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# Débuts



An Introduction to French

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## *Débuts*

### *An Introduction to French*

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**I** dedicate this book to my partner, Gregory P. Trauth. (1958–1999), whose life taught me the importance of generosity, integrity, and most of all, love. “Good night, sweet prince, / And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!”

And to my family, David, Frances, and Jan Siskin, for their encouragement and support during the course of the project.

H. Jay Siskin



**I** dedicate this project to my son, Benjamin, a constant reminder that language opens all doors.

Ann Williams-Gascon



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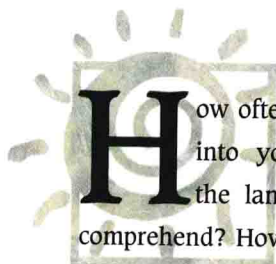
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# Preface



How often have you tried to integrate French films into your first-year French course and found the language too difficult for your students to comprehend? How many times have you been disappointed by the French videos offered with other textbooks? Would you like your students to watch a French film that they can actually understand, and one that will help them learn about French language and culture? If so, this program is for you!

## *The Débuts / Le Chemin du retour Program: What Is It?*

The textbook, *Débuts*, and the film, *Le Chemin du retour*, are a completely integrated film-based introductory course for learning French language and culture.

A two-hour feature-length film, *Le Chemin du retour* is the story of a young television journalist, Camille Leclair, and her pursuit of the truth about her grandfather's mysterious past. Through Camille's quest, students learn language and culture in the functional context provided by the story.

Unlike other textbook/video programs, in which the video component is thematically, functionally, or grammatically driven, and thus self-consciously pedagogical, this program has been developed so that the textbook is a complement to the film. The film narra-

tive is what drives the scope and sequence of vocabulary and grammar, the presentation of culture, and the development of reading and writing. This does not mean, however, that these items are presented in a random fashion. Rather, the screenwriter worked within the authors' pedagogical framework *but did not let it limit* his creative expression. He did a wonderful job of writing a good story while still honoring the major steps in learning the French language.

The textbook/film package grew out of the authors' conviction that language learning is more than just learning skills: it is also a process in which understanding of culture must surely occupy a central position. Therefore, *Débuts* and *Le Chemin du retour* emphasize



the importance of cultural awareness and understanding, not only of the French culture, but also of the student's own culture.

Equally important, the authors strongly believe in the principles of communicative competence. *Débuts* gives students a solid foundation in the structure of the language, stressing acquisition of high-frequency grammar, vocabulary, and functional language. In addition, students come to view listening, reading, and writing as active tasks, requiring meaningful interaction as well as high-order cognitive processing.

## The Goals of the Program

The overall goal in *Débuts* is to move students toward communicative competence while guiding them toward intercultural sophistication. Included in this framework are the following student objectives:

- to communicate orally and in writing in natural-sounding French and in culturally appropriate ways
- to read with comprehension both informational and literary texts taken from authentic French sources
- to understand French when spoken by a variety of people using authentic speech patterns and rates of speed
- to increase awareness and understanding of cultural institutions and culturally determined patterns of behavior
- to develop critical thinking skills as they apply to language learning
- to link language study to broader and complementary discipline areas

## Understanding French

As students begin their study of French, it is important that they examine their beliefs about the nature of language and the language-learning process. They may believe that they have little difficulty understanding what they hear in their native language, yet if they reflect on their interactions with others, they will find that this is not always true. They will see, for example, that in one's native language it is not unusual to ask someone to repeat or to clarify what he or she said. People who speak rapidly or indistinctly are harder to understand than people who speak more slowly or clearly. Students should recognize that when speaking

with someone who mumbles, they are probably often reluctant to ask that person to repeat over and over again. In such a circumstance, they probably rely instead on the subject or direction of the conversation to fill in the gaps in their comprehension. Although they don't understand every word, they continue to listen to get the gist of the message.

When listening in a foreign language, however, students often set the bar higher. They are eager to understand every word, and when they don't, they become frustrated or they even give up. As they begin learning French, they should remember the following hints:

- Keep your expectations realistic.
- When you don't understand, keep listening!
- Try to fill in the gaps using context to help.
- See if you can get the gist of the message.

These strategies will be particularly important as students listen to the actors in the film. From the outset, they will be hearing authentic French spoken at a natural rate of speed. It has not been artificially slowed or simplified, because this will not be their experience when they travel in the French-speaking world or listen to French radio or television. But they should not worry. They will find that although they do not understand every word of the dialogue, they will still understand the story of *Le Chemin du retour*.

## Cultural Competence

*Débuts* had its origins in the desire to provide students with a stimulating, culturally rich set of tools for the acquisition of French. Cultural content was thus a central concern in the devising of the plot of *Le Chemin du retour*, and it has been integrated into every section of the text. Through the film, students have the opportunity for intensive exposure not only to the language and communicative habits of French speakers, but also to the visual culture of objects and non-verbal communication and to the auditory culture of music and the sounds of everyday life.

The approach to culture in *Débuts* is content-based. Themes treated in the sections specifically devoted to culture derive from the film but consistently move students toward the big questions of culture, stimulating them to consider matters that are of concern to all people, whether or not they ever travel to the French-speaking world. The authors have made

culture a “hook” in this program, to generate interest in longer-term language study and to place the study of language and culture within the larger context of a humanistic education. The cultural content of *Débuts* aims to be thought-provoking and to expand students’ horizons beyond simple “travelogue” facts toward understanding the roots of cultural differences.

## The National Standards

With its integrated, multifaceted approach to culture, *Débuts* exemplifies the spirit of the National Standards\* of foreign language education. By watching the characters in the film perform routine tasks and interactions and by grappling with complex issues of history and identity, students are exposed to a multiplicity of products, processes, and perspectives.



# Le Chemin du retour

## Structure of Le Chemin du retour

*Le Chemin du retour* is available in a Director’s Cut version that is the uninterrupted, full-length feature film. The instructional version of the film, however, divides the story into a preliminary episode, twenty-two story episodes, and an epilogue. Except for the **Épisode préliminaire**, which introduces students to the concept of learning French through film, each episode of *Le Chemin du retour* follows the same three-step format.

1. Students watch and participate in on-screen pre-viewing activities.

- **Vous avez vu...** Scenes from previous episodes are used to remind students about main events in the story that will help them understand the new episode.

Through the presentation of functional language, role-play activities, and personalized activities, as well as an emphasis on listening comprehension, *Débuts* emphasizes **communication**. Documents, readings, and other exploratory activities help students make **connections** between their study of French, other discipline areas, and their own lives. As for **culture**, the *Regards sur la culture* and *Synthèse* sections in the textbook provide sustained opportunities for hypothesis and analysis, inviting students to make connections between beliefs, behaviors, and cultural artifacts. Ample opportunities are also provided for cross-cultural **comparisons** in the follow-up activities to the *Regards sur la culture* and *Synthèse* sections. Finally, web-based and experiential activities allow students to explore the many types of **communities** inherent in the French-speaking world.

- **Vous allez voir...** Scenes previewing the upcoming episode set up the context for what students will see and hear in the episode.
  - **Paroles et images** This section, which occurs through Episode 11, introduces and practices a particular viewing strategy that students can apply to help them understand the language and events of the film.
2. Students view the complete episode.
  3. Students watch and participate in on-screen postviewing activities.
- **Vous avez compris?** Scenes from the episode are used in a variety of multiple-choice and true-false activities to help students verify their comprehension of the main ideas and the plot of the episode they’ve just viewed. Students who didn’t understand an important point as they viewed the episode will find they understand more after doing these activities.

\*Standards for Foreign Language Learning: Preparing for the 21st Century (1996, National Standards in Foreign Language Education Project). The standards outlined in this publication were established by a collaboration of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), the American Association of Teachers of French (AATF), the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese (ASTSP), and the American Association of Teachers of German (AATG).



- **Langue en contexte** A transition back to the textbook, this section identifies for students the language functions and structures they will learn about in the textbook. Appropriate scenes from the film are subtitled in French and the targeted grammar and vocabulary are highlighted in yellow.

## Using *Le Chemin du retour* in a Classroom Setting

The film, *Le Chemin du retour*, can be used as the foundation for a classroom-based beginning French course at the college level. As such, it offers several options for implementation. For example, an instructor may

- use the textbook, *Débuts*, and the film in class, assign most of the material in the Workbook and Laboratory Manual for homework, and follow up selected homework activities with discussions in class.
- use only the textbook in class, and have students view the film episodes at home, in the media center, or in the language laboratory.

- use the Student Viewer's Handbook with the film either by itself or to accompany other print materials.

## Options for Using *Le Chemin du retour*

The film, *Le Chemin du retour*, can also be used

- in a distance learning course.
- as an offering for adult or continuing education students.
- as the foundation for French courses at the high school level.
- as a supplement to beginning, intermediate, or advanced courses, at all levels of instruction.
- as a resource for informal learning.
- as training materials for French-language classes in business and industry.
- as a significant addition to library movie collections.

# Cast of Characters



*Camille Leclair*

A young television journalist who searches for the truth about her grandfather's past.



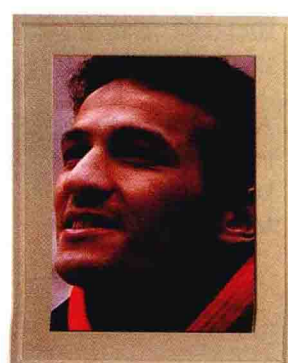
*Mado Leclair*

Camille's mother, who fears the truth and wants to keep her father's history hidden forever.



*Bruno Gall*

Camille's cohort on the morning television show "Bonjour!"



*Rachid Bouhazid*

A new reporter at "Bonjour!" who, with his family, must adjust to a new life in Paris.



*Louise Leclair*

Camille's grandmother, who encourages her granddaughter to pursue her quest for the truth.



*Martine Valloton*

Producer of "Bonjour!" who has to risk her job to support Camille's determination to find out about her grandfather.



*Hélène Thibaut*

A journalist from Quebec, and friend of Bruno and Camille.



*David Girard*

Historian, friend of Bruno, who researches information about Camille's grandfather.



*Alex Béraud*

A musician who plays in the Mouffetard Market. Friend of Louise, Mado, and Camille.



*Sonia Bouhazid*

Wife of Rachid and mother of their daughter, Yasmine.



*Jeanne Leblanc*

A woman who knew Camille's grandfather during the time of the German occupation of France.



*Roland Fergus*

A man who worked with Camille's grandfather during the German occupation and who holds the key to the truth.



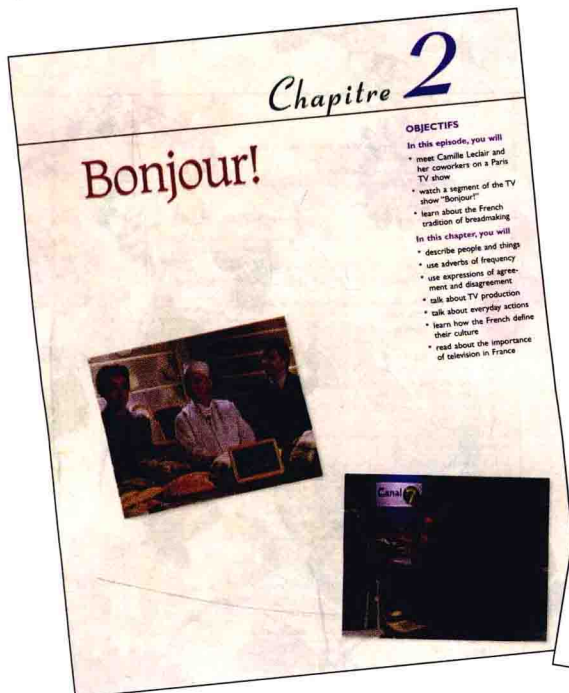
# Débuts

## A Guided Tour of the Textbook

**D**ébuts, the textbook, is clearly organized and easy to use. The chapters are coordinated with the individual episodes of the film. Each of the twenty-two main chapters consists of the following self-contained teaching modules, which maximize flexibility in course design. The preliminary chapter, containing a slightly different structure, introduces students to basic vocabulary and provides an overall framework for using the film.

### Chapter Opener

Chapter learning goals prepare students for what is to come in the chapter and in the accompanying movie episode.



### Vocabulaire en contexte

Thematically grouped vocabulary is presented in culturally informative contexts with drawings and scenes from the movie. It is accompanied by activities that promote vocabulary development.



# Synthèse

The chapter culminates in a synthesis section, which alternates between cultural presentations and readings, many of which are literary selections. Prereading strategies and postreading comprehension activities help students develop reading skills. A writing activity follows in the Workbook and Laboratory Manual.

## Other features

### Langage fonctionnel

This feature provides useful phrases for carrying on conversations in particular situations.

### Vocabulaire relatif à l'épisode

Unfamiliar vocabulary items needed for comprehension of the episode are provided in Visionnement 1.

### Notez bien!

These marginal notes highlight important details about grammar and vocabulary that students should learn.

### Pour en savoir plus

These marginal notes contain optional information about culture, vocabulary, and grammar.

# Program Components

As a full-service publisher of quality educational products, McGraw-Hill does much more than just sell textbooks to students; we create and publish an extensive array of print, video, and digital supplements to support instruction on your campus. Orders of new (versus used) textbooks help us to defray the substantial cost of developing such supplements. Please consult your local McGraw-Hill representative to learn about the availability of the supplements that accompany *Débuts*.

## Books and Multimedia Materials Available to Adopters and to Students

### Student Edition

The *Débuts* textbook is correlated with the individual episodes in the film, *Le Chemin du retour*, and contains vocabulary presentations and activities; pre- and

postviewing activities; grammar explanations and practice activities; cultural, historical, and literary readings; and pre- and postreading activities.

## Synthèse: Lecture

### Mise en contexte

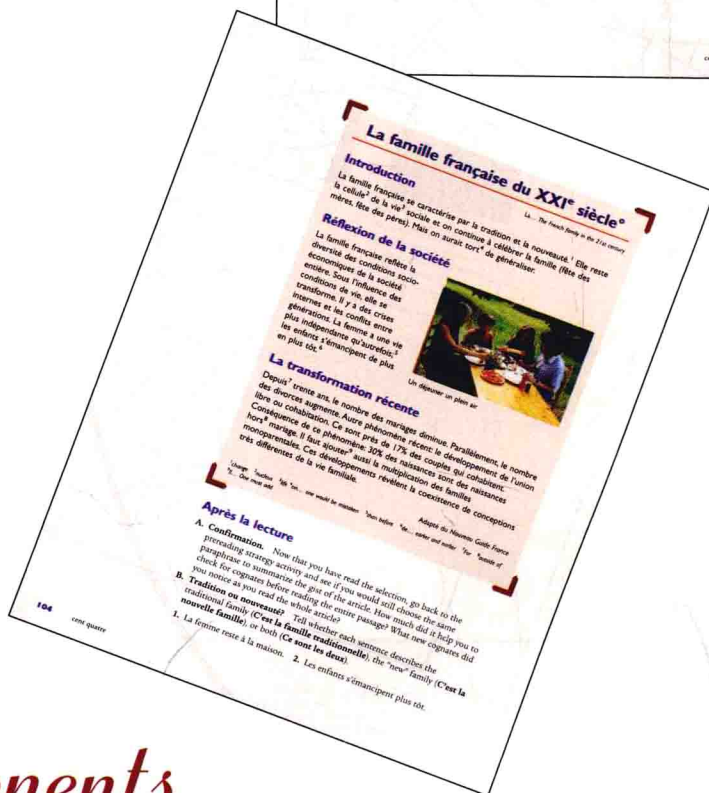
The notion of family in France has for centuries been the traditional dual-parent household and a closely knit extended family. In this tradition, husbands support the family, wives stay at home and raise the children, the whole family sits down to meals together, the children cooperate rather than compete, and so on. Marriage, children, and family are almost synonymous in this tradition, and it is, of course, a generalization.

### Stratégie pour mieux lire Recognizing cognates

Scientific texts tend to use a vocabulary that is high in cognate forms. This text draws on sociological terminology that may be familiar to you because of its similarity to English. Skim the passage, paying particular attention to familiar words and cognates. Then predict which of the following sentences will best summarize the gist of the entire text.

1. L'instauration de la famille *renewée* (renewed) très importante pour la majorité des Français.
2. La diversité de la famille française résulte en une déstabilisation de la société.
3. La famille française assume (takes on) une multiplicité de configurations.

Now read the whole text through and see if your prediction is correct.





### **Listening Comprehension Audio CD or Cassette**

The listening comprehension audio CD or cassette contains the vocabulary list from the end of each chapter of the textbook.

### **Workbook and Laboratory Manuals**

The Workbook and Laboratory Manual accompanies the main textbook. Each chapter is divided into sections that follow the organization in the main textbook; and each section, as appropriate, may contain both laboratory and workbook exercises. All chapters provide practice in global listening comprehension, pronunciation, speaking, vocabulary, grammar, reading, writing, and culture.

### **Student Audio Program**

For use with the laboratory exercises in the Workbook and Laboratory Manual, the audio CDs or audiocassettes offer hours of listening, oral communication, and pronunciation practice.

### **Student Viewer's Handbook**

Ideal for those courses in which *Le Chemin du retour* is used to supplement other course materials than *Débuts*, the Handbook offers a variety of pre- and postviewing activities for use with the film.

### **Le Chemin du retour**

The complete film broken into episodes, each with on-screen pre- and postviewing activities.

### **Director's Cut**

Available in either VHS or DVD format, the entire film can be viewed uninterrupted. The DVD version allows inclusion of French or English subtitles.

### **Student CD-ROM**

This multimedia CD-ROM allows students to interact with the film while practicing vocabulary and grammar skills, listening comprehension, and reading and writing skills in a highly interactive format.

### **Online Learning Center**

A complete learning and teaching resource center for both students and instructors, this website brings the French and Francophone worlds to student's fingertips and allows them to work with film clips for enhanced comprehension. Instructor resources are available to aid in building a complete online French course.

## **Books and Multimedia Materials Available to Adopters Only**

### **Instructor's Edition**

The Instructor's Edition is identical to the Student Edition except that it contains annotated suggestions, cultural information, additional vocabulary, activity extensions and variations, and so on.

### **Instructor's Manual / Test Bank**

The Instructor's Manual provides additional background information on the film as well as sample lessons, syllabus planning and scheduling suggestions, and an answer key for the Student Edition. It also offers suggestions for working with videos in the classroom. The Test Bank consists of two sets of tests for each chapter of *Débuts*, as well as quarter and semester exams.

### **Instructor's Audio Program**

The Instructor's Audio Program, available on audio CD or audiocassette, contains the same material as

the Student Audio Program, but the package includes an Audioscript.

### **Audioscript**

Packaged with the Instructor's Audio Program, the Audioscript contains the complete recording script of the Audio Program.

### **Picture File**

The Picture File contains fifty color photographs from the film and textbook and is designed to stimulate conversation in the classroom.

### **Distance Learning Faculty Guide**

The Distance Learning Faculty Guide contains useful information on how to implement a distance learning course and how to incorporate the film and print materials in that environment.

# Acknowledgments

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# *Débuts*



An Introduction to French



# Contents

**Preface** xxii

## Chapitre préliminaire



**Ça tourne!** 1

### Visionnement

Avant de visionner

Le film 2

Pour utiliser le film 2

Pour parler du film 3

Visionnez! 3

### Vocabulaire en contexte

Les salutations 4

Les nombres de 0 à 59 5

Dans la salle de classe 7

Les mots apparentés et les faux amis 9

Structure 1: **Est-ce... ? Qui est-ce? C'est... ,  
Ce sont...** 11

Structure 2: **Qu'est-ce que c'est?**, les articles indéfinis  
et définis et les substantifs 13

Le français dans le monde 16