



FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAMS: MATH AND ENGLISH



CPF AND YOU

Canadian Parents for French (CPF) was founded in 1977 by mainly English-speaking parents from across the country. Now, as then, CPF values the French language as an integral part of Canada and is dedicated to creating, supporting and promoting opportunities for young people to learn and use French as a second language.

CPF PROVIDES INFORMATION AND RESOURCES FOR PARENTS TO SUPPORT THEIR CHILDREN'S FRENCH-SECOND-LANGUAGE EDUCATION:

- CPF operates websites that provide answers to frequently asked questions on FSL education.
- CPF holds skills-building workshops and training sessions for volunteers and parents.
- CPF compiles lists of French-language computer software, educational games and Internet sites.
- CPF publishes an annual report, *The State of French-Second-Language Education in Canada*.
- CPF publishes informative national and provincial/territorial newsletters for members.

CPF PROVIDES ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH TO SUPPORT THEIR FRENCH-SECOND-LANGUAGE EDUCATION:

- CPF sponsors summer camps, special programs, contests and activities for French-second-language students across communities, provinces and territories
- CPF provides information on where to find a broad range of support materials – in print and electronic formats – for use in the home and at school.
- CPF hosts a web-based *Coin des jeunes* (Children's Corner) – a virtual treasure chest of information, games and activities for children and teens.
- CPF works with the Society for Educational Visits and Exchanges in Canada (SEVEC) and others to promote student exchanges between communities.

This project has been made possible due to funding by the Language Acquisition Development Program of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

CONTACT CANADIAN PARENTS FOR FRENCH

CPF BRITISH COLUMBIA & YUKON

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Website: www.cpf.bc.ca

CPF ALBERTA

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Website: www.cpfalta.ab.ca

CPF NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

Tel: (867) 669-7247

CPF SASKATCHEWAN

Tel: (306) 244-6151
Website: www.cpfask.com

CPF MANITOBA

Tel: (204) 222-6537
Website: www.cpfmb.com

CPF ONTARIO

Tel: (905) 366-1012
Website: www.cfont.on.ca

CPF QUEBEC

Tel: (514) 487-1414
Website: www.cpf.qc.ca

CPF NEW BRUNSWICK

Tel: (506) 432-6584
Website: www.cpfnb.com

CPF NOVA SCOTIA

Tel: (902) 453-2048
Website: cpfns.ednet.ns.ca

CPF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Tel: (902) 368-7240
Website: www.cpfpei.pe.ca

CPF NEWFOUNDLAND/ LABRADOR

Tel: (709) 579-1776
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FRENCH IMMERSION PROGRAMS Math and English-Language Skills



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Proud of Two Languages
Nos deux langues, notre fierté



MAKING CHOICES ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S EDUCATION

Parents want to make the best educational choices for their children. Many would like their children to have the advantages of learning both of Canada's official languages, but they have some questions:

- Will my child develop strong English-language skills in a French immersion program?
- Will my child be taught the same math skills as students in the regular English program?
- Will my child understand math courses taught in French?

Researchers have studied these issues since French immersion programs were introduced in the early 1970s. This pamphlet is intended to help to answer your questions about French immersion by providing some information from research studies and the results of a number of provincial student assessments. We have included references to these materials so that you can study them further. We have also posted this information on the CPF website [www.cpf.ca] and we will update it as new studies become available.



FRENCH IMMERSION STUDENTS DO WELL IN ENGLISH AND MATH

A recent review of the research on immersion programs from 1972 to 2001 concludes that "the effect of learning a second language on first-language skills has been positive in all studies done. Furthermore, the loss of instructional time in English in favour of the second language has never been shown to have negative effects on the achievement of the first language."¹

In fact, a 1991 review of student outcomes research showed that although French immersion students sometimes lag behind at Grade 3, they match and often surpass English program students' performance in English-language skills by Grade 4 or 5.

These studies also found that French immersion students met or exceeded English program students' performance in mathematics.²

Recently, a number of provinces have introduced province-wide assessments by which all elementary and secondary school students in selected grades write the same tests.

Although not all provinces reported the results of French immersion students in province-wide assessments, results from British Columbia, New Brunswick and Ontario show that students in French immersion programs demonstrate superior skills on tests of English-language skills and mathematics. We have included a few results from these assessments; the references will help you to locate these materials if you would like to read the full reports.

- In 2000, researchers in Ontario reported that at Grade 3 "the performance of immersion and non-immersion students was broadly similar. Immersion students did somewhat better on literacy tests, but differences were small." By Grade 6, however, "students in immersion clearly outperformed those in the regular program on tests in both literacy and mathematics."³
- In New Brunswick it was found that at Grade 8 "students in the Early and Intermediate French immersion

programs were considerably more successful than regular program students in a 2000 province-wide English assessment of language proficiency." Mathematics assessment results also indicated that immersion students "achieved at a significantly higher level than those in the regular program."⁴

- In 2000, province-wide student assessments in British Columbia demonstrated that at Grade 10 French immersion students do as well or better than non-immersion students in measures of English-language and math skills.⁵

REFERENCES

1. Bournot-Trites M., Tellowitz U. (2002) Report of Current Research on the Effects of Second Language Learning on First Language Literacy Skills; Atlantic Provinces Educational Foundation, Halifax NS.
2. Dubé L., MacFarlane A. (1991) Middle Immersion: Is it a Better Option Than Early or Late? Immersion Journal 14(3) p. 21-27; Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers; Ottawa ON.
3. Turnbull M., Hart D., Lapkin S. (2000) French Immersion Students' Performance on Grade 3 Provincial Tests; Potential Impacts of Program Design; Canadian Modern Language Review 58(1) p. 9-26; University of Toronto Press, Toronto ON.
4. New Brunswick Department of Education (2000); Report Card 2000, Anglophone School Districts, NB Department of Education.
5. British Columbia Ministry of Education (2000); British Columbia Foundation Skills Assessment 2000, BC Ministry of Education.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT LEARNING IN FRENCH IMMERSION

- Contact your local school or school board to find out about French immersion programs in your area.
- Contact Canadian Parents for French for answers and support as your children learn French. Our provincial Branches are listed on the last page. Ask about *Helping Your Child Become Bilingual: A Toolkit for CPF Members*.
- Check out the CPF website [www.cpf.ca] to find out about new French immersion studies as they are published.



CPF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

CPF allows one or two adults per family as voting members.

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65% of your membership fee supports the activities of your local Chapter, 25% supports CPF's work at the Branch level and 10% goes to CPF National to partially cover processing costs.

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