Échelle québécoise des niveaux de compétence en français

QUICK REFERENCE—COURTESY TRANSLATION

This document was created to support beneficiaries of the *Vers l'accès et l'utilisation des services d'emploi en région des Québécois d'expression anglaise (2024-2026)* program . The original, complete *Échelle québécoise des niveaux de compétence en français* was first developed in 2000 and updated most recently in 2022 by Québec's **ministère de la Langue française**.[1]

This document provides a courtesy translation of key content required for English-speaking program users to assess their French language proficiency according to the provincial scale. It is a companion document and not meant to replace nor reproduce the original.

Secrétariat aux relations avec les Québécois d'expression anglaise

Québec

1.https://cdn-contenu.quebec.ca/cdn-contenu/francisation/MIFI/referentiel/NM_echelle_niveaux_competences.pdf

Using the scale

Use the translated tables in this quick reference to help determine where you land on Québec's French language proficiency scale.

The scale uses a range from 1 to 12 (with 1 being the lowest level of proficiency and 12 being the highest) and the tables provide a short description of each level in the range to help you choose which number corresponds best with your ability in that particular French language skill category.

Beginner				Intermediate				Advanced			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
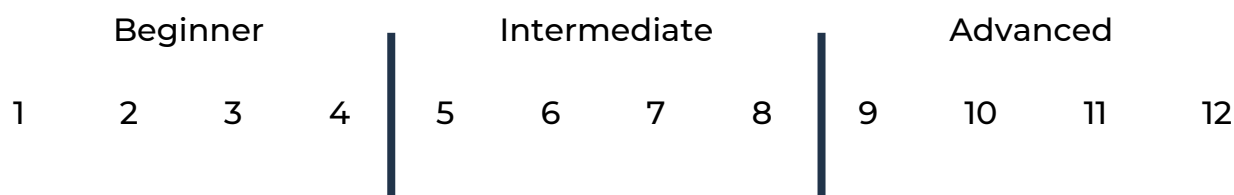
There are 4 French language skill categories to measure:

- Oral comprehension (listening)

- Oral production (speaking)

- Written comprehension (reading)

- Written production (writing)

Oral comprehension (listening)

Progression of general descriptions

Beginner (minimal, elementary, functional)	
1	The person understands a few key words or common expressions in requests or information related to personal data or his/her **immediate environment**.
2	The person understands very brief statements related to their **immediate environment**. Understands factual, explicit, and concrete requests or information formulated in simple syntactic constructions. Understands standard vocabulary.
3	The person understands brief statements concerning activities or services related to daily life. Understands factual, explicit, and concrete requests or information formulated in simple syntactic constructions. Understands standard vocabulary.
4	Understands the **general meaning** of brief conversations related to current activities or situations. Understands factual, explicit, and concrete requests or information formulated in simple syntactic constructions. Understands standard vocabulary.

Intermediate (Interactive, autonomous)	
5	**Understands the gist** of conversations on **current topics**. Understands factual, explicit, and concrete statements formulated in simple or sometimes complex syntactic constructions. Understands a varied vocabulary.
6	Understands the details of conversations or **cultural productions** on a variety of **current topics**. Understands factual, explicit, and concrete statements formulated in simple or sometimes complex syntactic constructions. Understands a varied vocabulary.
7	Can understand the **main points** of conversations, **cultural productions**, or presentations on **general or specific topics**. Understands concrete and sometimes implicit statements formulated in sometimes complex syntactic constructions. Understands a varied vocabulary.
8	Understands conversations, **cultural productions**, or presentations on **general or specific topics**. Understands sometimes implicit and sometimes abstract statements formulated in sometimes complex syntactic constructions. Understands a varied vocabulary.

Advanced (with ease, nuanced)	
9	The person understands **with ease** exchanges or presentations related to his/her field of expertise or interest. Understands sometimes implicit and sometimes abstract statements formulated in complex syntactic constructions. Understands an extensive vocabulary.
10	The person has a **deep understanding** of exchanges or presentations related to his/her field of expertise or interest. Understands implicit and abstract statements formulated in complex syntactic constructions. Extensive vocabulary.
11	The person **interprets** exchanges or presentations on a **variety of subjects**. Understands implicit and abstract statements formulated in complex syntactic constructions. Understands an extensive vocabulary.
12	**Appropriately interprets** exchanges or presentations on **subjects at the crossroads of different fields**. Understands implicit and abstract statements formulated in complex syntactic constructions. Understands an extensive vocabulary.

Progression parameters— Oral comprehension (listening)

Beginner						
	Communication	**Context**	**Topics**	**Content**	**Range**	**Language components**
1	**Minimal**	**Predictable**, undemanding, generally informal, facilitated by the face-to-face situation, by **visual cues** or by the constant help of an intermediary	Related to the **immediate environment**	Factual Explicit Concrete	Some key words and common expressions	Common vocabulary
2	**Minimal**	**Predictable**, undemanding, generally informal, facilitated by the face-to-face situation, by **visual cues** or by the constant help of an intermediary	Related to the **immediate environment**	Factual Explicit Concrete **Linear organization**	Very brief remarks	Common vocabulary Simple sentence constructions
3	**Elementary**	**Predictable**, undemanding, generally informal, facilitated by the face-to-face situation, by **visual cues** or by the frequent help of an intermediary	Related to daily life	Factual Explicit Concrete **Linear organization**	Brief remarks	Common vocabulary Simple sentence constructions
4	**Functional**	**Predictable**, undemanding, generally informal, sometimes facilitated by **visual cues** or by the occasional help of an intermediary	**Current**	Factual Explicit Concrete **Linear organization**	Brief conversations	Common vocabulary Simple sentence constructions
Intermediate						
	Communication	**Context**	**Topics**	**Content**	**Range**	**Language components**
5	**Interactive**	**Predictable**, undemanding, sometimes **formal**, facilitated by the occasional help of an intermediary	**Current**	Factual Explicit Concrete **Linear organization**	Conversations	Varied vocabulary Simple or sometimes complex sentence constructions
6	**Interactive**		**Current**	Factual Explicit Concrete Sometimes organized in a **non-linear** way	Conversations and **cultural productions**	Varied vocabulary Simple or sometimes complex sentence constructions

	Communication	Context	Topics	Content	Range	Language components
7	**Autonomous**	Partly predictable, sometimes **demanding**, sometimes **formal**	Of **general** or **specific** interest	Sometimes implicit Concrete Sometimes organized in a **non-linear** way	Conversations, **cultural productions**, and presentations	Varied vocabulary Sometimes complex sentence constructions
8	**Autonomous**	Partly predictable, sometimes **demanding**, sometimes **formal**	Of **general** or **specific** interest	Sometimes implicit Sometimes abstract Sometimes organized in a **non-linear** way	Conversations, **cultural productions**, and presentations	Varied vocabulary Sometimes complex sentence constructions
	Advanced					
	Communication	Context	Topics	Content	Range	Language components
9	**With ease**	Not predictable, **demanding**, **formal**	**Related to their area of expertise** or **interest**	Sometimes implicit Sometimes abstract **Non-linear** organization	Discussions and lectures	Extensive vocabulary Complex sentence constructions
10	**With ease**	Not predictable, **demanding**, **formal**	**Related to their area of expertise** or **interest**	Implicit Abstract **Non-linear** organization	Discussions and lectures	Extensive vocabulary Complex sentence constructions
11	**Nuanced**	Not predictable, **demanding**, **formal**	**Diverse**	Implicit Abstract **Non-linear** organization	Discussions and lectures	Extensive vocabulary Complex sentence constructions
12	**Nuanced**	Not predictable, **demanding**, **formal**	**At the crossroads of different fields**	Implicit Abstract **Non-linear** organization	Discussions and lectures	Extensive vocabulary Complex sentence constructions

Oral production (speaking)

Progression of general descriptions

Beginner (minimal, elementary, functional)	
1	The person requests or provides information related to personal data or his/her **immediate environment**. Uses isolated words or memorized everyday expressions.
2	The person asks for or provides factual, concrete information related to his/her **immediate environment** in very brief sentences. Uses standard vocabulary.
3	The person makes brief statements about activities or services related to daily life. Requests or provides factual, concrete information using simple syntactic constructions. Uses everyday vocabulary.
4	The person participates in brief conversations related to current activities or situations. Requests or provides factual, concrete information using simple syntactic constructions. Uses standard vocabulary.

Intermediate (Interactive, autonomous)	
5	The person communicates on **current topics** in conversations or short presentations. Exchanges factual, concrete information using simple or sometimes complex syntax. Uses standard vocabulary.
6	The person communicates in **detail** on a variety of **current topics** in conversations or short presentations. Exchanges factual, concrete statements using simple or sometimes complex syntactic constructions. Uses a varied vocabulary.
7	The person communicates on **subjects of general interest** or **specific topics** in conversations or presentations. Exchanges concrete statements using sometimes complex syntactic constructions. Uses a varied vocabulary.
8	The person communicates in a **structured** way on **subjects of general interest** or on **specific topics** in conversations or presentations. Exchanges sometimes abstract statements using sometimes complex syntactic constructions. Uses a varied vocabulary.

Advanced (with ease, nuanced)	
9	The person communicates **with ease** on **subjects related to his/her field of expertise or interest** in exchanges or presentations. Sometimes makes abstract statements using complex syntax. Uses a rich vocabulary.
10	The person communicates with **precision** on **subjects related to his/her field of expertise or interest** in exchanges or presentations. Uses complex syntax to express abstract ideas. Uses a rich vocabulary.
11	The person communicates in a **finely articulated** way on a **variety of subjects** in exchanges or presentations. Expresses abstract ideas using complex syntax. Uses a rich vocabulary.
12	The person communicates creatively on **subjects at the crossroads of different fields** in exchanges or presentations. Expresses abstract ideas using complex syntax. Uses a rich vocabulary.

Progression parameters— Oral production (speaking)

	Beginner					
	Communication	**Context**	**Topics**	**Content**	**Range**	**Language components**
1	**Minimal**	**Predictable**, undemanding, generally informal, facilitated by the face-to-face situation, by **visual cues** or by the constant help of an intermediary	Related to the **immediate environment**	Factual Concrete	Isolated words or memorized phrases	Common vocabulary
2	**Minimal**	**Predictable**, undemanding, generally informal, facilitated by the face-to-face situation, by **visual cues** or by the constant help of an intermediary	Related to the **immediate environment**	Factual Concrete **Linear organization**	Very brief remarks	Common vocabulary Simple sentence constructions
3	**Elementary**	**Predictable**, undemanding, generally informal, facilitated by the face-to-face situation, by **visual cues** or by the frequent help of an intermediary	Related to daily life	Factual Concrete **Linear organization**	Brief remarks	Common vocabulary Simple sentence constructions
4	**Functional**	**Predictable**, undemanding, generally informal, sometimes facilitated by **visual cues** or by the occasional help of an intermediary	**Current**	Factual Explicit Concrete **Linear organization**	Brief conversations	Common vocabulary Simple sentence constructions
	Intermediate					
	Communication	**Context**	**Topics**	**Content**	**Range**	**Language components**
5	**Interactive**	**Predictable**, undemanding, sometimes **formal**, facilitated by the occasional help of an intermediary	**Current**	Factual Explicit Concrete **Linear organization**	Conversations and short presentations	Varied vocabulary Simple or sometimes complex sentence constructions
6	**Interactive**	**Predictable**, undemanding, sometimes **formal**, facilitated by the occasional help of an intermediary	**Current**	Factual Explicit Concrete Sometimes organized in a **non-linear** way	Conversations and short presentations	Varied vocabulary Simple or sometimes complex sentence constructions

	Communication	Context	Topics	Content	Range	Language components
7	**Autonomous**	Partly predictable, sometimes **demanding**, sometimes **formal**	Of **general** or **specific** interest	Sometimes implicit Concrete Sometimes organized in a **non-linear** way	Conversations and presentations	Varied vocabulary Sometimes complex sentence constructions
8	**Autonomous**	Partly predictable, sometimes **demanding**, sometimes **formal**	Of **general** or **specific** interest	Sometimes implicit Sometimes abstract Sometimes organized in a **non-linear** way	Conversation and presentations	Varied vocabulary Sometimes complex sentence constructions
			Advanced			
	Communication	Context	Topics	Content	Range	Language components
9	**With ease**	Not predictable, **demanding**, **formal**	**Related to their area of expertise** or **interest**	Sometimes abstract Organized to ensure message coherence	Discussions and lectures	Rich vocabulary Sometimes complex sentence constructions
10	**With ease**	Not predictable, **demanding**, **formal**	**Related to their area of expertise** or **interest**	Abstract Organized to ensure message coherence	Discussions and lectures	Rich vocabulary Complex sentence constructions
11	**Nuanced**	Not predictable, **demanding**, **formal**	**Diverse**	Abstract Organized to ensure message effectiveness and coherence	Discussions and lectures	Rich vocabulary Complex sentence constructions
12	**Nuanced**	Not predictable, **demanding**, **formal**	**At the crossroads of different fields**	Abstract Organized to ensure message effectiveness and coherence	Discussions and lectures	Rich vocabulary Complex sentence constructions

Written comprehension (reading)

Progression of general descriptions

Beginner (minimal, elementary, functional)	
1	The person understands a few key words or common expressions in texts of a few lines related to personal data or his/her **immediate environment**.
2	The person understands texts of a few lines related to his/her **immediate environment**. Understands factual, explicit, and concrete content formulated in simple syntactic constructions. Understands standard vocabulary.
3	The person understands one-paragraph texts about activities or services related to daily life. Understands factual, explicit, and concrete content with simple syntax and linear organization. Understands standard vocabulary.
4	The person understands the **general meaning** of two- or three-paragraph texts about everyday activities or situations. Understands factual, explicit, and concrete content formulated in simple syntactic constructions. Understands standard vocabulary.

Intermediate (Interactive, autonomous)	
5	The person understands the **gist** of texts of a few paragraphs on **current topics**. Understands factual, explicit, and concrete content formulated in simple or sometimes complex syntactic constructions. Understands a varied vocabulary.
6	The person understands the details of one- to two-page texts on a variety of **current topics**. Understands factual, explicit, and concrete content formulated in simple or sometimes complex syntactic constructions. Understands a varied vocabulary.
7	The person understands the **gist** of one- to two-page texts on **topics of general or specific interest**. Understands concrete and sometimes implicit content formulated in sometimes complex syntactic constructions. Understands a varied vocabulary.
8	The person understands multi-page texts on **topics of general or specific interest**. Understands content that is sometimes implicit and sometimes abstract, formulated in syntactic constructions that are sometimes complex. Understands a varied vocabulary.

Advanced (with ease, nuanced)	
9	The person understands a variety of publications on **subjects related to his or her field of expertise or interest**. Understands content that is sometimes implicit and sometimes abstract, formulated in complex syntactic constructs. Understands an extensive vocabulary.
10	The person has a **thorough understanding** of a variety of publications on **subjects related to his/her field of expertise or interest**. Understands implicit and abstract content formulated in complex syntactic constructions. Extensive vocabulary.
11	The person **interprets** a variety of publications on a **variety of subjects**. Understands implicit and abstract content formulated in complex syntactic constructions. Understands an extensive vocabulary.
12	The person has an **appropriate interpretation** of a variety of publications on **subjects at the crossroads of different fields**. Understands implicit and abstract content formulated in complex syntactic constructions. Understands an extensive vocabulary.

Progression parameters— Written comprehension (reading)

	Communication	Context	Topics	Content	Range	Language components
Beginner						
1	**Minimal**	**Predictable**, undemanding, generally informal, facilitated by **visual cues**	Related to the **immediate environment**	Factual Explicit Concrete	Some key words and common expressions	Common vocabulary
2	**Minimal**	**Predictable**, undemanding, generally informal, facilitated by **visual cues**	Related to the **immediate environment**	Factual Explicit Concrete **Linear organization**	Texts with a few lines	Common vocabulary Simple sentence constructions
3	**Elementary**	**Predictable**, undemanding, generally informal, facilitated by **visual cues**	Related to daily life	Factual Explicit Concrete **Linear organization**	One-paragraph texts	Common vocabulary Simple sentence constructions
4	**Functional**	**Predictable**, undemanding, generally informal, facilitated by **visual cues**	**Current**	Factual Explicit Concrete **Linear organization**	Two or three-paragraph texts	Common vocabulary Simple sentence constructions
Intermediate						
5	**Interactive**	**Predictable**, undemanding, sometimes **formal**, facilitated by visual cues	**Current**	Factual Explicit Concrete **Linear organization**	Texts with a few paragraphs	Varied vocabulary Simple or sometimes complex sentence constructions
6	**Interactive**	**Predictable**, undemanding, sometimes **formal**, facilitated by visual cues	**Current**	Factual Explicit Concrete Sometimes organized in a **non-linear** way	One- to two-page texts	Varied vocabulary Simple or sometimes complex sentence constructions

	Communication	Context	Topics	Content	Range	Language components
7	**Autonomous**	Partly predictable, sometimes **demanding**, sometimes **formal**	Of **general** or **specific** interest	Sometimes implicit Concrete Sometimes organized in a **non-linear** way	One- to two-page texts	Varied vocabulary Sometimes complex sentence constructions
8	**Autonomous**	Partly predictable, sometimes **demanding**, sometimes **formal**	Of **general** or **specific** interest	Sometimes implicit Sometimes abstract Sometimes organized in a **non-linear** way	Texts with several pages	Varied vocabulary Sometimes complex sentence constructions
	Advanced					
	Communication	**Context**	**Topics**	**Content**	**Range**	**Language components**
9	**With ease**	Not predictable, **demanding**	**Related to their area of expertise** or **interest**	Sometimes implicit Sometimes abstract **Non-linear** organization	Varied publications	Extensive vocabulary Sometimes complex sentence constructions
10	**With ease**	Not predictable, **demanding**	**Related to their area of expertise** or **interest**	Implicit Abstract **Non-linear** organization	Varied publications	Extensive vocabulary Complex sentence constructions
11	**Nuanced**	Not predictable, **demanding**	**Diverse**	Implicit Abstract **Non-linear** organization	Varied publications	Extensive vocabulary Complex sentence constructions
12	**Nuanced**	Not predictable, **demanding**	**At the crossroads of different fields**	Implicit Abstract **Non-linear** organization	Varied publications	Extensive vocabulary Complex sentence constructions

Written production (writing)

Progression of general descriptions

	Beginner (minimal, elementary, functional)
1	The person transcribes information related to personal data or the **immediate environment**. They use isolated words or memorized everyday expressions.
2	The person records brief, factual, concrete information about his/her **immediate environment**. Uses memorized everyday expressions and vocabulary.
3	The person writes short sentences about everyday activities and services. Communicates factual, concrete content using simple syntax. Uses standard vocabulary.
4	The person writes one-paragraph texts on everyday activities and situations. Communicates factual, concrete content using simple syntax. Uses standard vocabulary.

	Intermediate (Interactive, autonomous)
5	The person writes short texts of a few paragraphs on **current topics**. Communicates factual, concrete content using simple or occasionally complex syntax. Uses standard vocabulary.
6	The person writes short, detailed texts of a few paragraphs on a variety of **current topics**. Communicates factual, concrete content using simple or occasionally complex syntax. Uses a varied vocabulary.
7	The person writes one- to two-page texts on **topics of general or specific interest**. Communicates concrete content using sometimes complex syntax. Uses a varied vocabulary.
8	The person writes structured one- or two-page texts on **topics of general or specific interest**. Communicates content that is sometimes abstract, using syntax that is sometimes complex. Uses a varied vocabulary.

	Advanced (with ease, nuanced)
9	The person writes multi-page texts on **subjects related to his/her field of expertise or interest**. Communicates content that is sometimes abstract, using syntax that is sometimes complex. Uses a rich vocabulary.
10	The person writes **accurate**, multi-page texts on **subjects related to his/her field of expertise or interest**. Communicates abstract content using sometimes complex syntax. Uses a rich vocabulary.
11	The person writes **sophisticated**, multi-page texts on a **wide range of subjects**. Communicates abstract content using complex syntax. Uses a rich vocabulary.
12	The person can write **creatively** on **subjects at the crossroads of different fields**. Communicates abstract content using complex syntax. Uses a rich vocabulary.

Progression parameters— Written production (writing)

	Beginner					
	Communication	**Context**	**Topics**	**Content**	**Range**	**Language components**
1	**Minimal**	**Predictable**, undemanding, generally informal	Related to the **immediate environment**	Factual Concrete	Isolated words or memorized phrases	Common vocabulary
2	**Minimal**	**Predictable**, undemanding, generally informal	Related to the **immediate environment**	Factual Concrete	Memorized common expressions	Common vocabulary
3	**Elementary**	**Predictable**, undemanding, generally informal	Related to daily life	Factual Concrete **Linear organization**	A few brief phrases	Common vocabulary Simple sentence constructions
4	**Functional**	**Predictable**, undemanding, generally informal	**Current**	Factual Concrete **Linear organization**	One-paragraph texts	Common vocabulary Simple sentence constructions
	Intermediate					
	Communication	**Context**	**Topics**	**Content**	**Range**	**Language components**
5	**Interactive**	**Predictable**, undemanding, sometimes **formal**	**Current**	Factual Concrete **Linear organization**	Texts with a few paragraphs	Varied vocabulary Simple or sometimes complex sentence constructions
6	**Interactive**	**Predictable**, undemanding, sometimes **formal**	**Current**	Factual Concrete **Linear organization**	Texts with a few paragraphs	Varied vocabulary Simple or sometimes complex sentence constructions

	Communication	Context	Topics	Content	Range	Language components
7	**Autonomous**	Partly predictable, sometimes **demanding**, sometimes **formal**	Of **general** or **specific** interest	Concrete Sometimes organized in a **non-linear** way	One- to two-page texts	Varied vocabulary Sometimes complex sentence constructions
8	**Autonomous**	Partly predictable, sometimes **demanding**, sometimes **formal**	Of **general** or **specific** interest	Sometimes implicit Sometimes abstract Sometimes organized in a **non-linear** way	One- to two-page texts	Varied vocabulary Sometimes complex sentence constructions
	Advanced					
	Communication	Context	Topics	Content	Range	Language components
9	**With ease**	Not predictable, **demanding**, **formal**	**Related to their area of expertise** or **interest**	Sometimes abstract Organized to ensure message coherence	Texts with several pages	Rich vocabulary Sometimes complex sentence constructions
10	**With ease**	Not predictable, **demanding**, **formal**	**Related to their area of expertise** or **interest**	Abstract Organized to ensure message coherence	Texts with several pages	Rich vocabulary Complex sentence constructions
11	**Nuanced**	Not predictable, **demanding**, **formal**	**Diverse**	Abstract Organized to ensure message effectiveness and coherence	Texts with several pages	Rich vocabulary Complex sentence constructions
12	**Nuanced**	Not predictable, **demanding**, **formal**	**At the crossroads of different fields**	Abstract Organized to ensure message effectiveness and coherence	Texts with several pages	Rich vocabulary Complex sentence constructions