

French

How you can succeed in your Junior Cycle French CBA



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Emer Hallissey is an experienced teacher of French. Here she shares her hints and tips for succeeding in the Junior Cycle French CBA.



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Introduction

Over the course of Junior Cycle French you will need to complete two Classroom-Based Assessments (CBA). There is a unique grading system for the CBA, where you will receive a descriptor for your work from your teacher. The descriptors include “yet to meet expectations”, “in line with expectations”, “above expectations”, and “exceptional”. These CBA descriptors do not contribute to your final grade, however they will be added to your Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement. Also, CBA 2 is linked to your Assessment Task which is worth 10% of your overall grade.

Putting grades and descriptors aside, the CBAs are important learning opportunities that will set you up with important skills for Senior Cycle – French and future language learning. Therefore, you should give it your best shot. In 2nd year, you will complete the CBA 1 which assesses your Oral Communication (how well you speak French). In 3rd year, CBA 2 gets you to review your language learning by reviewing your language portfolio (made up of examples of work from 2nd and 3rd year) and writing a reflection on your work. Following on from CBA 2, you will complete your Assessment Task.

This guide will give you a better understanding of what is expected of you during the CBAs and Assessment Task. The guide is laid out clearly to help you find information quickly. This guide also includes suggestions and recommendations on how to can achieve your best result for each CBA.

Classroom-Based Assessment 1 - Oral

Communication

The purpose of this CBA is to develop and improve your ability to speak French and to communicate information clearly through French. This is an important part of your language learning as languages are meant to be spoken. From this CBA, you should learn/improve the following skills:

- **Pronunciation** – Can you say words correctly in French?
- **Clear communication** – Did my teacher and classmates understand what I was talking about?
- **Language** – Was my grammar generally correct and did I use lots of different vocabulary.

The CBA 1 allows you to work towards many of our **Learning Intentions** such as;

1.9 Pronounce words accurately enough to be understood, with appropriate intonation.

1.10 Convey simple descriptions, presentations, or announcements on familiar topics.

2.2 Apply all language learning to creative activities such as producing simple poems, posters, presentations, games, and drama.

3.7 Analyse similarities and differences in relation to their peers' lives in the target language country/countries in areas of daily life and present them using a range of media.

You may have to do one of the following tasks:

- An interview
- A role-play
- A presentation followed by a question and answer.
- A conversation in response to stimulus (something).

You might choose from this list yourself or your teacher might decide for you. You may work on your own or in pairs or in groups. Again, this may be your decision, or your teacher might decide. You will be expected to speak in French for 3-4 minutes. Even if in a group, it is important that you are able to show that you did your part. At the end you will need to write a reflection on what you learned from this CBA.

Getting started and preparing for CBA 1

No matter what you're doing for your CBA, you will need to plan and be prepared. Think about which task you're doing and brainstorm what you need to do. If your teacher has given you a theme or framework, read this very carefully and make notes. Don't be afraid to ask your teacher questions and for advice. If your teacher has given you complete freedom, work on a topic which interests you e.g. I love football, so I will pretend to interview my favourite footballer. You will need to research your topic and look up some new vocabulary. Of course, you need to write out what you plan to say. Be aware that you may need to rewrite and redo parts of your CBA. The more preparation that you do at this stage, the easier it will be.

Tips for presenting your CBA 1

- ✓ Be prepared. Have research and planning done.
- ✓ Write out what you plan to say. Preferably on cue cards. Don't write too much per card.
- ✓ Practice saying your presentation to friends and family.
- ✓ Consider the feedback that friends and family give you.
- ✓ Make little notes to help with pronunciation.
- ✓ During your CBA presentation, do your very best not to read your notes or to read them as little as possible.
- ✓ Stand up straight with shoulders back. Confidence is key!

Tips on how to reflect on your CBA 1

Reflecting on what you have learned from doing CBA 1 is an essential part of the process. You will need to reflect on what you have learned from writing and presenting your CBA. It is important to put thought into your reflection.

- You must roughly write down your thoughts and brainstorm what you learned from the CBA1.
- You must reread your notes, review them, and re-draft them if necessary.
- Remember to consider - how you spoke, how was your pronunciation, did you have to refer to your notes, had you practiced enough, did your classmates understand you.
- Most importantly: What did you do well and what would you do differently if you had the chance?

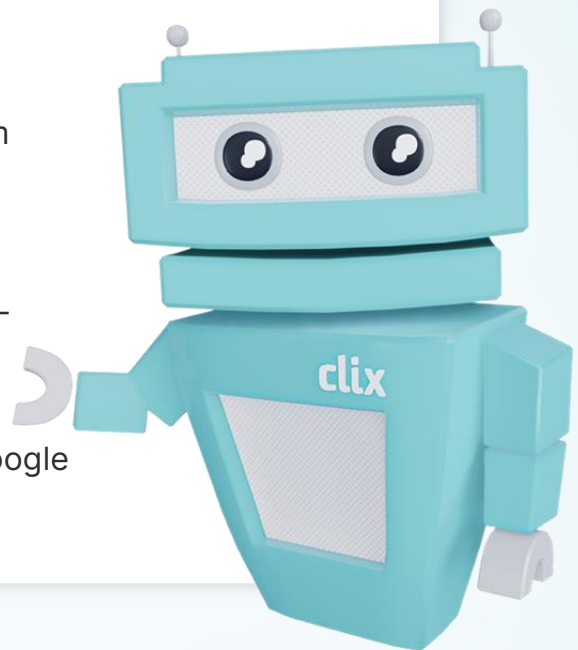
Tip: Helpful Websites and Apps

To look up single words – wordreference.com

To look up phrases – linguee.com

To work on pronunciation and learn off lines –
naturalreaders.com

To learn off lines, try taking an image with Google
Lens and having it read them back to you.



Classroom-Based Assessment 2 - Student Portfolio and Reflection Note.

Throughout 2nd and 3rd year, you will have been collecting documents (examples of your work and proof of your learning). It is essential that you keep these documents very safe, whether they are a physical folder of written documents or a digital file. Some documents may be recordings of you speaking French on a variety of themes which you have studied in class. Your teacher may also get you to re-do some of the documents to improve them which you will learn from. Therefore, you must be patient with your work, be careful to mind it and always put your best effort into your work.

What will my final CBA 2 portfolio look like?

- 3 texts chosen from the collected work from 2nd and 3rd year (no 1st-year work).
- This must include: 1 oral text/recording (not from CBA 1), 1 text about French culture or language and a final text of your choice.
- For these 3 documents, you must include all drafts.
- You must include a reflection (what I learned and what would I change) on each document.

How do I reflect on my documents?

What did I learn from this document?

1. Did I learn how to conjugate the present tense, and did I learn to correct my mistakes?
2. Did I learn how the ends of adjectives change depending on whether the noun is masculine, feminine or plural?
3. Did I learn new vocabulary such as the rooms of the house and did doing this task help me to learn and remember it?
4. If I did two drafts of this document, what did I change in the second draft to improve it? What did this teach me?
5. If this was a speaking document, how was my pronunciation? Do I need to revise my French phonics sounds?

What would I change to improve the document?

1. Would I use more vocabulary? E.g., If I were to describe my house, I would include more colours?
2. Would I include more tenses? E.g., If I were writing a letter about my holiday, I would speak about what I did yesterday, what I do every day and what I will do tomorrow.
3. For an oral document, would I pronounce maison – correctly may-zon (rather than ma – son) because I now know about nasal vowels.
4. For the document on culture, did I do enough research, and did I check if my sources were reliable.

Assessment Task

After completing CBA 2, you will do your assessment task which will be based on your work in CBA 2. Your assessment task will be worth 10% of your final Junior Cycle grade and it is a formal assessment. This means that you will be writing it out under your teacher's supervision, and it will be sent away with your JC paper to be corrected by the State Examinations Commission. It is done in class for two 40-minute lessons.

There are 2 stages:

Stage 1: (Discussion and reflection) is the preparation stage. Firstly, your teacher will give you something to read/ watch /listen to. In class, you will discuss this material. The discussion might be in pairs, small groups, or as a whole class. The purpose of the material is to help you think about your learning, but you don't need to refer to the video/poster/recording in your answer. Secondly, you will read section A and section B of your answer book and think about how you might respond to these answers. **DON'T WRITE ANYTHING IN THE ANSWER BOOKLET YET.** This is again a time for you to

reflect, brainstorm and make notes on what you learned from the 3 documents from CBA 2. So, reread and reconsider your original reflections on them. Is there anything more which you can add? You will answer the questions in your booklet based on these documents. While you can't bring the booklet home, you can take down the questions and work on them at home. Remember to keep referring to what you learned and how you would improve your work in the future.

Stage 2: is for writing up your responses in the booklet (which your school will give you). You can have your CBA 2 documents and reflections with you and any other notes which you took down during stage 1 or at home. You have 35 minutes to fill in the booklet on your own without help. The remaining 5 minutes of class is just for submitting the booklets.

Dos and don't for CBA 1, CBA 2 and Assessment task

- ✓ Do prepare!
- ✓ Do write and re-write!
- ✓ Do improve your work with feedback from your teacher/others!
- ✓ For CBA 1, do work on pronunciation!
- ✓ For CBA 1, try to record yourself and watch your presentation back.
- ✓ For reflections, "what have I learned?" – be specific on tenses, adjectives, vocabulary, etc.
- ✓ For reflections, "how would I improve my work?" – would I use more adjectives or use other verbs than *être*?
- ✓ For each reflection, focus on something different that you learned.
- ✗ Don't just write one draft.
- ✗ Don't ignore your mistakes. When you see a mistake, don't fail to correct it.
- ✗ Don't try to vague about what you learned. e.g. I learned lots of verbs (What ones?)
- ✗ Don't say that you would do everything the same again. Otherwise, you've learned NOTHING!
- ✗ Don't write down the first thing that comes to your mind in the booklet. Stop. Think. Consider your answer.
- ✗ For reflections, don't repeat that you learned the same thing from each document. E.g. don't talk about improving the past tense in two or more reflections

