

Viewer's Guide

On est capable!

French as a Second Language

Professional Learning Video Clips for "French as a Second Language" Educators

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Introduction

The focus of these video clips is developing oral communication skills in French as a Second Language. Whether students are in French Immersion, Extended French or Core French programs, they need ample opportunity to develop confidence in their abilities to interact orally in French from the very beginning of their learning experience. For many second language learners, opportunities to apply their French skills in everyday life often occur first through oral interactions. FSL learners must first comprehend a message, and then formulate and convey a response effectively. They must consider simultaneously word choice, sentence structure, pronunciation, and socio-cultural etiquette. Providing sufficient practice within the safe classroom environment allows for these situations to be less intimidating, and reaffirms for FSL learners that they can use their French skills effectively.

There are many factors that contribute to effective French as a Second Language instruction. When viewing the videos, teachers are encouraged to note the implicit and explicit elements of planning, instruction, and assessment that result in student success.

“Research indicates that students become engaged in their learning when they have a choice in what they are learning, how they are learning and how they are being assessed. They also are motivated to learn when the tasks are challenging and relevant, when they receive explicit feedback. We also know that time for talk and interaction in flexible groupings enhances student achievement.”

Literature Circles Viewer's Guide

<http://www.curriculum.org/secretariat/circles/files/CirclesGuide.pdf>

Authentic, Spontaneous, Action-Oriented Oral Interaction

Spoken interaction involves listening and speaking, negotiating meaning, reacting, and acting appropriately for the situation. Oral interactions that are authentic sound like real conversations. The topics are relevant and meaningful. Students ask questions to gain further information and make comments to indicate that they are listening, that they understand or need clarification, or that they agree or disagree. An authentic interaction does not neatly follow a “question – answer – question – answer” formula. It includes reactions, pauses, interruptions, repetitions, and re-phrasing.

Oral interactions that are spontaneous do not follow a memorised script. They require students to apply their French language knowledge and skills, including the use of strategies to compensate for gaps in their knowledge without resorting to the use of English.

Teachers engage students in spontaneous interactions when they provide a choice of topics, situations, scenarios, or problems as the reason for communicating orally. Spontaneous oral interactions must be preceded by carefully scaffolded instruction, through the use of the gradual release model, to ensure students can be successful. Teachers encourage students to take risks with the language and they value what students can do.

Oral interactions that are action-oriented involve the students in using the language to carry out a task. The purpose of the interaction is not to practise a specific language convention but to give, receive, or exchange information, to persuade, debate, create, or accomplish something with tangible results. Explicit teaching of the language conventions necessary to convey and understand the message enables students to communicate effectively. Students' need to communicate in an authentic situation motivates them to learn the language conventions.

As students progress in their acquisition of French skills, the length of the interaction is extended and the expectations regarding language accuracy are increased.

Video Clip Descriptions

PERSPECTIVES FROM SYSTEM LEADERS

System leaders have an important role to play in ensuring students' success. These segments feature five speakers from the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, reflecting on the importance of developing skills in oral interaction and ensuring that tasks are authentic and relevant.

Jennifer Adams, *Director*, and **Neil Yorke-Slader**, *Superintendent, Curriculum Services*, discuss the positive impact of focusing on the development of oral communication skills.

Barry Bickerton, *System Principal - Secondary, Curriculum Services*, and **Nadia Towaij-White**, *System Principal - Elementary, Curriculum Services*, note the excitement generated by the relevance of the learning and the impact on student engagement in all FSL programs, as they work toward the ultimate goal of having students graduate with the confidence to use French and take risks.

Denis Cousineau, *Instructional Coach, Secondary FSL*, discusses key factors that contribute to increasing student engagement and proficiency in FSL.

“The research on how the brain thinks and the emergence of knowledge regarding intelligence, creativity, and learning styles all argue that social interaction is critical in the development of intelligent behaviour.”

Rolheiser & Bennett, 2001

Elementary FSL: Core and Intensive French



Junior Core French Grade 6

Two students provide a model for the interactive oral activity before the teacher guides the class in the co-creation of success criteria. Students are encouraged to take risks and use a variety of strategies to express themselves, using French only. Intermediate students demonstrate the effective use of technology to review oral proficiency. The teacher comments that her teaching and assessment practices have been influenced by the *Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)* – a tool that promotes the development of relevant, interactive communication skills.



Intermediate Core French Grades 7 and 8

Establishment of a respectful and supportive classroom environment in which students are encouraged to take risks is a key factor in promoting student engagement. Scaffolding, modeling, explicit teaching of learning strategies and metacognitive skills, embedded in a program that provides a variety of opportunities to practise oral interactions contribute to the development of oral proficiency.



Junior Intensive French Grade 5; **Intermediate Post-Intensive French** – Grade 8

The Intensive French program is offered in Grade 5, providing French literacy instruction for 75% of the day for five months. Careful scaffolding of learning opportunities, the gradual release of responsibility, and authentic topics contribute to student engagement and the development of proficiency in French. Students in Post-Intensive French develop skills in authentic communication through a literacy-based program.

Elementary FSL: French Immersion and Extended French



Primary Early French Immersion Grades 1 and 2

Modelling, clear expectations, encouragement, and ample opportunities for oral interaction help primary students build a strong oral foundation. Grade 6 students partner with Grade 1 students to practise authentic conversations. Grade 2 students practise questioning and inferring in small groups.



Junior Early French Immersion Grade 4

Students are developing skills in spontaneous oral interaction as they apply higher-order thinking skills to deepen their understanding of global social issues.



Intermediate Early French Immersion Grades 7 and 8

In the two classes in this video, students are developing proficiency in spontaneous oral interaction while applying higher-order thinking skills as they explore and debate topics related to technology and gender stereotypes.



Junior Middle French Immersion Grade 6

Students are working in groups to discuss and evaluate information about cyber-bullying. Creating a supportive classroom environment encourages students to use French to express their opinions.



Intermediate Middle French Immersion Grade 7

Students are working in groups to discuss and evaluate information about composting. Integration of French across the curriculum, explicit teaching of learning strategies, establishing a culture of mutual respect, and flexible groupings, contribute to student engagement and the development of oral proficiency.



Junior Extended French Grades 4 and 5

Carefully scaffolded learning opportunities and the provision of visual supports enable students to work successfully in small groups. Through the establishment of a supportive classroom environment, students are encouraged to take risks. French language skills are developed through authentic tasks and grammatical concepts are taught in context.



Junior-Intermediate Extended French Grades 6 and 7

Action-oriented tasks, engage students in the learning process and grammatical concepts are taught in context. Explicit teaching of learning strategies and co-construction of success criteria develop learner autonomy.

Secondary FSL: Core French and French Immersion



Secondary Core French Grade 9 Applied

Authentic oral tasks, partner work, a supportive classroom environment, and building French literacy skills on a strong oral foundation are elements of this Grade 9 Applied Core French class. The teacher comments that her teaching and assessment practices have been influenced by the *Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)* – a tool that promotes the development of relevant, interactive communication skills.



Secondary Core French Grades 9, 10, 11

Grade 9 (FSF1D) students develop fluency through the co-construction of a story, during which time they engage in conversations to add and clarify details. Grade 10 (FSF2D) students assess their peers while they are recounting stories with the support of sketches. Grade 11 (FSF3U) students interview each other and develop skills in spontaneous oral interaction through discussion of the responses.



Secondary French Immersion Grade 11

Authentic tasks, scaffolding instruction, explicit teaching, descriptive feedback, and small group oral work are key elements in developing skills in spontaneous oral interaction. The teacher comments that teaching and assessment practices have been influenced by the *Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)* – a tool that promotes the development of relevant, interactive communication skills, and learner autonomy through self-assessment and goal-setting.

Setting Context for Viewing

Consider:

- What is an authentic activity?
- What are the benefits to students of focusing on authentic activities?
- What learning skills are necessary for successful oral interaction?
- What scaffolding is necessary to prepare students for successful spontaneous oral interaction?
- What is the difference between an activity that is action-oriented and one that is not?

“The brain is innately social and collaborative. Although the processing takes place in our students’ independent brains, their learning is enhanced when the environment provides them with the opportunity to discuss their thinking out loud to bounce their ideas off their peers and to produce collaborative work.”

Wolfe, Oat and Brandt, Ron, “What Do We Know from Brain Research?” Educational Leadership – How the Brain Works, Nov. 1998

Using the Video Clips

SELECTING

Because strategies for second language learning can be relevant for multiple grade levels and programs, viewers are encouraged to watch several videos and discuss how the strategies could be adapted for use in a variety of situations.

VIEWING

Reflective practice leads to new insights, deeper understanding, and greater confidence. Engaging in reflection supports the development of shared beliefs and understandings related to FSL instruction. After viewing and discussing the videos, revisiting these topics promotes professional growth, as beliefs and daily practices will be confirmed, clarified, and/or challenged.

Educators may wish to watch videos in their entirety or focus on specific segments in order to delve deeper into a particular topic, recording insights gained from hearing the teacher's thoughts, observing the teacher and students in action, and hearing the students' opinions.

The videos can be viewed in the context of a professional learning community (PLC) or by individual educators for self-directed learning.

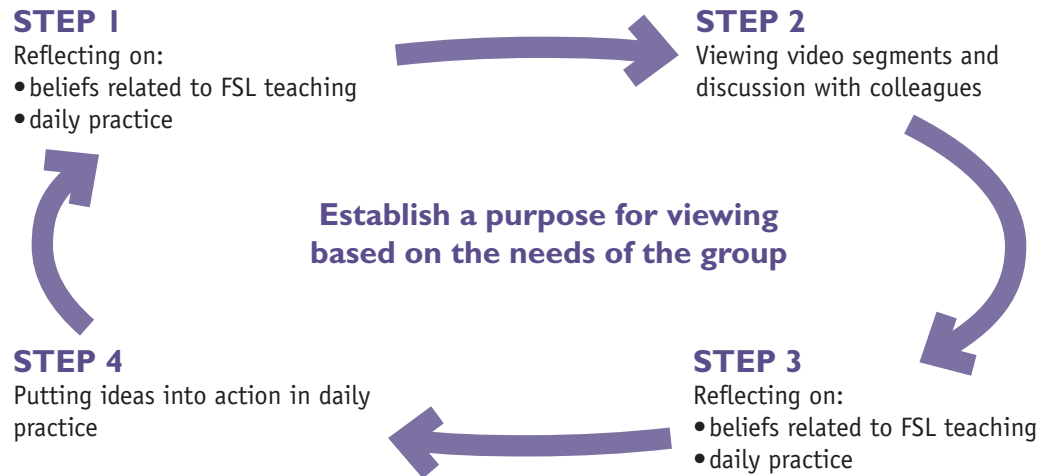
VIEWING PROCESS

Before viewing, select and record beliefs and daily practices in FSL on which you wish to focus.

During viewing, observe and record key ideas and supporting details. You may wish to use graphic organizers.

After viewing, compare new information with prior knowledge and beliefs. Use the post-viewing questions to guide discussion. Put ideas into practice.

A Suggested Cycle for Using the Videos in a PLC



POST-VIEWING QUESTIONS

Select questions that are most relevant for the focus of the group's discussion.

- What did you notice that is conducive to nurturing learner autonomy?
- What strategies did you notice that help students develop self-assessment skills?
- What actions can be taken to create a harmonious classroom climate where students feel safe to participate actively and take risks?
- What pre-teaching needs to occur before students can successfully engage in interactive oral tasks?
- How did teachers maximize participation of all students?
- How might learning opportunities be extended to heighten authenticity?
- How might the learning be extended to action-oriented tasks?
- Being able to think about one's own thinking (metacognition) is an important part of learning. What strategies did teachers use to teach metacognitive skills?
- What evidence did you see of effective assessment *as* learning?
- What evidence did you see of effective assessment *for* learning?

MY BELIEFS

As an FSL teacher, what are my beliefs about ...?

DEVELOPMENT OF FRENCH LANGUAGE SKILLS

- spontaneous, oral interaction
- development of proficiency in using the French language
- expectations for student proficiency in each of the strands
- interrelationship between skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing
- use of authentic texts and authentic situations

ASSESSMENT

- identification of learning goals and co-construction of success criteria
- error correction
- descriptive feedback
- assessment *for* learning, *as* learning, and *of* learning
- focusing on proficiency, rather than deficiency

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

- use of French by teachers and by students
- establishment of a positive, nurturing environment
- development of cooperative learning skills
- differentiated instruction
- use of technology

LEARNER AUTONOMY

- use of the gradual release model
- explicit teaching of French language learning strategies
- development of metacognitive skills
- development of higher-order thinking skills
- student tracking of progress and goal-setting

MY DAILY PRACTICE

How do I reflect my beliefs in my daily practice?

DEVELOPMENT OF FRENCH LANGUAGE SKILLS

- What strategies do I explicitly teach my students to use so they are able to express themselves orally and to interact naturally in French?
- How do I select activities to ensure students develop high levels of proficiency in listening comprehension, spoken production, spoken interaction, reading, and interactive writing?
- What strategies do I explicitly teach my students to enable them to listen and/or view so they can understand increasingly complex authentic French?
- How do I ensure that all students have the prerequisite skills and knowledge necessary to carry out a task?
- How do I teach language conventions so that they are relevant and meaningful?

ASSESSMENT

- How do I ensure that learning goals are explicit and that all students have a clear understanding of the success criteria?
- How do I ensure that students understand that making errors is part of the learning process?
- How do I provide descriptive feedback and time to improve?
- How do I regularly collect evidence of student learning? What criteria do I use to inform my judgements about the quality of student learning?
- How do I provide students with opportunities for self-assessment and goal-setting?

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

- How do I establish French as the language of communication?
- How do I ensure that the classroom is a safe, supportive, and respectful learning environment? How do I encourage all students to be risk-takers?
- How do I ensure students make optimal use of class time?
- How do I differentiate to meet the needs of all students?
- How do I incorporate the use of technology to develop proficiency in oral French and comprehension of authentic aural texts?

MY DAILY PRACTICE

continued

How do I reflect my beliefs in my daily practice?

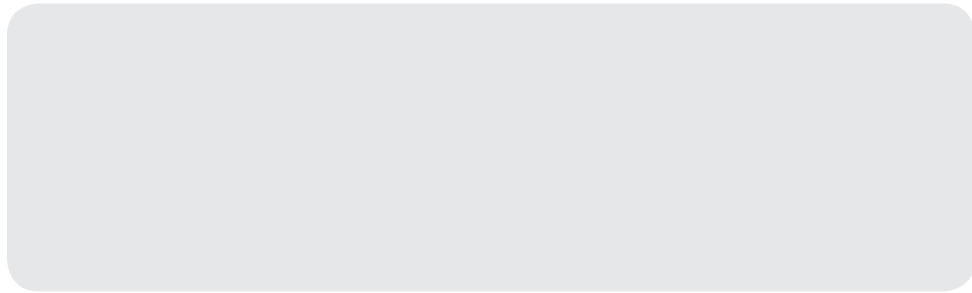
LEARNER AUTONOMY

- How do I scaffold activities to develop independent learners?
- How do I explicitly teach French language acquisition strategies?
- What strategies do I explicitly teach my students so they develop and use metacognitive skills?
- What strategies do I explicitly teach my students so they develop higher-order thinking skills?
- What strategies do I explicitly teach my students so they are able to self-assess effectively? How do I demonstrate that I value what students can do and help my students develop confidence in their abilities to communicate effectively in French?

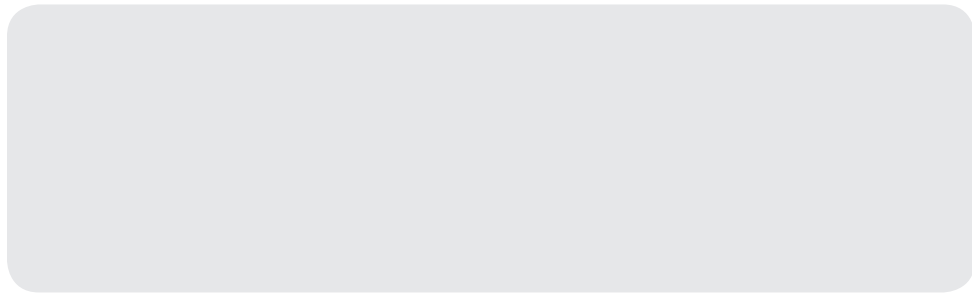
PERSONAL REFLECTION JOURNAL

TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT ON HOW THE VIDEO SEGMENTS AND THE DISCUSSION WILL INFORM YOUR PRACTICE.

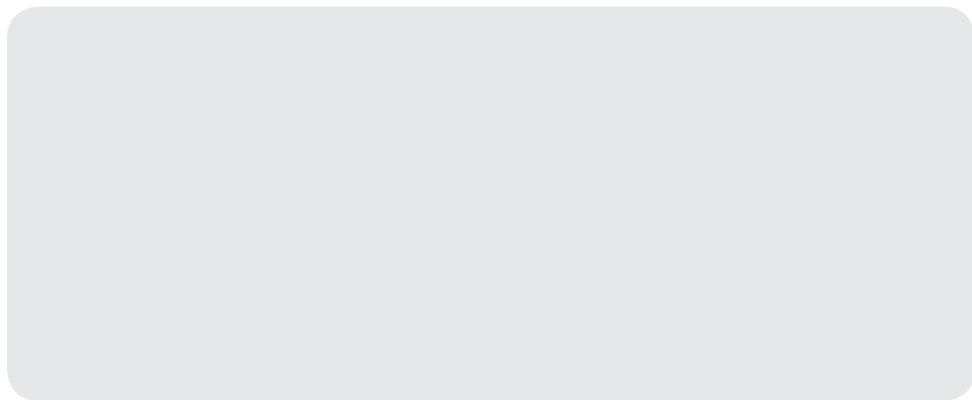
- What resonated most with me while viewing the video(s)?



- What am I already doing that was validated?



- What obstacles exist that might challenge the implementation of authentic, spontaneous oral interaction in my classroom? What are possible strategies to overcome these obstacles?



PERSONAL REFLECTION JOURNAL

continued

TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT ON HOW THE VIDEO SEGMENTS AND THE DISCUSSION WILL INFORM YOUR PRACTICE.

- What aspect(s) of oral communication would I like to explore further?

A large, light gray rectangular area with rounded corners, intended for the user to write their reflection on the first question.

- How well is my daily practice aligned with my beliefs?

A large, light gray rectangular area with rounded corners, intended for the user to write their reflection on the second question.