FSL Homework Toolbox / Trousse pour les devoirs!

Help for parents with children in French Immersion
www.fslhomeworktoolbox.ca

Visit the home page of the French Second Language (FSL) Homework Toolbox / Trousse pour les devoirs, a new website that supports parents who have children in a French Immersion (FI) program and wish to assist them with homework in French. It is also a resource for FI students who require an accessible user-friendly reference tool to help with homework. Learners and educators in other FSL programs will also find it helpful.

Parents and students alike will enjoy exploring this new site and we encourage you to do so together. From fun French pronunciation and video clips, to providing parent support with specific strategies for success, this site is indeed a welcomed resource for all FSL learners.

Helpful sections of the website include:
- audio files in French and English
- video clips demonstrating instructional strategies
- a reference guide for specific topics
- a list of French language-learning websites
- general tips for learning French

The Learning and Research Skills sections are presented from a teacher’s perspective (based on the current Ontario report card criteria) which may seem a bit heavy at first. Fortunately, the site also provides direct strategies for students and parental support for each of the criteria. The Frequently Asked Questions section is very similar to the information that Canadian Parents for French (CPF) provides to its members and the public on how to support your child in an FSL program even though you may not speak French yourself. It is presented with an emphasis on good work habits, creating a supportive environment at home, and fostering a sense of curiosity.

As your children get older, they themselves will find the Research Skills section of this site very helpful when completing assignments and projects with a focus on learning in the internet age. In addition there are links to many other resources embedded throughout the site to extend the support beyond the toolbox itself.

This website, produced by Rainbow District School Board, was based on the 2010 needs assessment conducted by CPF Ontario and was made possible through the financial support of the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage.
CPF Toronto Midtown West

*French Homework Club:* The Chapter started this after-school club as a trial program in the fall at Regal Road Public School. Due to its success it will now continue throughout the school year. Once a week children in French Immersion from Grades 2 to 4 bring their homework and assignments to the homework club (3:30pm to 4:45pm). The instructor, Ms. Jo Furley, is a B.Ed student at York University and has two children in the French Immersion program at the school. Jo approached the local high school to find a student to volunteer with the club. Together they provide a welcoming and fun learning environment. The club is offered at a very reasonable rate of $5.00 per child per week and students pre-register for eight-week sessions. Positive feedback has been received from both the students and their parents. The students enjoy the relaxed atmosphere and support and the parents like the affordable rate and the convenience.

**2011 Mlacak Award Winner**

Anne Scrafield-Goulart from CPF Halton is the recipient of the 2011 Mlacak Award. Having served as Chapter president for nine years, Anne helped plan numerous annual events from adult French classes to book fairs, French art and cooking classes for children, along with the popular end of school year French Café event. Her time was also dedicated to serving on a number of committees at the Halton District School Board. Anne has two daughters that went through the French Immersion program and a very supportive husband.

CPF Stratford

*Parent Success Night:* In November parents were treated to an evening out to discover resources to help their children succeed in French. Workshops were offered by community partners including the Stratford Public Library, TFO, local French Immersion teachers, and topped with a book fair by Scholastic Books. This “adults only” event was complete with complimentary croissants and coffee from the “Café” and free childcare for children.

**2011 McGillivray Award Winner**

Helen Griffin, Learning Coordinator, FSL and International Languages, with the Thames Valley District School Board is this year’s winner of the 2011 McGillivray Award. Helen has been a tireless promoter of French Second Language (FSL) learning in Ontario. She has promoted FSL instruction, supported teachers and parents, and has been involved in a variety of Ministry of Education initiatives. She is also an active member of the Ontario Modern Language Teachers’ Association. Helen always has the child, the student, in mind at the heart of all that she takes on.

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR**

**Canadian Parents for French (Ontario)**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

The Board of Directors of Canadian Parents for French (Ontario) invites applications for individuals to serve as directors for a minimum of two years effective Oct., 2012.

The CPF Ontario Board of Directors is responsible for the governance and strategic direction of the provincial branch of Canadian Parents of French. If you have a keen interest in quality education and want to build on the current FSL successes in Ontario, then join our team. Board positions are voluntary; an orientation session on non-profit board governance will be offered.

Any current CPF member may put forward their candidacy or nominate another person (with their consent) by forwarding a résumé and cover letter electronically to: Chair, Nominations Committee at cpfont@cpfont.on.ca. **Nominations will be accepted until June 30th, 2012.**
CPF Symposium Brings People Together
Passionate parents steal the show

Canadian Parents for French (Ontario) did what it does best at the October 29, 2011, CPF Symposium on FSL Education in Ontario....it brought people together.

Parents, teachers, administrators, community partners, and government representatives gathered on Saturday to hear and discuss some of the best practices in French Second Language (FSL) education in Ontario. As is often the case, passionate parents stole the show as they kept pulling the agenda on access to quality FSL education forward, each with his or her own accounting of personal impact and the necessity for inclusive policies and quality FSL programs that will engage all types of learners through to Grade 12 and beyond.

Graham Fraser, Canada’s Commissioner of Official Languages, opened the event followed by a panel of experts in their field including Michael Salvatori, Registrar and Chief Executive, Ontario College of Teachers; Mercedes Gagnon, Manager, School Programs and Standards Unit, Minister of Education; and Alison Pearce, FSL Coordinator, Toronto District School Board. Also featured were FSL student graduates who have successfully included official language bilingualism into the next phase of their lives. The afternoon workshops introduced the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) and the Diplôme d'études en langue française (DELF), highlighted community partners in FSL education such as TFO Education, ISE Ontario and French for the Future, and presented a synopsis of e-learning courses and online resources for FSL learners.

CPF members were put to work on Sunday, participating in round-table, problem-solving discussions on a variety of relevant topics including accommodation reviews, counseling out of a French Immersion program, running community-based chapter activities, staying in French Immersion after Grade 8 and growing your CPF membership.

Two individuals were honoured at the CPF Ontario banquet and awards presentation held at the Créme Brasserie restaurant in Yorkville on Saturday night. Anne Srafeild-Goulart is the 2011 winner of the CPF Ontario Mlacak award, presented for her outstanding work as a long-time volunteer of the CPF Halton Chapter. The McGillivray Award for outstanding contribution to FSL education in Ontario was awarded to Helen Griffin, in her capacity as FSL coordinator, and for bringing to fruition many innovative pilots and best practices in the Thames Valley District School Board.

Our sincere thanks and appreciation goes to the over 140 delegates for their contribution to the success of the FSL symposium and the CPF Ontario Conference and AGM, for responding to the feedback survey, and for their infectious passion for FSL learning and the important role they all play in the future of so many officially bilingual children!

Photograph provided by the Ontario College of Teachers.
I was born in Vancouver, B.C., but grew up in the town of Osoyoos in the Okanagan Valley in the 1960’s. At the time, my family were the first Chinese to settle there. While many in the community were supportive, others were less welcoming towards visible minorities at the time and, as a child, I did experience many incidents of race-based bullying from both other children and adults. Over time, attitudes improved although stereotypes based on race prevailed (i.e. Asians as nerdy bookworms) and even that native-born persons of colour were not “true Canadians”. It was on a school trip to France when I arrived at a remarkable realization that when I spoke French, I was treated as a Canadian without being asked dumb questions such as “Where are you really from?” Speaking both French and English marks you as a Canadian full stop, no hyphenation required no matter what colour your skin. Thus began my love affair with the French language and culture and I realized what a great gift it was for this country to have two official languages.

After finishing law school at Osgoode Hall, I studied at Alliance Française de Toronto for one year and spent three months doing French immersion in Montpellier and Paris, France. Since that time, I’ve continued to take courses, listened to French radio, watched French films and since 2002, I’ve been participating in and organizing a monthly French conversation group (The French Meetup). In terms of personal impact, I think that being able to speak French helped me get my first job working as a staff lawyer at a legal clinic and I met many amazing friends that I would never have met had I not embarked on this journey. My affection for the French language led us to enrol our son Grayson in the Bébé Alliance Française at 18 months and he is currently in Grade 7 at a French immersion school in Oakville. As for me, I think that speaking French does help him see himself as truly Canadian when there are still many people who want to put you in the “Asia/immigrant/other” box. The power of this really came to roost when we had the opportunity to participate in the apology and redress for the Chinese Head Tax in June of 2006 at the House of Commons and I heard my then 7-year old singing from the heart ‘O Canada’ in both English and French. I was wondering if the next time he sang it there it would be as an MP or even Prime Minister! As for my involvement with CPF, it evolved naturally from my interest in having my son learn French. From my previous volunteer stints with the Daily Bread Food Bank and with the Chinese Canadian National Council, I knew that things only worked as well as they did because there were these nearly invisible people in the background working their tails off called “volunteers.” I quickly realized that it was no different with French Second Language (FSL) education and that CPF was very much the glue that was helping to hold the system together in the face of limited resources and even fierce opposition. So helping out with the local CPF Halton Chapter only made sense as we held events to provide parents with the confidence to stay with French and to help fund and organize fun extra-curricular French activities for the kids. When I was asked to join the CPF Ontario board of directors as a multicultural liaison, especially to approach ethnic minorities and immigrants about the benefits of enrolling their children in FSL, I thought that this would be a perfect way to combine my background and interests and deal with the obvious fact that, if CPF’s vision of all youth becoming proficient in both official languages is ever to come to fruition, it will not be so without convincing those coming from outside of the traditional English- and French-speaking countries to participate as they are quickly becoming the majority.

Stephen Lee, Director, CPF Ontario

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**CPF Membership Timeline**

1980: 925 members in Canada, 285 members in Ontario
1983: 1,200 in Ontario
1987: 4,235 in Ontario
1991: 18,152 in Canada, 3,987 in Ontario
2008: 5,465 in Ontario
2012: 25,071 in Canada, 6,293 in Ontario
French Immersion: Stick with it and your child will thank you later!

My name is Mary Clements and I am 25 years old. My parents told me that it was an easy decision to put me in French Immersion in senior kindergarten. Even though this meant losing the convenience of walking to our neighbourhood school, and that helping with homework would be a challenge since neither of my parents speaks French, and I would have to travel even farther to continue French Immersion in high school, the decision was still easy as they wanted their children to have the opportunity to learn a second language.

Everything was going great that first year of senior kindergarten. The teacher was speaking French and I was bonding with my 20 or so classmates over the fact no one could understand what she was saying. By the end of the year we were all in the routine and everything was going swimmingly. Grade 1 was where the trouble started, not only for me, but also for many of my classmates. My mother recounts that by the first parent-teacher interview she was already being told that I was not suited for French Immersion. Our once class of 20 began shrinking.

By Grade 2, the teachers were very adamant that I most definitely should not be in French Immersion and that my mother insisting that I stay in the program was doing me no favours, even setting me up for failure. My mother is a very strong woman and stood her ground that they must make French Immersion work for me and she had no intention of removing me from the program. Our class was now down to 13 children. After the heartache of Grade 1 and 2, most parents would be discouraged finding themselves in that situation again. Still believing in the importance of a second language, they enrolled my brother (who is two years younger) and began the same battles.

Finally it happened, the turning point of my so far less than sparkly elementary career. With a new teacher in Grade 5, the dreaded parent-teacher interview came, but this time there were only positive comments. Again for the next report card, same thing...how could this be? Wasn’t it only last year that I was being tested for hearing problems and learning disabilities? To my parents’ delight it appeared that it had finally happened and French Immersion was working for me.

By Grade 6, I was graduating with near perfect marks and an increase in confidence. I did not use French a whole lot outside of school, but I had enough confidence to add to my French Immersion experience. My parents, teachers, and I were all in agreement that it had worked out for me, but could it work for others? I hope so! 

Article continues on page 6.
At TFS, we recognize that an entire world exists outside our borders, where anything is possible. That is why we are pleased to provide our students with Canada’s only co-educational, bilingual, International Baccalaureate program. It is a program that prepares them to be independent, internationally minded thinkers who can succeed anywhere with anyone and help shape the global community. www.tfs.ca

Join us at our next Open House:

La p’tite école:
Age 2 to Grade 1
Jan. 18, 9:30 a.m.

Junior School:
Grade 2 to Grade 5
Jan. 12, 9:30 a.m.

Senior School:
Grade 6 to University Entrance
Jan. 25, 9:30 a.m.

RSVP Admissions: (416) 484-6533 ext. 4247

Toronto Campus
Mississauga Campus
Age 3 to Grade 7
Feb. 11, 10:30 a.m.

Our School.
Those Other Schools.

French Immersion: Stick with it...
(article continues from page 5.)

Immersion had ‘clicked’ with me! I finished French Immersion as an honour roll student in both elementary and high school. I then went on to complete an honours double degree in French and Music from McMaster University in Hamilton.

Currently I run a small business called Les Petites Pommes that plans fun extra-curricular activities in French. We run summer, winter, and March break camps, as well as tutoring services and homeschooler classes. When I first started out the CPF Hamilton-Wentworth Chapter helped me out a great deal. They are a great organization and I am now happily a part of the Chapter as a CPF rep in Hamilton.

Thank you to my family who always believed in me and especially to my mother who always insisted she knew her children best. French Immersion is truly a worthwhile program that has enriched my life with many opportunities and I am very thankful to have been a part of it! To all parents who may be experiencing similar struggles, stick with it and your child will thank you later!

Is your school participating in the largest French public-speaking event in Ontario?

May 12, 2012 marks the 28th anniversary of Le Concours et festival d’art oratoire, our public-speaking event for students in Grades 4-12 studying French as a Second Language in Ontario schools (Core, Extended and French Immersion). The “festival” portion of the day is a non-competitive experience for students in elementary school. High school students compete for cash prizes up to $1000. First place winners from each category in Grades 11-12 will win a $1,000 scholarship to York University. Grade 11-12 winners from each category also move on to compete at the national level where they have the chance to win one of four $20,000 scholarships to the University of Ottawa.

Visit www.cpfont.on.ca and click on “Concours/Festival” for information on this event, or call the branch office at 1-800-667-0594, x4.
Your Board @ Work

We are pleased to introduce a new section of the CPF Ontario News called Your Board @ Work (the catchy title credited to our colleagues in B.C.).

At the CPF Ontario AGM held on October 30, 2011 in Toronto, members voted in an experienced and dedicated slate of directors: Heather Stauble, President, Mary Cruden, Vice-President, Nancy McKeraghan, Treasurer, Maureen McEvoy, Secretary, Mary Anne Alton, Director, Max Cooke, Director, Denise Harding, Director, Stephen Lee, Director...with a special thank you to outgoing board member Kaywana Gargarello!

Over the past year your board members have served the organization in their respective roles as officers, minding the organization’s strategic plan, governance and fiscal responsibilities, in addition to actively serving on the CPF Ontario Advocacy Committee, the Bylaws Committee and the Nominations Committee.

Heather Stauble and Mary Cruden have each played a leadership role in presenting briefs in support of the CPF Ontario Position Statements during this current year to the Minister of Education, the Assistant Deputy Minister, Mauril Belanger, a member of the Federal sub-committee on official languages, the Minister responsible for Francophone Affairs, the Commissioner of French Language Services in Ontario, and the provincial government standing committee on good government on amendments to the education act.

Your board members at work have boosted the credibility of the CPF organization and earned CPF Ontario two permanent seats on the Ministry of Education FSL Working Group; a CPF Ontario representative on the Early Learning Implementation Advisory Committee; and on the Groupe de travail permanent EDU-FCU sur le continuum de l’apprentissage en langue française. Maureen McEvoy, our secretary extraordinaire, brings not only communications and operational expertise to the table but also her understanding of the Ottawa scene from a language, political, and funding perspective.

Nancy McKeraghan brings her business acumen to the table and oversees the fiscal management of the organization in her role as treasurer. First and foremost though she is our residentCPF historian. Nancy is one of the pioneers from the CPF Ontario York Region Chapter to advocate for the French Immersion program and remains our strongest advocate for continued growth and equitable access.

As a board member Stephen Lee has worked steadily as our multicultural liaison, promoting French Second Language (FSL) education to diverse communities. He played an important role in coordinating focus groups for the CPF Ontario and CPF National multicultural projects and continues to encourage individuals to join CPF who share his belief that learning French together builds a common bond.

Board member Max Cooke also brings communications and board governance expertise to the table. A French Immersion graduate and bilingual goodwill ambassador by nature, Max represented CPF Ontario as a guest panelist speaking on how francophiles support the francophone community at the recent conference in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the law guaranteeing French language services in Ontario. Max will also be representing CPF Ontario on the Groupe Permanent EDU-FCU.

Board member Mary Anne Alton bridges the educator, administrator, and parent gap on the CPF Ontario board. She recently shared her expertise as a former Director of Education with parents and the FSL community at the October CPF Ontario Symposium as a panelist highlighting the best practices in FSL education in a rural board setting. Mary Anne is also spearheading CPF Ontario support for affordable French-language exchange opportunities for Ontario students.

All but two board members make up the CPF Ontario Advocacy Committee. Each has an opportunity to review and contribute to the consistency of outgoing messaging. New board member Denise Harding has already contributed by provided feedback on the FSL curriculum review bringing to light expertise in the field of special needs learning as it relates to the FSL curriculum.

A special thank you to outgoing board member Kaywana Gargarello. For two years Kaywana played the most valued role on the board of always bringing the local CPF Chapter perspective to the discussion. She was and remains the strongest advocate in support of extra-curricular opportunities outside the classroom that provide “real life” French experiences that motivate youth to include French in their lives long term.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS & STAFF

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CPF Ontario gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Department of Canadian Heritage in producing CPF Ontario News
French Fiction is Fun!

French Creative Writing Competition

Is your child creative? Do they enjoy story-telling? Do they like to write for fun?

If so, encourage them to participate in the CPF Ontario French Fiction is Fun event, a French creative writing competition for students in grades 1 – 8*. The first place winner from each level will receive a fun-filled prize package and their work will be showcased on CPF Ontario’s website.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Maximum Length</th>
<th>Word Count</th>
<th>Presentation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary (Grades 1 – 3)</td>
<td>One 8.5’ by 11’ sheet of paper. One-sided.</td>
<td>Min. of 10 words. Max. of 50 words.</td>
<td>The student may decorate the page with pictures to help emphasize the creative writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior (Grades 4 – 6)</td>
<td>One 8.5’ by 11’ sheet of paper. One-sided.</td>
<td>Max. 350 words.</td>
<td>No pictures but the student may arrange the words in a creative fashion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior (Grades 7 – 8)</td>
<td>Two 8.5’ by 11’ sheet of paper. One-sided.</td>
<td>Max. 700 words.</td>
<td>No pictures but the student may arrange the words in a creative fashion.</td>
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*Open to CPF Ontario members only. Non-members may compete by joining CPF. The fee to join is $25 for a one-year family membership, which you can include with your submission as a cheque made payable to Canadian Parents for French.

Deadline for submissions is March 31st 2012.

Please note: the writing must be entirely in French and an original work of poetry or prose created solely by the participant. The theme, style, and format of the submission are up to the participant, so be creative and have fun!

French Fiction is Fun!

Last Name: _______________________________________First Name: __________________________

Address: ______________________________________________________________________________

City: _____________________________________________Postal Code: _________________________

E-mail address: ____________________________________Phone no. (_______)___________________

CPF Membership no.____________________________________________________________________

School Name: _____________________________________School Board: ________________________

Grade: _____________________FSL Program: ______________________________________________

(Core French, Extended French, French Immersion)

Please complete this registration form and mail, together with your submission, to:
Canadian Parents for French (Ontario), 103 - 2055 Dundas St. East, Mississauga, ON L4X 1M2

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:
Canadian Parents for French (Ontario)
103-2055 Dundas Street E., Mississauga, ON L4X 1M2

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