

The Capretz Method Second Edition

French in Action

A Beginning Course in Language and Culture

Study Guide

P a r t 2

BARRY LYDGATE

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with Sylvie Mathé, Norman Susskind, John Westlie, Laurence Wylie

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S T U D Y G U I D E / P A R T 2

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INTRODUCTION Using the Study Guide

The purpose of this guide is to show how the video, audio, and print components of *French in Action* fit together into a coherent learning system and how individual users can get the most out of the course.

Before beginning, you should read lesson 1 in the textbook, which describes the function of the different components of the course. Each lesson consists of:

- a video program
- an audio program
- a textbook chapter
- a workbook chapter
- a study guide chapter.

The study guide will lead you through each lesson, and you should follow it step by step. Briefly, the principal steps are these:

1. *Preview the study guide.* Read carefully the story summary at the beginning of each study guide lesson, and review the notes on culture and communication. These will prepare you for the video program.

2. *View the video program.* You will retain more from each video program if you can view it more than once. If you are using the course via public TV broadcast or cable and have access to a videocassette recorder, tape the lesson off-air. If the video programs are available in a language lab or media center, review them there. Remember, though, that the purpose of the video program is to expose you in a preliminary way to the material of the lesson and to help develop your feel for communication in French. You will not need to take notes, and you shouldn't worry if you don't understand everything you hear and see. Your objective is to get the gist of what is going on. You won't be expected to learn any word or structure in depth from the video program alone. More extensive practice in understanding and using French comes later, as you work with the workbook, audio program, and textbook.

3. *Complete the lesson.* After you have watched the video program, you should start immediately with the section of the lesson called *Text work-up*, and proceed through the workbook, audio program, and textbook, with the study guide as your companion and road map.

As you begin *French in Action*, keep the following in mind:

- *The importance of regular study.* You will achieve the best results in this course if you do the lessons regularly. Learning a language is like creating a painting or writing a short story: success depends on consistent, steady effort over time. Avoid letting too much time go by between periods of study. And avoid trying to complete several les-

sons at one sitting; the day-to-day contact you need in order to develop your listening and speaking skills can't be compressed.

- *Determining what is basic.* At the beginning of each study guide lesson you will find a list of features of the language treated in that lesson. Check marks (✓) identify the basic, minimal material of the lesson—material that you will be expected to learn and that you should cover carefully. While the balance of the lesson is not optional (you should complete the entire lesson), you may choose how much to concentrate on the remaining material, according to your interest and the time available.
- *Testing; written and oral assignments.* This course has been designed to help you get into a regular rhythm of study and practice. At the end of the study guide you will find a summary quiz for each lesson. If you are taking *French in Action* as a tele-course, your instructor will probably assign these quizzes, and you should complete and return them following the information in your course syllabus. The summary quizzes for even-numbered lessons (beginning with lesson 4) contain an oral production section for you to record on an audiocassette and submit to your instructor. In addition, topics for additional written and oral assignments are suggested in each study guide lesson. These are optional, and may or may not be assigned by your instructor. Check the course syllabus for directions.
- *Dealing with overload.* Most language-learners experience a certain amount of disorientation at their first contact with a new language. If you are new to language study, or if you have studied language via more conventional approaches, you may find the early lessons of this course particularly challenging and time-consuming. If you do, it is because the course *immerses* you in French and asks you to make sense of the language on its own terms, without the aid of English.

This immersion approach is highly effective, but it is a bit untraditional, and you may find it overwhelming and even frustrating at the beginning. You will quickly get used to it, however. First of all, like any new skill, understanding and speaking French gets easier as you learn the ropes. After a few lessons you will build up a critical mass of familiarity with the course and with the language. From that point on, everything will go faster and more smoothly. Second, and even more important, although you may find it frustrating at first to study French without the crutch of English, you are developing survival skills that will serve you well in the long run—skills that you would not be likely to acquire in a conventional course.

- *Using the audio program.* As you work with the audio program, resist the natural inclination to whisper or mumble when you repeat and answer. Your goal is to learn to speak French, and there is no reason to be modest. Get into the habit of saying everything *out loud*, as if you were talking back to a telephone answering machine, or speaking to someone halfway across the room. If it helps, try to mimic the voices you hear, as though you were making fun of them. (Most students are experts at making fun of their teachers, so here is a golden opportunity.)

- *Audio cues.* Most of the workbook exercises have an audio component. You will notice that the phrases you hear on the audio program for many of these exercises are printed in the workbook just beneath the instructions for completing each exercise. You should be able to complete most of the exercises without looking at these phrases, and you should always try to do so. The printed cues are given for reference only if you need them.
- *The importance of participation.* Anyone can learn to communicate in French and discover the satisfaction—and the fun—of being able to say steadily more and more. The speed with which you progress, however, depends on your willingness to take the initiative in speaking. That is why your active, verbal participation—your *performance*—in this course is so important.

As you practice speaking up and speaking out, you will get a great deal of support in the lessons that follow. There are role-playing and interactive exercises in abundance in this course, and for good reason. The ability to imagine yourself as a speaker of French is an indispensable first step toward actually becoming one. By assigning you various French-speaking parts, these role-playing exercises help you get used to lending yourself to the language and projecting yourself as a speaker of it. The faster you can cultivate this skill, the more rapid your progress will be.

Good luck—*bonne chance!* And *bon travail!*

PHONETIC SYMBOLS The sounds of French

In the workbook and study guide lessons, you will see the sounds of French written as symbols contained between two slashes: / /. These symbols of the International Phonetic Association are used because conventional letters are not reliable guides to the sounds of a language—too many of them can be pronounced differently from language to language, and even within a single language.

Below are the symbols for the basic sounds of French, grouped into categories of related sounds. Next to each sound is a word that contains it. You will learn how to make these sounds and see which spellings are associated with them in the lessons that follow.

Oral vowels

/i/	il
/e/	divorcé
/ɛ/	père
/a/	grave
/o/	gros
/ɔ/	personne
/u/	toutou
/y/	tutu
/ø/	deux
/œ/	sœur
/ə/	le

Nasal vowels

/ɛ̃/	hein
/ɑ̃/	roman
/ɔ̃/	allons
/œ̃/	aucun

Consonants

/p/, /b/	papa, banc
/t/, /d/	taxi, drame
/k/, /g/	calcul, garçon
/f/, /v/	fille, Véronique
/s/, /z/	poisson, poison
/ʃ /, /ʒ/	chat, jardin
/l/	elle
/r/	mardi
/m/, /n/	madame, Noël
/ɲ/	saignant

Semivowels

/j/	voyons
/ɥ/	huit
/w/	Louis

Story summary for lessons 2–26

On a beautiful spring morning, his first day in Paris, Robert Taylor sets off to explore the Latin Quarter. He follows some student demonstrators into the courtyard of the Sorbonne. Mireille Belleau, on her way to class, happens to end up in the same place. They catch each other's eye, and meet.

They see each other a number of times over the next several days, sharing interests and experiences. They discover they have an acquaintance in common, Mireille's godmother, who is a childhood friend of Robert's mother. As they get to know each other, they seem unaware that a mysterious man in black has taken an interest in their banter.

Mireille and Robert are invited to dinner at the home of their common acquaintance. By this time Robert has become very interested in Mireille—an interest fueled, perhaps, by her friendly but noncommittal attitude toward him. Robert would love to accompany Mireille on a trip she plans to take to Chartres. After dinner, he asks her when he can see her again. She gives him her phone number and tells him to call her the following Monday.

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LESSON 27 All manner of transportation I

THE STORY

9 a.m. Monday. Mireille's phone rings. Wrong number; the caller wanted the Salvation Army. At 9:03, the phone rings again. This time it's Robert. Timidly, he asks if he can see her today. She's going to Chartres, to visit that little museum near the cathedral. Could he come along? If he insists. How should they get there—rent a car? Too expensive. Bus? Too slow. Airplane? Chartres is too close. On foot? It isn't that close. Bicycle, horseback, motorcycle, hydrofoil, helicopter, all rejected. What, then? The train! Of course! All Robert has to do is take the métro to the gare Montparnasse. Lost? Nonsense! No one gets lost in the métro!

Next we see Robert lost in the métro—or nearly, in spite of Mireille's excellent directions. Finally, only ten minutes late, he finds her at Montparnasse. Robert wants to buy two first-class tickets, but Mireille already has hers, and it's second class. When everything is in order they board the train, which departs on time.

As the train passes through Versailles, Mireille suggests they drop the formal *vous*. Even though *tu* is common among young people, this represents a step forward. And she invites him to dinner with her family on Thursday and to a movie afterward. Things are moving along!

NOTES ON CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION

- **The train.** Trains in France are one of the best and safest means of transportation. Frequent, fast, comfortable, and punctual, they make traveling through the country easy and pleasurable. The national rail network is administered by the Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer (SNCF), a state-run company whose latest achievement is the development of the *train à grande vitesse* or TGV, the fastest train in the world.
- **The château of Versailles** began as a hunting pavilion under Louis XIII (1601–1643). Louis XIV (1638–1715) turned it into a monumental palace and made it his capital; it remained the royal seat until the fall of the monarchy in 1789. An architectural masterpiece, the château has elaborate interior decoration, furniture, and works of art, which, with its incomparable gardens, make Versailles the archetype of French classical art.
- **Body language and the telephone.** Only words are transmitted in telephone conversations, yet the role of the body in communication is so automatic that expressions and gestures contribute to the message even though their share of it does not get through. Turn off the sound and watch Robert's and Mireille's facial expressions and gestures on the phone: the eyes, for example, which roll up as the speaker searches for a solution when a woman gets the wrong number and asks Mireille for the Salvation Army,

when Robert asks Mireille if he may accompany her to Chartres, when he considers the best way to get to Chartres, when Mireille ponders her replies.

CONTENT AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES OF LESSON 27

This lesson shows ways in which French speakers insist, express fear, and talk about making mistakes. It also shows how they talk about getting places via various modes of transportation.

The following points are highlighted in lesson 27 (you should concentrate on sections marked with a ✓):

- *Se tromper*
- *Avoir peur*
- *Tenir à*
- Y and *en*, review and extension (27.15–27.19)
- ✓ • A and *en* with means of transportation
- ✓ • The conditional (27.24–27.28)
- Masculine and feminine forms *-eur*, *-euse*, *-eux*, *-euse*

ASSIMILATION OF THE TEXT

27.1 Text work-up

The mise en œuvre of the text will give you a working familiarity with the important words and structures of the lesson, in preparation for explanations of their function and practice in their use.

Bear in mind that you are not expected to learn word for word all the material contained in the work-up. Its purpose is to single out and help you focus on elements of the text that you will be working with in detail later on.

- You should begin the mise en œuvre as soon as possible after you have viewed the video program for lesson 27. Listen to the mise en œuvre on the audio recording, repeating and answering according to the musical signals (short signal = repeat; long signal = answer). Complete 27.1 on the audio program **before** you look at the printed text in the textbook. Remember to speak up and speak out.

27.2–27.4 Aural comprehension and oral production

This section will give you practice in associating French phrases with mental images of the situations to which they refer, without having to go through the laborious process of translation.

- In 27.2, you see a series of illustrations. In phase 1 of the exercise, study the numbered pictures as you listen to the phrases that correspond to them on the audio recording. In phase 2, these phrases are presented in a different order, labeled A through H. Find the illustration that best fits the phrase you hear and write the identifying letter beneath it.

✓ Check your answers in key 27.2 at the back of the workbook.

- In 27.3, you will hear a series of dialogues. Take the part of one of the characters, as indicated, mimicking his or her speech as closely as possible. You will hear the line again for confirmation. (The characters you are to play are indicated in the workbook.)
- In 27.4, listen to the brief passage on the audio program, and answer the questions that follow.

✓ Check your answers in keys 27.3 and 27.4 at the back of the workbook.

THE “TEXT” AND THE TEXTBOOK

Turn to your textbook and study the text of lesson 27 and the accompanying illustrations. Then read the first set of questions that follows the text and answer them out loud. (They will be familiar to you from the *mise en œuvre* you just completed with the audio program.) If you find you have any difficulty answering, return to section 27.1 and repeat it, looking at the questions in the textbook as you listen to them on the recording.

TOWARD COMMUNICATION

27.5 Activation: Pronunciation; vowel sounds (review)

- Repeat the words and expressions you hear, paying close attention to the vowel sounds. Be especially careful
 1. not to stress them too much (there should be a slight stress—no more—on the final vowel of a rhythmic group, and nowhere else);
 2. not to let your voice slide from one vowel sound to another in the same syllable, as often happens in English: *how* = *ha-oo*;
 3. not to let their sound be influenced or distorted by the sound of the following consonant.

27.6, 27.7 Observation and activation: Errors; *se tromper de*

Everyone makes mistakes, so *se tromper de*, followed by a noun, is a very valuable expression. Use the noun to express the kind of mistake that has been made: if Robert has once again gotten the wrong door, say *il s’est trompé de porte*; if the woman who calls the Belleaus’ telephone number wanted to reach the Salvation Army, say *elle s’est trompée de numéro*, and so forth.

- The statements you hear in exercise 27.7 draw attention to people's errors. Say that they have made a mistake and indicate what kind of mistake by using *se tromper de* and the appropriate noun. Notice in the example that the noun will not always be contained in the sentence you hear. You may need to infer it from the context.

27.8, 27.9 Observation and activation: Easy solutions; *n'avoir qu'à* + infinitive

Need to get to the gare Montparnasse? The expression *n'avoir qu'à* used with an infinitive suggests a simple solution to your problem: "Vous **n'avez qu'à** prendre le métro!" All you have to do is what is indicated by the verb in the infinitive following *n'avoir qu'à*.

- In exercise 27.9, various people find themselves in situations that require an immediate solution. They are told what to do. Point out how simple each solution is, using *n'avoir qu'à* followed by an infinitive.

27.10, 27.11 Observation and activation: *Avoir peur de*

Mireille is afraid she and Robert will never make it to Chartres if they drive a rental car. What worries her is the possibility of a breakdown, and she expresses her fear by using *avoir peur* with *de* and an infinitive, as shown in chart 27.10.

- In exercise 27.11, various people don't want certain things to happen. Ask whether they're afraid of these things taking place, using *avoir peur de* followed by an infinitive.

27.12–27.14 Observation and activation: *Insistence; tenir à*

Although he gets lost frequently, Robert is a tenacious fellow. He has his heart set on going to Chartres with Mireille, a desire that can be expressed by *tenir à* and an infinitive: "Il **tient à** aller à Chartres."

Notice that what one insists on (*à* and the entire expression that follows it) may be replaced by *y*: "Il tient **à aller à Chartres**" → "Il **y** tient."

- In exercise 27.13, you will be asked whether various people very much want to do certain things. Say they do, using *tenir à*.
- In exercise 27.14, you will be asked whether you or other people want to do certain things. Say yes, you and they insist on doing them, using *tenir à*.

27.15–27.19 Observation and activation: Comings and goings; *y, en* (review and extension)

Chart 27.15 illustrates the use of two pronouns: *y* to refer to a place to which one is going, and *en* to refer to a place from which one is coming. Both are used in situations where the identity of that place is already known from the context. In chart 27.16 you can see how

these pronouns are positioned between the subject and the auxiliary verb in the *passé composé*. (*Y* and *en* are treated in this respect, and in general, like personal pronouns).

- In 27.17, you will be asked whether people are going to various destinations. Answer yes, using *y* to refer to each destination.
- In 27.18, you will be asked whether people are coming back from various places. Answer yes, using *en* to refer to those places.
- In 27.19, you will be asked if people are coming back from or are going to various locations. Say no, they're doing the opposite, using *y* or *en* to refer to the locations that are mentioned.

27.20, 27.21 Observation and activation: Means of transportation; *en*, *à*

Some conveyances enclose travelers and others simply carry them perched on top. Discussing how to go to Chartres, Robert and Mireille use *en* when they talk about riding inside (*en voiture*, *en train*). When they discuss means of transportation that require standing or straddling, they use *à* (*à cheval*, *à ski*, *à bicyclette*).

- In exercise 27.21, determine whether each conveyance encloses the traveler or not and complete the sentences, using *en* or *à* as appropriate.

✓ Check your answers in key 27.21 at the back of the workbook.

27.22, 27.23 Observation and activation: Questions of speed; *vite*, *rapide*

In chart 27.22 two expressions are used to characterize things that move fast. *Vite* is an adverb, and so modifies a verb (“Il **va** vite,” “Elle **est** vite **allée** chez elle”). *Rapide* is an adjective, and so modifies a noun (“Le TGV est rapide”) or a pronoun (“Il est très rapide”).

- In written exercise 27.23, decide from the context whether each sentence makes more sense with *vite* or *rapide*, and write the appropriate expression in your workbook.

✓ Check your answers in key 27.23 at the back of the workbook.

27.24–27.28 Observation and activation: Reality and conditional supposition

You saw in lesson 2 that in addition to having different **tenses** to refer to action at various times (present, past, future), verbs come in a variety of **moods** that correspond to different functions (indicative, infinitive, imperative).

The function of the **indicative** is to indicate, to say what's what. If Robert, stuck in a phone booth without exact change, says “La vie **n'est** pas facile,” he is using the indicative.

Fortunately, language does not limit us to talking about what is or is not. It also allows us to speculate, to suppose, to imagine what might or might not be. The **conditional** fulfills

one of these speculative functions. It is used to hypothesize how things would be if a certain **condition** were present.

Robert knows that in life there are all sorts of problems: *La vie n'est pas facile*. That is a fact, and so *est* is in the indicative. But he feels that the problems Mireille mentions when he tries to wangle an invitation to accompany her to Chartres are not real ones. If there were no more serious problems than those, “*La vie serait facile!*” (although in fact there are, and so it isn't). Since the condition (= no problems) is definitely contrary to reality, its outcome is equally unreal, and so this outcome is expressed in the **conditional**.

Chart 27.24 contrasts the conditional and the indicative.

Charts 27.25 and 27.26 show how the conditional is formed from the stem of the future tense and the endings of the imperfect tense.

- In exercise 27.27, decide whether the sentences you hear are in the indicative or the conditional, and mark the appropriate box on the grid.
- In written exercise 27.28, Robert is daydreaming about what might happen if Mireille let him go with her to Chartres. To reveal his thoughts, review the appropriate sections of the story episode in lesson 27 in the textbook, then return to the workbook exercise and decide which verb makes the most sense in each context. Write that verb in the conditional tense.

✓ Check your answers in keys 27.27 and 27.28 at the back of the workbook.

27.29, 27.30 Observation and activation: Masculine and feminine endings; -eur, -euse, -eux, -euse

Feminine forms ending in *-euse* have masculine equivalents that end in one of two ways, as the chart illustrates.

- In 27.30, you will hear masculine nouns characterized in various ways. A feminine noun corresponding to each item is listed in your workbook. Describe the feminine noun in the same way, using the appropriate form of the adjective you heard.

27.31 Activation: The telephone (recapitulation)

- Before you begin written exercise 27.31, review sections of the story in lessons 12, 22, 24, and 27 as indicated in the directions. Pay particular attention to references to the telephone. Then decide which expression pertaining to telephones makes the most sense in each context, and write the appropriate forms in your workbook. (Note: The twentieth-century poet Louis Aragon, whose opinion of the telephone is quoted in this exercise, is not suggesting that there is something sacred about it. He is using *sacré* to suggest astonishment; an English equivalent of *une sacrée invention* might be “one heck of an invention.”)

27.32 Activation: Dialogue between Mireille and Robert

This interactive exercise is designed to strengthen your role-playing and pronunciation skills, and to help you learn some short, useful French phrases.

Listen to the conversation between Mireille and Robert on the audio recording, and memorize Robert's lines. Imitate Robert's voice as carefully as possible, until you can answer Mireille yourself. Try to complete the exercise **without** looking at the written text of the dialogue beforehand. Above all, avoid looking at the written text as you do the exercise.

SELF-TESTING EXERCISES

Test exercises 27.33–27.35, keyed to principal points covered in lesson 27, allow you to measure what you have learned from the lesson and help you to review.

- To complete exercises 27.33 and 27.34, select the appropriate phrase from those given in the title and write its correct form.
- Complete 27.35 by listening to the sentences on the audio recording and marking whether the verb you hear is in the indicative or in the conditional.
- ✓ Check your answers in keys 27.33–27.35 at the back of the workbook. If you have made errors, follow the references at the end of each exercise to sections of the workbook and audio program for review.

TOWARD FREE EXPRESSION

27.36 Cross-examining the text

Cross-examining the text asks you to step back from the story a bit and look at it more critically, reflect on it, analyze its characters and situations. This exercise will give you an opportunity to read between the lines, make new connections, develop interpretations, and express your own opinions.

- Re-read the story segment of the lesson in the textbook, then read and reflect on the questions you see under Cross-examining the text in your textbook. Try to frame a response to each one. Your instructor may ask you to formulate oral responses in preparation for a discussion in class. You may also be asked to write down your answers.

27.37 Words at large

Words at large will give you practice retrieving and reusing words and structures you have learned in lesson 27 and in previous lessons.

The questions in 27.37 can be answered in many ways. A number of possibilities are

given in the workbook; read them and add as many other examples as you can. If you work alone, say your answers out loud (you may write them down as well, if you like). If you work with a partner, alternate and see how long you can keep going.

27.38–27.40 Role-playing and reinvention of the story

Role-playing and reinvention exercises give you an opportunity to make creative use of what you have learned so far, and to adapt the story to your own tastes and preferences.

In 27.38, Robert and Mireille are discussing what kind of transportation to take to Chartres. Imagine their dialogue, aloud, using the alternatives given in the workbook as a point of departure. If you work with a partner, take parts and complete the exercise, then switch roles and do it again.

Exercise 27.39 sets forth a number of situations in which people interact. Imagine the dialogues suggested by these scenarios.

In 27.40, Robert is on his way to the gare Montparnasse to keep his appointment with Mireille. Needless to say, he gets lost. Imagine his adventures, saying them aloud. You may use the suggestions in the workbook to get started, or you may invent the whole story yourself. If you work with a partner, tell parallel stories, each of you giving your own version of each scene.

- **Suggested written assignment.** Write out a version of Robert's adventures in 27.39 (50–75 words). Submit this assignment to your instructor (see the course syllabus for details).

DEVELOPING READING AND WRITING SKILLS

At the end of the textbook chapter for lesson 27 you will find a series of documents for reading practice. Study the documents assigned in the course syllabus and complete the corresponding exercises in sections 27.41–27.45 of the workbook. Read each document once, complete the exercises, and check your answers in the keys at the back of the workbook. Then re-read the document. (Your instructor may ask you to submit written answers to certain exercises; see the course syllabus for details.)

Documents 2 and 3 are short anecdotes by Coluche, *des histoires de Coluche*. **Document 2** is about artichokes. Coluche's father was of a philosophical turn of mind, and liked to say that artichokes are real poor-folks' food, *un vrai plat de pauvre*, because more is left on your plate when you finish than when you started. Note the contractions *t'as* (*tu as*) and *t'en* (*tu en*) that are characteristic of very colloquial French. **Document 3** begins the way many Coluche stories begin: "There's this guy . . ." (*C'est un mec . . .*) Notice the street speech contraction *'Y a* (*il y a*). (**Document 7** also contains these trademarks of the oral story: "*C'est une locomotive . . .*," *'Y a, t'as*. It is also by Coluche.)

Document 4 is a promotional brochure published by the Paris subway and bus authority, the RATP. It summarizes much of what the RATP has to be proud of, including the number of kilometers of track on the métro and the RER (suburban express), the number of