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Courses

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Brush Up Your French (Intermediate and Advanced Intermediate)

Intermediate

DESCRIPTION

This course is designed for students who have completed beginning-level French and are ready to progress to the intermediate level. At this stage, students can comprehend common expressions on familiar topics, perform routine tasks involving direct information exchange, and respond to simple questions. While they have a grasp of present and past tenses, they have yet to explore other tenses such as the future and conditional tenses. The class will prioritize listening and speaking skills, while reading and writing assignments will be given as homework. Topics covered in class will encompass current events, everyday life in France and the French-speaking world, as well as cultural themes like art, history, music, food and travel. Students will expand their vocabulary in familiar areas, develop detailed explanations and descriptions, and recount stories about past and future events. Basic grammar concepts and additional verb tenses will be taught. Collaborative exercises in small groups will involve gathering information from classmates and delivering brief presentations to the class based on their findings. The aim will be to enhance students' confidence in speaking French with others.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Workbook: AMSCO French: Two Years (3rd Edition), by Eli Blume and Gail Stein. Purchase at [Perfection Learning](#) and elsewhere.

Textbook: Contacts, (8th Edition), by Valette & Valette. Purchase used copies on Amazon.

Advanced Intermediate

DESCRIPTION

This course is for advanced intermediate-level students who are somewhat fluent and can express their thoughts, defend opinions and participate in informal discussions. They can converse about familiar topics in present, past and future tenses, and are familiar with other verb tenses but could benefit from a review and more practice. Emphasis in class will be on listening and speaking, while reading and writing will be assigned as homework. Online French video clips will be used to present new topics for classroom discussion. Topics covered will include current events, everyday life in France and the French-speaking world, and cultural themes such as history, art, music, food and travel. Students will acquire new vocabulary, improve their ability to explain and describe in detail, and narrate past and future events. More advanced grammar topics and verb tenses will also be addressed. Students will often work in small groups to gather information from colleagues and present their findings to the class, with the goal of building confidence in speaking French with others.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Workbook: AMSCO French: Three Years (3rd Edition), by Eli Blume and Gail Stein. Purchase at [Perfection Learning](#) and elsewhere.

INSTRUCTOR



Ann Koller has taught French at all levels for over 30 years. She worked for the Department of Defense teaching French to Special Forces Soldiers and Foreign Service Officers before moving to the Chicago area. She holds a B.A. in French from the University of Maryland and an M.S. in Education and Social Policy from Northwestern University.

Ann recently retired from Glenbrook North High School, where she worked as a French teacher and Instructional Supervisor for World Languages for 18 years. She also teaches French at New Trier Extension.

Conversation Avancée

DESCRIPTION

This class is designed for students at the high-intermediate and low-advanced levels who want to improve their conversation skills. Students will discuss current and past topics that reflect authentic French culture, history, travel, civilization, etc. Grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation will be included to increase language proficiency. The class will be conducted entirely in French using interactive resources and technology.

INSTRUCTOR



Gigi Kuhn-Olmstead is a global citizen, teacher by training, lover of the French language and culture. She was born in Saigon, raised in Paris, studied in Montreal, and worked in London. Gigi is trilingual, with French as her mother tongue. Although Chicago has been her home since the year 2000, Paris will always be her hometown.

In Chicago, Gigi has carved out a distinguished career as a French teacher of children, teenagers and adults, at levels ranging from beginning to advanced. She has taught at the Alliance Française de Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago, the Latin School and the Berlitz Language Center. She is currently chair of the World Languages Committee at the Catherine Cook School (Chicago). In 2015, the Chicago chapter of the American Association of

Teachers of French awarded Gigi its *Prix d'Excellence* for outstanding contributions to the teaching of French language and culture.

Conversations sur Paris

DESCRIPTION

This conversation course is designed for students at the mid- to high-intermediate levels to improve their ability to communicate confidently while increasing their knowledge of Paris. We'll explore Paris through photography, art, songs, monuments, off-the-beaten-path sites, Parisian celebrities, restaurants and cafes. We'll use a variety of materials such as articles, excerpts of tour guides, songs, literature, poems and videos while integrating vocabulary and grammar into the conversation.

Students will be encouraged to express their opinions and share their experiences in a supportive and structured setting. Students will receive materials ahead of time to prepare for class discussions.

INSTRUCTOR



Rachel Christophe Baker is a native French speaker raised near Versailles, France. For the last 12 years, she has been teaching French and designing and leading cultural tours and programs. She is certified in teaching French as a second language and has earned the DAEFLE (Diplôme d'Aptitude à l'Enseignement du Français Langue Etrangère) through the Alliance Française in Paris. She began her teaching career at the Alliance Française de Chicago where she taught for six years.

She also cofounded Café Culture, a francophone salon to experience and practice the French language through arts and culture. In 2020, she created Chin-Chin France to offer online classes and trips to experience French culture and language.