French GCSE Revision for the Unenthusiastic

OR

How to Get <u>at least</u> a C Grade in French GCSE with the Minimum Effort

Including:

Listening:

Strategies or How to Get **More Marks Than I Deserve**Pairs of words which mean the same, or groups which are linked

Speaking:

Tips or Ways of **Cheating Legally**

- Rôle Plays
- Conversation

Simple, **Basic Phrases** which will save your skin Words and **Phrases to Worm into the Conversation**

Reading:

Strategies or How to Get **More Marks Than I Deserve Pairs of words** which mean the same, or groups which are linked

Coursework:

The French Teacher's **Commandments Starting Sentences** in an Interesting but Not Terribly Difficult Way **Linking Sentences** in an Interesting but Really Incredibly Easy Way
Stylish, but Simple, **Alternatives to Boring Words**

Vocabulary

or All the **French Words** You Learned... But Forgot

Grammar

or What You Never Really Understood, And It's Too Late Now (Or is it?)

Speaking Exam (Oral)



Speaking Exams normally come in two parts: **Role Play** and **Conversation**. Your exam will be recorded on cassette to be sent away and marked by an external examiner. It is therefore really important that you **speak clearly** and make every word count.

Role Play

They say that the Role Play part of the speaking exam should last around **5 minutes**, but it won't.

Either a) You'll rattle through it because you've prepared thoroughly and you'll know all the answers. Or b) if you've been gaming, listening to your MP3 player or cleaning out your ears in French for two years, you won't know the answers at all, and it'll be even shorter. Or c) most probably it'll be somewhere in between.

You will have to complete two role plays with your teacher. For the **Foundation** level, you will do Role Play A and Role Play B. For the **Higher** level you will do Role Play B and Role Play C.

Most people will do the Higher, not because we think everybody is a genius, but because we have looked at the marks and done some very clever calculations and realised that you are **more likely to get a good grade** if you do the **Higher** level. Be aware that we won't advise you to do the Higher Level if we think you'll completely mess it up. If we do advise you do the Higher it'll be because we think you will get more marks. We like you to get more marks. It makes us look better...

One thing to remember in role plays is KISS - Keep It Simple, Stupid! Don't try and give LOADS of French when it's your turn. You won't get any more marks for it and you may well make unnecessary mistakes.

Role Play A

These will be simple scenarios set in shops, banks, post offices or at the home of a pen-friend. You will need to be able to:

• give a greeting - **Bonjour!**

- Ask for something *Je voudrais*...
- Remember your vocab for shops (all shops, not only food) but also for
 places in the house eg bathroom
- Ask how much something costs *C'est combien?*
- Say thank-you *Merci!* and goodbye *Au Revoir!*

HANDY HINT: In answer to "De quelle couleur?" if asked for a colour – don't say "bleu" because it can easily sound too much like the English "blue", and the examiners will not give you a mark if they think you're speaking English. Say "rouge", "jaune", "vert" or anything else where confusion is less likely to arise.

Remember that you are being asked for *VERY SIMPLE ANSWERS*. Don't try and be too clever, or you might risk making yourself less easily understood.

Make sure you have this well rehearsed as this is a good place to score marks and feel confident for the rest of the exam!

Role Play B

These will be slightly more complicated conversations, set in shops, your pen-friend's house, hospitals, post offices, train stations, hotels or other places where you might find yourself speaking French.

You will encounter an *unexpected question*. Be familiar with the types of questions asked for the unexpected element. In your preparation time, spend a minute thinking what this might be. For instance:

- if you are buying a ticket for a train, or staying in a hotel, you might be asked *how long (combien de temps) you are staying*, or *what nationality* you are.
- If you're talking about work, you might be asked *what time* you start or finish. In fact time crops up a lot. Make sure you recognise the question à quelle heure?
- If you're buying a gift, who's it for "C'est pour qui?"
- If you're at the doctor's when did it start? is "Ça a commencé quand?"

You will also have to ask a question yourself at the end of the Role Play B. Again, the range of these is limited.

Remember how to use the main question words.

Où? Where? *Où est la caisse* (till) /le téléphone/ la sortie (way out)

Comment? How? **Comment peut-on y aller?** How do I get there?

(Also expect "Peut-on y aller en bus/train/à pied?" – can I get there by bus/train/on foot? - this crops up a lot)

Est-ce qu'il y a ? Is there ? Est-ce qu'il y a un hotel/bus/train ?

C'est loin? Is it far?

C'est près? Is it near?

Role Play C

In the C role play you'll be given a task with bullet points and more information to get across. You're not expected to give more complicated language than the B Role Play, but it's a little freer, and you are left to decide YOURSELF how to phrase what you want to say.

The main thing is that it's very important to understand the way the role play card is constructed.

- If there's a question mark at the end of a bullet point YOU have to ASK A QUESTION.
- If there's not, you have to MAKE A STATEMENT.

Role Play vocabulary: Learn these, or else...

Je voudrais I would like

Avez-vous? Do you have?

Ça fait combien? How much is that?

Une table pour trois personnes A table for three people

Où sont les toilettes? Where are the toilets?

Où est la caisse/le restaurant? Where is the till/the restaurant?

Je cherche I'm looking for

À quelle heure ça ferme? What time does it shut?

À quelle heure part le train? What time does the train leave?

À quelle heure commence le travail? What time does work start?

Qu'est-ce que je dois porter? What do I have to wear?

Il faut porter un uniforme? Do I have to wear a uniform?

Tu portes un uniforme? Do you wear a uniform?

As-tu un job? Do you have a job?

On peut y aller à pied? Can we go there on foot?

Je reste cinq jours I'm staying five days

J'ai oublié I've forgotten

J'ai perdu I've lost

Je peux téléphoner chez moi? May I phone home?

Il y a une piscine près d'ici? Is there a pool near here?

C'est loin/près? Is it far/near?

And these, in specific situations:

Shopping

Un kilo de a kilo of

Deux boîtes de 2 tins of

Une bouteille de a bottle of

Un pot de a jar of

Je peux payer par carte de crédit ? Can I pay by credit card ?

Vous acceptez les chèques Do you accept cheques ?

In a clothes shop

C'est quelle taille ? What size is it ?

Vous l'avez en un autre couleur ? Do you have it in another colour ?

C'est trop grand/petit/serré/cher It's too big/small/tight/expensive

Je prendrai ces chaussures I'll take these shoes

In a restaurant

La carte s'il vous plaît the menu, please

Au coin in the corner

Près de la fenêtre near the window

Je prendrai le menu à €20 I'll take the €20 menu

L'addition s'il vous plaît the bill, please

Le service est compris? Is service charge included?

A t the hotel

Avez-vous des chambres libres? Do you have any free rooms?

Une chambre pour deux personnes A room for two people

Un grand/petit lit A doubles/single bed

Avec douche/salle de bains With a shower/bathroom

Y a-t-il un parking? Is there a car-park?

À quelle heure est le petit déjeuner ? What time is breakfast ?

At the bank

changer des cheques de voyage change traveller's cheques

la banque ouvre/ferme à quelle heure ? what time does the bank open/close ?

At the post office

Stamps des timbres

Envelopes des enveloppes

At the tourist office

Un plan de la ville A map of the town

Un dépliant A brochure

Quand est-ce que le musée est ouvert? When is the museum open?

C'est fermé le mardi? Is it closed on Tuesdays?

J'aime visiter les églises I like visiting churches

Peut-on y aller en bus? Can you get there by bus?

Problems

Je ne me sens pas bien I don't feel well

J'ai mal à la tête/la gorge I have a headache/sore throat

J'ai de la fièvre I have a temperature

Lost property

J'ai perdu I've lost

Une valise/ un porte-monnaie / un sac à dos A suitcase/ a purse/ a rucksack

Il est noir et en cuir It's black and made of leather

Hier/ ce matin/ cet après-midi Yesterday/ this morning/ this afternoon

Il contient It contains

Conversation

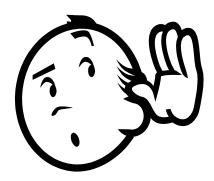
Most GCSE speaking exams include a conversation which can last from **around 5 to 15 minutes**.

You may have to speak to your teacher, to an examiner or onto a cassette. The conversation is an opportunity for you to show off your speaking skills! No, we're not being funny – if you prepare, you will find you have a lot of speaking skills to show off.

There are two conversations: the first topic is chose by YOU. Find one topic, learn it THOROUGHLY, and then take the initiative and show me and the examiners how well you can do. Remember – the more you say off your own back, the fewer questions you might be asked, and the less chance that you don't understand what the examiner is saying.

The second topic is given on the role play B which you have to do (a random order prescribed in the Teacher's Leaflet). Make sure you have answers prepared for each topic, again as long as possible so that you don't find yourself looking like a guppy out of water when you don't understand a question. Make notes below. Merge answers together to avoid having to answer more and more questions. Remember the LINKING WORDS and express OPINIONS.

Listening Exam



Your listening exam may last for around **45 mins** to **1 hour**. You'll be asked to *listen* to a cassette or CD in French and you will have to answer questions in *English* or *French*.

This is really important... In fact, let's say that more loudly: This is really important: If the question is in English, answer in *English*; if it is in French, answer in *French*. If you answer in the wrong language, you won't get the mark. Did you get that? **You won't** get the mark.

You will be allowed to study the questions *before* the recording plays. You will hear each extract twice.

To answer some questions, you will be asked to:

- tick to show you've got the correct answer
- state whether an answer is true or false (*vrai* ou *faux*, in French)
- write a letter or number to indicate the correct answer
- write a word or phrase in French or English (see above)
- complete a sentence

You don't have to answer in full sentences, but make sure that you include all the details you have been asked for. There will be a number by each question to show how many marks are available. Use this as a guide to how much to answer.

Now there are certain things to remember about a Listening exam, which may seem obvious, but which are ever so easy to forget.

1. It's a **Listening** exam so it's a good idea to **listen.** If you don't, you'll lose where you are and it will all go horribly wrong. It's not easy to lose where you are because the tape is very clear, but if you start daydreaming about what you're going to do with your mates at the weekend, it *iS* possible.

- 2. When you have your chance to read through the paper, try and think what you might **expect to hear.** If you're in a doctor's surgery, for example, might it be about something wrong with someone? What treatment would they receive? How long might they have had this ailment? Logic can take you a long way.
- 3. **Don't leave any gaps! At all! Ever!** Think about it. If you guess, you have a chance of getting it right. Especially if you've done 1. and 2. **A blank space never got a mark**.

Linked Vocabulary – Okay. This is really important for the Listening and the Reading exam.

In the text you have to listen to or read there will be words which you will be **expected to know**. They will not be the same words which crop up in the questions on the paper, but they will be linked in some way, either they will be **synonyms** or they will be **related in meaning**.

Once you've got the hang of this, you will find it very, very, VERY helpful.

École – collège – lycée

La natation - nager - piscine - maillot de bain

L'équitation - faire du cheval - le cheval

Le cyclisme - faire du vélo - le VTT

L'hiver - froid - décembre - geler - Noël

Intéressant - beaucoup à faire - passionnant

Discuter - conversation - communication - parler

Difficile - compliqué

Long - prend des heures

Le sport - take your pick !!!

Les ordinateurs - surfer l'internet - jeux - informatique

La lecture - lire - livres - magazines

Les amis - les copains - les copines - rencontrer

Se relaxer - se détendre

Conduire - rouler - la voiture - l'auto - l'automobiliste - conducteur - chauffeur

Il pleut - pluvieux

Il fait beau - il fait du soleil - le soleil brille

Petit déjeuner - matin

Déjeuner - midi

Dîner - soir

Manger - repas - plat

Boire - boisson

Bijouterie - bijoux - boucle d'oreille - collier - bague

Été - juillet - aout

Télé - petit écran - émission

Cinéma - grand écran - film

Devoirs - travail - études

Difficile - pas facile (Beware of negatives+ opposite!)

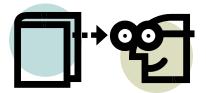
Ennuyeux - pas intéressant (Beware of negatives+ opposite!)

Future tense: l'année prochaine - dans 2 ans

past tense: l'année dernière - il y a 2 ans

Add any more examples which you come across here:

Reading Exam



Your reading exam may last for around **45 mins** to **1 hour**. You'll be asked to *read* information in French and you may have to answer questions in both *English* or *French*.

And again – what we said about the Listening exam...

This is really important... In fact, let's say that more loudly: This is really important: If the question is in English, answer in *English*; if it is in French, answer in *French*. If you answer in the wrong language, you won't get the mark. Did you get that? **You won't** get the mark.

To answer some questions, you will be asked to:

- tick to show you've got the correct answer
- state whether an answer is true or false (*vrai* ou *faux*, in French)
- write a letter or number to indicate the correct answer
- write a word or phrase in French or English (see above)
- complete a sentence

You don't have to answer in full sentences, but make sure that you include all the details you have been asked for. There will be a number by each question to show how many marks are available. Use this as a guide to how much to answer.

A couple of pointers:

- 1. It's a **Reading** exam so (and you know what we're going to say here, don't you?) it's a good idea to **read** the text. Yes, we know that you're not going to understand every word, but we hope that you'll have learned in class to **pick out** important words. Don't look at a big block of text and go **Aaarghh!** You might not need more than one or two words to be able to understand what you need to understand in order to get the marks. If you don't get it the first time, read it again. The important stuff is there and you **can** find it. Honest, guv, you can.
- 2. And again the gap thing we mentioned about the listening exam. **Don't!**

Coursework

Over the two years of your GCSE studies, you will be asked to write several pieces of coursework, which should be *150-200* words on a particular topic. Don't write more than 200 words because you might make more mistakes than you need to. Don't write less than 150 words because you won't get as many marks as you could.

Your teacher will have to submit the best two *UNCONTROLLED*_pieces of coursework which you have completed over Year 10 and 11, and the best *CONTROLLED* work.

CONTROLLED work is done under exam conditions, whether in your classroom or in an actual exam. You will know what you're writing about beforehand, and you may have written a first draft (if you've any sense), but in the actual exam, there will only be you, your task stimulus (ie what you have to write about), a clean piece of paper and a dictionary. There is an old Latin saying; **Cave Dictionarius!** Which means **Beware the Dictionary!** Actually, there isn't – we made that up, but there should be. Use a dictionary properly and it's great. Use it wrong, and you'll be unleashing gobbledygook all over your work.

Logically speaking, since you will know what you're writing about, the key to a great piece if controlled coursework is *PREPARATION*. Don't go into the exam thinking that everything will come flooding into your head when you read the courseork stimulus, even though you've not given it a moment's thought. It won't. That's a CAST-IRON GUARANTEE. The only thing which will guarantee you success is having a broad-brusgh (or even better, detailed) PLAN of what you're going to write, which you can then *ADAPT* to fit the detail of the stimulus.

UNCONTROLLED work is done in, well, uncontrolled conditions. You may use your notes, textbooks and whatever other resources you have. Do not copy great chunks from these resources because that's called 'cheating', and don't use any of those online translators, because you will end up writing fluent garbage. They're great for individual words as long as it's clear what the meaning is (how can it tell which meaning of 'play' you're looking for, for instance?), but string a few together and, trust us, they get confused and spit any old stuff at you.

This is another place where we're going to shout at you:

If you do great coursework and get a good grade, you will have to do less in the other papers to get a C...And you may even do better!

Coursework: The Ten Commandments

- 1. Thou shalt not write fewer than 180 words, nor more than about 210 words.
 - a. Too few you can't get a C.
 - b. Too many you have more room to make mistakes.
- 2. Thou shalt use a variety of tenses.
 - a. Present Ma matière préférée est...
 - b. Past Le weekend dernier *je suis allé … J'ai regardé … C'était …*
 - c. Future Après le collège je vais aller à l'université.
 - d. Conditional Je voudrais être médecin.
- 3. Thou shalt use conjunctions to LINK sentences.

(Et, mais, parce que, car, ou, puis, ensuite...)

- 4. Thou shalt use subordinate clauses. (Don't panic this just means clauses which can't stand on their own.
 - a. Je mange à la cantine, parce que les repas sont bons.
 - b. Pendant la récré je joue au ou je lis des livres.
- 5. Thou shalt express opinions. Lots. All different.
- 6. Thou shalt use adverbs.

(lentement, poliment, vite etc.)

- 7. Thou shalt use negatives.
 - a. Je n'aime *pas* les chats/le français / les pommes de terre je ne regarde
 - b. Je ne regarde jamais la télé.
- 8. Thou shalt use comparatives and superlatives.
 - a. L'anglais est plus facile que la biologie.
 - b. Le pire, c'est les devoirs.
- 9. Thou shalt make sure that thy adjectives agree with thy nouns.
- 10. THOU SHALT LEARN THY VERBS!!!!!!!!!!

Right. That's that. Now, when you've handed in your first draft, you'll get a checklist back which won't be terribly helpful, but will give you a teeny clue as to what you could improve. **Take notice of it.**



Check:

Content:

- 180-200 words. Not too little, but not too **much** either. The more you write, the more mistakes you can make, and you won't get extra points. If you write 150 or less, you can't get a C.
- Don't try to be too complex, but Vary the structures and vocab.
- Link sentences and phrases logically: et, mais, ou, parceque...



Grammar:

- verb tenses. Look at the verb tables in your textbook, AND YOUR NOTES!
- **spellings** & **accents** look at the vocab sections of each unit, and check in the *Vocabulaire* at the back of Métro 4.
- nouns & genders when in doubt, check it out! LOOK IT UP!
- **adjectives** *order*: before noun (petit, grand, joli, beau, bon) or after noun. Use BOTH. *agreements*: masculine/feminine/plural.

We've seen, year after year, people who didn't bother and who are disappointed when they get a D for their coursework, when if they'd done this last bit, they'd have got the B they were expecting. Don't be one of them.

Now all you have to do is look at your teacher's enraptured face and wait for the



Vocabulary *Or*

All the French Words You Learned... But Forgot

Questions

Qui... Who
Qu'est-ce que... What
Quand... When
Où... Where
Pourquoi... Why
Comment... How

Combien... How much

Les jours de la semaine

Days of the Week

Lundi Monday
Mardi Tuesday
Mercredi Wednesday
Jeudi Thursday
Vendredi Friday
Samedi Saturday
Dimanche Sunday

And...

La semaine dernière

Last week

Il y a quatre jours

Four days ago

Yesterday

Aujoud'hui

Today

Demain

Tomorrow

En quatre jours

In four days

Les mois de l'année

La semaine prochaine

Months of the Year

Next week

JanvierJanuaryFévrierFebruaryMarsMarchAvrilApril

Mai May Juin June Juillet July Août August Septembre September Octobre October Novembre November Décembre December And...

L'année dernière Last year L'année prochaine Next year

Les Saisons

Le printemps spring
L'été summer
L'automne autumn
L'hiver winter

Les Jours de Fête

Nouvel An/ Nouvelle Année New Year Bonne Année! Happy New Year Vendredi Saint Good Friday Pâques Easter Noël Christmas Merry Christmas! Joyeux Noël Les grandes vacances summer holidays Bonnes Vacances! Happy Holidays! birthday Anniversaire Bonne Anniversaire Happy Birthday!

L'heure

Il est une heure
à une heure
Il est deux heures
Il est onze heures
Il est midi
Il est dix-huit heures
Il est minuit

Il est quatre heures **et quart**Il est trois heures **et demie**Il est vingt-deux heures **moins le quart**Il est treize heures **trente**Il est cinq heures **vingt**

Time

Seasons

Holidays

It's one o'clock
at one o'clock
It's two o'clock
It's eleven o'clock
It's midday
It's six in the evening (24 hour clock)
It's midnight

It's **quarter past** four
It's **half past** three
It's **quarter to** ten in the evening
It's one **thirty** in the afternoon
It's five **twenty**

Il est six heures **moins dix** It's **ten to** six

Il est sept heures moins vingt-cinq It's twenty-five to seven

In order to say 'at' a particular time, write or say 'à' instead of 'il est'.

Les Numéros

Numbers

Un one Deux two Trois three Quatre four Cinq five Six six Sept seven Huit eight Neuf nine Dix ten Onze eleven Douze twelve Treize thirteen Quatorze fourteen Quinze fifteen Seize sixteen Dix-sept seventeen Dix-huit eighteen Dix-neuf nineteen Vingt twenty Vingt-et-un twenty-one Vingt-deux twenty-two Trente thirty Quarante forty Cinquante fifty Soixante sixty Soixante-dix seventy Soixante-et-onze seventy-one Soixante-douze seventy-two **Quatre-vingts** eighty Quatre-vingt-et-un eighty-one Quatre-vingt-douze eighty-two Quatre-vingt-dix ninety Cent hundred thousand Mille Mille-neuf-cent-quatre-vingt-quatre 1984

Time Phrases

aujourd'hui today demain tomorrow

the day after tomorrow après-demain

hier yesterday

avant-hier the day before yesterday

récemment recently bientôt soon après un peu de temps after a while

en (deux semaines) in (two weeks) time il y a (deux semaines) (two weeks) ago pour un jour/une semaine for one day/week

puis then ensuite then enfin finally

Opinion – very, very, very, very important!! Use loads, and all different!!

J'aime/adore/ I like/love Jen'aime pas/déteste I don't like/hate Je trouve que... I think that... Je pense que... I think that...

Il me semblerait que It would seem to me that (**conditional. USE!!**)

A mon avis... In my opinion Selon moi... In my opinion On the other hand Par contre C'est possible que It's possible that... Cela dépend That depends

Peut-être **Perhaps**

And Finally....

Stalling Elegantly or How to look as if you Haven't Forgotten Every Word of French you Ever Knew

Eh bien..... Well... Alors.... So... Bien, vovons... Let's see... Bof... Well, you know...

Bon... Mmmm...

Basically these are all interchangeable phrases to use while you're THINKING. On their own... well, let's say, you won't get that C.

Grammar

Or

How to know enough to be able to change sentences a bit.

Yes, Yes, I know.... Grammar's boring.... What's the point...? Why doesn't everyone speak English? Blah, blah, blah.

Can I just say, from the point of view of a French teacher:

A big fat YAWN!!!!!!

The point is, you've spent about **350 hours of your life in French lessons.** That's about 14 whole days, 24 hours a day. *Two whole weeks of your life, four if you don't count sleeping hours* – wouldn't it be a good idea to get something out of that?

Well, in order to do that, you'll have to understand just a bit of grammar.

Tenses

In any language, when we refer to something happening, we always use a **tense** to indicate *when* the action takes place.

e.g. I'm going to eat an apple. I am eating an apple. I ate an apple.

There are three main types of tenses: *present* (now), *past* (what's gone before) and *future* (what's going to happen). There are different rules for each, depending on how they're used. If this seems difficult, it might be some consolation to know that there are loads more tenses in English than in French. So just think how difficult it is for French students of English!

Anyway, tenses are important, So important, in fact, that lavish use of loads of different tenses gets you oodles of marks in oral exams and in coursework. So use them! Métro 4 has a very good section on tenses – pages 201-207 cover the main ones.

When checking your verbs in coursework or your oral presentation, use verb tables on $M\acute{e}tro~4~p221$.

And DO check them. You know it makes sense!

Adjectives

Adjectives, as we're sure you know, are words that describe things; people, places, feeling for instance.

Masculine and feminine

You may need to change the *spelling* of adjectives depending on whether the thing that you're describing is *masculine* or *feminine*. These changed endings are known as *agreements*.

Feminine words usually need an -e added: e.g. il est grand - he is tall or elle est grande - she is tall

Plural words usually need an -s added Eg: ils sont grands - they are tall

Sometimes you need to add an -x – ils sont beaux

Do not add an -e if the word <u>already ends</u> with one: e.g. jaune - yellow, mince - slim.

All the words for **colours** can be used as adjectives.

There are some good lists of adjectives in $M\acute{e}tro~4$ – see pages 22, 38, 75, 90, and 126

Conjunctions - These are unbelievably important – especially in the SPEAKING and COURSEWORK parts of the exam.

et and mais but si if ou or puis then

donc so/therefore et... et... both... and...

parce que because car because

ne...ni...ni... neither... nor

ensuite next
ou bien or else
puis then
comme as
quand when
que that

Prepositions

à to, at, in

à côté de next to, beside

après after

au sujet de about, on the subject of

avant before avec with

chez at the home/office of, among

contre against

dans in

d'après according to

de from, of, about

depuis since, for

derrière in back of, behind

devant in front of

durant during, while

en in, on, to

en dehors de outside of

en face de facing, across from

entre between

envers toward

environ approximately

hors de outside of

jusque until, up to, even

loin de far from

malgré despite

par by, through

parmi among

pendant during

pour for

près de near

quant à as for, regarding

sans without

selon according to

sous under

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Right!

That's it!

You now have two choices.

- a) Ignore all this, don't do any revision at all and get a *rubbish* grade in your GCSE.
- b) Take it on board. Hit the revision for a while, or in short spurts, Make sure your remaining courseworks are as good as they can be, prepare for your oral, be pleasantly surprised at what a doddle the listening and reading exams are and blow everyone away

with how *completely* brilliant you are!

Bonne chance!