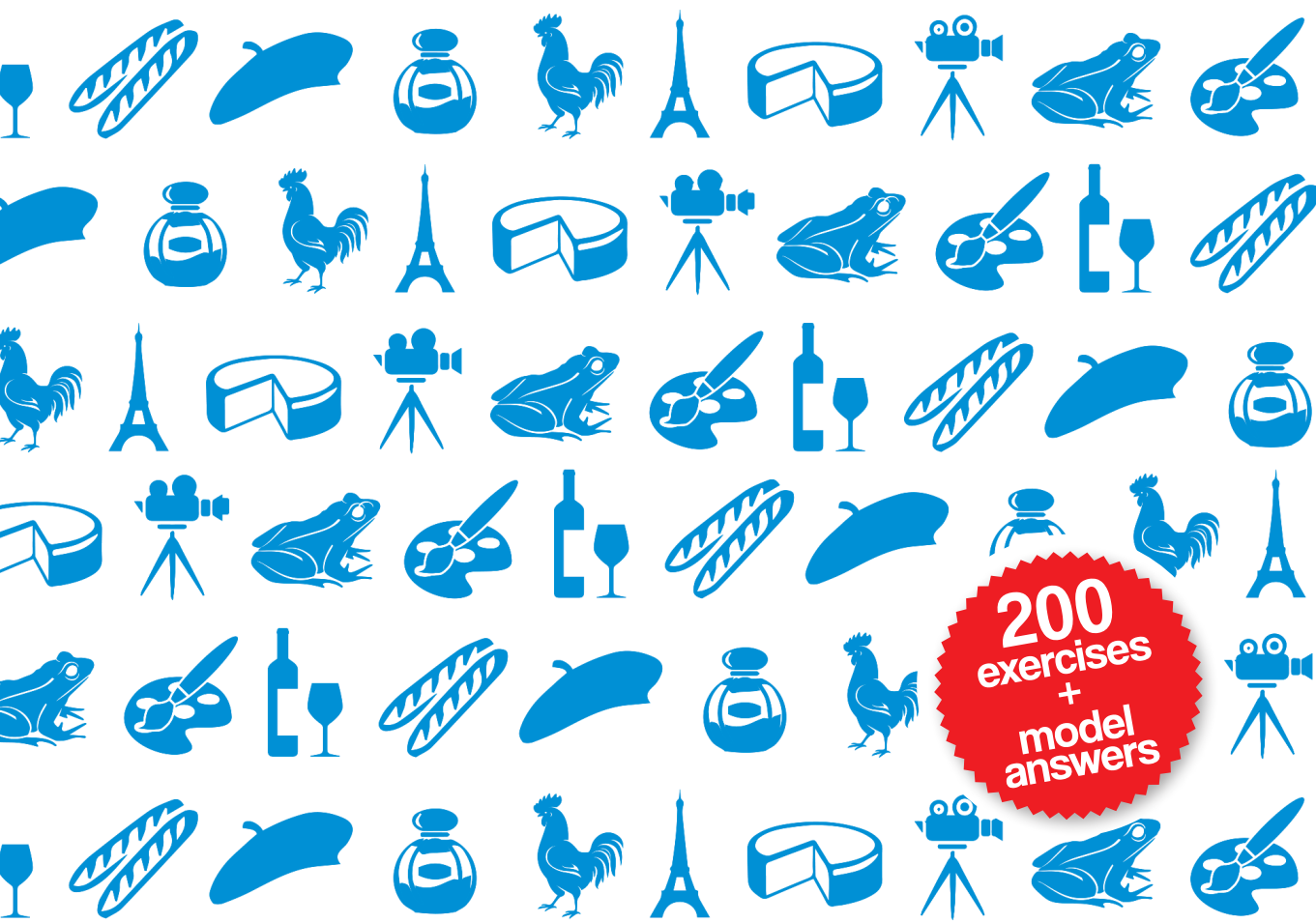
workbook ASSiMiL®

French

False beginners



Workbook

French

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About this workbook

The 20 lessons in this workbook, which contain some 200 exercises, will allow you to progressively review and practice the fundamentals of French, from pronunciation and vocabulary through to simple and more complex sentence construction.

Each lesson deals with a key grammatical point such as verb conjugation and usage, parts of speech and sentence structure, as well as giving pronunciation tips. The exercises allow active and contextual reinforcement of the points covered, calling upon your knowledge of the language. The aim of the workbook is to provide a fun and systematic way to consolidate your French skills.

As you work through the exercises, you can self-assess your results by selecting the appropriate icon after each exercise (☺ if the majority of your answers were correct, 😐 if around half your answers were correct, or ☹ if less than half were correct). After a lesson, enter the number of icons of each type you received in the exercises, and then enter these totals into the final score table at the end of the workbook so you can tally your final results after completing all the exercises.

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1 Alphabet and pronunciation

The alphabet

The French alphabet is the same as the English alphabet, although the letters are pronounced differently:

A (ah)	G (zhay)	M (em)	S (es)	Y (eegrek)
B (bay)	H (ash)	N (en)	T (tay)	Z (zed)
C (say)	I (ee)	O (oh)	U (ew)	
D (day)	J (zhee)	P (pay)	V (vay)	
E (uh)	K (kah)	Q (kew)	W (doobluh vay)	
F (ef)	L (el)	R (er)	X (eeks)	

1 **Spell these words aloud using the French alphabet.** 😐

B-O-N-J-O-U-R
(hello)

C-H-A-I-S-E
(chair)

M-A-M-A-N
(mum)

H-E-U-R-E-U-X
(happy [m.]*)*

Q-U-E-S-T-I-O-N

F-L-E-U-R
(flower)

R-A-V-I-E
(pleased [f.]*)*

V-R-A-I
(true [m.]*)*

G-E-N-T-I-L-L-E
(nice [f.]*)*

W-A-G-O-N

P-A-P-Y
(grandad)

Z-O-O

Written accents in French

French has a number of accents used for pronunciation or spelling reasons:

- An acute (**aigu**) accent **[é]** indicates that the vowel **[e]** should be pronounced *eh*.
- A grave (**grave**) accent **[è]** indicates that the vowel **[e]** should be pronounced *ay*, or is used with **[a]** or **[u]** to distinguish words that are otherwise spelled the same.
- A circumflex (**circonflexe**) accent **[â]** is used on any vowel to indicate the presence of a historical letter. It lengthens an **[a], [o]** or **[u]** vowel sound.
- A diaeresis (**le tréma**) **[ë]** is used to indicate that a vowel should be pronounced independently rather than blended with another vowel, as in **Noël** (*no-ehl*).
- A cedilla (**la cédille**) **[ç]** indicates that the **[c]** is pronounced *s* as in **ça**.

2 **Using a French dictionary, add the correct accents or other marks to these words and then give their meaning.**

E.g. frere ➜ frère = brother

a. une mere ➜ _____ = _____

b. peut-etre ➜ _____ = _____

c. Noel ➜ _____ = _____

d. une lecon ➜ _____ = _____

e. le present ➜ _____ = _____

f. tot ➜ _____ = _____

g. un garcon ➜ _____ = _____

h. le passe ➜ _____ = _____

3 **Underline the correct word in the following sentences.**

a. Mon **pere / pêre / pére / père** est au travail.

b. Il me tarde d'être à **Noêl / Noél / Noël / Noèl** !

c. Pourriez-vous me donner des **glassons / glasons / glacons / glaçons**, s'il vous plaît ?

d. Oublie le **passe / passè / passé / passê**. Pense au futur !

e. Elles portent la **meme / mème / méme / même** robe !

Silent letters

Unfortunately, French is rarely pronounced as it is written. Certain letters are not pronounced at all!

- This often occurs at the end of words, such as
  – with **final consonants**: **salut** *hi [sahloo]*
  – with a **final [e]**: **femme** *woman [fam]*
- The letter **[h]** at the beginning of a word is always silent: **homme** *man [ohm]*.

4 **Read these words with silent letters aloud and then write the English translation below each word.**

froid	porc	trois	vous	abricot .....
chez	mot	chat	salut	outil .....
estomac	beaucoup	trop	nerf	deux

5 **Place each word in the appropriate column according to whether or not it ends with a silent letter.**

TURC POULE HIVER FOUR LOURD OURS FROID ŒUF

Silent final letter	Voiced final letter

Nasal vowels, the [u] and [r] sounds

- **Nasalized vowels:** In syllables ending with **[m]** or **[n]** (as in **tante** *aunt*, **oncle** *uncle*), the **[m]** or **[n]** are barely voiced, but they make the preceding vowel sound "nasal". The best way to approximate these sounds in English is to imagine a vowel followed by **[-ng]** (as in *song*) and stopping short before pronouncing the **-ng**.
- **The French [u]:** This tricky sound is not the English **[oo]**, but is closer to an **[ew]** sound. To imitate it, pronounce **[ee]** while pursing your lips with the tongue towards the front of the mouth, its tip resting against the lower teeth.
- **The French RRRRRRRRRRRRR!:** The **[r]** is the pet hate of most English speakers learning French. But with a bit of practice, it doesn't have to be! It is a guttural sound somewhere between an **[h]** and an **[r]**. It is close to the Spanish **[j]** or the Scottish **[ch]** in *Loch Ness*. To pronounce it, place the base of your tongue at the back of your throat and the tip of your tongue behind the lower teeth and make a sound as if you were coughing up a hairball!

6 Practice your pronunciation by reading the following sentences aloud.

a. Tu es sûr que la poule est sur le mur ?

b. Où est ton chien ? Sur ou sous le banc ?

c. As-tu entendu ? Sa sœur a eu un garçon !

d. J'ai perdu le numéro de téléphone de sa tante.

Liaison

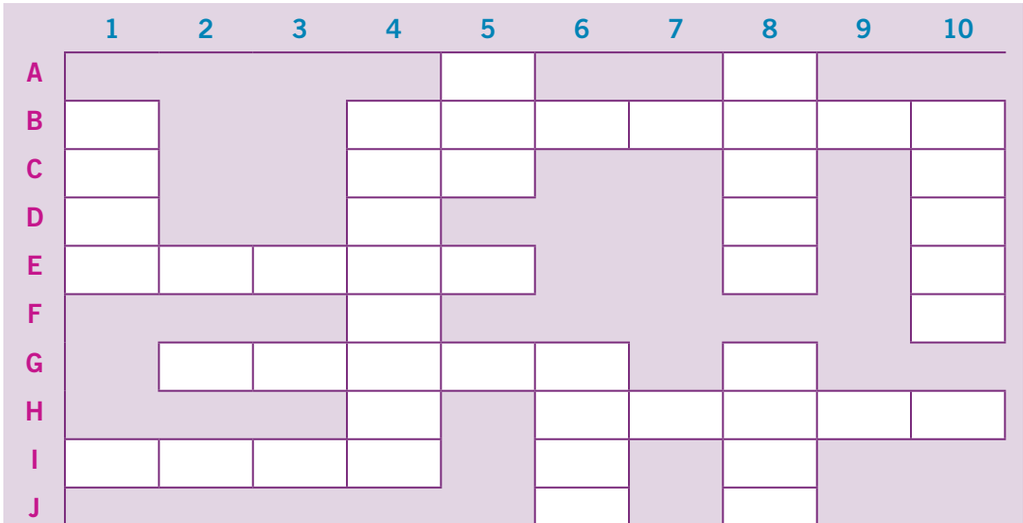
The letters **s, x, z, t, d, n** and **m**, which are normally silent at the end of a word, are sometimes pronounced if the following word starts with a **vowel sound** or a **mute [h]**, as in *les enfants [layz anⁿfahn]*. Note that: not every **h** is mute, in some words, you briefly pause like in **haricot**, *bean*.

7 Indicate whether or not there should be a liaison by ticking Y (✓) or N (✗).

	Y	N
un homme		
les élèves		
les haricots		

	Y	N
les vieux éléphants		
le petit ami		
les yeux		

8 Complete this crossword using words you have seen in this lesson.



Down

1. Polite form of "you"
4. A lot of
5. A word
6. The number 2
8. Man – mother
10. Very happy *(f.)*

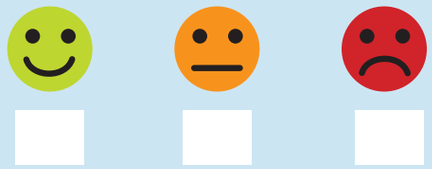
Across

B. A greeting
C. A short conjunction
E. Informal greeting
G. The opposite of hot
H. A school student
I. Too much

9 Add the 10 missing accents in the text below.

« Mon pere est rentre hier soir du Venezuela pour feter Noel en famille. Il veut des festivites francaises ! C'est genial d'etre enfin ensemble ! C'est l'heure des cadeaux et des escargots ! Nous allons nous regaler ! Quelle fete cela sera ! »

Congratulations! You have completed Lesson 1! It is time to count up how many of each type of icon you received. Then record your results in the final self-assessment table on page 128.



2 Articles and nouns

French nouns

- In French, all nouns have a gender. They are either masculine (*m.*) or feminine (*f.*). Unfortunately, it is not easy to tell which gender a word is just from the way it is spelled. Typically a noun that ends in **[-e] (une fille)** is feminine, while a noun that ends in a consonant is masculine **(un garçon)**. However, there are a lot of exceptions (e.g. **un arbre**). The only sure way to know the gender of a noun is to check in a dictionary. Always try to learn a new noun with its gender. Note also that nouns that refer to people often have a different masculine and feminine form, such as **un Américain** *an American man* and **une Américaine** *an American woman*.

- To form the plural (*pl.*) of most nouns, an **[-s]** is added (**une fille → des filles**). If the noun ends in **-u**, an **[-x]** is added (**un cheveu → des cheveux**). If the noun ends in **-al**, an **[-aux]** is added (**un journal → des journaux**). If the noun ends in **-s**, **-x**, or **-z**, there is no change in the plural form (**le fils → les fils**).

1 Tick the right answer: are the following words masculine (M), feminine (F) or plural (P)?

Nouns	M	F	P
salon	☐	☐	☐
chambre	☐	☐	☐
toilettes	☐	☐	☐
cave	☐	☐	☐
grenier	☐	☐	☐
cuisine	☐	☐	☐

2 Complete the following table (using a dictionary if necessary).

Masculine singular	Feminine singular	Masculine plural
.....	une amie	.....
un Français	.....	.....
.....	.....	des marchands
un marié	.....	.....
.....	une avocate	.....
.....	.....	des invités

Definite articles

The definite article *the* has four forms in French. The form varies according to whether the noun it is used with is masculine, feminine, singular or plural:

- **le** before a masculine noun: **le père**
- **la** before a feminine noun: **la mère**
- **l'** before a singular noun starting with a vowel or a silent [h]: **l'enfant, l'hôtel**
- **les** before a plural noun: **les parents**

	Singular	Plural
Masculine	**le/l'**	**les**
Feminine	**la/l'**	**les**

3 Circle the correct definite article. LE LA L' LES

a. (Le / La / L' / Les) maison est grande !

b. (Le / La / L' / Les) filles sont très jolies !

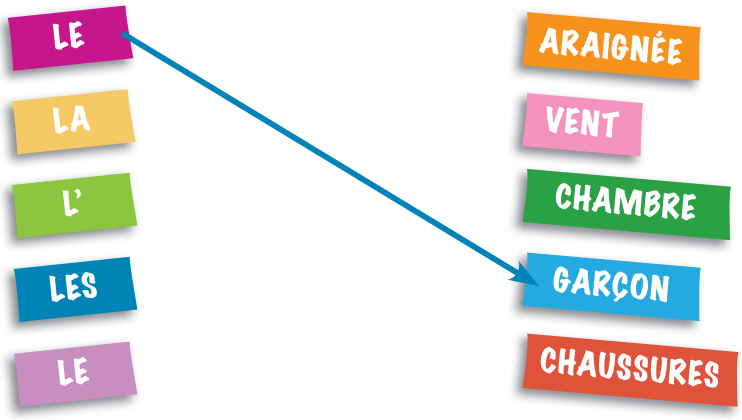
c. (Le / La / L' / Les) enfants sont gentils.

d. (Le / La / L' / Les) eau est trop froide !

e. (Le / La / L' / Les) garçon joue au football.

f. (Le / La / L' / Les) homme est très grand !

4 **Connect each noun to the correct definite article.**



Indefinite articles

- **un** and **une** are the equivalent of the English article *a(n)*. The article **un** is used in front of a masculine noun (**un arbre** *a tree*) and **une** is used in front of a feminine noun (**une maison** *a house*).
- The article **des** is used in front of a plural noun: **des frères** *brothers*.

	Singular	Plural
Masculine	**un**	**des**
Feminine	**une**	**des**

5 **Circle the correct indefinite article. You can use a dictionary to check if the noun is feminine or masculine.**

a. Il y a **(un / une / des)** chat sur le toit.
b. As-tu **(un / une / des)** crayons dans ta trousse ?
c. Je mange **(un / une / des)** gâteaux tous les jours.
d. Il veut **(un / une / des)** guitare pour Noël.
e. Nous avons **(un / une / des)** chien.

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French

False beginners

This easy-to-use workbook has been designed specifically for false beginners in French. It includes 200 fun-filled exercises (with answers) which follow a logical progression. You will be able to self-assess your level at the end of each chapter. Every aspect of the language has been covered, including grammar, spelling, vocabulary, syntax, pronunciation and accentuation.

- **200 fun-filled exercises (with answers) to learn French**
- **Tasks include: matching, fill the blanks, find the odd one, unscrambling exercises, crosswords, riddles and more.**
- **Grammar, conjugation, spelling, pronunciation and accentuation**
- **Test yourself with our self-assessment tasks**

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