

Exploring Considerations for Program Planning in FSL



The Ontario Curriculum, French as a Second Language, Grades 9 – 12, Core French, Extended French, and French Immersion, (revised), 2014

Grades 9 to 12: Core French, Extended French, and French Immersion

The revised curriculum describes fifteen considerations for FSL program planning and explains how the revised FSL curriculum aligns and connects with other Ontario Ministry of Education and Training policies and initiatives. See pages 34 to 55 in the revised curriculum for more information.

PLANNING FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

Learning for All: A Guide to Effective Assessment and Instruction for All Students, Kindergarten to Grade 12 (Draft, 2011) describes a set of beliefs, based in research that should guide program planning for students with special education needs in all disciplines (page 38).

Accommodations change a student's instruction, environment and / or assessment, without making changes to the curriculum expectations. Using **differentiated instruction**, FSL teachers **accommodate** many students' individual needs: use of a storyboard with pictures, symbols, key vocabulary words, to support recounting a story; sentence starters or templates to focus student writing; access to anchor charts for interviews and spontaneous conversation activities; choice of activities / format for presentations (e.g. student uses technology to pre-record individual /group presentations); presentation to a small group/a partner rather than an entire class; use of headphones to improve audio focus and clarity for listening comprehension; additional time.

Modifications to curriculum expectations are only made for those individual students when it is clearly defined in the student's IEP. Modified expectations for individual students must reflect "specific, realistic, observable, and measurable goals, and must describe the specific knowledge and/or skills that the student can demonstrate independently, given the appropriate assessment accommodations" (page 40). Examples of modifications include the use of voice to text technology for student writing; text to speech technology for reading; oral examinations/provision of a scribe, reduced expectations.

Program Considerations for English Language Learners

English language learners [...] bring a rich diversity of background knowledge and experience to the classroom. These students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds not only support their learning [...] but also become a cultural asset in the classroom community. (page 41)

ELL students may require additional instructional scaffolding to meet curriculum expectations. Appropriate adaptations include:

- modification of some or all of the subject expectations so that they are challenging yet attainable
- use of a variety of instructional strategies (e.g. visual cues, graphic organizers, scaffolding, pre-teaching of key vocabulary)
- use of a variety of learning resources (e.g. audio support for reading; annotated versions of readers; graphic readers)
- use of assessment accommodations (e.g. extra time; graphic supports; more audio repetitions)

Environmental Education

Acting Today, Shaping Tomorrow: A Policy Framework for Environmental Education in Ontario Schools, 2009 promotes environmental responsibility at all levels of the Ontario education system. Its three goals are:

- to promote learning about environmental issues and solutions
- to engage students in practising and promoting environmental stewardship in the school and in the community
- to stress the importance of having organizations and individuals within the education system provide leadership by implementing and promoting responsible environmental practices.

Specific FSL teacher prompts provide examples for integrating environmental education considerations (page 22).

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

To feel valued and connected students need to be involved in healthy relationships with their peers, teachers, and other members of the school community. The action-oriented approach to language learning emphasizes purposeful social interaction. “[Teachers] can help students develop and practise the skills they need for building healthy relationships by giving them opportunities to apply critical-thinking and problem-solving strategies and to address issues through group discussions, role play, case study analysis, and other means” (page 45). Respectful, healthy relationships based on caring, empathy, trust and dignity are also supported by FSL’s overall expectation of **Intercultural Understanding**.

Equity and Inclusive Education

In an inclusive education system, diversity is valued, and all members of the school community feel safe, comfortable, and accepted. Every student is supported and inspired to succeed in a culture of high expectations for learning.

In the revised FSL curriculum, specific expectations start with the students’ personal and familiar environments (self, family, classroom and peers) and explore their roles in their community, region, province, Canada and the world. The overall expectation – **Intercultural understanding** – found in each strand, provides opportunities for exploring and celebrating the backgrounds and contributions of women and men of diverse communities, including those of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples (page 46).

Financial Literacy

Financial Literacy education can provide the preparation students need to make informed decisions and choices in a complex and fast-changing financial world. In addition to learning about saving, spending, borrowing, and investing, students need to:

- develop broader skills in problem-solving, inquiry, decision making, critical thinking, and critical literacy in order to analyse and manage financial risk;
- develop an understanding of the effects of world economic forces on the local, national and international levels which impact their personal economic and financial circumstances;
- understand the social, environmental and ethical implications of their own choices as consumers. (page 47)

In the FSL classroom, personal financial activities could include role play of interactions within the local community (e.g. buying and selling goods; making currency transactions with various currencies used by French-speaking countries prior to travelling; planning a budget for their summer vacation, post-secondary education or career training; calculating the cost of holiday or birthday gifts; sharing the proportional or average costs of an activity or purchase with friends).

LITERACY, INQUIRY SKILLS, AND NUMERACY

In order to be successful, Lifelong Learners, students must develop skills in the following three areas: thinking, expression and reflection. Oral communications skills are fundamental to the development of FSL literacy and are essential for thinking and learning.

Critical thinking is the process of thinking about ideas or situations in order to understand them fully, identify their implications, make a judgement and/or guide decision making.

Critical literacy involves looking beyond the literal meaning of a text to determine what is present and what is missing, in order to analyse and evaluate the text’s complete meaning and the author’s intent. For more information on **Literacy strategies**, refer to the Fact Sheet “**Language Learning Strategies**”.

Metacognition supports students’ critical thinking through reflection on their own thought processes. It is found in each of the four FSL strands. FSL teachers encourage students to acquire and use metacognitive skills to promote critical thinking and to empower students to monitor their own learning and develop self-advocacy skills.

Inquiry Skills in FSL are developed when students “are required to reflect on what they have learned; how they have come to know what they have learned and what other resources they may need to consult to reach an informed conclusion.

FSL builds on, reinforces and enhances **Numeracy**, particularly in areas involving problem solving, data management, and graphing. Examples include representation of survey results, financial transactions or plans; and the interpretation and use of diagrams, charts, and tables (page 50).

Additional Considerations for Program Planning

- The Role of the School Library
- The Role of Information and Communication Technology
- The Ontario Skills Passport
- Education and Career/Life Planning
- Cooperative Education and Experiential Learning
- Planning Program Pathways and Specialist High Skills Major
- Health and Safety