CARSHALTON BOYS SPORTS COLLEGE

Excellence • Character • Aspiration

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT

Vocabulary Booklet

YEAR 11

French — AQA (9-1) GCSE

Units 1–4: The Environment and Where People Live, Media/Technology/Celebrity Culture, Customs/Festivals/Celebrations, and Terminal Examination Preparation

Tier 2 & Tier 3 Vocabulary — Expected & Aspirational

Academic Year 2026 – 2027

For pupils, parents and carers

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A Note for Parents and Pupils

Welcome to your son's Year 11 French vocabulary booklet. GCSE examination year is significantly more demanding than Year 10, both in the precision of language required and in the volume of vocabulary pupils must deploy fluently across all four papers: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

AQA mark schemes credit "a range of vocabulary, including more complex language" as an explicit assessment requirement across Speaking and Writing. A pupil who can deploy structures such as relative clauses (qui, que), the conditional tense and impersonal verbs (il manque, il faut) accurately and unprompted is writing and speaking in the language the examiners are looking for. A pupil who cannot, regardless of how good their underlying understanding may be, will not access the top mark bands.

For each of the three taught units, we have set out two tiers of vocabulary. Tier 2 vocabulary is the academic and functional language used to talk about language itself (e.g. "opinion", "comparative structure", "relative clause"). Tier 3 vocabulary is the actual French — words, phrases and higher-tier structures — that a confident GCSE candidate needs at his fingertips.

Within each tier, words are marked Expected (E) — every Year 11 pupil is expected to know, spell and deploy these accurately — or Aspirational (A) — stretch language for pupils targeting grades 7–9 and the Higher tier papers.

Pupils will be tested on each section's vocabulary through weekly knowledge tests, through Work Outside the Classroom (the majority of homework this year), and through PATHS-assessed speaking, writing and mock-examination tasks, which credit accurate and ambitious use of vocabulary directly.

You do not need to speak French to help. Quizzing your son over dinner, in the car, or as a Sunday-evening fifteen-minute habit will make a measurable, lasting difference in the run-up to the terminal examinations.

How to Learn Vocabulary by Heart

Learning words and structures to long-term memory is not the same as recognising them when re-reading the booklet. The five strategies below — used in this order — will produce reliable, fluent recall under exam conditions. The challenge is doing them consistently, not finding better ones.

1. Look, Cover, Write, Check

Look at the French word, its type and its English definition. Cover them up. Write the word and its definition from memory, then write the example sentence in your own words. Uncover and check. If wrong, repeat. Effortful retrieval — not copying — is what builds memory traces.

2. The Leitner System (Spaced Practice with Flashcards)

Make flashcards (paper or digital — Quizlet or Anki) with the French word on one side and the definition and example on the other. Sort them into three boxes: Box 1 — review every day (words you don't yet know); Box 2 — review every three days (words you got right once); Box 3 — review once a week (words you got right twice in a row). When you get a Box 2 or Box 3 word wrong, it returns to Box 1.

3. Dual Coding — A Word, A Diagram, A Process Sentence

For every Tier 3 word or structure, draw a small sketch and write a sentence that uses it in a specific GCSE context. Higher-tier structures — relative clauses, the conditional, impersonal verbs — particularly reward this approach, because the visual anchors the grammar as well as the meaning.

4. Self-Quizzing Out Loud

Close the booklet. Speak the definition aloud, in your own words, in full sentences, without notes. Then check. Recognition is not the same as recall — if you can explain a term out loud to an imaginary examiner, you own it. This is the precursor to using it confidently in the Speaking exam.

5. Use the Word in Writing

A word you have used in a sentence is a word you own. After every section, write a paragraph (90–150 words, matching the GCSE Writing paper) using as many of the new terms as you can in a correct context. Bring it to your teacher — they will read it gladly and feed back. This is the single most reliable way to unlock the Aspirational terms and make them exam-ready.

A Weekly Routine That Works

- Session 1 — 15 mins. Look–Cover–Write–Check on this week's new Literacy List terms.
- Session 2 — 15 mins. Leitner-system review of all current flashcards.
- Session 3 — 15 mins. Self-quiz aloud, then dual-coding sketches of the higher-tier structures.
- Session 4 — 15 mins. Write one paragraph in French using at least six of the terms in context.

Tier Markers — Expected and Aspirational

E — Expected	A — Aspirational
Every Year 11 pupil should know, spell and use these words by the end of the relevant unit. They are the minimum entitlement for the GCSE examinations. There is no opt-out.	Stretch vocabulary and structures for pupils targeting grades 7–9 and the Higher tier papers. Deployed confidently and accurately in the Speaking and Writing exams, these terms reliably move a response into the top mark band.

Why these tiers?

All Year 11 pupils — without exception — are expected to learn the Expected vocabulary. Aspirational vocabulary is how stronger candidates distinguish themselves: structures such as relative clauses, the conditional tense and impersonal verbs are not "extra credit", they are the language of a confident, exam-ready linguist. Every AQA GCSE French paper credits accurate and ambitious use of vocabulary and structures directly.

Unit 1 — The Environment and Where People Live

Theme 3: town, region and area of interest; local and global environmental issues. The vocabulary of description, comparison and environmental concern.

Tier 2 — Academic Vocabulary

Academic and functional language — the vocabulary of talking about language itself, used across this and other units.

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
advantage / disadvantage	*noun*	A benefit / a drawback of a place, decision or situation.	*Give an advantage and a disadvantage of living in a city.*	E
opinion	*noun*	A view or judgement, ideally justified with a reason.	*Give an opinion on your local area and justify it.*	E
comparative structure	*noun*	A grammatical construction used to compare two things, e.g. plus... que.	*Use a comparative structure to compare two towns.*	E
imperative	*noun*	The command form of a verb, used to give instructions or directions.	*Tournez à gauche is an imperative giving directions.*	A
environmental issue	*noun*	A problem affecting the natural world, at a local or global scale.	*Discuss an environmental issue affecting your area.*	E
impersonal verb	*noun*	A verb that does not refer to a specific subject, often used to describe a general state.	*Il manque and il faut are impersonal verbs.*	A

Tier 3 — Subject-Specific Vocabulary

The French vocabulary of this topic, grouped by sub-topic as taught across the unit.

My Town

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
habiter	*verb*	to live (in a place)	*J'habite dans une grande ville.*	E
il y a / il n'y a pas de	*impersonal phrase*	there is/are / there isn't/aren't any	*Il y a un cinéma mais il n'y a pas de piscine.*	E
il y avait	*impersonal phrase, imperfect*	there was/were	*Dans ma ville, il y avait un grand marché.*	A
se trouver / être situé(e)	*verb phrase*	to be located, to be situated	*Ma ville se trouve près de la mer.*	E
les commodités	*noun*	the amenities, facilities	*Il y a beaucoup de commodités dans le centre-ville.*	E

Opinions on My Area

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
je trouve que	*verb phrase*	I find that, I think that	*Je trouve que ma ville est trop bruyante.*	E
propre / sale	*adjective*	clean / dirty	*Les rues sont propres dans mon quartier.*	E

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
pollué(e)	*adjective*	polluted	*L'air est pollué à cause de la circulation.*	E
la circulation	*noun*	traffic	*Il y a trop de circulation le matin.*	E
plus... que / moins... que	*comparative*	more... than / less... than	*Ma ville est plus animée que la campagne.*	A

Directions and Ideal Home

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
je voudrais vivre	*verb phrase, conditional*	I would like to live	*À l'avenir, je voudrais vivre à la campagne.*	E
si j'avais l'argent / le choix	*conditional clause*	if I had the money / the choice	*Si j'avais le choix, j'habiterais en France.*	A
tournez / prenez / allez	*imperative*	turn / take / go (commands)	*Tournez à gauche puis prenez la deuxième rue.*	E

Environmental Issues

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
un problème / une menace	*noun*	a problem / a threat	*La pollution est une menace pour l'environnement.*	E
une usine	*noun*	a factory	*L'usine pollue la rivière.*	E
le recyclage	*noun*	recycling	*Le recyclage aide à protéger la planète.*	E
protéger	*verb*	to protect	*Il faut protéger l'environnement.*	E
je m'inquiète / ça m'inquiète	*verb phrase*	I worry / that worries me	*Je m'inquiète pour l'avenir de la planète.*	E
il manque	*impersonal verb*	there is a lack of, X is missing	*Il manque des poubelles de recyclage dans ma ville.*	A
ne... plus / ne... ni... ni / ne... que	*negative structure*	no longer / neither... nor / only	*Il n'y a plus d'espaces verts dans le centre-ville.*	A

Unit 2 — Media, Technology and Celebrity Culture

Theme 2/3: internet and mobile technology use, and celebrity culture. The vocabulary of frequency, opinion and influence, extended into higher-tier structures.

Tier 2 — Academic Vocabulary

Academic and functional language — the vocabulary of talking about language itself, used across this and other units.

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
advantage / disadvantage	*noun*	A benefit / a drawback of using technology.	*Give an advantage and a disadvantage of social media.*	E
frequency	*noun*	How often something happens.	*Describe the frequency with which you use your phone.*	E
opinion	*noun*	A justified view about technology or celebrities.	*Give your opinion on celebrity culture.*	E
influence	*noun*	The effect a person or thing has on someone's behaviour or views.	*Discuss the influence of celebrities on young people.*	E
relative clause	*noun*	A clause introduced by qui, que or quand that adds detail about a noun.	*Use a relative clause to describe a celebrity's actions.*	A
conditional tense	*noun*	A verb form used to express what would happen.	*The conditional tense is a higher-tier structure in this unit.*	A

Tier 3 — Subject-Specific Vocabulary

The French vocabulary of this topic, grouped by sub-topic as taught across the unit.

The Internet and Mobile Technology

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
un gadget	*noun*	a gadget, a device	*Mon gadget préféré, c'est mon portable.*	E
utiliser	*verb*	to use	*J'utilise mon portable pour communiquer.*	E
j'ai regardé / écouté / téléchargé	*verb, perfect tense*	I watched / listened to / downloaded	*Hier, j'ai téléchargé une nouvelle application.*	E
on peut / on doit	*modal verb phrase*	one can / one must	*On peut faire beaucoup de choses avec un smartphone.*	E
ça me fait peur / ça m'inquiète	*verb phrase*	that scares me / that worries me	*Ça m'inquiète que les jeunes passent trop de temps en ligne.*	E
plus... que / moins... que / aussi... que	*comparative*	more... than / less... than / as... as	*Internet est plus utile que la télévision, à mon avis.*	A
ne... jamais	*negative*	never	*Je n'utilise jamais mon portable en classe.*	A

Life as a Celebrity

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
je l'adore / je le / la trouve	*verb phrase*	I love him/her / I find him/her/it (to be)	*Je la trouve très talentueuse et généreuse.*	E
il y a un risque de / il existe le risque de	*impersonal phrase*	there is a risk of	*Il existe le risque de perdre sa vie privée.*	A
qui	*relative pronoun*	who, which (subject)	*C'est une célébrité qui aide beaucoup de charités.*	A
le / la / les (preverbal pronoun)	*pronoun*	him/her/it/them, placed before the verb	*Je les trouve très inspirants.*	A

Celebrities' Actions and Influences (Higher Tier)

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
que / quand	*relative pronoun / conjunction*	that/which (object) / when	*C'est l'émission que je regarde le plus.*	A
je voudrais / je serais	*conditional*	I would like / I would be	*Si j'étais célèbre, je serais plus généreux.*	A

Unit 3 — Popular Culture: Customs, Festivals and Celebrations

Theme 3: festivals and celebrations in the UK and in French-speaking countries and communities, including Senegal and Morocco. Narration and comparison across tenses.

Tier 2 — Academic Vocabulary

Academic and functional language — the vocabulary of talking about language itself, used across this and other units.

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
compare	*verb*	To identify similarities and differences between festivals or traditions.	*Compare a UK festival with one from a Francophone country.*	E
tradition	*noun*	A custom or belief passed down through generations.	*Explore traditions specific to Senegal and Morocco.*	E
narrate	*verb*	To tell a sequence of past events using accurate tenses.	*Narrate how you celebrated a festival last year.*	A
register	*noun*	The level of formality of language, appropriate to audience and purpose.	*Use an appropriate register when writing about customs.*	A

Tier 3 — Subject-Specific Vocabulary

The French vocabulary of this topic, grouped by sub-topic as taught across the unit.

Celebrations

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
je célèbre / on célèbre	*verb phrase*	I celebrate / we celebrate	*On célèbre l'Aïd avec toute la famille.*	E
je suis / on est	*verb phrase*	I am / we are (referring to religion or identity)	*Je suis musulman(e) et je fête l'Aïd.*	E
on va	*verb phrase*	we go (to a place of worship or celebration)	*On va à l'église pour Noël.*	E

Customs and How We Celebrate

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
c'est le / la... de	*structure*	it is the (festival) of...	*C'est la fête de l'Indépendance au Sénégal.*	E
on mange / donne / organise / prépare	*verb phrase*	we eat / give / organise / prepare	*On prépare un couscous pour la fête.*	E
on cache / achète / s'amuse	*verb phrase*	we hide / buy / have fun	*On s'amuse bien pendant le Ramadan après le coucher du soleil.*	E

Comparing Traditions

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
on croit / voit / boit / reçoit / écrit	*verb, present tense*	we believe / see / drink / receive / write	*On reçoit des cadeaux et on écrit des cartes.*	A

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
c'était / il y avait	*imperfect tense*	it was / there was	*Quand j'étais petit, il y avait toujours une grande fête au village.*	**A**
le Sénégal / le Maroc	*proper noun*	Senegal / Morocco	*Les traditions au Sénégal et au Maroc sont fascinantes.*	**E**

Unit 4 — Revision, Exam Technique and Terminal Examination Preparation

Spring 2 and the Summer term are dedicated to systematic revision, full mock examinations and explicit exam technique across all four AQA GCSE French papers. No new topic vocabulary is introduced; instead, pupils consolidate and apply the vocabulary from Years 10 and 11 with growing fluency and accuracy.

Tier 2 — Academic Vocabulary

Academic and functional language — the vocabulary of talking about language itself, used across this and other units.

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
strategy	*noun*	A planned approach used to tackle a task or exam question.	*Apply a clear strategy for each paper: Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing.*	E
technique	*noun*	A specific skill or method used to complete a task effectively.	*Practise skimming and scanning technique for the Reading paper.*	E
retrieval	*noun*	The act of recalling information from memory without looking it up.	*Retrieval practice is the most effective way to prepare for exams.*	E
translate	*verb*	To render meaning accurately from one language into another.	*Translate the passage from French into English, retaining register.*	E
spontaneous	*adjective*	Done without preparation, in immediate response to a question.	*Practise spontaneous answers for the general conversation.*	A
mark scheme	*noun*	The document setting out how marks are awarded for an answer.	*Refer to the mark scheme's language when reviewing PATHS feedback.*	A

Tier 3 — Subject-Specific Vocabulary

The French vocabulary of this topic, grouped by sub-topic as taught across the unit.

Revision Focus Areas

Word	Type	Definition	Example	Tier
réviser	*verb*	to revise	*Je révise le vocabulaire tous les soirs.*	E
une épreuve	*noun*	an exam paper, a test	*L'épreuve d'expression orale est demain.*	E
un examen blanc	*noun*	a mock exam	*J'ai un examen blanc la semaine prochaine.*	E
améliorer	*verb*	to improve	*Je dois améliorer ma prononciation.*	E
une cible / un objectif	*noun*	a target, a goal	*Mon objectif est d'utiliser plus de temps verbaux.*	A

Appendix — Grammar Glossary and Language Reference

The following reference material underpins all three taught units and is used consistently in lessons, vocabulary tests and revision materials.

Grammar Glossary

Term	Definition	Example
subjunctive mood	a mood used to express things that are uncertain, subjective or not yet real	*wishes, doubts, feelings, recommendations*
modal verb	expresses ability or necessity	*pouvoir (to be able to)*
impersonal verb	does not refer to a specific subject, often used for weather or general states	*il faut (it is necessary to)*
comparative structure	a structure used to compare two things	*plus... que (more... than)*
opinion phrase	a phrase introducing a view	*je pense que (I think that)*
justification phrase	a phrase giving a reason	*parce que (because), puisque (since)*
time phrase	a phrase indicating when or how often	*normalement (normally)*
cognate	a word which looks similar in both languages	*musique*
question word	a word used to ask a question	*quand? (when?)*
negation	a sentence including a negative structure	*ne... pas (not), ne... jamais (never)*

Essential Verbs (High Frequency)

French	English	Example Sentence
être	to be	*Je suis grand. (I am tall.)*
avoir	to have	*J'ai un frère. (I have one brother.)*
aller	to go	*Je vais en France. (I go to France.)*
aimer / adorer	to like / to love	*J'adore les serpents. (I love snakes.)*
jouer	to play	*Je joue au foot. (I play football.)*
faire	to do / to make	*Tu fais du sport. (You do sport.)*
habiter	to live	*Elle habite à la campagne. (She lives in the countryside.)*
pouvoir	to be able to	*Tu peux aller au parc. (You can go to the park.)*
vouloir	to want	*Je veux aller au cinéma. (I want to go to the cinema.)*

Connectives & Sequencing

French	English	Example Sentence
et	and	*J'aime lire et écrire.*
mais	but	*J'aime la viande mais pas le poisson.*
parce que / car / puisque	because / for / since	*Il est fort parce qu'il étudie beaucoup.*
bien que	although	*Bien qu'il pleuve, j'irai au parc.*
cependant / par contre	however	*C'est délicieux cependant c'est assez gras.*
de plus	furthermore	*De plus, je pense qu'il est super fort.*
donc / par conséquent	therefore	*Je n'ai pas d'argent donc je ne peux pas sortir.*
puis / ensuite / après	then / later	*Je me suis habillé puis je suis sorti.*
finalement	finally	*Finalement, j'ai fini mes devoirs.*

Opinion Phrases

French	English	Example Sentence
Je pense que...	I think that...	*Je pense que c'est magnifique.*
Je crois que...	I believe that...	*Je crois que c'est ennuyant.*
À mon avis...	In my opinion...	*À mon avis, il est marrant.*
Selon moi / pour moi...	According to me...	*Selon moi ce n'est pas normal.*
Le meilleur (le mieux) est que...	The best thing is that...	*Le meilleur est que c'est relaxant.*
Le pire est que...	The worst thing is that...	*Le pire est que c'est dégoûtant.*

Intensifiers

French	English	Example Sentence
très	very	*C'est très grand.*
assez	quite	*C'est assez difficile.*
trop	too	*C'est trop dangereux.*
un peu	a little	*C'est un peu salé.*
totalement	totally	*C'est totalement terminé.*

Interrogatives

French	English	Example Sentence
Que / quel / quelle?	What?	*Que vas-tu faire demain ?*
Quand?	When?	*Quand est ton anniversaire ?*
Où?	Where?	*Où habites-tu ?*
Comment?	How?	*Comment vas-tu à l'école ?*

French	English	Example Sentence
Qui?	Who?	*Qui est ton sportif préféré ?*
Combien?	How much / how many?	*Combien coûte les bonbons ?*
Pourquoi?	Why?	*Pourquoi aimes-tu le poisson ?*

This booklet should be kept at home and used as the foundation for weekly homework throughout Year 11, and for revision ahead of the terminal examinations. A digital copy is available on Google Classroom.