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Dear French 1 and 2 Students and Parents,

I am excited to welcome you to French 1. Learning a foreign language has numerous benefits that range from improving your understanding of your own language to advancing your competitive edge when applying for scholarships, colleges and ultimately jobs. Before we embark on our journey for this school year, I want to explain the format with which I teach French 1. French 1 will be taught using a blended “Flipped Classroom” format. You might have heard a little about this new teaching style. It is not my own idea, but it is a unique format and one that has been met with success in classrooms worldwide. Since this is not the traditional class format, I want to explain how I have worked to tailor this teaching method to best meet the needs of my students.

## WHAT IS A FLIPPED CLASSROOM?

A Flipped Classroom is a “flip” from the traditional routine of a high school classroom. In a flipped classroom students learn the curriculum objectives at home by reading the textbook or watching videos and taking notes on their own, then students do practice activities (what would have traditionally been done for homework) in the classroom with the teacher and classmates present. In French 1, as the year progresses, students will be required to watch more lessons at home, however here at the beginning of the year, I will “blend” the traditional format with the Flipped format. This means that there will be some lessons watched at home, and some lessons which I will teach within the class period.

## WHY DO I TEACH WITH THIS METHOD?

The face to face time that I have with my students is very important. A few years ago, I took some time to evaluate how well I am using that face time. I came to realize that my students were spending far too much class time just sitting and listening, and not communicating in the language. After investigating the Flipped method, I realized that by having my students watch lessons at home, we can spend our valuable 50 minutes doing more exciting and beneficial activities that better prepare my students for communicating in the language.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A FLIPPED CLASSROOM?

- Since “lectures” are watched at home, class time is open for many more different types of activities.
- I am available during class time to help students when they have questions about directions or need reassurance that they are doing an assignment correctly. (This is something they often can’t get at home.)
- I can work with more students individually. Since I am no longer standing in front of the classroom the entire class period, I am able to walk around, constantly monitoring students’ progress.
- Because lessons are watched outside of class, students can pause, rewind or repeat lessons so that they fully understand the information. (Parents can watch, too.) Students learn at their pace.
- Lessons are available at all times. Students don’t miss valuable lessons due to absences. Also, students can re-watch lessons at any time, especially before an exam.

## Here are some Frequently Asked Questions:

### ***What if a student doesn't have a computer at home?***

For each lesson, I will offer textbook page numbers where students can read the necessary information. While the textbook explanations will not be as detailed as my video explanations, there will be enough information for students to complete notes. Also, there are computers available in the library or in my classroom. Students can watch the videos before or after school or during lunch.

### ***What if there isn't reliable internet at home?***

I can easily save videos to a flash drive. If a student knows that he/she will not be able to connect to the internet to watch a video at home, he/she just simply needs to give me a USB flash drive in class, and I can save the video in order for it to be watched at home. I can also save videos to a DVD, if necessary. Again, before or after school, or during lunch, students can watch videos at the library or in my classroom.

### ***What if questions occur about the subject matter covered in the video?***

If a student is confused about something that is covered in the video, he/she is encouraged to write down the question and to visit me before school the next day. Students will always have several days to watch the videos. **I encourage students not to procrastinate.** That way there is plenty of time to ask me if there are questions. I am always available before school. Questions can always be asked via email, as well, but there may be evenings that I cannot answer an email immediately.

### ***How often are students required to watch videos?***

This varies by level. There are very few video lessons at the beginning of the year, but as the year progresses students may be required to watch one to two 5-10 minute videos a week. Students will typically have two days' notice, and all video due dates will be posted on my website and Schoology.

### ***What happens if a student doesn't watch the video for homework?***

As with any type of homework, there are consequences to not completing the assignment. Each video will have some type of follow-up assignment. That assignment might be an electronic activity to be submitted through the web immediately after viewing the lesson, or it might be a notes quiz to be completed in class the following day. If a student doesn't watch the video, not only will he or she be confused about the topic covered in the video, he/she will not earn points for the follow-up assignment, and points will also be deducted if the notes are not included in the student's binder during quarterly notebook checks. It is extremely important that students watch the lessons when they are assigned. Watching the video assignments takes less time than traditional homework assignments, so it is a very small time commitment.

*I am thrilled to be starting the year off using this teaching method. I have spent hours working on making this class a rewarding experience. I am continuously working hard to provide the highest level of success for my students. I am excited about teaching French as a Flipped Classroom. If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me.*

Thank you,

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