

# Results from the 2011 AP<sup>®</sup> French Language Exam Administration

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# Session Content

- 2011 AP French Language Exam grade distributions
- Statistics and Chief Reader's comments on each section of the 2011 exam
- Changes in scoring and weightings for the 2012 exam (AP French Language and Culture)

# 2011 AP French Language Exam Grade Distributions

# 2011 AP French Language Grade Distributions

## *How are the grades set?*

Only the scores of the **Standard Group** students are used to determine the grade distributions (AP 5/4/3/2/1).

Standard Group students answer “NO” to these questions on their answer sheet:

- Do you hear or speak the target language regularly at home? NO
- Have you lived for more than a month in a country where the target language is spoken? NO

# 2011 AP French Language Grade Distributions

## *How are the grades determined?*

1. Raw scores on the exam are calculated for Standard Group students.  
Maximum possible = 160 pts. (80 MC + 80 FR)
2. Student performance on a subset of MC questions repeated from another year is considered.  
The 2011 exam contained 22 MC questions repeated from the 2010 exam. Students performed slightly better this year on those questions.
3. Adjustments to the grade distributions were made considering the 2010 grade distributions and the five-year average.
4. After the grade distributions are set based on Standard Group performance, grades are assigned to students not in the Standard Group based on their raw scores.

# 2011 AP French Language Grade Distributions

## *Standard Group (approx. 75% of Total Group)*

AP Score	2011	2010	Five-year average (2006-2010)
5	6.9%	5.8%	6.7%
4	13.6%	12.6%	13.8%
3	30.3%	29.3%	29.7%
2	23.7%	24.3%	23.8%
1	25.5%	28.0%	26.0%
5-4-3	50.8%	47.7%	50.2%

# 2011 AP French Language Grade Distributions

## *Total Group*

AP Score	2011	2010	Five-year average (2006-2010)
5	12.4%	10.9%	11.6%
4	15.8%	14.6%	15.8%
3	29.1%	28.5%	28.8%
2	20.9%	21.6%	21.2%
1	21.8%	24.4%	22.6%
5-4-3	57.3%	54.0%	56.2%

# **Statistics and Chief Reader's Comments on each Section of the 2011 Exam**



# 2011 AP French Language Student Performance

## *Section I, Part A: Multiple-Choice Listening*

Standard Group performance (14,864 students)

Listening Comprehension (41 questions)

- 92 Standard Group students answered all 41 questions correctly
- Average student performance: 25.4 correct (62%)

# 2011 AP French Language Student Performance

## *Section I, Part B: Multiple-Choice Reading*

Standard Group performance (14,864 students)

Reading Comprehension (38 questions)

- 4 Standard Group students answered all 38 questions correctly
- Average student performance: 20.8 correct (55%)

# 2011 AP French Language Student Performance

## *Section II: Writing, Fill-Ins (Function Words)*

Standard Group performance (14,864 students)

Function Words (15 questions)

- 112 Standard Group students answered all 15 questions correctly
- Average student performance: 6.6 (44% of max. possible score)

# 2011 AP French Language Student Performance

## *Section II: Writing, Fill-Ins (Verbs)*

Standard Group performance (14,864 students)

Verbs (15 questions)

- 153 Standard Group students answered all 15 questions correctly
- Average student performance: 7.8 (52% of max. possible score)

# 2011 AP French Language Student Performance

## *Section II: Writing, Essay*

Standard Group performance (14,864 students)

Essay (scored on a 0-9 scale)

- 198 Standard Group students earned a score of 9.
- Average student performance: 4.4 (49% of max. possible score)

# 2011 AP French Language Student Performance

## *Section II: Writing, Essay*

### Comments from the Chief Reader:

“The formulation of the essay prompt and the essay topic itself were more accessible to students this year. This year, the essay topic appeared to be within the experience of all students.”

“The essay topic last year required more vocabulary and elicited more examples taken from literature and film.”

“ ‘Classic’ student errors persist: poor organization, incorrect or no use of transition words, using *tu* instead of *on*, and of course, illegible handwriting!”

# 2011 AP French Language Student Performance

## *Section II: Speaking (Picture Sequence)*

Standard Group performance (14,864 students)

Three questions related to a picture sequence  
(each scored on a 0-5 scale; max. possible = 15)

- 621 Standard Group students earned a score of 15.
- Average student performance: 9.5  
(63% of max. possible score)

# 2011 AP French Language Student Performance

## *Section II: Speaking (Picture Sequence)*

### Comments from the Chief Reader:

“Generally, the picture sequence and the questions based on it were more accessible to students this year, allowing them to produce a greater variety of vocabulary than last year’s picture sequence.”

“The questions based on last year’s picture sequence were thought to be more difficult than this year; the 2010 questions called for a more sophisticated range of grammatical structures.”

“This year the images were labeled (A, B, C etc.); this appears to have helped students organize their spoken responses.”



# 2011 AP French Language Student Performance

## *Section II: Speaking (“Split Screen”)*

Standard Group performance (14,864 students)

Two questions related to a “split screen” of two images (each scored on a 0-5 scale; max. possible = 10)

- 977 Standard Group students earned a score of 10.
- Average student performance: 6.5 (65% of max. possible score)

# 2011 AP French Language Student Performance

## *Section II: Speaking (“Split Screen”)*

Comments from the Chief Reader:

“The vocabulary in this year’s ‘split screen’ questions was simpler, as both scenes showed activities related to the same general topic (sports), not different topics.”

“The prompt for the first ‘split screen’ question this year said merely ‘Comparez’, instead of ‘Décrivez et comparez’.”

**Changes in scoring and weightings  
for the 2012 exam  
(AP French Language and Culture)**

# AP French Language and Culture (2012 exam)

## *“Breaking scale”*

- A great advantage of the new AP French Language and Culture exam in 2012 is the ability to “break scale” with the old exam.
- This means that a new statistical norm with new grade distributions will be established for the 2012 exam. No questions from previous years of the AP French Language exam will be repeated on the 2012 exam forms.

# AP French Language and Culture (2012 exam)

## *Multiple-Choice Section*

Standard Group student performance on the MC section will continue to be an important factor in the grade-setting process in 2012:

- All MC questions used in the 2012 exam forms have been pre-tested over the past 18 months. We have statistics on how current AP French students are handling the new question types, and thus we know which of the pre-tested questions are appropriate to carry forward to the 2012 exam forms.
- The 2012 exam forms (operational, alternate, exception) will have a certain degree of overlap of MC questions, so that we may establish a basis for comparing all the students who take the new exam in 2012.

# AP French Language and Culture (2012 exam)

## *Multiple-Choice Section Weighting*

2011: AP French Language		2012: AP French Language and Culture	
Listening Comprehension	25%	50%	Interpretive Communication: Print Texts
	Reading Comprehension		25%
			Interpretive Communication: Audio Texts

# AP French Language and Culture (2012 exam)

## *Free-Response Section Weighting*

2011: AP French Language			2012: AP French Language and Culture		
<b>Writing: Fill-Ins (Function Words)</b>	5%	25%	25%	12.5%	<b>Interpersonal Writing: E-Mail Reply</b>
<b>Writing: Fill-Ins (Verbs)</b>	5%			12.5%	<b>Presentational Writing: Persuasive Essay</b>
<b>Writing: Essay</b>	15%				
<b>Speaking: Picture Sequence</b>	15%	25%	25%	12.5%	<b>Interpersonal Speaking: Conversation</b>
<b>Speaking: “Split Screen”</b>	10%			12.5%	<b>Presentational Speaking: Cultural Comparison</b>

# AP French Language and Culture (2012 exam)

On the AP French Language exam (2011), each of the fill-ins was either right (1 pt.) or wrong (0 pts.), the essay was scored on a scale of 0-9 pts., and each of the five spoken responses was scored on a scale of 0-5 pts.

On the new AP French Language and Culture exam (2012), each of the 4 free-response tasks will be scored on a scale of 0-5 pts. Please see the *AP French Language and Culture Course and Exam Description* for the preliminary scoring guidelines (rubrics).



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Mary Trachsel  
Associate Professor, Department of Rhetoric  
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# Questions and Answers

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