

CLEP® French Language: At a Glance

Description of the Examination

The French Language examination is designed to measure knowledge and ability equivalent to that of students who have completed two to four semesters of college French language study. It focuses on skills typically acquired from the end of the first year through the second year of college study; material taught during both years is incorporated into a single exam. The examination contains approximately 121 questions to be answered in 90 minutes. Some of these are pretest questions that will not be scored. There are three separately timed sections. The three sections are weighted so that each question contributes equally to the total score.

Most colleges that award credit for the French Language examination award either two or four semesters of credit, depending on the candidate's score on the exam.

Knowledge and Skills Required

Candidates must demonstrate their ability to understand spoken and written French. The CLEP® French Language examination tests their listening and reading skills through the various types of questions listed below. The percentages indicate the approximate percentage of exam questions devoted to each type of question.

15% Section I: Listening: Rejoinders

Listening comprehension: choosing the best responses to short spoken prompts

25% Section II: Listening: Dialogues and Narratives

Listening comprehension: choosing the answers to questions based on longer spoken selections

60% Section III: Reading

10% Part A. Discrete sentences (vocabulary and structure)

20% Part B. Short cloze passages (vocabulary and structure)

30% Part C. Reading passages and authentic stimulus materials (reading comprehension)

Study Resources

Most textbooks used in college-level French language courses cover the topics in the outline above, but the approaches to certain topics and the emphases given to them may differ. To prepare for the French Language exam, it is advisable to study one or more college textbooks, which can be found in most college bookstores.

Besides studying basic vocabulary, you should understand and be able to apply the grammatical principles that make up the language. To improve your reading comprehension, read passages from textbooks, short magazine or newspaper articles, or other printed material of your choice. To improve your listening

comprehension, seek opportunities to hear the language spoken by native speakers and to converse with native speakers. French CDs and tapes are available in many libraries. Take advantage of opportunities to join organizations with French-speaking members, to attend French movies, or to hear French-language radio broadcasts.

A recent survey conducted by CLEP found that the following textbooks are among those used by college faculty who teach the equivalent course. Most of these have companion websites with practice test questions and other study resources. HINT: When selecting a textbook, check the table of contents against the Knowledge and Skills Required for this test.

Boudraa and Accilien, <i>Francophone Cultures Through Film</i> (Focus)
Bragger and Rice, <i>Allons-y!: Le Français par étapes</i> (Heinle)
Heilenman et al., <i>Voilà!</i> (Heinle)
Jansma and Kassen, <i>Motifs!</i> (Thompson and Heinle)
Maley, <i>Dans le Vent</i> (Heinle)
Muyskens et al., <i>Bravo!</i> (Heinle)
Oates and BuBois, <i>Personnages: An Intermediate Course in French Language and Francophone Culture</i> (Wiley/Cengage)
Pons et al., <i>Points de départ</i> (Prentice-Hall)
Siskin et al., <i>Debuts</i> (McGraw-Hill)
St. Onge and St. Onge, <i>Interaction</i> (Heinle)
Thompson and Phillips, <i>Mais Oui!</i> (Heinle)
Tufts and Jarausch, <i>Sur le Vif</i> (Heinle)
Valdman et al., <i>Chez Nous</i> (Prentice-Hall)
Valette and Valette, <i>Contacts</i> (Heinle)
Weidmann-Koop, <i>Bien Sur! Culture et communication</i> (Prentice-Hall)

Grammar resources:

Baker et al., <i>Collage: Révision de grammaire</i> (McGraw-Hill)
Crocker, <i>Schaum's Outline of French Grammar</i> (McGraw-Hill)
Rochat and Bloom, <i>Contrastes, Grammaire du français courant</i> (Prentice-Hall)
Stillman and Gordon, <i>Reprise: A French Grammar Review Worktext</i> (McGraw-Hill)

In addition, the following resources, compiled by the CLEP test development committee and staff members, may help you study for your exam. However, none of these sources are designed specifically to provide preparation for a CLEP exam.

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The College Board has no control over their content and cannot vouch for accuracy.

<http://dictionnaire.tv5.org/> (French dictionary, free)

<http://maisondequartier.com> (free)

<http://www.lepointdufle.net>

Le Point du FLE (Français Langue Etrangère)

<http://babelnet.sbg.ac.at/canalreve/rencontres/index.htm>

(Canal Rêve — Histoires d'amour)

<http://www.bonjourdefrance.com/index/indexapp.htm>

<http://www.bonjourdefrance.com/index/indexgram.htm>

<http://www.realfrench.net/>

<http://oli.web.cmu.edu/openlearning/forstudents/freecourses/french>

(free online Carnegie Mellon course)

<http://www.laits.utexas.edu/tex/> and

<http://www.laits.utexas.edu/fi/>

(U. of Texas French website)

Visit www.collegeboard.com/clepprep for additional French language resources. You can also find suggestions for exam preparation in Chapter IV of the *CLEP Official Study Guide*. In addition, many college faculty post their course materials on their schools' websites.

Sample Test Questions

The following sample questions do not appear on an actual CLEP examination. They are intended to give potential test-takers an indication of the format and difficulty level of the examination and to provide content for practice and review. For more sample questions and info about the test, see the *CLEP Official Study Guide*.

1. Paul finissait ses devoirs tout _____ prenant son petit déjeuner.

- (A) avoir
- (B) ayant
- (C) en
- (D) pour

2. Si vous voulez acheter un aller simple, allez _____.

- (A) à la bourse
- (B) au guichet
- (C) au quai
- (D) à la cabine

Directions for Part B: In each of the following paragraphs, there are blanks indicating that words or phrases have been omitted. As you go through the questions, the computer will highlight each blank, one at a time. When a blank is shaded, four completions are provided. For each blank, choose the completion that is most appropriate, given the context of the entire paragraph.

Je n'ai ___3___ contre les betteraves, mais je préfère les asperges ou les ___4___ de terre.

- 3. (A) pas
- (B) personne
- (C) rien
- (D) que
- 4. (A) trous
- (B) sacs
- (C) carottes
- (D) pommes

Directions for Part C: Read the following selections. Each selection is followed by one or more questions or incomplete statements. For each question, select the answer or completion that is best according to the selection.

Par arrêté municipal du 31.07.2002

Les poubelles sont réservées aux ordures ménagères enfermées dans des sacs. Tous les autres déchets sont à mettre à la déchetterie de Régusse.

Les contrevenants s'exposent à des amendes prévues par la loi

5. Selon ce panneau, qu'est-ce qu'on aurait le droit de mettre dans ces poubelles, pourvu que ce soit enfermé dans un sac?

- (A) Les déchets d'un poulet
- (B) Des pneus usés
- (C) Les ordures d'une boucherie de quartier
- (D) Une chaise et un lit en morceaux

6. Qu'est-ce qui peut arriver à ceux qui ne suivent pas ces règles?

- (A) Ils devront ramasser les déchets du quartier.
- (B) Ils devront payer une somme d'argent.
- (C) Ils seront dorénavant surveillés par la police.
- (D) Ils seront ridiculisés par leurs voisins.

Credit Recommendations

The American Council on Education has recommended that colleges grant 6 credits for a score of 50, which is equivalent to a course grade of C, on the CLEP French Language exam, and 12 credits for a score of 59. Each college, however, is responsible for setting its own policy. For candidates with satisfactory scores on the French Language examination, colleges may grant credit toward fulfillment of a distribution requirement, or for a particular course that matches the exam in content. Check with your school to find out the score it requires for granting credit, the number of credit hours granted and the course that can be bypassed with a passing score.

Answers to Sample Questions: 1-B; 2-B; 3-C; 4-D; 5-A; 6-B.