

**INTRODUCTORY LESSONS
IN THE FRENCH
LANGUAGE; WITH A
SERIES OF EXERCISES**

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Introductory Lessons in the French Language; With a Series of Exercises by C. J. Delille

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FRENCH LANGUAGE;

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A Series of Exercises.

BY C. J. DELILLE.

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AUTHOR OF

"The French Class-Book;" "Le Manuel Etymologique;"
"Le Répertoire Littéraire," &c.

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P R E F A C E.

THIS little work is chiefly intended to furnish grammatical elements for the assistance of beginners. It has been composed after an attentive consideration and study of the works of the best grammarians, especially *Boniface*, *Lemare*, *Girault-Duvivier*, *Noël and Chapsal*, and that excellent authoress, *Madame Tastu*.* The orthography adopted is that of the recent dictionary of the French Academy, the standard of the present day.

The author has endeavoured to produce an outline of the Grammar of the Language, containing definitions, explications, and examples of primary importance to a pupil, disencumbered of every thing which might distract his attention, or impede his progress at the commencement of his studies. Although brevity has been adopted for the sake of assisting the memory, still great care has been taken to make the language of the work as clear and lucid as possible.

* *Education Maternelle*. Paris, 1835.

Exercises have been introduced as well by way of illustrating the grammatical principles laid down, as also, of enabling the pupil to obtain improvement by the valuable practice of translating and retranslating the examples given. The best mode of thus exercising a pupil is explained in the French Class-Book. The author has there stated the following method with reference to exercises in classes :—

“ 1st. Every example, exercise, or subject, is to be *spoken aloud*, translated and thoroughly analyzed by the Instructor. 2dly. After having duly repeated, let each Pupil write a free translation, which when corrected, should at an ensuing lesson be reproduced, and *orally* rendered into French, *imitating the language of the original.*”—*French Class-Book*, p. 26.

To this may be added the valuable practice of the Instructor *speaking* the subject in French, and the same being repeated and translated *vivâ voce* by the pupil.

The pupil having laid the foundation of a knowledge of the French grammar, by acquiring an intimate acquaintance with the elements, may proceed to the study of more elaborate works, in which he will find his progress much facilitated.

INTRODUCTORY LESSONS.

PRONUNCIATION.

LETTERS.

THE French Alphabet has twenty-five letters, which are divided into vowels and consonants.

The vowels or simple emissions of the voice are:—*a*,* *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, and *y*.

The other letters, being articulated *with* the assistance of vowels, are called *consonants*, they are:—*b*, *c*, *d*, *f*, *g*, *h*, *j*, *k*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *p*, *q*, *r*, *s*, *t*, *v*, *x*, *z*.

* Pronunciation cannot be learnt from books; the student must therefore acquire a knowledge of the powers or sounds of these letters by listening attentively and carefully to his teacher; and a knowledge of pronunciation is not the only advantage to be derived from oral instruction, for language as written differs widely from language as spoken; the former being more exact and precise, the latter more easy and graceful; the former leaving little to be understood which is not expressed, whilst the latter, as vivid and as rapid as the thought from which it derives its birth, leaves much to be expressed by the tones and gestures of the speaker. How important, how essential is it therefore, during the course of instruction, to practise colloquial phraseology, so that the pupil may learn conversational language, at the same time that his ear becomes *familiarly accustomed* to the delicate inflexions of pure pronunciation and accent!

Accents.

There are three accents in the French Language.

The *acute accent* (´) placed over *e* only, to give it an acute or slender sound; as *été*, been.

The *grave accent* (`) placed over *e*, gives it a broad or open sound, as *très*, very.

The *circumflex accent* (^) is placed over any long vowel, as *pâte*, dough. *Fête* feast.

[The *grave accent* is placed upon *a*, to, or at; *là*, there; *où* where, and *dès*, from, since; to distinguish those words from *a*, has; *la*, the or her; *ou*, or; and *des*, of the.]

VOWELS.

The *vocal sounds*, or simple emissions of the voice, are represented by one or more vowels:

a *la*, the; *ma*, my; *ta*, thy.

e feeble (called *e* mute), *je*, I; *me*, me; *te*, thee; *cage*.*

é acute. *célébré*, (part.) celebrated; *aimer*, to love.

è open. *célèbre*, (adj.) celebrated; *près*, near.

ê (long). *tête*, head; *être*, to be.

î *lit*, bed; *pipe*; *visible*.

o *monotonie*; *apôtre*, apostle.

u *uni*, united; *nature*; *ductile*.

y has two sounds: the first like two French *î*'s, as in *moyen*, means; *joyeux*, joyful; the other like a single *î*: *style*.

ai sounded like *é*, *j'ai*, I have.

* The translation is not given of words which are obviously alike in both languages.

ai }
aie } like *è* { *j'avais*, I had.
eai } { *ils parlaient*, they were speaking.
ei } { *ils changeaient*, they were changing
Seigneur, Lord.
au, eau, like *o*; *chaud*, warm; *chapeau*, hat.
eu *deux*, two.
eu like *e* in *je, jeune*, young.
ou (like *oo* in the English word *cool*), *vous*, you.

NASAL VOWELS.

an . . . plan. *am* camp.
en . . . encore. *em* empereur.
in . . . vin, wine *im* importun, troublesome.
on . . . bon, good. *om* ombre, shadow.
un . . . Lundi, Monday. *um* parfum, perfume.

A diphthong is the sound of two or more vowels in one syllable; as, *viande*, meat; *amitié*, friendship; *crois-moi*, believe me; *soie*, silk; *Dieu*, God.

CONSONANTS.

Most of the consonants are sounded as in English, their peculiar or accidental articulations are explained in the following table:—

c is sounded like *k* before *a, o, u*, as *canal, consul, cube*.

c is sounded like *s* before *e, i*, as *central, citron*.

c is also sounded like *s* when accompanied by a little mark called a cedilla (*ç*), as *ça*, that; *leçon*, lesson; *reçu*, received.

g is hard before *a, o, u*, as *garçon*, boy; *gomme*, gum; *guttural*.

g is soft before *e, i*, as *Georges, girafe*.

gn is generally liquid, as *champagne, Boulogne*.