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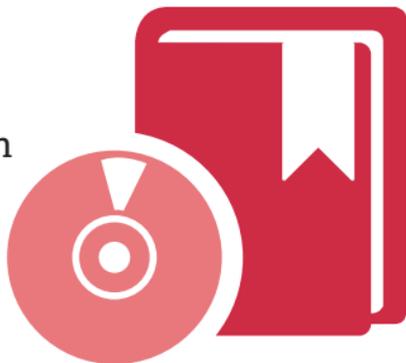
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Introduction

If you have just bought this book, then you know that French is both a useful and an important language. For those of you who might be reading this introduction and wondering whether our method is worth the investment, let us explain the advantages of learning with Assimil.

French is, of course, identified with France. But it punches well above its weight in relation to the number of native speakers. Used by an estimated 300 million people across all five continents, French is the main or official language of more than 25 countries, from Canada to Cambodia. It is an official or working language of major organisations such as the United Nations, UNESCO, the European Union, NATO and the International Red Cross. And it is the favoured medium of communication in fields such as art, fashion, food, dance, and the visual arts.

At the same time, French is becoming increasingly global, thanks partly to bodies such as the **Organisation internationale de la Francophonie**, which brings together nearly 90 states and governments to promote the French language and French-speaking cultures. By some estimates, French could become the first or second most important world language by the middle of the twenty-first century.

But arguably the main reason for learning French is pleasure: the pleasure of mastering a language that is melodic, precise and not unduly difficult to learn; the pleasure of being able to read great writers in the original (France is the country with the most Nobel Prize winners in Literature); the pleasure of watching undubbed movies made by world-renowned directors; the pleasure of being able to communicate with local people in some of the world's most exciting and beautiful countries. As one great author and philosopher said: **Ma patrie, c'est la langue française** (see lesson 100 for more information).

About the Assimil method

We believe that people can and should acquire a foreign language in the same way that they learned their mother tongue: by natural assimilation. We do not try to make you sound, think and behave like a native speaker; instead, we give you the tools to understand and be understood in a wide variety of settings. To do this, we choose situations that are as realistic as possible but that still allow you to acquire grammar and vocabulary progressively. When native speakers communicate with a learner, they generally make little or no effort to steer clear of expressions, idioms or verb tenses that might be unfamiliar; they will speak naturally, idiomatically and – in some cases – grammatically incorrectly. Our job, as course designers, is to strike a balance between these different modes of communication, seeking the best possible compromise between phased theoretical learning and real-world exposure.

What will you learn in Assimil French?

The aim is to enable beginners or “false beginners” to communicate in a French-speaking environment: understanding the main points of a message in clear, standard language, dealing with most of the situations likely to arise when travelling, describing events and experiences, and briefly giving reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. (This corresponds to level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.)

In addition to simple things such as how to introduce yourself and order a meal or beverage, you will learn to shop in a market, order goods online, participate in a quiz show, tell a joke, and even file a missing-person report. The language varieties, or registers, range from casual conversation to formal prose, ultimately allowing you to converse in a wide variety of situations and to understand moderately complex texts. Sidebar notes provide insights into the culture, heritage and history of France, with added information about other French-speaking countries. But whatever the lesson theme, the aim is always the same: to make the learning process as natural and enjoyable as possible.

How does it work?

The learning process is divided into **two phases**:

- **receptive**, when you simply absorb the language and become familiar with its mechanisms;
- **productive**, when you start to generate phrases and sentences of your own based on what you have already learned.

The **receptive phase**, from lessons 1 to 49, consists in listening to the recorded dialogues, reading the text and grammar notes, and completing the exercises in each lesson in order to absorb the language as naturally as possible. During this first phase, you should repeat each sentence aloud along with the recording, imitating the speaker in order to get as close as possible to the correct pronunciation. Don't feel shy!

The **productive phase** starts at lesson 50. When you reach the end of a new lesson, still working in receptive mode, go back to the beginning of the book and begin working forward again, lesson by lesson, as instructed. Translate on sight the main dialogue and the first exercise into French (don't forget to mask the French dialogue), noting any particular difficulties. You can do this in writing or orally, preferably both. When you reach lesson 100, go back to lesson 51 and work steadily through the second half of the book in productive mode. We encourage you to check the notes, revision lessons or grammar appendix if you need to review or consolidate anything you may still be unsure of.

This built-in revision function will not only jog your memory; it will also help to activate the vocabulary and grammar you have already learned and assimilated naturally. For that reason, it is important to work on a daily basis. If you don't have time to complete a full lesson, in either the receptive or the productive phases, you should still pick up the book or recordings and read a dialogue, do an exercise, or check a grammar point. In this way, you will learn the language by developing your muscle memory.

Pronunciation

Recent research suggests that too much emphasis has been placed on acquiring a perfect accent in a foreign language, particularly after the age of 12. Among the reasons for this more realistic attitude is the fact there is no need to sound exactly like a native speaker to communicate successfully or carry out professional tasks. Nevertheless, many languages have sounds – vowels, diphthongs and other phonemes – that do not exist in the learner's native language and that need to be recognised and acquired in order to avoid misunderstanding or confusion (think *ship* / *sheep* in English).

The conventional way to represent pronunciation effectively is to use the International Phonetic Alphabet, a system of unique symbols representing every characteristic sound in a language. In many cases, however, learners would first have to acquaint themselves with the IPA before they can study their language of choice. That is why Assimil uses a system of respelling, called figurative pronunciation, to equate sounds with their nearest equivalent in the source language. We try to use only the Latin alphabet, but some sounds are impossible to represent this way. Which is why our figurative pronunciation must be seen as an approximation rather than a perfect representation.

Although many French words are similar or identical to English words when written (for example, **pardon**, *pardon*), they sound very different.

Vowels

French has two types of vowel sounds, oral and nasal, whereas almost all English vowels are oral.

– English makes a clear distinction between long and short sounds (*rich* and *reach*, for example), but French vowels fall somewhere in between: **riche** is neither as short as *rich* nor as long as *reach*.

– The **u** sound has no exact equivalent in English. To produce it, say [oo] while moving your lips to pronounce [œ]. This sound, which we represent as [ew], is important because there are several pairs of similar words, like **vu** and **vous**, that can be easily confused.

Other vowels are nasalised, which means they are pronounced by letting air escape through the nose as well as the mouth. (Try blocking one of your nostrils with a finger.) Nasalisation is particularly evident when a vowel sound (either a single vowel or combinations such **ei** and **ai**) is followed by the consonants **n** or **m**, which become silent.

To reproduce these sounds in our figurative pronunciation, we have had to resort to three simple conventions. In each case, pronounce the English word or sound shown in italics, while blocking a nostril:

ahⁿ: the short *a* in *cat*: **pain** [*pahⁿ*]

œhⁿ: the long *a* in *car*: **croissant** [*krwahssœhⁿ*]

ohⁿ: the long *o* in *oh!*: **bonjour** [*bohⁿzhoor*]

– A terminal **e**, without an acute accent, is usually silent: for instance **pile**, [*pœl*], **battery**. However, when added to the end of a masculine adjective to make the word feminine, the **e** causes the final consonant to be pronounced: **grand** → **grande**, **big**: [*grœhⁿ* → *grœhⁿd*].

Accented vowels

There are three main accents, or diacritics, that can be placed on vowels: ´ (acute), ` (grave) and ^ (circumflex). In some cases, they simply give a visual indication of grammatical function, without changing the pronunciation: for example, **a** and **à** (respectively, the third person singular of **avoir** and the preposition meaning *to* or *at*). Likewise, the grave accent shows the difference between the conjunction **ou**, *or*, and the adverb/pronoun **où**, *where*.

In other cases, however, a diacritic alters the pronunciation. The letter **e** is important because it is the only vowel that can take all three accents. The “bare” **e** is either mute, usually at the end of a word (**balle**), or unstressed (**merci**). With an acute accent, **é** is pronounced a little like [*ay*], though not as long. Thus **occupe** [*okewp*] but **occupé** [*okewpay*].

The grave accent, **è**, produces an open sound, like the *e* in the English word *pet*. It is often, but not always, placed over the letter **e** when the next syllable is mute: **père** [*pair*].

The only other vowels taking the grave accent are à and ù (the latter used only in où, *where*), and there is no change in pronunciation.

The circumflex, [^], is the only accent that can be used with all five vowels. It serves several functions. For example, it signals that a word is of Latin origin and that one or more letters, usually an *s*, have been removed. (Interestingly, that *s* is generally present in the English equivalent: **un hôpital**, *a hospital*). The circumflex also helps to distinguish between homophones such as **sur** / **sûr** (*on / sure*) and **du** / **dû** (*of / owed*). The only vowels that actually change pronunciation with a circumflex are â, ê and ô. But the differences are very slight so, for the purposes of this course, it is more important to recognise the differences between the written words than the slight changes in sounds.

Another diacritic is the **tréma** (or diæresis), consisting of two dots placed over the second of two vowels to indicate that they must be pronounced separately rather than as a diphthong. The most common of these are **Noël**, *Christmas* [*nowel*] and **maïs**, *corn* [*my-eess*] (rather than **mais**, *but*, pronounced [*may*]).

Consonants

Most consonants have more or less the same sounds in French and English in the initial and middle positions.

– Final consonants, especially the plural **-s** and **-x**, are usually silent: **papiers** [*papeeyay*], *papers*; **morceaux** [*morsoh*], *pieces*. There are four exceptions to this rule: **-c**, **-f**, **-l** and **-r**: **sac**, [*sak*], *bag*; **tarif** [*tareef*], *fare*; **appel** [*ahpel*], *call*; **hiver** [*eevair*]. (A simple mnemonic, **CaReFuL**, is a good way to remember these voiced consonants.)

– Some double consonants are pronounced differently from English:

-ll- is generally pronounced [*l*], but if preceded by an *i* and another vowel, it sounds like [*yy*]: **fille** [*feeyy*], *girl, daughter*;

-gn- is pronounced [*nyuh*]: **Bretagne** [*bruhtanyuh*], *Brittany*;

-ch- is [*sh*]: **chercher** [*shershay*] *to look for*;

-th- is [*t*]: **théâtre** [*tay-ahtr*], *theatre*.

– The letter **g** can also pose a problem because it has two pronunciations. In front of the vowels **e** and **i** (and the half-vowel **y**), it is soft, like [zh] in *vision*, thus **plage**, *beach*, is [plazh]; and **région**, *region* is [rayzhyohⁿ]; in front of the three other vowels and all consonants, it is hard: [g] as in *golf*. Thus **gâteau**, *cake*: [gatoh], **grand**, *big*: [groehⁿ]. In some cases, however, a hard **g** is needed before **e** and **i**, in which it is followed by a **u**: **guerre**, *war* [gair]; **guide**, *guide* [gid]. Note that the letter **j** is also pronounced as a soft **g**: **je**, *I*, [zhuh], **déjeuner**, *lunch* [dayzhuhnay]. Lastly, be careful when spelling words aloud: **g** [zhay] and **j** [zhee].

– The French **r** can be hard to pronounce because there is no equivalent sound in English. It is pronounced at the back of the throat, with the tip of the tongue against the bottom teeth. To approximate the sound, imagine you are trying to clear your throat before speaking.

Accented consonants

The only diacritic on a consonant is **la cédille**, *cedilla* – a hook-like mark beneath the letter **ç** that changes the pronunciation to an [s]. It is used only if the **c** occurs before the vowels **a**, **o** and **u**. This is because **e** and **i** always produce the [s] sound when preceded by **c**. Thus the **c** of **France** [froehⁿs] becomes **ç** in **français** [froehⁿssay].

Linkage and liaison

Linkage is when the final consonant of a word is run into the initial vowel (or **h**) of the following one. Liaison is similar to linkage but involves the pronunciation of an otherwise silent final consonant. In both cases, the aim is to make sentences flow smoothly and euphonically. In the first 28 lessons of this course, we show these links using an undertie .

The basic rules are simple:

– The final **n** on the masculine indefinite article **un** is sounded if the following word starts with a vowel: **un**  **ami** [ahnnamee].

– The final **s** on the plural definite articles **ils** and **elles** becomes a [z]: **elles**  **achètent** [elzashett]. The same applies to the pronouns **nous** and **vous**: **nous**  **avons** [noozavohⁿ], **vous**  **allez** [voozalay].

- The final **s** on a plural adjective is liaised with its noun: **grands enfants** [grœhⁿdzœhⁿfœhⁿ].
- A final **t** or **d** is liaised, both being pronounced [t]: **petit ami**, **grand artiste** [puhteetamee, grœhⁿtahrteest].
- The same rule applies to a final **x**: **beaux arts** [bohzhahr].
- The half-vowel **h** at the beginning of a word is silent, but there is a distinction between **h muet** (silent h) and **h aspiré** (aspirated h). Most words beginning with **h** are of the first type and require elision and liaison. For example, in **un hôpital**, *a hospital*, the **n** and **o** are run together [ahnopœetal]; with the definite article **le**, the final **e** is elided **l'hôpital** [lopeetal]. These rules do not apply to words beginning with an **h aspiré**, so **un havre** (*a port, haven*) and the city **Le Havre** are pronounced [ahⁿ / ahvr] and [luh / ahvr], with a slight break, indicated here by /, between the article and the first vowel of the word. Despite its name, the “aspirated” **h** is not pronounced: **l'heure** [luhr], *the hour, time*.

Liaison is not permitted in some cases:

- with the conjunction **et**: **un café et un thé**: [ahⁿ kafay ay ahⁿ tay]
- between a singular noun and the following word: **une idée intéressante**
- with an **h aspiré** (see above)
- with proper names: **Robert est sympa**.

Stress

French is a syllable-timed language, meaning that all the syllables in a word or sentence are given more or less the same importance. As a result, vowel sounds are not reduced or weakened. By contrast, English is a stress-timed language: syllables are emphasised at regular intervals and those that are unstressed are pronounced less clearly. For example, *comfortable* is usually pronounced [kumfɛbel], (three syllables are pronounced instead of four, while the “o” in the second syllable and the “a” in the third have the same sound). By contrast, the French equivalent, **confortable**, marks all four of its syllables and the vowel sounds are clear: [kohⁿfortahbl].

As a rule, the last syllable of a French word is accentuated slightly more than the others, but not at all to the same degree as English.

Although short vowels may be “squeezed” by the syllable stress in a sentence, the sounds are still quite clear. To achieve the proper rhythm, remember that the syllables are approximately the same length and are pronounced at regular intervals.

Punctuation

There are several differences in punctuation between French and English. Here are the most noticeable ones.

– French leaves a space before “strong” punctuation signs such as *the question mark (le point d’interrogation)*, *the exclamation mark (le point d’exclamation)*, as well as *the colon (le deux-points)* and *the semi-colon (le point-virgule)*:

Quel est votre nom ? *What’s your name?*

Attendez-moi ! *Wait for me!*

Ne sortez pas : il pleut. *Don’t go out: it’s raining.*

Ma voiture est en panne ; je vais prendre le métro. *My car has broken down; I’ll take the metro.*

– Initial capital letters are not used for days of the week (**lundi** *Monday*) or for months (**janvier** *January*). In book or movie titles, only the first word is capitalised: **Certains l’aiment chaud** *Some Like It Hot*.

– Numbers: Decimal points are written as commas: **3,8 %** (note the space before the percentage sign); millions (**1 000 000**) and thousands (**1 000**) are separated by spaces, not commas.

– Clauses or phrases set off by a long (“em”) dash take a comma after the second dash: **J’ai vu un bon film – Le Jour se lève –, à la télé** *I saw a good movie – Daybreak – on TV*.

– Quote marks are usually written as double chevrons with a space either side: « **Bonjour** ». In this book, however, we have used conventional marks in order to save space.

There are several other, subtle differences but they are not relevant to the material you will be studying.

That’s enough theory for the time being. It’s time to start learning French. Ready? **On y va !** (*We’re on our way*).

Before starting out, please be sure to read the introduction and pronunciation guide – even if you already studied French before. This will help you understand how the Assimil method works.

1

Première leçon [pruhm-yair luhsuhⁿ]



Comment allez-vous ?

1 – Bonjour ¹ Jeanne, comment_allez-vous ² ?

2 – Bien, et vous ?

3 – Ça va ³ très bien, merci.

4 – Je vous présente ⁴ ma fille, Chloé.

5 – Bonjour, Chloé. Comment ça va ⁵ ?



Pronunciation

kohmœhⁿ-talay voo 1 bohⁿzhoor zhœhⁿ, kohmœhⁿ-talay voo 2 byahⁿ ay voo 3 sahvah tray byahⁿ mairsee 4 zhuh voo prayzœhⁿt ma feeyy kloh-ay 5 bohⁿzhoor kloh-ay kohmœhⁿ sahvah



Pronunciation notes

(1) In most French words, the final consonant is silent. For example, **vous** sounds like [voo]. And **comment** is generally pronounced [kohmœhⁿ] – as in line 5. But if the following word starts with a vowel, then the normally silent final consonant of the first word is pronounced and “linked” to the second word: **comment_allez**: [kohmœhⁿ-talay]. This link is called a liaison. Listen to the difference in the pronunciation of **comment** in sentences 1 and 5. We indicate the liaison with an undertie _ between the two words.



Notes

1 **bonjour** literally means *good (bon) day (jour)*. It can be used as the equivalent of *good morning* but also as a formal way of saying *hello* throughout the day until around 6 pm.

1 • **un** [ahⁿ]

In the English translation of the dialogues, we use parentheses [] to indicate words that are necessary in English but omitted in French, while italicised words in brackets () give a literal word-for-word translation to help you understand the mechanics of the language.

First lesson

How are you?

- 1 – Hello Jeanne, how are you (*how go-you*)?
- 2 – Well, and you?
- 3 – (*It goes*) Very well, thanks.
- 4 Let me introduce (*I present you*) my daughter, Chloé.
- 5 – Hello, Chloé. How are you (*it goes*)?



- 2 **allez** comes from the irregular verb **aller**, *to go*, the verb used to enquire about someone's health or well-being (instead of *to be* in English: *How are you?*). **Allez** is the form used with the formal address for *you* (**vous**) when speaking to people other than close friends or family.
- 3 **va** is the third-person singular (*he/she/it*) of **aller**.
- 4 **présenter** means *to present* but, in this context, *to introduce*. **Je vous présente** is the equivalent of *May I introduce / I would like to introduce*, etc.
- 5 **Comment ça va ?** *How are you doing?* is equivalent to **Comment allez-vous ?**, but slightly more familiar. Here, **Jeanne** (the female equivalent of the masculine forename **Jean**) is talking to her friend's daughter, so she uses a less formal phrase.

 Exercice 1 – Traduisez

Exercise 1 – Translate

- 1 Bonjour, comment allez-vous ?
- 2 Ça va très bien.
- 3 Comment ça va, Jean ?
- 4 Je vous présente ma fille.
- 5 Chloé va très bien.

Exercice 2 – Complétez

Exercise 2 – Fill in the missing words

(Each dot represents a character, which can be a letter, an apostrophe, a hyphen, etc.)

- 1 How are you?
..... allez-vous ?
- 2 Very well, thank you.
Ça .. très bien,
- 3 Let me introduce Jeanne and Chloé.
Je vous Jeanne .. Chloé.
- 4 Well, and you?
.... et vous ?
- 5 My first lesson.
Ma leçon.

2

Deuxième leçon [duhz-yem luhsuhⁿ]



Le café

1 – Monsieur, madame, vous désirez ? ¹



Pronunciation

luh kafay 1 muhsyuh madam voo dayzeeray

3 • trois [trwah]

Answers to Exercise 1

① Hello, how are you? ② I'm very well. ③ How are you, Jean? ④ Let me introduce my daughter. ⑤ Chloé is very well.

Answers to Exercise 2

① Comment – ② – va – merci ③ – présente – et – ④ Bien – ⑤ – première –

*French has two forms of address: formal and familiar. We'll start by learning the honorific, or formal, mode, marked by the pronoun **vous**, because this is the one you are most likely to encounter when visiting France and interacting with people you don't know. (In other French-speaking countries, such as Canada, the informal address, marked by **tu**, is used more frequently.) Which form to use in which circumstances is a much debated issue, but we've adopted the rule of thumb that **tu** is strictly for family and friends.*

Congratulations! In a short space of time, and without too much effort, you've learned some important –and useful– words and phrases. Remember that the best way to make progress is to learn a little every day. That's the secret of the Assimil method!

2

Second lesson

The café

1 – Sir, Madam, [what] would you like (*you desire*)?

Note

- 1 This is the easiest way to ask a question in French: use the affirmative (**vous désirez**, *you want*) but with a rising intonation at the end of the sentence.

Cinquantième leçon



Je m'ennuie ¹...

- 1 – Que faites-vous dans la vie ?
- 2 – Je m'ennuie. Tous les jours, sans exception, je fais exactement la même chose.
- 3 Je me réveille ¹ à la même heure et je me connecte ¹ à Internet pour lire les messages dans ma boîte de réception.
- 4 Si j'ai vraiment envie, j'écoute les informations à la radio ² – je me méfie ³ des journaux télévisés
- 5 car je trouve qu'ils se trompent constamment et, de toute façon, les infos ⁴ me ⁵ dépriment.
- 6 Moins on les écoute, plus on est tranquille.



Pronunciation

From now on, we will provide transcriptions only for words that are particularly difficult to pronounce or that resemble English words and could therefore be mispronounced.

zhuhmæhⁿnwee **2** ... sœhⁿzeksepsyohⁿ ... **3** ... rayvayy **4** ... layzahⁿformahssyohⁿ ... rahdyo ... **5** ... ahⁿfoh ... **6** ... trœhⁿkeel

Pronunciation notes

(6) **tranquille**: Despite the seemingly feminine ending (-lle), the adjective **tranquille** is masculine, so the last syllable is pronounced [-eel].



Notes

- 1** This lesson looks at pronominal verbs and, more specifically, reflexive verbs, where the subject is the person or thing performing the action. Indicated by **se** (or **s'** in the infinitive: **s'ennuyer**, for example), these verbs always take reflexive pronouns in French, though not necessarily in English. Thus the transitive verb **ennuyer quelqu'un**, *to bore someone*, requires a pronoun in the reflexive form: **je m'ennuie**, which translates as *I am bored* ("I bore myself") or, in some contexts, *I get bored*. Likewise, **Je connecte mon ordinateur à mon téléphone**, *I'm connecting my com-*

Fiftieth lesson

I get bored... (*I me bore*)

- 1 – What do you do for a living (*in life*)?
- 2 – I get bored. Every day, without exception I do exactly the same thing.
- 3 I wake up at the same time and I log on (*connect myself*) to [the] internet to read the messages in my inbox (*box of receipt*).
- 4 If I really want to (*have envy*), I listen to the news on the radio – I'm wary of TV news broadcasts
- 5 because I find that they constantly get things wrong (*mistake themselves*) and, in any case, the news depresses me.
- 6 [the] less you listen to it, [the] calmer you feel.

puter to my phone, requires a pronoun if the subject and object are the same person: **Je me connecte à Internet**, *I'm connecting to the internet*.

- 2 à with the definite article (**au** with a masculine noun) translates *on* in the case of communications media such as the TV, radio or phone: **à la radio**, **à la télévision**, **au téléphone**. Be careful not to use **sur**.
- 3 **se méfier (de)** means *to mistrust* or *be suspicious of*. (It is the negative form of **se fier à**, *to trust*). **Elle se méfie des informations qu'elle lit en ligne**, *She mistrusts the news that she reads online*. (Remember: **de** becomes **des** because **informations** is plural). The imperative **Méfiez-vous !** is commonly used as a warning – **Méfiez-vous du chien !**, *Beware of the dog* – and in certain proverbs: **Il faut se méfier de l'eau qui dort** ("You need to be wary of water that sleeps"), i.e. *Still waters run deep*.
- 4 Here is another apocope (lesson 17 note 7): **les informations**, *the news*, is shortened in everyday speech to **les infos**.
- 5 **me** is one of the reflexive pronouns, along with **te**, **se** (the same as the infinitive), **nous** and **vous**. But it is also a direct object pronoun (lesson 24 note 6). For example, **Je me réveille à midi**, *I wake up at noon*, but **Le bruit me réveille toutes les nuits**, *The noise wakes me every night*.

- 7 De temps à autre, je lis un magazine sur ma tablette, mais je le finis en ⁶ cinq minutes.
- 8 Au bout d'un quart d'heure, je me lève ⁷ très lentement – je ne me dépêche pas –
- 9 puis je vais dans la salle de bains, où je me rase, me lave et me brosse ⁷ les dents.
- 10 Ensuite je m'habille ⁷ et me prépare à partir au travail, en centre-ville.
- 11 J'y vais en ⁶ voiture, jamais en ⁶ bus ou en ⁶ métro, et j'y suis en vingt minutes.
- 12 En arrivant ⁸, je m'installe dans mon bureau et ferme la porte à clé.
- 13 Je fais semblant ⁹ de travailler, mais j'essaie surtout de ne pas m'endormir.
- 14 Le travail, c'est dur, vous savez. Je me demande ¹⁰ si je suis fait pour ça.
- 15 C'est très stressant de ne rien faire. Je dois me détendre autant que possible.
- 16 Mon médecin m'a conseillé de ne pas m'énerver et de me reposer quand je peux.

 7 ... *tœhⁿzah-ohtr* ... 9 ... *raz* ... *lav* 10 ... *mabeey* ... 13 ... *sœhⁿblœhⁿ* 15 ... *ohtœhⁿ* ... 16 ... *kohⁿsayyay*

Notes

- 6 **en**, as we know, can be both an adverbial pronoun (lesson 31 note 2) and a preposition meaning *on*, *in*, *to*, etc. Note how it is used in this lesson, and how it contrasts with **dans** (lines 3 and 12). In particular, **en** is used with modes of transport –**en bus**, **en voiture**, etc.– but not for walking: **aller à pied** (lesson 25 line 10). We'll look at **en** vs. **dans** in greater detail in the next revision lesson.

- 7 From time to time (*time to other*), I read a magazine on my tablet, but I finish it in five minutes.
- 8 After (*at the end of*) half an hour, I get up (*raise myself*) very slowly – I don't hurry (*myself*) –
- 9 then I go into the bathroom, where I shave (*myself*), wash (*myself*), and brush (*brush myself the*) my teeth.
- 10 Then I get dressed and prepare to leave for work, in the town centre.
- 11 I go by (*in*) car, never by (*in*) bus or by (*in*) metro, and I'm there in twenty minutes.
- 12 When I arrive (*on arriving*), I settle (*install myself*) in my office and lock the door.
- 13 I pretend (*make semblance*) to work, but I try above all not to fall asleep.
- 14 Work is very hard, you know. I wonder (*ask myself*) whether I'm made for it.
- 15 It's very stressful doing nothing. I must relax as much as possible.
- 16 My doctor advised me not to get annoyed (*annoy myself*) and to rest (*repose myself*) when I can.

- 7 Many verbs that are reflexive in French but not in English concern everyday actions such as *getting up* (**se lever**), *shaving* (**se raser**), *dress-ing* (**s'habiller**), *brushing one's teeth* (**se brosser les dents**), but also *taking a shower* (**se doucher**), *applying make-up* (**se maquiller**) and *brushing one's hair* (**se brosser les cheveux**).
- 8 See lesson 42 section 1.1.
- 9 The noun **semblant**, the origin of *semblance*, is commonly used in the expression **faire semblant (de)**, to *pretend* or *act as if*: **Mon enfant fait semblant de ne pas m'entendre quand je dis non**, *My child pretends not to hear me when I say no*.
- 10 **demander (à)**, to *ask*, is used in the pronominal form, **se demander**, to mean to *wonder* ("to ask oneself"): **Je me demande ce qu'il faut faire**, *I wonder what to do*. The verb is rarely used in the negative.

17 – Mais vous vous amusez quand même un peu ?
En fait, quel métier faites-vous ?

18 – Je suis Président-directeur général d'une des entreprises de mon père.

19 – Ça ne m'étonne pas ! " □



18 ... prayzeedœhⁿ ... **19** ... mayton ...

Note

11 Note that the English idiom *I don't wonder* means *I'm not surprised* and is translated with the verb **s'étonner** (the root of *to astonish*): **Ça ne m'étonne pas**, *That doesn't surprise me*.



Exercice 1 – Traduisez

1 Quand je me lève, je me douche, ensuite je me maquille, et enfin je me brosse les cheveux. **2** Plus on écoute les infos, moins on est tranquille. – Et ça t'étonne ? **3** Je sais que le travail est un peu stressant, mais détendez-vous ! **4** Ils s'ennuient, car ils font la même chose tous les jours et toutes les semaines. **5** Cette journaliste se trompe de temps à autre, mais ses articles sont toujours intéressants.

Exercice 2 – Complétez

1 He wakes up very early and logs on immediately to his inbox.
Il très tôt et tout de suite . ..
..... de réception.

2 Are you going by metro or by car? – I'm going [there] on foot.
..... .. tu . vas ? – ... vais
.....

3 When he arrives, he goes into his office, closes the door and pretends to work.
.., il va son bureau, ferme la porte et
.....

- 17 – But you enjoy yourself a little anyway? In fact, what job do you do?
 18 – I'm Chairman and Managing Director of one of my father's companies.
 19 – That doesn't surprise me.



Answers to Exercise 1

① When I get up, I shower, then I put on my makeup and, lastly, I brush my hair. ② The more you listen to the news, the less easy you feel. – And that surprises you? ③ I know the work is a bit stressful, but relax! ④ They're bored because they do the same thing, every day and every week. ⑤ That journalist gets things wrong from time to time, but her articles are always interesting.

- ④ Guy doesn't get worked up. He rests when he can, and he falls asleep easily in the evening.
 Guy Il quand il peut, et il
 facilement le soir.
- ⑤ They're pretending to be bored. Still waters run deep!
 Ils de Il faut de
 !

Answers to Exercise 2

① –se réveille – se connecte – à sa boîte – ② Est-ce que – y – en métro ou en voiture ? J'y – à pied ③ En arrivant – dans – fait semblant de travailler ④ – ne s'énerve pas – se repose – s'endort – ⑤ – font semblant – s'ennuyer – se méfier – l'eau qui dort

Exercice 2 – Complétez

- ① When we have taken our decision, we will keep you posted.
Quand nous notre décision,
.....
- ② We know each of our products down to the last detail, which gives an advantage over our competitors.
Nous connaissons de nos produits dans ..
....., ce qui nous donne un avantage ...
..... nos concurrents.
- ③ We design software and digital solutions, both my husband and I.
Nous et des solutions
....., mon mari
- ④ Either you love IT or you hate it: I have been telling you that for years.
.. vous aimez vous la détestez : ..
.... des années !
- ⑤ Will you have finished the paint work before this evening? I hope there will be no more delays.
Est-ce que les travaux de peinture
avant ce soir ? J'espère

100

Centième leçon



La langue française

- 1 Nous voici à la fin du livre, mais pas à la fin du voyage.
- 2 Pour assurer votre réussite, vous devez continuer à lire, parler, écouter et écrire le plus possible.

Answers to Exercise 2

① – aurons pris – nous vous tiendrons au courant ② – chacun – les moindres détails – par rapport à – ③ – concevons des logiciels – numériques, aussi bien – que moi ④ Ou – l’informatique ou – ça fait – que je vous le dis ⑤ – vous aurez terminé – qu’il n’y aura plus de retard

*Much of the vocabulary connected with advanced technology is imported directly from English. In information technology, however, French has succeeded in coining native words, such as **un ordinateur** and **haut débit** (“high flow,” broadband), that have taken root. But some of these terms do not always have a one-on-one equivalent. For example, **un logiciel** is a software program or package, whereas the uncountable English noun “software” would usually be rendered by a plural. She designs software, **Elle conçoit des logiciels**. Another example is **l’informatique** (see note 7). As always, it is the context that will dictate not just the term but its grammatical form.*

Productive phase: 50th lesson

100

One-hundredth lesson

The French language

- 1 Here we are at the end of the book, but not at the end of the journey.
- 2 To ensure your success, you must continue to read, speak, listen and write as much as possible.

- 3 À propos de voyages, vous pouvez désormais profiter de vos connaissances en faisant un tour du monde francophone ¹.
- 4 Vous serez le bienvenu ² non seulement en Suisse, en Belgique et au Luxembourg mais partout où l'on parle le français.
- 5 Bien sûr, vous trouverez des différences d'accent et de vocabulaire relatif à des spécificités culturelles.
- 6 Au Canada, par exemple, vous pourrez faire vos emplettes chez un dépanneur, manger un chien-chaud ou encore conduire votre char ³.
- 7 En Afrique francophone, "un alphabète" ⁴ est une personne qui sait lire et écrire

Notes

- 1 The suffix **-phone** can be used to form nouns and adjectives relating to speakers of particular languages. Thus the noun **un francophone** is a *French-speaker*, and the adjective means *French-speaking*: **un pays francophone**, a country where French is spoken. **La Francophonie** is the usual title of an organisation promoting the French language internationally. For more information, visit www.francophonie.org.
- 2 **bienvenu** ("well come") is an adjective: **un accord bienvenu**, a *welcome agreement*. As such, when used in greetings, it agrees in number and gender **Vous êtes le bienvenu** and **Soyez la bienvenue**. But in the expression **souhaiter la bienvenue**, it is a noun and always takes a final "e": **Je vais leur souhaiter la bienvenue**, *I'm going to wish them the welcome*. At the beginning of a sentence, spoken as a greeting, we always use **bienvenue** alone: **Bienvenue dans notre nouvel appartement**, *Welcome to our new flat* (see lesson 6). This may all seem a little complicated, but the word—however spelled—is instantly understandable.
- 3 Canadian French has a distinctive accent and vocabulary. For example, **un dépanneur**, meaning a *repairman* or *mechanic* in France, is a

- 3 Speaking of travel, you can now take advantage of what you've learned by going on a trip around the French-speaking world.
- 4 You will be welcome not only in Switzerland, Belgium and Luxembourg but everywhere where French is spoken.
- 5 Of course, you will find differences in accent and vocabulary relating to specific cultural features (*specificities*).
- 6 In Canada, for example, you will be able to do your shopping at a convenience store, eat a hot dog or drive your car.
- 7 In French-speaking Africa, a “literate person” is one who can read and write.



convenience store. Some words come from old French (**un char**, a *car*, derives from the word for a *cart*), while others are imported from America and then –importantly– translated: **un chien-chaud**, a *hot dog*!

- 4 French is an official language in nearly 30 countries on the African continent. Many words and expressions from these regions find their way into “official” French via mainstream dictionaries. Thus **un alphabète**, a *literate person*, is a logical back-formation from **analphabète**, *illiterate*; **un taxieur** is a local equivalent to **un chauffeur de taxi** while **une essencerie** (from *l'essence*, lesson 66) is a *petrol station* (rather than **une station-service**). Though not used in a formal register, these idioms nevertheless show that French is a living language.

- 8 et “un taxieur”⁴ vous conduira à votre destination – mais pas avant d’avoir fait le plein à une “essencerie”⁴.
- 9 Des mots de diverses origines ont toujours enrichi notre vocabulaire : de “arobase”⁵ à “vasistas”⁶
- 10 en passant par “le caoutchouc”, “le goudron” ou encore “le paquebot”⁶
- 11 le français est riche, varié et très accueillant.
- 12 C’est aussi une langue précise et nuancée, forte de⁷ son héritage de langue diplomatique :
- 13 “Ce qui n’est pas clair n’est pas français”, disait un grand auteur.
- 14 Et puis il y a la Francophonie¹, un “pays sans frontières” où des centaines de millions de gens partagent leur passion pour cette belle langue.
- 15 Maintenant, vous aussi, vous faites partie de cette communauté francophone,
- 16 composée de femmes et d’hommes qui peuvent se permettre de déclarer :
- 17 “Ma patrie, c’est la langue française !” □



Pronunciation

9 ... *arobaz* ... 10 ... *kaootshoo* ... *pakboh*



Notes

- 5 Derived from an Arabic word, **une arobase** is the official term for the *At symbol*, used in email addresses. When spelling out an address, however, some French speakers say *at* rather than **arobase**. We insist on the latter (listen to the first sentence of the first exercise).
- 6 **un vasistas** is a *fanlight* or *small window*. The word comes from the German interrogative **Was ist das?**, *What is it?*, the gruff greeting supposedly shouted at thirsty French visitors knocking at the spy window

- 8 and “a taxi driver” will drive you to your destination –but not before filling up at a “gas station.”
- 9 Words from various origins have always enriched our vocabulary: from the “At” symbol to “fanlight”
- 10 along with (*passing by*) “rubber,” “tar” or “[ocean] liner”
- 11 French is rich, varied and very welcoming.
- 12 It is also a precise and nuanced language, with a strong diplomatic heritage:
- 13 “What is not clear cannot be French,” said a great author.
- 14 And then there is La Francophonie, a “country without borders” where hundreds of millions of people share their passion for this beautiful language.
- 15 Now, you too are part of this French-speaking community,
- 16 made up (*composed*) of women and men who can afford (*allow themselves*) to declare:
- 17 “My homeland is the French language!”

of local taverns. Another “gallicised” loan word, this time from English, is **un paquebot**, *an ocean liner*, derived from the old term *a packet boat*. These, and dozens of other borrowings, show how the French vocabulary has been enriched through interactions with other languages and cultures over the centuries.

- 7 The adjectival phrase **fort(e) de** is widely used –usually at the beginning of a sentence– in descriptive writing to emphasise a strength, quality or advantage. **Fort de son expérience, il a tout organisé**, *Drawing on a wealth of experience, he organised everything*. The actual translation will depend as always on the context because, as with many idiomatic constructions, there is no single translation.

 Exercice 1 – Traduisez

- ① Envoyez-moi le document tout à l'heure par mail à l'adresse suivante : jean@assimil.fr. ② Forte de sa réussite en France, la société vise maintenant des marchés dans les pays francophones. ③ Tu peux désormais passer tes appels et partager tes fichiers sans utiliser un logiciel spécifique. ④ Voici une étude qui présente la spécificité de notre langue et notre culture. ⑤ Toi aussi, tu devrais profiter des vacances pour faire un tour au Canada.

Exercice 2 – Complétez

- ① This product is ideal for getting rid of tar, rubber and paint from furniture and clothes.
 est idéal pour éliminer, ..
, et la peinture des et des
- ② An illiterate is a person who does not know how to read or to write.
 Un est une personne

- ③ Welcome to my place. It's nice of you to welcome us in person.
 Vous chez moi ! C'est gentil de nous
 en personne.
- ④ This taxi driver will drive you to your destination in Paris but first he has to fill up at a petrol station.
 Ce te conduira à à Paris
 mais d'abord il doit à
- ⑤ Our homeland is the French language, for anything that is not clear cannot be French.
 , c'est, car

Answers to Exercise 1

① Send me the document later by email at the following address: jean@assimil.fr. ② Buoyed by its success in France, the company is now targeting markets in French-speaking countries. ③ From now on you can make calls and share files without using a specific software program. ④ Here is a study that presents the specific features of our language and our culture. ⑤ You too, you should take advantage of the holidays to do a tour of Canada.

Answers to Exercise 2

① – Ce produit – le goudron, le caoutchouc – meubles – vêtements
 ② – analphabète – qui ne sait ni lire ni écrire ③ – êtes le bienvenu – souhaiter la bienvenue – ④ – chauffeur de taxi – ta destination – faire le plein – la station-service ⑤ – Notre patrie – la langue française – ce qui n'est pas clair n'est pas français



Productive phase: 51st lesson

*We hope you have enjoyed the course –but it isn't over yet! You still have to complete the **Productive Phase**, from lesson 52 through to lesson 100. And, of course, you should take every opportunity to read, listen to and practise French. As we said before, **Bonne continuation!***

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