

American and French Grade Level Comparison



Student Age (Approximative)	American Grade Level	French Grade Level	Subject Matter	NOTES
Prior to six years of age	Preschool	Ecole Maternelle	Physical and sensory exercises; exercises in language and observation	Instruction in both types of school are not compulsory at this age
6-11 years of age: ELEMENTARY EDUCATION	Elementary school	Cycle Elementaire		Compulsory education begins
6 years of age	1st grade	Cours Préparatoire (CP) or 11ème	Beginning reading, writing, spelling	
7 years of age	2nd grade	Cours Elémentaire I (CE I) or 10ème	Beginning history, geography, science by observation, grammar	
8 years of age	3rd grade	Cours Elémentaire II (CE II) or 9ème		
9 years of age	4th grade	Cours Moyen I (CM I) or 8ème		
10 years of age	5th grade	Cours Moyen II (CM II) or 7ème		
11-15 years of age: SECONDARY EDUCATION	Junior High School or Middle School	First Cycle Collège		
11 years of age	6th grade	6ème	Beginning foreign language	Sixth grade can be in either elementary or middle schools in the United States; it varies by state and region.
12 years of age	7th grade	5ème	Beginning geometry, Latin and algebra	
13 years of age	8th grade	4ème	Fr: Beginning of second foreign language and Greek for students oriented towards "Classique L"	
14 years of age		3ème		
15-18 years of age: SECONDARY EDUCATION - TERMINAL CYCLE	High School	Lycée		French Terminal Cycles begin one grade higher than US high schools. While these ages are typical, it is not uncommon for French students to have repeated a year and be older than the ages listed.
14-15 years of age	9th grade	(Collège - see above)		
15-16 years of age	10th grade	Seconde	Fr: Beginning third foreign language for those students studying neither mathematics nor Latin. US: Students begin AP (Advanced Placement - the ability to be placed in higher level university classes) and Honors Level subject study	The French Second Cycle studies are organized into three year tracks (l'enseignement long) for Baccalauréats and the Brevet de Technicien (B.T. : technician's diploma), and one/two year tracks (l'enseignement court) for the Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle (C.A.P.: certificate of vocational competency), the Brevet d'Etudes Professionnelles (B.E.P.: diploma of vocational studies), and various agricultural diplomas.
16-17 years of age	11th grade	Première	Fr: Leading to the Baccalauréat (7 main sections: philosophy, mathematical science, mathematics and technology, economics and humanities)	
17-18 years of age	12th grade	Terminale	Fr: Students must pass the Baccalauréat exam to graduate.	
POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION				
Universities	Standardized Test Scores, letters or recommendation, and grade point averages serve as primary admission qualifications in the US	The Baccalauréat serves as admittance to universities.		
Junior and Community Colleges	Community colleges may award of Arts (AA) or Associate of Science (AS) degree after two years. Those seeking to continue their education may transfer to a four-year college or university	N/A		
Grandes Ecoles	N/A	Special post-Baccalauréat schools prepare for competitive examinations admitting students to the Grandes Ecoles.		