



Bienvenue à la Classe de Français!

Petaluma High School

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. How many French teachers are there?

Madame Sarah Wadsworth is the only French teacher at Petaluma High School. Teaching for over 20 years at PHS, she has developed the program into what it is today. The classes offered range from French One to the very unique French 5 AP literature course. Students at PHS have the distinction of being amongst only 2,000 students nationwide who test for the French AP literature credit.

Q. What is the philosophy of the French program?

The basis of the French program is communication, and every activity done in and out of class is designed to improve a student's ability to communicate, whether it be writing, speaking, or reading. Language opens many doors and French at PHS hopes to help each student with self and world perspective, and the opportunity to explore another culture while working at mastery of its language.



Q. How many years of a foreign language are required?

To graduate high school, a student must pass one year of a foreign language or fine arts class. State schools require two years, the University of California and many private institutions require three, though more are suggested due to the competition involved in gaining acceptance to college.



Q. Will a Student be fluent in French if s/he continues with it throughout high school?

Yes. Though this fluency is not the fluency of a native speaker, a student will have a solid command and understanding of the French language after four years. They will be well-read, schooled in grammar, and an accomplished writer and speaker

Q. What does a normal day in French class look like?

Time in class is always spent wisely. Students are always involved with either the teacher or each other. Students in French One and Two spend class exercising and improving their oral and grammatical skills. Upper levels practice the baseline skills taught in the first two years through all forms of French communication.

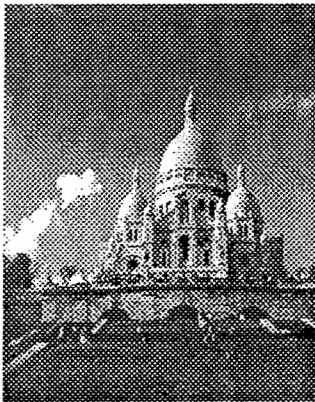
Q. What kind of a student will have the easiest time succeeding in the PHS French program?

Students who succeed in the French program are not only interested in French but are also motivated, dedicated, and organized. The motivation to learn the language, the dedication to continue with the program, and the growing organizational skills to manage time and materials are all traits which help students succeed in the French program.



Q. How much homework should one expect?

Homework for the first two years of French is strongly centered on command of grammar and vocabulary. While the time to memorize grammar principles and vocabulary differs for each student, in order to gain the best from the Petaluma French program, one should spend 30-45 minutes on homework four to five times a week.

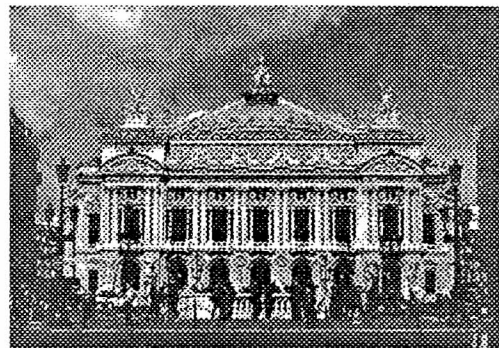


Q. Do students use a textbook?

All French classes are heavily supplemented by outside sources. The texts used in French One and Two although dated are necessary and effective. These textbooks are required everyday in class, along with a French dictionary, and are used as the backbone for all grammar work while supplemental packets, projects, conversation, and the like add course variety. Upper levels use text sparingly for drill-style practice of everyday class work and language level.

Q. What extra curricular activities does the French program offer?

The French program offers an immersion trip to France every two years. Madame takes a group of students to a language school in Paris and on the Western or Mediterranean coast. The next trip will be during the summer of 2009 and is open to French students 15+. Also offered is a French club (Alliance Française), which organizes French movie nights, field trips to local French cultural events, the Sonoma State speech contest, and of course French style cooking events at lunch.



Q. What are culture points?

Culture points are projects chosen by a student to demonstrate his or her knowledge of French culture. These culture projects are an opportunity for students to learn about the French culture and work within mediums that they enjoy.