



September 29, 2009

Bonjour les parents!

As most of you know, my name is Mme Genée-Brown and I will be your child(ren)'s French teacher this year. I am very excited to be the Core French teacher at St.James again this year and it was a pleasure to see so many of you at the Open House. I would like to take this opportunity to tell you a little about the French program this year.

If you have a child in a primary grade, the “**Dimoitou**” program will be used. This program emphasizes learning to listen and understand speech, rather than on any other aspect of the language. In the early phases of language learning, developing comprehension is believed to give the child the greatest immediate success. Using this approach, I will help students acquire linguistic knowledge (structures, vocabulary, etc) as well as an ability “to do things with words” - for example, to carry out instructions. This will be done through a variety of activities such as rhymes, songs, picture stories, role playing, in addition to social, manual, and relaxation games.

If you have a child in a junior grade, the “**Visages**” program will be used. This program is an activity-based Core French program. Through its student-centred approach to second language learning, “Visages” is intended to foster in the student a positive attitude towards the learning of French. It also helps to foster those skills, abilities, and attitudes required for the development of communicative competence in the French language. Communicative competence can be defined as the ability to comprehend, and to negotiate and convey meaning in an effective, creative, and culturally appropriate manner. The achievement of communicative competence in any language, first or second, is a lifelong endeavor. “Visages” aims to stimulate in students the desire to continue to enhance their ability to use French. It aims to nurture such aspirations by providing a solid foundation on which students can build.

If you have a child in Grades 7 and 8, the “**On Y Va**” program will be used. This program is designed to develop a wide range of essential skills in French as a second language, and an appreciation of French culture from within Canada and around the world. The “On Y Va” program offers students a valuable educational experience through cross-curricular connections with other subjects. Students will discover French while learning about topics that connect to the whole curriculum. They are given the opportunity to develop a basic usable command of the French language in many areas. The program also encourages self-expression, critical and creative thinking, problem solving, understanding of the self and others and, ultimately, independence through learning.

The best way that you, as a parent, can support your child with French is by having a positive attitude towards the learning of a second language. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at the school.

Sincerely,

Mme Genée-Brown