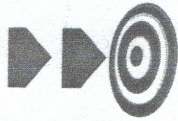


As you work toward achieving that **5** on your AP French Language and Culture exam, here are five essentials that you **MUST** know above everything else:

Barron's Essential 5

- 1 Familiarize yourself with the exam structure, the six themes, and the three modes of communication around which the course is structured.** Understanding the various tasks in the exam is critical for success. Remember that communication can be interpersonal, interpretive, or presentational. All of the tasks in the exam are built upon these modes. Your success depends on a balanced mastery of language.
- 2 Listen and read critically.** You will need to comprehend a variety of authentic French texts, letters, articles, conversations, interviews, and other items such as maps, charts, and instructions. Be able to understand the purpose, the essential facts, and the tone of each of these items.
- 3 Immerse yourself in authentic materials.** The AP French exam is based on real-world materials. Your success on the test depends on how well you can interact with these selections. Remember that this is the AP French Language and Culture exam—your exposure to authentic materials increases your cultural knowledge. Constantly immerse yourself in French by taking advantage of the myriad of online resources along with texts and magazines.
- 4 Write and speak in both formal and informal registers.** Knowing how to deal with the two writing and the two speaking tasks that require both registers is a key to your success. Know how to write an effective and well-organized essay that cites three different sources. Know how to respond to an e-mail with appropriate salutations. Be able to engage in an informal conversation. Finally, know how to make an oral presentation in which you compare your own community with a francophone community on a specific aspect of culture.
- 5 Continue your practice right up to exam day.** Staying sharp by continued exposure to French is critical! By using all of the elements of this guide, including the two complete sample exams and models of written and spoken responses, you will go into the exam confident. On exam day, be completely familiar with all exam directions.



Strategy 1: Use the Introduction

Read the information given in the introduction. This will remind you of knowledge you may already have and may prove to be an asset to you. You will be able to make connections to what you already know from personal experience or from your academic learning.

In some cases such as interviews, the introduction gives you the name of the person who is interviewed. This fact alone is helpful as you will not confuse the name with some new French word that you might waste time trying to figure out or remember.

In other instances, understanding the focus of the passage will put you at ease and spare you from being overwhelmed. For example, in selection 1 of chapter 2 (page 7), the introduction gives you information about where this print article appeared (la Société Spatiale Européenne Astrium). Once you know that the communication is posted on the site of a European space agency, you can think of NASA and its missions in space. The selection also mentions the use of satellites to observe Earth. Make connections to what you have learned in your science classes. Now that you have certain expectations of the passage, you are ready to read.



Strategy 2: Scan and Skim Through the Questions and Answers

Before reading the passage, scan the questions. Determine which ones you can easily answer because they call for specific factual answers. Separate these questions from the ones that require you to analyze the tone of the message and make conclusions.

Warning: Do not answer any questions based on your prior knowledge of the topic. Do not assume that you are familiar enough with the topic to answer the questions without actually finding the answer in the text. Your prior knowledge should help you predict answers. However, you must confirm and support your answers with evidence provided in the text.



Strategy 3: Apply Critical Skills

Find the main ideas. Underline or highlight them. Start answering factual or comprehension questions as you come across evidence in the text.

Find details that are relevant to some of the questions you previously scanned. Underline or highlight these details.

Focus on words or phrases that help identify the following:

- Point of view (*il me semble* would point to a personal opinion).
- Purpose of the text (instructions in the imperative form might be used to urge you to do something).
- Intended audience (a letter opening with the words *chers amis* would identify the intended audience).

As you encounter unfamiliar words or phrases, try to get the main idea of the sentence by using context clues.

Look at the nature and organization of the text:

- Is it an interview (question/answer)?
- Is it divided into paragraphs? Why?
- Are subheadings provided that clearly give you the main ideas of the text?

Strategy 4: Familiarize Yourself with the Question Types



Be aware that most passages will be followed by a mix of the following types of questions:

- Comprehension questions (what, where, when, why).
- Reading strategy questions (using context to figure out the meaning of a word or expression; distinguishing relevant details from irrelevant details).
- Interpretive questions (intended audience, purpose, genre, interpretation of stylistic devices, and so on).

The most challenging questions will require you to infer and draw conclusions. Use logic, critical thinking, and reasoning skills when answering these types of questions.

HOW TO DRAW A CONCLUSION OR MAKE AN INFERENCE

Sometimes drawing the right conclusion can be pretty obvious. If telegrams are mentioned in the passage, you can easily conclude that the passage mentions old technology from the twentieth century.

At other times, you have to use the process of elimination to arrive at the correct conclusion. For example, to answer question 5 on page 9, you are looking for how satellite technology is used according to the information presented in this passage. (That answer is not necessarily the first one that comes to mind.) Choosing answer (A) (to reduce the greenhouse effect) sounds sensible. Answer (C) (to prevent the polar caps from melting) sounds equally sensible. Answer (B) (to predict natural events) sounds sensible. Answer (D) (to change Earth's topography) does not sound sensible. You can quickly eliminate choice (D) because in the passage, satellites help study Earth's topography, not change it. Now go back into the passage and see if the text provides any evidence to support (A), (B), or (C). Answer (A) must be eliminated. Although *l'effet de serre* (greenhouse effect) is mentioned, the text does not state that satellites prevent it. Answer (C) must also be eliminated. Although polar caps are mentioned, the text states that satellites are a tool of surveillance, not prevention. The sentence « . . . fournissent une capacité de prévision de plus en plus avancée et nous alertent sur les événements . . . » gives you the evidence you needed to support answer (B).

You used two strategies before drawing a final conclusion. First you eliminated one answer. Then you found evidence in the text to support the best answer.



If the reading or listening passage is an interview (or a conversation), the last question may be similar to these:

- What would the journalist's next question be?
- What would person X now say to person Y?

In order to identify the best answer from the choices, once again use your sense of logic and proceed by order of elimination. For example, if the author interviewed clearly stated that this was his or her first novel, neither speaker should refer to a previous novel by that author.

Writing E-mail Replies

5

The e-mail reply portion of the AP French Language and Culture exam takes 15 minutes. You will provide a written response to an e-mail sent to you by someone other than a friend or relative. Therefore, you must use the formal register in your reply. To help you out, we are providing a concise list of useful vocabulary targeting formal writing as well as some strategies to perform well on this task.

INSTRUCTIONS, STRATEGIES, AND TIPS

You must write a formal response to a formal e-mail. You have 15 minutes to read the prompt and write the reply.

Here are some tips for you to obtain the best possible score on this task.

1. While reading the e-mail, **underline or highlight key words**. Doing this will prompt you to elaborate on these key ideas.
2. While reading the e-mail, **underline or highlight questions**. Doing this will prompt you to answer them.
3. Give a concise reply. However, elaborate on some key ideas and respond to **all questions**.
4. Use a formal approach in both language and tone. Use *vous* consistently as necessary. Do not use the “pitch of voice” interrogative approach; this would be too familiar. Try using the inversion interrogative structure as much as possible, as in “Pourriez-vous me renseigner . . . ?” rather than “Vous pourriez me renseigner . . . ?”
5. **Ask for details** of something that appeared in the original message.
6. If you recognize references to a particular francophone culture in the e-mail, try to show your understanding of the special features of the culture in your response. For example, you may elaborate on the detail, or make a comparison with your own culture, or ask a question about the item.
7. Organize your response, indent as appropriate, and follow standard writing conventions (capitalization, spelling, accent marks, and so on).
8. Use a mix of simple and complex sentences. Use transitional phrases.
9. Use precise and idiomatic vocabulary as well as a variety of grammatical structures.
10. Be sure to include an opening to the letter as well as a closing. Preferably, these should be different from the one used in the e-mail to which you are writing a reply.

See the justifications for some of these requirements that appear after the exemplary reply to selection 1.

USEFUL VOCABULARY FOR E-MAILS

Opening an E-mail

In the event you are writing to a totally unknown person, use this form of address:

Monsieur, Madame,
To whom it may concern,

Even if you have previous electronic contact with a person, it is customary to address the person in the e-mail as simply *Monsieur* or *Madame*.

If you have met the person and have established a closer yet formal relationship, you may also use one of the following forms of address:

Cher monsieur,
Dear sir,

Cher monsieur Dupont,
Dear Mr. Dupont,

Chère madame,
Dear madam,

Chère madame Flaubert,
Dear Mrs. Flaubert,

With individuals who bear a professional title, use *Monsieur* or *Madame* followed by the professional title:

Monsieur le Directeur/Madame la Directrice,
Dear Director,

Monsieur le professeur/Madame le professeur,
Dear Professor,

Monsieur le docteur/Madame le docteur,
Dear Doctor,

Note: The use of *mademoiselle* is no longer acceptable in official correspondence.

Closing an E-mail

French closings in letters tend to be long and flowery. However, formal closings in e-mails tend to be much shorter. Here are a few examples that are all equivalents of a simple *sincerely*. Remember to look at how your contact closed his/her letter and use a different closing in your own reply.

Cordiales salutations,
Cordialement,
Bien cordialement,
Bien à vous,
Sincères salutations,
Avec mes salutations les plus cordiales,
Sentiments distingués,

Avec reconnaissance,
Recevez mes sentiments respectueux,

Other Expressions Used in an E-mail

Je vous remercie de votre réponse.
I thank you for your answer.

Je vous remercie de m'avoir répondu dans un si bref délai.
I thank you for having answered so promptly.

Je vous suis reconnaissant(e) de m'avoir contacté(e).
I thank you for having contacted me.

Merci d'avance.
I thank you in advance.

Avec mes remerciements.
Many thanks.

J'attends votre réponse.
I am looking forward to your answer.

Dans l'attente de votre réponse,
Looking forward to your answer,

Dans l'attente d'une réponse favorable,
Pending a favorable response,

Essential Vocabulary Contained in E-mails on Previous AP French Language and Culture Exams

The following phrases were found in e-mail messages on previous AP French Language and Culture exams. We are providing exemplary sentences in French and English to illustrate how they might be used in an e-mail that you read or write.

donner suite à : Nous allons donner suite à votre demande. *We will consider your request.*

suite à votre demande : Suite à votre demande, nous confirmons les dates de votre séjour.
To follow up on your request, we confirm the dates of your stay.

prier : Nous vous prions de répondre immédiatement. *Please answer immediately.*

envisager : Vous devriez envisager un nouveau plan. *You should contemplate a new plan.*

les moyens : Quels moyens de transport préférez-vous ? *What means of transportation do you prefer?*

la bourse : Nous accordons des bourses d'étude. *We grant scholarships.*

la formation : Nous offrons une formation de deux semaines. *We offer a two-week training.*

le stage : Le stage aura lieu en juin. *The internship will take place in June.*

les démarches : Suivez les démarches ci-joint. *Follow the attached/enclosed steps.*

le renseignement : Nous avons besoin de renseignements. *We need some information.*

Writing the Persuasive Essay

6

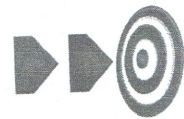
When writing a persuasive (or argumentative) essay, you try to convince others to agree with your point of view. To achieve that goal, you must present facts and arguments that are valid, coherent, logical, and well supported by precise and valid examples.

INSTRUCTIONS, STRATEGIES, AND TIPS

The following contains some best practice suggestions that will help you with writing the persuasive essay.

1. Practice Paraphrasing

When you hear or read something in French, always ask yourself how you would most easily be able to summarize key points in your own words, words that are familiar to you and therefore easy to remember.



Don't quite know how to explain something? Use French words you already know even if the wording is not exactly correct or precise. You'll get your point across.

1. Think of the main message/main idea you want to convey.
2. Think of how many different ways you could convey a message (regardless of the language).
3. Think in French, and describe what you mean with language that feels familiar to you.

Suppose you want to express this message in French: One tends to get frustrated when facing big challenges. You can do this in several ways. Consider these possibilities:

- On est **généralement/souvent/quelquefois** frustré quand on fait face à de grands défis.
- **Il est possible qu'**on se sente frustré face à de grands défis.

The verb "to get" is frequently used in English and has a variety of translations in French. In order to convey its correct meaning in French, you must first paraphrase. What is another way to express "get" in this sentence? Look at the following easy possibilities:

- On a tendance à **devenir** frustré.
- On a tendance à **être** frustré.



HOW TO WRITE A PERSUASIVE ESSAY

Required Steps

1. State your point of view to your audience (perspective).
2. Develop an argument to support your point of view.
3. Make a list of specific facts and examples to support your argument.
4. Prioritize, edit, and/or sequence the facts and details in order of importance to build the argument.
5. Form and state a conclusion.

Specific Requirements for the AP Exam

1. You must demonstrate understanding of viewpoints in the print and audio sources presented to you.
2. You must cite the sources presented in your essay without simply repeating verbatim what you read or heard.
3. You must take a position on the issue and develop an argument.
4. You must organize your essay and present your ideas clearly.

What Is Not Required

You are not expected to summarize the points of view or understand every nuance or detail in the various sources. You must simply demonstrate understanding of some ideas presented in these sources while using them to support your own point of view. If you use quotes directly from the sources, use quotation marks and keep the quotes brief.

Although you may agree with one of the points of view in the sources, **you are not required** to embrace it. What is required is your own point of view.

You are not required to specify that you are referring to the print text, the audio source, or the chart (although you may if you like); feel free to simply refer to source #1, #2, or #3 when referring to the sources.

INSTRUCTIONS, PROMPTS, AND EXEMPLARY ESSAYS

The presentational writing portion of the AP French Language and Culture Examination tests your writing ability in an essay based on information from three sources: a printed text, an audio source, and a chart or graphic. The information from the print and audio sources presents various sides of an argument. The graphic or chart is informational in nature.

You will have six minutes to read the essay topic and the printed material. Then you will hear the audio material twice. Your task is to synthesize the information and write a persuasive essay on the topic using information from all three sources. You are expected to indicate your own position on the topic and defend it thoroughly. We suggest you use a graphic organizer like the one presented on page 127 of this section.

Here are the instructions you can expect to be given for this portion of the exam. *We recommend you use the College Board website to check for any updates or changes.* Note that the instructions appear in both French and English. Choose one language in which to read your instructions.

CONVERSATION

Interpersonal Oral Communication Strategies and Tips

In any conversation, you must synthesize and interpret the verbal message in order to produce an appropriate verbal response. Form a mental picture of the information conveyed or asked.

- What was the nature of the comment or narrative?
- What information was asked for in the question?
- What type of reaction, reply, or follow-up does the verbal message call for?
- What vocabulary from the original message (if any) can be used (recycled) or modified in order to produce a verbal response?

Answer each question completely. Provide as much information as possible (agree, disagree, ask for more details, react by showing surprise, disappointment, happiness, and so on).



Tips for Success

- Immerse yourself in this simulated conversation by playing the role described.
- Refer to the outline that tells you what each part of the conversation needs to be. Take advantage of this great asset.
- Answer each part of the conversation as thoroughly as possible.
- Don't panic if you are cut off by the second beep at the end of the 20 seconds. You are being evaluated on the quality of your response, not on your ability to speak for exactly 20 seconds.
- Whenever possible, practice on the same equipment/software that you will use on exam day.
- Speak clearly and loudly enough to be heard and understood.
- Pay attention to time frames/tenses.
- Always give a response, even if you do not completely comprehend the questions being posed. You have the script outline to give you a generic idea of what your response should be.
- Should you catch yourself making a mistake (for example, *j'ai allé* versus *je suis allé*), correct yourself. The person evaluating your response will appreciate your effort and give you credit for your corrected response.
- Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, this conversation will be conducted in the **informal register**. That means the person with whom you will be speaking will be someone who could be a friend, family member, or classmate. Using and staying in the informal register is critical. When you are addressing your partner, do not switch back and forth from *tu* to *vous*. Use *tu* consistently when addressing your conversation partner. Do not let yourself be distracted or confused by the fact that the instructions are given to you in the *vous* form.

Generally in a conversation, one person listens while the other speaks. Then the roles are reversed. You must listen to the interlocutor and then respond to the information. The steps provided in this section give you tools to improve both skills.

1. UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETING EACH STIMULUS OR MESSAGE

- What was the nature of the comment or narrative?
- What is the main idea?
- What specific information was asked for in the question?
- What type of reaction, reply, or follow-up does the message require?
- What vocabulary from the stimulus (if any) can be used or modified in order to produce a response?



2. RESPONDING

- Before listening to the recording and before the interlocutor starts talking, read the conversation outline. What does it require you to do? You may need to express interest or surprise, agree or disagree, ask for details, and so on.
- Answer *fully* by providing as much information as possible (agree, disagree, ask for more details, show surprise, show disappointment, act happy, and so on).
- Paraphrase if you do not know the exact word for something. For instance, if you can't think of the words "*réunion*" to talk about tomorrow's club meeting, just say "*quand on se verra demain*" or "*quand on se recontrera demain*."
- Do not rack your brain trying to remember the irregular future form of *voir* as in "*on se verra*." Since you are required to use the familiar register for this task, it is acceptable to use the near future "*on va se voir*" or even the present tense "*on se voit*."
- Ask for clarification as in "*Tu veux que je vienne t'aider, c'est ça ?*"



3. ICING ON THE CAKE

- Use interjections and spontaneous phrases used in conversations in the familiar register such as "*Cool*," "*Ah non!*," "*Ah bon!*," "*Formidable*," "*Mais oui*," "*Quelle histoire!*" "*Dis donc*," "*Pas possible!*" "*Tu blagues!*" "*Tu exagères!*" and so on.
- Use transitional phrases such as "*et puis! et alors*," "*en plus*," "*de ma part*," "*à mon avis*," "*c'est pourquoi*," "*mais quand même*," and so on.
- Use a variety of descriptive adjectives as appropriate ("*une longue journée*," "*une bonne idée*," "*de vrais amis*").
- Use adverbs such as "*généralement*," "*certainement*," "*souvent*," and "*fréquemment*," with verbs.
- Use the stress pronoun "*moi/quant à moi*" to contrast your own actions or opinions with those of others.
- Try to use a variety of precise verbs above and beyond the basic "*être*," "*avoir*," and "*faire*."
- Try to use idioms, at least basic ones such as "*Je n'en ai pas envie*" and "*Je fais du français depuis quatre ans*."
- Use the present tense, *the passé composé*, *the imparfait*, the near past, and/or the near future as accurately as possible.
- Do not agonize over forming conditional sentences or irregular subjunctive forms. However if they come naturally as in "*Je viendrais si je pouvais, mais il faut que je finisse mes devoirs*," that's beautiful. Just do not sacrifice spontaneity for the sake of elaborate grammatical structures unless you know them really well.



Cultural Comparisons

8

The presentational speaking portion of the AP French Language and Culture examination consists of an oral presentation on a specific topic to your class. For this task, you will have 4 minutes to read the question, organize your thoughts, and prepare your presentation. Then you will have 2 minutes to record your presentation. The presentational speaking task will test your ability to speak about a specific topic. You need to show what you know about French and francophone cultures.

As for any presentation, you must illustrate your points by using precise examples. The prompts are generically designed so that they are subject to interpretation in order for you to pull examples from personal experience or from a variety of sources, including literature, current events, media, movies, and so on.

Remember to use the appropriate forms of address (*vous* forms). Also use effective stylistic devices as you are speaking to your class.

As the task requires you to make a comparison, be sure to include the following in your presentation:

- Your own community (as narrow as your family or as wide as your country)
- A francophone culture you know well and include examples and detailed support
- Differences and similarities between your community as you have defined it and the francophone culture you have chosen to discuss

INSTRUCTIONS, STRATEGIES, AND TIPS

During your 4 minutes of preparation, you should jot down some ideas that will assist you when it is time to speak. Do not attempt to write a script. Instead, prepare a short outline or a list of key terms that will serve as reminders as you speak. Using a small graphic organizer is another strategy that we will demonstrate later in this section.

When it is time to speak, you must describe and explain the cultural points of the prompt as it applies to your family, school, town, region OR country, and you must do the same for a place in the francophone world. Use your experiences (based on real life or studies).

Do not hesitate to mention how and where you acquired your information. You may refer to what you have studied in class, what you have read, what you have viewed in documentaries and movies, and/or in cases where this applies, what you have personally experienced. Use specific well-developed examples that illustrate a unique perspective, point of view, or cultural value.

Manage your time. Be sure to dedicate enough time to both your community and the francophone one; the task will not be accomplished unless you compare both communities.

Finally, use appropriate comparison expressions. (See the list of terms that follows.)

USEFUL VOCABULARY FOR A COMPARISON

Memorize some of the expressions below. Use them to introduce, connect ideas, make smooth transitions, and conclude your presentation.

To Start Your Conversation

Tout d'abord	<i>First of all</i>
En premier lieu	<i>First of all</i>
Pour commencer	<i>To start off with</i>
Premièrement	<i>Firstly</i>

To State Your Opinion/Point of View

À mon avis	<i>In my opinion</i>
Selon moi	<i>In my opinion</i>
Pour ma part	<i>As far as I'm concerned</i>
En ce qui me concerne	<i>As far as I'm concerned</i>
A mon sens	<i>As I see it</i>
Il me semble que	<i>It seems to me that (+ indicative mood)</i>
J'estime que	<i>I consider that</i>
Je soutiens que	<i>I maintain that</i>

To Add/Connect Ideas

Ensuite	<i>Next</i>
De plus	<i>In addition</i>
En outre	<i>Furthermore</i>
En deuxième lieu	<i>Secondly</i>

To Show a Difference in Opinion or a Contrast

Mais	<i>But</i>
En fait	<i>In fact</i>
Cependant	<i>However</i>
Toutefois	<i>However</i>
Au contraire	<i>On the contrary</i>
Par contre	<i>By contrast</i>
Néanmoins	<i>Nevertheless</i>
Quand même	<i>Nevertheless</i>
Pourtant	<i>Yet</i>

To Conclude

En dernier lieu	<i>Lastly</i>
Enfin	<i>Finally</i>
Pour terminer	<i>To finish up with</i>
Pour finir	<i>To finish up with</i>
Tout bien réfléchi	<i>All in all</i>
Tout bien considéré	<i>All in all</i>
Tout compte fait	<i>When all is said and done</i>
Toute réflexion faite	<i>When all is said and done</i>
En somme	<i>In short, all in all</i>
En fin de compte	<i>When all is said and done, at the end of the day</i>
En conclusion	<i>To conclude/in conclusion</i>
Pour conclure	<i>To conclude/in conclusion</i>

Remember the Following Strategies and Tips



PLANNING PHASE

There is **no source material** for this task—**only a prompt**.

- Read the prompt carefully. Underline key words.
- Do not confuse the **general directions** for this task (comparing cultures) with the specific **prompt for this task** (focusing on a precise aspect of culture such as people's attitude toward cultural diversity).
- Relate the topic to your own experience and knowledge of cultures.
- Take notes to organize your oral presentation during the 4 minutes before you record your voice. Use a graphic organizer such as a Venn diagram to identify similarities and differences.
- You do not need numerous examples. One well-developed example on each side might be sufficient as long as you elaborate and show insight into the reasons for the differences.
- Write a **thesis statement** that clearly demonstrates an understanding of the topic and task and that will introduce your presentation.
- Map out your oral presentation using key words and phrases to provide **significant and specific examples** (products, perspectives, practices) in your own culture as well as in a francophone culture to support the thesis statement.
- Do a significant number of practice items to be comfortable using the 2-minute time allotment fully and efficiently.
- If you answer the prompt fully, it is likely that you will be stopped midsentence by the beep that signals the end of the 2-minute session. The beep does not mean that your score is penalized.