

**Q: Does being in a French immersion program have any bad effect on student's progress in English?**

**A:** The results of evaluation studies show that, for the first few years of elementary school, early immersion students do not read and write quite as well in English as students in a regular all-English program. By the end of grade 6 – after two years of formal English instruction – they are on an equal or better footing.

**Q: Are immersion programs only for students of above-average intelligence?**

**A:** On “academic” tests of literacy-related skills, the above-average students scored better than the less able students, as one would expect. There was no similar differentiation by I.Q. in students' ability to communicate in French. The below-average students understood French as well as the above-average students, and scored as well on oral production tests. I.Q. does not play a more significant role in the immersion program than in the regular English program as far as success in school is concerned.

**Q: Will French immersion affect my child's social development?**

**A:** Studies have proven that early immersion students suffer no intellectual, emotional, or social impairment. While they might tend to associate more with their classmates on the playground, this is typical of all children.



**Q: How can I help my child?**

**A: Start by** developing ongoing and systematic interaction and feedback with the teacher and principal. When your child brings homework home and says, “I don’t understand,” or “I can’t do this,” and you don’t understand it either, show *support, interest and common sense.*

If a problem with homework continues, contact the teacher for help.

It also helps to take advantage of all “Franco Fun” extracurricular activities (libraries, drama, public speaking, visits, travel, summer camp, French club, tapes, records, French radio and television) that you can find. The more they hear the language and participate, the better.

There are many, many websites that offer support and guidance in helping your immersion child. Start with the CPF sites. Cpf.ca

Remember, French Immersion was developed for Anglophone children whose parents, for the most part, do not speak French.



## Say “Oui” to French Immersion



**CANADIAN PARENTS FOR FRENCH**  
PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

For information on French Programs in PEI:  
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## What is immersion?

Immersion is a very effective method known for teaching a second language. Early immersion works well because of an early start to learning. It also provides more time learning in a second language and more time results in more learning.

In grade one, all instruction, including reading, writing and mathematics, is in French. The emphasis is on speaking skills and by Christmas, students will understand most French classroom communication.

The students will increasingly use more French in the classroom and by spring, only French will be spoken in class.

The aim of early immersion is functional bilingualism. Graduates are able to communicate and function comfortably in a second language while maintaining the same fluency in their mother tongue as their peers enrolled in English programs.

An important key to success is a positive attitude in the home towards the language and the program.



**CANADIAN  
PARENTS  
FOR FRENCH**

## Why learn French?

1. Students have a better understanding and appreciation of their mother tongue;
2. Students develop learning skills that they can use for the rest of their lives (researchers say that children who learn a second language have improved problem-solving skills);
3. Students develop the ability to handle abstract ideas – from algebra to theories of history;
4. Students ability to think creatively is improved;
5. Students will be able to learn a third or fourth language more easily;
6. It opens the door to career opportunities and travel in all parts of Canada and in any of the 83 countries around the world where English and/or French are spoken;
7. Students acquire knowledge of other peoples and cultures, which contributes to tolerance and open-mindedness; and
8. Students feelings of identity and team are enhanced.

*“If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head. If you talk to him in his own language, that goes to his heart.” Nelson Mandela*

*Become a member of Canadian Parents for French. Your \$25 fee helps support advocacy and community events.*

## Answers to parents questions.?

**Q: How much French can one actually learn in an immersion program?**

**A:** Language learning is a result of language *study*, language *practice* and language *use*. The three elements are directly related to *time on task* or cumulative hours of instruction. By the end of grade 12, French Immersion students can function very well in French and can become quite fluent.

**Q: What if we're transferred to another district or province?**

**A:** French immersion is available in most urban centres of Canada and is spreading to many smaller school districts. Contact your ministry or department of education for a list of the schools in your area. Transferring out of immersion is not recommended or often necessary. If a child transfers out of immersion very early – before English language arts is introduced – they may experience a brief lag in English. Consultation with the new teachers and some work at home overcomes this problem very quickly.

**“One language sets you in a corridor for life. Two languages open every door along the way.”**

