pharmacie** = chemist's / pharmacy)
8. Can you find links with other words in the language? (eg **une maison** = a house : **une maisonnette** = a small house)
9. Are you aware of language patterns? (eg 're' in front of a word often means again: **recommencer** = to start again)
10. Use your knowledge of grammar. For example, if you can identify a plural, a verb tense, an adjective, an adverb or preposition, you will be in a better position to make an intelligent guess at a meaning.
11. Use your knowledge of the countries. For example, knowing about the French educational system could be very useful if you are working on a text about school.
12. If you have to write answers in the language, be as clear as possible.
13. Don't spend too long on a difficult item. Come back to it later.

## Web sites for students to explore...

- <http://resources.edugas.co.uk/Pages/ResourceSingle.aspx?rlid=804>
- <http://www.lightbulblanguages.co.uk/resources-fr-al.htm>
- <http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/vtc-home/vtc-ks3-home.htm>
- <http://www.learnanytime.co.uk/index.htm#>
- <http://worldlanguages.pppst.com>
- <http://www.mflresources.org.uk/#frppt>
- <http://www.languagesresources.co.uk/index.htm>
- <http://www.mflresources.org.uk/>
- [http://www.asisehace.net/?page\\_id=26](http://www.asisehace.net/?page_id=26)
- <http://www.didcotgirls.oxon.sch.uk/depts/mfl/exercises/exercisesindex.htm>
- <http://www.languagesonline.org.uk/>
- [http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/websites/11\\_16/index.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/websites/11_16/index.shtml)
- <http://www.linguacentral.co.uk/>
- <http://www.wildfrench.co.uk/>
- <http://www.ltsotland.org.uk/mfle/c4modernlanguages/#>
- <http://www.ltsotland.org.uk/mfle/c4modernlanguages/#>
- <http://www.ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk/Curriculum/modlang/index.htm> (click on: language resources)
- <http://www.prescot-school.knowsley.sch.uk/prescot-language/mfl-site/french.htm>