



Frequently Asked Questions French as Second Language



As a **parent**, you want to make the best decision for **your child's education and future**. The following information provides you with key information, along with answers to the most-frequently asked questions about **French as a Second Language (FSL)**.

Did you know that Algoma District School Board offers French as a Second Language programs?

1. **Core French** (also known as basic French): Students learn French as a subject. At the elementary level, students are required to accumulate a minimum of 600 hours of French instruction by the end of Grade 8. Core French is compulsory in Grade 9 and can be continued through Grade 12 for additional credits. The Core French program encourages students to use their linguistic skills to efficiently communicate in real-life situations.
2. **French Immersion**: Students learn French as a subject but also receive instruction, in French, in two or more other subjects. At the elementary level, at least 50% of all instruction is provided in French. At the secondary level in the French Immersion program, students accumulate ten credits in French: four are FSL language courses and six are other subjects taught in French.

Who can take FSL programs?

Everyone! FSL programs are for all students in Ontario's English-language boards, including students with special needs and English Language Learners. Your child will receive French instruction up to Gr. 9 if s/he is not attending the French Immersion program.

What are the benefits of learning French as a Second Language (FSL)?

The advantages go beyond learning both of Canada's official languages. Being bilingual opens doors, produces creative thinkers and students who can multi-task.

Languages are highly valued by employers, and can translate into higher average salaries and increased career opportunities.

Did you know?

In 2016, the **English–French bilingualism** rate in Canada reached the highest proportion ever at 17.9%. Bilingualism increased in most provinces and territories. (*Statistics Canada*)



According to research, learning a second language has many **cognitive benefits**, including:

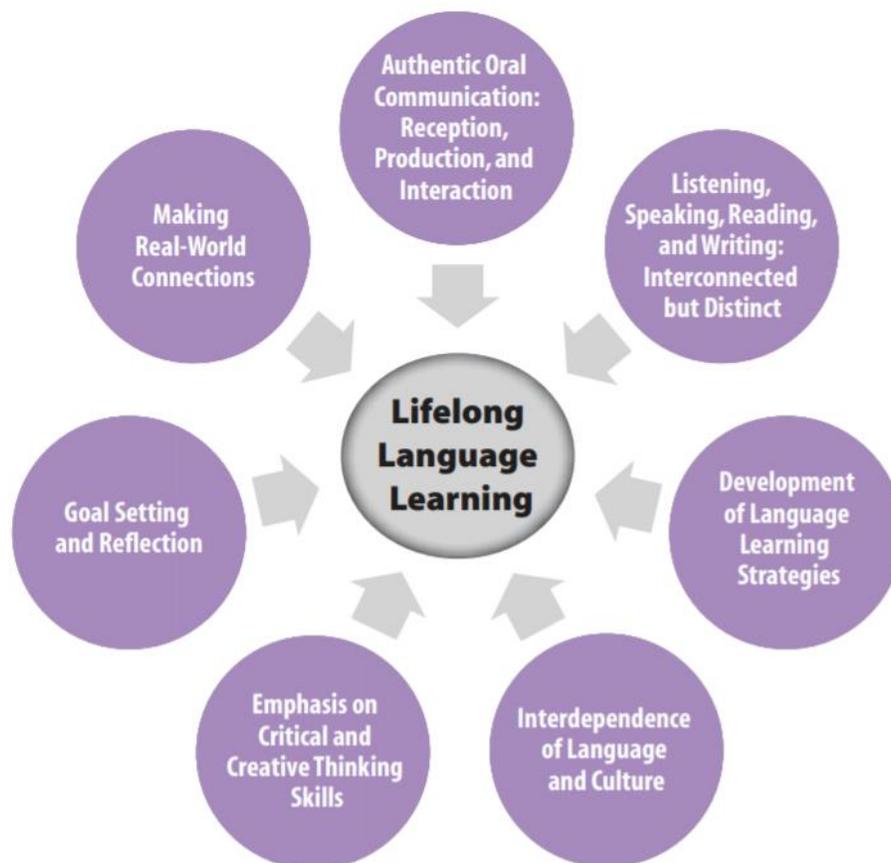
- ✓ Developing strong thinking and communication skills;
- ✓ Enhancing first-language and overall literacy skills;
- ✓ Strengthening problem-solving, reasoning and creative thinking;
- ✓ Strengthening understanding math concepts and problems;
- ✓ Focusing and making decisions;
- ✓ Ability to better multi-task, as bilingual individuals switch from one language to the other;

- ✓ Ability to better adapt to changes in the environment;
- ✓ Developing a greater cultural and social awareness;
- ✓ Ability to learn another language easier, as language skills reinforce each other.

It even has **health benefits!**

- ✓ Bilingualism can delay the onset of Dementia and Alzheimer's disease.
- ✓ It speeds up the recovery process after a stroke.
- ✓ It lowers stress levels.

The main goal of learning a language is **communication**. As FSL learners, students need to see themselves as social citizens using communication for real purposes. Therefore, the teaching, learning and assessment of FSL rely on communicative and action-oriented approaches in which the students' learning activities are providing authentic situations of communication. Here are the key principles:



The **skills** learned in FSL (Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing) are **applicable beyond the FSL classroom**.

How will my child be supported in the FSL programs?

- Through a variety of **instructional strategies** (modelling, open-ended activities, strategic use of students' first languages, collaborative learning), ensuring that all students are able to communicate in French in both familiar and new contexts.
- Through the use of a deliberate pace while speaking French to ensure maximum understanding, explaining explicitly and in various ways to address the needs of all learners;
- Action-oriented approach teaching, learning and assessment through meaningful and authentic situations of communication;
- Through a variety of learning resources (music, drama, gestures, visual representations of key ideas, key vocabulary, word wall);
- Technology to support language and literacy development;

- Specific support is provided to children with **special education needs**, as well as **English Language Learners**.

How can I support my child in FSL?

Even if you do not speak French, you can fully support your child by showing interest in what your child is doing at school and providing support. For instance, you can help by encouraging your child to talk, read, and write at home in their first language to strengthen their first-language skills, which are the foundation for learning French; visiting the public library, going on family outings, ensuring homework is completed, and communicating regularly with the teacher. Studies show that students perform better in school if their parents are involved in their education.

Learn more at FSL Homework Toolbox (www.fslhomeworktoolbox.ca).

Remember! All communication coming from schools, including report cards, is in English.



“Learning a language is the best possible example of life-long learning. As a second language learner myself, I continue to develop, use and refine my language skills continuously throughout my life and my career.”

- Lucia Reece, Director of Education



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« As a parent with a child who has taken Core French in elementary school and this year academic French in high school for the first time, I am very pleased with the opportunity my daughter has had to learn a new language. While she may not be fully bilingual, she will have the fundamental skills to read, speak and understand French which will serve her well in life.”

— A Parent



References

“[French as a Second Language](#)” (MEO)

[The Ontario Curriculum – French as a Second Language, Core French Grades 4-8, Extended French Grades 4-8, French Immersion Grades 1-8](#) (MEO, 2013)

[A Framework for FSL in Ontario Schools](#) (MEO, 2013)

[Including Students with Special Education Needs in FSL Programs](#) (MEO, 2015)

[Welcoming English Language Learners into FSL Programs](#) (MEO, 2016)

“[10 Amazing Benefits of Being Bilingual](#)” (BilingualKidSpot.com)

“[I want my child to be bilingual](#)” (CPF)

[FSL Homework Toolbox](#) (Rainbow District School Board)

“[English-French bilingualism reaches new heights](#)” (Statistics Canada)