

# Intensive French – Integrated Resource Package

This document sets out the provincially prescribed curriculum for Years One and Two of Intensive French. The study of French as a second language and culture is intended to enable learners to communicate purposefully in French and to provide opportunities for students to gain insights into their own culture and to develop an openness to cultural diversity.

The following documents were consulted in formulating the Intensive French – British Columbia's Provincial Document:

Department of Education, Newfoundland and Labrador. (2001). *Intensive Core French Grade 6*.

Ministry of Education, British Columbia. (2001). *Core French 5 to 12 Integrated Resource Package*.

Netten, J., Germain, C., & Anderson, B. (2004). *Le français intensif; Guide pédagogique interprovincial*.

## Principles of Learning

Provincial education programs are based on three principles of learning that reflect current views of how effective learning occurs. They have profound implications for all aspects of the program, such as the roles of student and teacher, the kinds of learning resources that are chosen, and the type of assessment that occurs. The development of this Intensive French has been guided by and incorporates these principles of learning:

- learning requires the active participation of the student
- people learn in a variety of ways and at different rates
- learning is both an individual and a group process

## Rationale

In Canada, where one quarter of the population comprises speakers of French, one of Canada's two official languages, it is important for British Columbia students to have opportunities to communicate in French.

- Communicative competence in French expands national and international career opportunities in many fields, such as commerce, hospitality, and tourism.
- Learning French enhances the learning of first and additional languages.
- The ability to communicate in French encourages the development of positive attitudes toward Francophone and other cultural groups, and increases students' awareness of their own cultures.

- Learning French as a second language and learning about francophones promotes an awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity, essential for full participation in today's bilingual, multicultural Canada and in the larger global, multilingual community.

French as a second language study offers important opportunities to students in their quest to become literate, articulate, effective communicators in English and in French. The Intensive French program is defined as an enrichment of the Core French program by the creation of a period of intensive exposure to French which enables students to receive in one school year approximately seven times the number of hours of instruction normally devoted to Core French. This is accomplished by conducting one half of the school year (Grade 5 or 6) almost exclusively in French. Students engage in project-based learning around thematic topics which focus on interests such as friends and family, animals and environment, food, sports and leisure and school life. In Intensive French, students participate in a language development program, emphasizing many of the skills found in English Language Arts.

## Guiding Principles

The overriding aim of Intensive French is communication; therefore, the suggested instructional and assessment strategies emphasize the practical use of the language in all its forms, and de-emphasize the analytical study of grammatical theory as an end in itself. Fluency and accuracy are developed in tandem according to the following basic pedagogical principles. A complete reference for the Intensive French program is found in Netten, J., Germain, C., & Anderson, B. (2004) *Le français intensif; guide pédagogique interprovincial*.

### **Learning to communicate in a second language requires authentic communication.**

To develop communication skills, language must be used as a means of communication. Therefore, students need to use the language to interact, read, and write in authentic/meaningful situations where they have something important to communicate. Only French should be used in the classroom as a means of communication and students should be exposed to a rich language environment. Time spent learning about language forms and structures is of limited value to beginning second language learners. However, they do need to spend time using the linguistic features of the language. Time in the classroom is better spent on providing students with a small number of structures and forms on a 'need to know' basis which they then use and re-use in a variety of activities. In this way, students proceduralize the language needed to communicate and are able very quickly to participate in authentic communication in a spontaneous manner.

### **Learning of languages for the purposes of communication is a development of literacy skills.**

When languages (both first and second) are taught for the purposes of communication, the major focus of the instruction is on skill development. Students are engaged in activities that develop listening, speaking, reading and writing, and use the language for

authentic communication tasks, focusing on the transmission of a message. The role of the teacher is to create the conditions within the classroom that enable all students to enhance their language skills. The literacy skills developed in Intensive French can be transferred to, and used, in English. This process of transfer enhances literacy skills in both languages. The focus is on developing the ability to use language to express thoughts, feelings and opinions and to interpret our environment.

**A task-based or project approach facilitates the use of cognitively demanding tasks.**

In Intensive French where the means of learning the language is through participation in authentic communication that has significance for the learner, students are able to engage in intellectually demanding and interesting tasks, such as doing a survey and graphing the results, creating a poem, reading a fable. These activities enable students to enhance general cognitive development while learning the second language. It is essential that the tasks undertaken in the Intensive French classroom are not centered on language structures and vocabulary development, but are cognitively challenging ones. Furthermore, as the students develop the ability to communicate spontaneously, the tasks that they engage in can increase in linguistic and cognitive complexity.

**Use of interactive teaching strategies increases linguistic proficiency and intellectual development.**

In Intensive French it is essential to use strategies that permit students to interact, such as group work, projects, etc. The use of these interactive strategies is important in order to enable students to use French in authentic communication. They also assist students to learn more effectively. Cognitive development is not only enhanced by the type of activities the students engage in, but also by interaction.

**Learning a second language for the purposes of communication requires the development of “procedural” knowledge.**

In Intensive French correct language structures are introduced as needed in each theme, and used and re-used in interesting and cognitively demanding authentic communicative activities. In this way correct language structures are learned implicitly and are proceduralized. In addition, implicit language knowledge is developed through reading stories, books and reference materials related to a topic.

Oral language use precedes written language use, although the two should be developed in close proximity, as there is a reciprocal relationship between them. Oral language use develops the structures of the language that are used both in speaking and writing. Students need to use and re-use language orally in order to proceduralize correct language structures. When doing oral work, the emphasis is on the correct use of language structures, so that students learn correct language forms implicitly.

Once students can use structures correctly orally, then they are able to use them when writing. Writing activities that focus on communicating a message which reuses the

structures already learned implicitly enable students to refine their language competence. When doing written work, the emphasis changes; language forms, such as third person plural endings, become important. These aspects of the language should be presented only when students are being prepared to write.

## **Communicative-experiential approach**

The Intensive French curriculum endorses what is commonly referred to as the communicative-experiential approach. In this approach, the focus of instruction is the purposeful use of the language to perform real-life tasks, share ideas, acquire information, and get things done. Grammar instruction plays a supportive role only--to provide useful strategies to facilitate communication and comprehension. Following are guidelines for such an approach:

As much as possible, language learning should emulate authentic language use.

The goal of language learning is performance with language rather than knowledge about the language.

Language learning is not additively sequential but recursive and paced differently at various stages of acquisition.

Language develops in a series of approximations toward native-like norms. Language learning is not the accumulation of perfectly mastered elements of grammar and vocabulary. Thus, learner errors are to be expected.

Language proficiency involves both comprehension and production. Comprehension abilities tend to precede and exceed productive abilities.

Language is inextricably bound to culture. Language use requires an understanding of the cultural context within which communication takes place.

Language learning is complex. Instruction takes into account individual learning styles and rates, and also attends to teaching process strategies for successful learning.

The ability to perform with language is facilitated when students actively engage in meaningful, authentic, and purposeful language-learning tasks.

Assessment reflects instructional goals and is performance oriented.

Technology and textbook materials play support roles for language-learning goals; they should not determine curriculum.

*(Adapted from "Teaching and Learning K-12 Authentic Instruction Communication," Section 7.19, ASCD Curriculum Handbook, September 1994.)*

## **A language arts / literacy approach**

The Intensive French program adopts a language arts/literacy approach whereby the second language is taught in a fashion similar to that used in teaching the first language. Emphasis is on communication, and language is used for authentic viewing, speaking, reading, writing and other ways of representing to think, learn, and exchange information. In authentic communication, listening and speaking are closely related. However, communication does not only mean oral use of the language. It also includes the ability to read and write. Therefore, learning to communicate means developing all four skills, in an integrated manner, through authentic language use.

In Intensive French, all four skills are developed from the beginning of the program. In the first three to four weeks, more emphasis may be placed on listening and speaking. While material is generally introduced orally first, reading and writing activities follow more or less immediately, as these skills reinforce what has been learned orally. This practice also responds to individual differences in learning and enables the students to engage in tasks that are more demanding, thus enhancing cognitive development.

When teaching and using the second language in the Intensive French classroom, it is important for the teacher to recognize the differences between oral and written language. Oral language develops the structures of the language that are used in both speaking and writing. Students need to use language orally first; then they should be encouraged to use the same structures when writing. When doing oral work, the emphasis should be on the language structures, and on the features that are particular to oral production, such as pronunciation. When doing written work, the emphasis changes, and the forms of the language that are necessary to write correctly, such as third person plural verb endings, for example, become important. These aspects of accurate language use should be noted when students are being prepared for a written activity. Many of the grammar rules' of French apply only to a written situation and are not necessary for oral communication.

## **Overview**

In Intensive French, offered at Grade 5 or 6, students are provided additional opportunities to develop their communicative abilities in French.

- French is the language of instruction, and fluent, accurate communication is the focus of the program.
- Students are challenged to meet second language curriculum outcomes normally expected of grades or courses they would experience later in their schooling.
- Cooperative learning is a key component in the project-based approach used in Intensive French.

Intensive Core French possesses four main characteristics which contribute to creating an

effective way of learning as second language:

- a period of intensive study
- the exclusive use of the target language as a means of communication
- a focus on language learning
- an emphasis on informal learning based on the interests of the students

During the Intensive French Year One, half of the year is conducted almost exclusively in French: typically, all learning activities are centered on acquiring and using the language in a variety of routine and thematic contexts. This can include all aspects of the regular school day, with the exception of Math instruction which is conducted in English.

During the second half of the Intensive French Year One, the regular subjects for that grade level are compacted into five month's instruction (with the exception of Math which is taught in English all year). French instruction, or Enriched Core French, continues during the second half of the year and follows the communicative thematic approach established during the first half.

## **Prescribed Learning Outcomes**

Prescribed learning outcomes in this IRP are expressed in terms of tasks to be performed and not in terms of language items to be mastered. Assessment and evaluation of language acquisition focus on students' abilities to understand others and to express themselves comprehensibly and appropriately. Assessment and evaluation do not focus on the mastery of grammar for its own sake. Where possible, the prescribed learning outcomes show progression through the grades.

## **Language-Learning Strategies**

Language-learning strategies are important components of a language program and are now recognized as an essential part of successful language learning. Examples of such strategies include using visual clues; recognizing cognates; recognizing, using, and adapting language patterns; using a variety of writing processes such as brainstorming, sharing, revising, editing, and publishing; and using context to support and extend language learning. When students apply a range of specific strategies to their language learning, they are better able to understand information, clarify and negotiate meaning, and generally communicate more effectively.

Students are encouraged to develop and apply a repertoire of language-learning strategies to support communication in French.

Students will:

- recognize known French and cognates in new contexts

- use visual aids, actions, lists, and pre-framed models
- use visual and context clues to guess meaning
- use mime, gesture, and props to help convey meaning
- use repetition, alone or with others, to practise and reinforce new language
- record ideas or expressions with visual images and symbols
- derive meaning by listening attentively and participating fully in activities
- use prior knowledge of a topic to predict meaning
- actively seek help by asking for clarification and repetition
- connect new topics to personal experience
- develop personal notebooks and dictionaries to record new vocabulary
- self-evaluate progress by comparison with earlier performance or against personal goals
- recognize and use common patterns
- adjust the message in order to use known expressions and vocabulary
- use word webbing charts, tables, and other graphic organizers to support oral and written expression
- reflect on learning by recording personal goals, successful strategies, and new vocabulary and phrases
- listen, view, or read selectively to focus on key information
- tolerate ambiguity of meaning when unable to understand fully
- transfer and adapt known structures to convey meaning in new contexts
- take risks with the language to extend language boundaries
- use a variety of reference materials, including dictionaries, for comprehension and production
- negotiate meaning by using questions in French and other techniques for clarification
- set personal goals in language skills and monitor their progress
- rephrase in French to compensate for unknown expressions
- summarize information in oral, graphic, and written form
- actively review common, useful expressions and patterns to refine communication
- self-monitor and correct recurring or significant errors in communication
- seek out and create practice opportunities in and out of the classroom

## **Curriculum Organizers**

The components of this IRP are categorized under three curriculum organizers. These organizers are based on the common reasons people have for wanting to learn an additional language and have been used to group the prescribed learning outcomes, suggested instructional strategies, suggested assessment strategies, and recommended learning resources. The curriculum organizers are:

- Communicating and conveying information - to communicate with other people, including acquiring and conveying information
- Understanding cultural influences and experiencing creative works - to interact with and appreciate another culture, including its creative works
- Acquiring general language principles to recognize and reflect on what language is, how we learn language and how culture influences us

These curriculum organizers are practical and purposeful. They focus attention on the most important purposes for studying an additional language. In the classroom, they should not be treated separately but should be integrated into most activities.

Teachers and students communicate and conduct all aspects of classroom life in French (with the exception of Math instruction). Initially, this will involve additional communication tools such as gesture, visuals, repetition and modeling. The structure of lessons, activities and routines is therefore very important, especially in the early days and weeks, to ensure that French is the only language of the classroom.

### ***Communicating and Conveying Information***

Learning outcomes listed under this organizer provide opportunities for students to use French to establish and maintain relationships, share ideas and opinions, and get things done. This organizer embraces a variety of communication skills—listening, reading, speaking, writing, viewing, and representing—in order to reach students with a wide range of abilities, language traditions, and backgrounds. It emphasizes authentic language-learning experiences and the application of a range of language-learning strategies. Teachers and students use French in all activities and student/student and student/teacher interactions.

In Intensive French, students participate in meaningful tasks designed to help them learn to communicate in French. Meaningful tasks are the starting point for learning. These tasks and projects are presented through themes linked to the life experiences, interests and abilities of the learners. Learning a second language shares many similarities with learning a first language: the emphasis is on communicating a message. Students bring life experiences and prior language knowledge to the second language learning process. In a communicative/experiential approach, language is a tool for communication. The task or activity determines the language elements required by students and these elements are introduced accordingly.

It is important for students to develop the ability to understand and acquire information from original sources in French (such as French-language television or radio programs, magazines, business and job advertisements, recipes, restaurant menus, schedules, or Internet sites) to complete authentic tasks. An authentic task is one that engages students in thoughtful learning and is meaningful and relevant to their lives. In the process of acquiring information from sources that are appropriate to their interests and age levels, students are encouraged to take risks.

Teachers select resources for this purpose, and ensure these resources are appropriate to the interests and age of the students. Students need to experience and enjoy language through creative expression - songs, poems, drama, music, and illustrations.

### ***Understanding Cultural Influences and Experiencing Creative Works***

When students communicate with others in French and participate in cultural experiences, they gain insight into the role of culture. Through exploring French and the Francophone world, they develop an understanding of Francophone perspectives and can better appreciate the role of other cultures, as well as their own.

Students learn a language most effectively when they experience music, film, art, poetry, and other forms of creative expression, such as storytelling. Students will be motivated to continue their language studies when they have frequent opportunities to listen, view, and read creative works in French and respond to them in various ways. Students should be exposed to a wide range of creative works representative of the Francophone world. Over time, students should be able to produce a variety of written, oral, and visual responses.

### ***Understanding and Applying General Language Principles***

General language education is another component which contributes to communication. This component encourages reflection during the learning process; it enables learners to understand what language is, how language is learned, and to make linguistic and cultural comparisons between English and French. An emerging awareness of language patterns within a communicative context is nurtured throughout the Intensive French program. This, as well as the acquisition and application of language learning strategies, helps students to become better language learners.

## **Assessment in Intensive French**

Since language is acquired in a spiralling and recursive process, students will thrive in a stimulating environment where risk-taking is nurtured and errors are viewed as a natural and informative part of language development. When students understand the role of errors, they are able to make confident decisions about when to take risks and when to edit carefully for accuracy.

In Years Ones, Two and Three, assessment places equal emphasis on the four major communication skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing.

*Refer to general information about assessment in Core French 5-12 IRP (2001)*  
*<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/cfrench512/cftoc.htm>*

## **Program Content**

The main curriculum organizers of communication, culture and creative works, and general language education in Intensive French are developed through topics including:

- family, friends, self
- hobbies, interests, sports, adventures
- animals, pets, nature, environment, weather, seasons
- music, arts, technology
- school, community
- holidays, celebrations, calendar
- health, food, nutrition
- travel and transportation
- Canada and the world

These topics can be organized under the following themes:

- Moi
- Les passe-temps
- Les animaux
- L'environnement
- Les voyages

Teachers are encouraged to use these and/or other themes according to the interests of their students and their own interests. Vocabulary such as calendar language, numbers, classrooms expressions and greetings should be incorporated as appropriate and reviewed often. Specific language structures are introduced as they are needed for the student to complete tasks. Since the goal is the ability to function and communicate spontaneously in French, the program begins by concentrating on acquiring and using the language orally. As students use and reuse — and thereby proceduralize—correct language structures, they are ready to use them when writing. Learning in Intensive French is related to communicating ideas, opinions, emotions and understanding a world view. This experience is both a literacy experience and an enriching educational one.

## **EAL Students and Second-Language Study**

Teachers of students for whom English is an additional language will need to be sensitive to the varying rates at which these students develop communication skills. Intensive French teachers are encouraged to use a wide range of appropriate adaptations to instruction and assessment to meet the needs of individual students. When teachers provide instruction in French, EAL students are placed on an equal footing with their classmates.

## **Students with Special Needs and Second-Language Study**

Although ministry policy states that students may be exempted from second-language study because of special needs, not all students who have been identified as having special needs should be exempted. Second-language study may actually enhance first-

language development for some students.

Students representing a wide range of special needs could successfully participate in this course because of its focus on the communicative-experiential approach. Teachers may need to adapt instructional strategies, activities, and evaluation methods for some students. Decisions to exempt a student from taking a second language should be made only after considering assessment information about the student's cognitive, sensory, or physical disabilities.

## **Learning Resources**

The fundamental aim of this curriculum is to enable students to communicate in French. The approach the curriculum advocates focuses on the purposeful use of the language to perform real-life tasks, share ideas, acquire information, and enhance the understanding of culture and experiencing of creative works. The kinds of learning resources available for students to use while learning the language are vital to achieving this aim and implementing this approach.

In order to help students achieve communication goals and carry out authentic tasks while learning French, learning resources should include authentic materials that reflect the language at work in daily life. The term *realia* is often used to describe such resources, which could include newspapers, magazines, web sites, information about entertainment, business, employment, food, holidays and celebrations, and artworks and artifacts reflecting the culture of Francophone communities. Community resource persons can enhance language acquisition and provide opportunities to communicate in French.

## **The learning environment**

The following guidelines should be considered in establishing and developing an appropriate learning environment for Intensive French:

- Communication is the focus for classroom activities.
- Students develop the ability to communicate by engaging in meaningful, interactive experiences.
- Meaningful experiences include many and varied media for language learning (arts, music, poetry, literature, film, and theatre).
- Curriculum outcomes determine instruction and assessment.
- Content is organized around experiences, themes and activities that are relevant to the learners.
- The classroom is learner-centred; learner needs, abilities (including first language

experiences), and interests provide a starting point for instruction.

- Instruction is planned to be both sequential and spiral, providing for a gradual increase in students' knowledge and skills, and allowing for the meaningful re-entry of knowledge gained through previous use. Instruction follows a project-based approach.
- French is the language of the classroom for instruction and general communication.
- Long-term, medium-term and daily planning by the teacher is important.
- The teacher assumes a range of roles in the instructional process.

The elementary school curriculum expands to provide for the widening interests of elementary school children. The introduction of Intensive French to the school is also a part of this expansion. This experience provides richness, variety and fluency at this key developmental age. The elementary years are a time when students begin their initiation into the world of adult reasoning, concepts, communication, and symbolism. Although there are some teaching strategies specific to this level, many are similar to those used in the primary grades.

An approach emphasizing the child as a thinking, doing, and feeling learner is essential. Intellectually, elementary children are moving from a concrete level of reasoning to more abstract reasoning. Many may continue to require significant concrete experiences before gradually moving to more abstract concepts. Intensive French offers an opportunity for individual interests and abilities to be explored in a second language through individual, paired and group projects.

Elementary children are curious about other languages and cultures. They are enthusiastic and want to learn French. These children need opportunities to be physically active through action songs, games, and dramatizations. The intensity and concentration of time in this program allows for greater in-depth exploration of individual needs, interests and abilities. Each instructional period should be varied, with a balance between the introduction of new material and the use of previously learned topics, all with the focus continually and primarily on communication.

Group and individual work require clear, structured tasks that yield concrete results. In every elementary classroom, there are varying levels of physical and emotional maturity. As they get older, students often become more sensitive to the reaction of their peers. This may be particularly evident in Grade 6 if this is Year One of the Intensive French program. Some students may become inhibited and reluctant to participate actively in certain situations. Teachers respond to these changes through the creation of a "supportive, non-threatening, risk friendly" environment; the careful selection of activities; the provision of choices (video taping a role play versus doing an improvisation); and the encouragement of different types of expression (creating a poem, a poster or a model). It is also very important that the teacher give frequent positive

feedback. Such practices demonstrate respect and sensitivity, and help ensure active participation.

## **Classroom Atmosphere**

In a warm, supportive environment students feel at ease, and they know that their attempts at communicating are valued. Good language learners take risks. Students need to know that taking risks and making and correcting errors are a natural part of experimenting with language, and of learning. This principle should guide teachers in the way they handle student errors. Teachers should demonstrate to students that even the teacher makes mistakes, needs correction or uses the dictionary. Overall, the classroom atmosphere of Intensive French is one of activity and comfort in the second language.

## **Use of French**

Research indicates that key factors affecting success in second language learning are the time devoted to it and the strategies used by the teacher. This has implications for the Intensive French environment. French is the language of instruction in the classroom. Every effort should be made to encourage communication, and convey meaning directly without recourse to English. The use of French, the project-based activities, the student-centered strategies and instructional time all affect student proficiency. Communicating successfully in French in the Intensive French program helps students develop a positive attitude toward themselves, toward learning, and toward learning French.

## **Fluency and Accuracy**

Communicating in a second language requires both fluency and accuracy. Fluency is a skill that is developed through the emphasis on authentic communication and the expression of thoughts, feelings and ideas. Accuracy can be most effectively developed by the repeated use of correct language forms in authentic communication. In this way a balance between accuracy and fluency can be achieved; both accuracy and fluency are developed simultaneously

Once students can use structures correctly orally, then they are able to use them when writing. Writing activities that focus on communicating a message which reuse the structures already learned implicitly enable students to refine their language competence. When doing written work, the emphasis changes; language forms, such as third person plural endings, become important. These aspects of the language should be presented only when students are being prepared to write.

Errors that occur often and block comprehension may need to be corrected, but communication should not be interrupted in order to make corrections. Errors may be brought to the attention of students through reflection and self-correction, through a small or large group activity, or on an individual basis, depending on the purpose of the activity or lesson. The focus in the Intensive French classroom is always on communication rather than language form. By the strategic selection of activities and the careful planning

of the teacher, the French language becomes transparent, as the atmosphere encourages students to share personal experiences and ideas. The teacher should provide frequent positive feedback and evidence of progress. Elementary students need a very concrete sense of their improvement.

## **Organizing for Instruction**

At the beginning of the Intensive French program, teachers should devote time to reviewing students' previous experiences in French (most students will know some words or phrases), to establishing French as the language of the classroom and to setting classroom routines. Students should learn how their previous language knowledge can help in new situations, for example, French and English share many words, the printed alphabet is the same, and punctuation is similar. To help ensure success, new experiences and tasks should build on what students already know and can do.

The organization of the classroom enhances student motivation and learning. The Intensive French classroom needs an area to display student work, vocabulary themes, posters and photos. A listening centre in the classroom is an asset, especially for multi-age groups. It is appropriate to provide students with opportunities to work independently with reading materials, games, word puzzles and cassettes. Ready student access to French resources reinforces participation and supports communication. A display area fosters cultural awareness through the presentation of postcards, maps, calendars, photos and other authentic items. Communication is also enhanced by flexible seating plans and group arrangements. Since much of the Intensive French day will involve frequent changes in grouping and seating arrangements, flexibility becomes essential.

### **Planning for the Intensive French term**

*[Refer to Interprovincial Guide p. 61]*

### **Planning for the compacted English term**

*[Refer to Interprovincial Guide p. 45]*

### **Planning for Enriched Core French in Years Two and Three**

*[TBA]*

## **Instructional Strategies**

### **Modelling**

Modelling provides learners with concrete examples and support. Modelling may take many forms. The teacher, students and classroom visitors are language models for the

students in the demonstration of strategies, technologies, new content and skills, the animation of texts, and the preparation of work samples to guide students. Teachers model games, grouping arrangements, and reading and listening comprehension strategies. For example, the teacher and one student may role play a pair interview. All students would follow this model to complete the task. Models may also include sample projects, audio recordings, and props such as puppets, realia, and visuals. Modelling is often used in conjunction with other strategies such as cooperative learning, peer grouping and role playing.

## **Cooperative Learning**

In cooperative learning, students work toward a common goal, with the group's success depending on the contribution of each member. Students work collaboratively; they have clearly defined roles; they learn how to organize to complete a task. Cooperative learning is further characterized by group interaction; the teaching and development of social skills; and opportunities for reflection. The Intensive French teacher describes the task, explains the role of each member, monitors and observes. Advance preparation may include a review of the French vocabulary needed to operate in French in the group.

Cooperative learning is most effective when:

- students know the purpose of the activity and understand the instructions;
- group members' roles are clear;
- groups are organized according to the purpose of the activity the size of the group and the membership change often;
- timelines are established and respected;
- social skills such as using quiet voices, sharing materials, and taking turns are also taught.

Since there are a number of differences between cooperative learning and traditional small group work, it is recommended that teachers consult the references in this guide. These references include classroom activities and suggestions for implementation.

## **The Interview**

The interview develops listening and speaking skills and is an opportunity for students to communicate ideas, likes and dislikes, and feelings. Interviews are used to collect and share information. In the Intensive French class, interviewing is frequently used and often informal. Examples include:

- teacher and student role playing a pair interview
- students interviewing each other
- students conducting oral surveys
- classroom imitation talk shows
- students interviewing classroom visitors
- interviews between students and classes of former Intensive Core French

- students
- teachers interviewing students

In preparation for a formal interview, the teacher should explain the process to students and provide sample question types. A friendly, encouraging manner is best. Questions should be posed as they would be in everyday situations, with one question leading to the next. The interview should be a positive experience for the student. Throughout the preparatory process students should be encouraged to “take a lead” in the interview by initiating the questions themselves and by leading the conversation in directions that interest them. (Ask the interviewer some questions.)

## **Role Playing**

In role playing, students try to speak, feel and behave like a character they portray. Role playing may be spontaneous or practised, and be part of a game or simulation. It encourages language use by providing a purpose and an audience for communication. When organizing role playing, teachers give clear instructions about the purpose of an activity, the situation to be portrayed and the role of the audience. To encourage active listening, groups may be asked to record specific information during each activity. Models should be provided and students should have opportunities to practise before the role play is presented. Role playing may be done “live”, with video tape or for another class or audience.

## **Brainstorming**

Brainstorming draws on student experiences to help establish a meaningful context for learning a wide range of ideas. Suggestions are usually recorded. If these ideas are recorded on chart paper, they can become effective classroom posters and contextual clues for students during a unit. Students may use items from brainstorming as a basis for a personal list or record. A brainstorming activity should be brief, usually not more than 2 - 3 minutes. All ideas are noted; little attempt is made to edit or evaluate the suggestions. Brainstorming may be a preparation for oral and written tasks. It helps build and review vocabulary. Brainstorming is also effective to summarize at the end of an activity or to draw conclusions about a lesson or topic and help students see their progress.

## **Appendices**

*To include the following:*

- *Intensive French Prescribed Learning Outcomes – Year One*
- *Intensive French Prescribed Learning Outcomes – Year Two*
- *comparison chart of Intensive French/Core French/French Immersion*
- *sample assessment rubrics*
- *sample resource list (with reference to Interprovincial Guide)*
- *sample lesson sequence (with reference to Interprovincial Guide)*

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