

## À l'école en France

*Bonjour, Nathalie!*



Bonjour!  
 Je m'appelle Nathalie Aubin.  
 J'ai 15 ans et j'habite à Savigny-sur-Orge  
 avec ma famille. (Savigny est  
 une petite ville à 20 kilomètres  
 au sud de Paris.)  
 J'ai un frère, Christophe, 17 ans,  
 et deux sœurs, Céline, 13 ans,  
 et Florence, 7 ans.  
 Mon père est programmeur.  
 (Il travaille à Paris.)  
 Ma mère est dentiste.  
 (Elle travaille à Savigny.)  
 Je vais au lycée Jean-Baptiste  
 Corot.  
 Je suis élève de seconde.  
 Et vous?

Nathalie

petite small sud south élève student seconde tenth grade

## Les photos de Nathalie

Voici ma famille.



*moi*

*ma mère*

*ma sœur Céline*



*mon père*

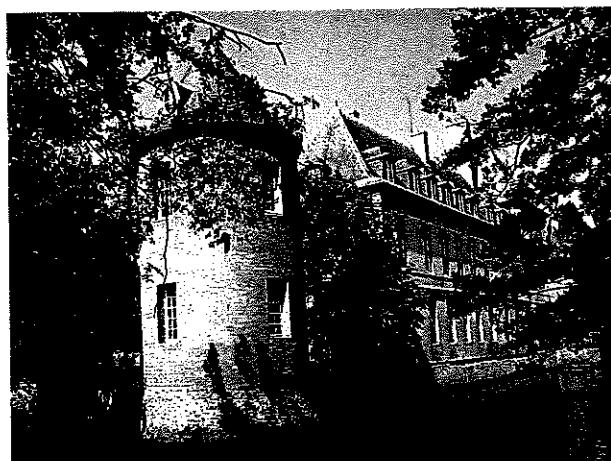


*mon frère Christophe et ma sœur Florence*



Voici ma maison. (C'est une maison confortable, mais ce n'est pas un château!)

Voici mon école.  
Le lycée Jean-Baptiste Corot  
est dans un château!



*école school dans in château castle*

## Le lycée Jean-Baptiste Corot



*Jean-Baptiste Corot*

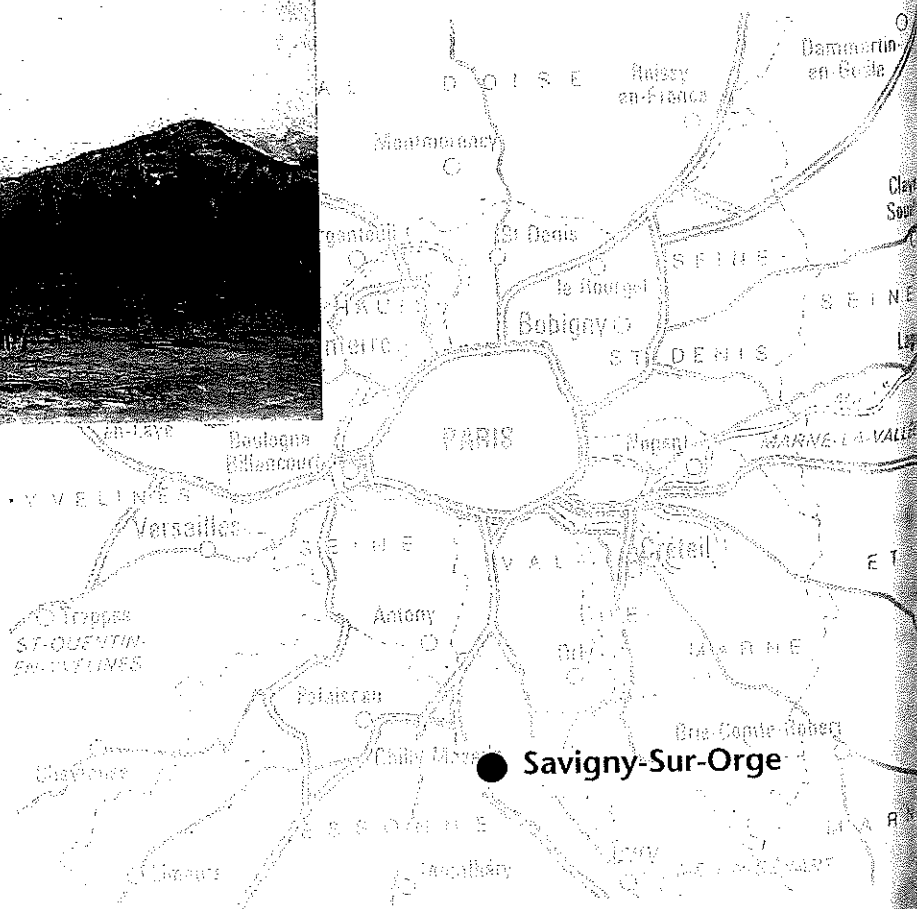


*un pastel de Corot*

The lycée Jean-Baptiste Corot is located in Savigny-sur-Orge, a small town about 12 miles south of Paris. Like many French schools, it is named after a famous French person. Jean-Baptiste Corot was a 19th century painter, remembered especially for his landscapes.

The lycée Jean-Baptiste Corot is both old and modern. It was created in the 1950s on the grounds of a historical castle dating from the 12th century. The castle, which serves as the administrative center, is still surrounded by a moat. The lycée itself has many modern facilities which include:

- les salles de classe (classrooms)
- la cantine (cafeteria)
- le stade (stadium) et  
le terrain de sport (playing field)





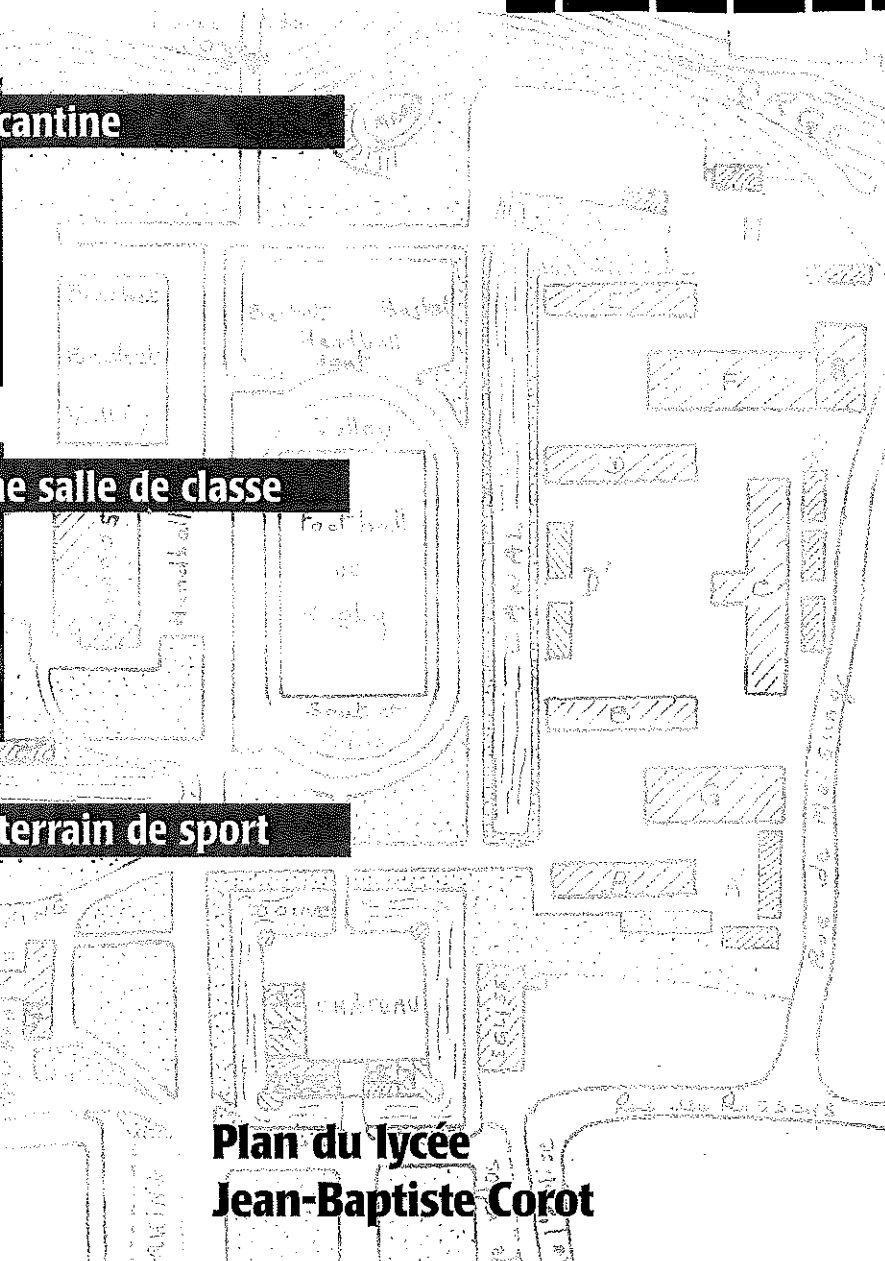
**la cantine**



**une salle de classe**



**le terrain de sport**



**Plan du lycée  
Jean-Baptiste Corot**

## Comparaisons Culturelles

1. Compare your school to the lycée Jean-Baptiste Corot.

- Is your school named after somebody? If so, why is this person famous?
- Is your school older or more modern than the lycée Jean-Baptiste Corot?  
When was it built (approximately)?
- Does your school have the same facilities as the lycée Jean-Baptiste Corot?  
Does it have other facilities?

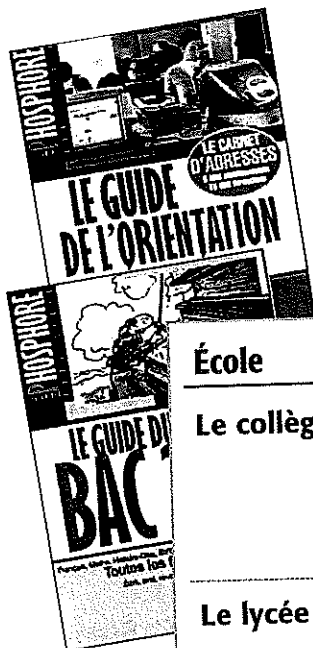
2. Make a map of your school, giving French names to its facilities. (Ask your teacher's help for words you do not know.)

## L'école secondaire en France

There are two types of secondary schools in France:

- **le collège**, which corresponds to the U.S. middle school (grades 6 to 9)
- **le lycée**, which corresponds to the U.S. high school (grades 10 to 12)

On the following chart, you will notice that each grade (**une classe**) is designated by a number (as in the United States): **sixième (6<sup>e</sup>)**, **cinquième (5<sup>e</sup>)**, **quatrième (4<sup>e</sup>)**, etc. However, the progression from grade to grade is the opposite in France. The secondary school begins in France with **sixième** and ends with **terminale**.



École	Classe	Âge des élèves	Équivalent américain
Le collège	sixième (6 <sup>e</sup> )	11–12 ans	sixth grade
	cinquième (5 <sup>e</sup> )	12–13 ans	seventh grade
	quatrième (4 <sup>e</sup> )	13–14 ans	eighth grade
	troisième (3 <sup>e</sup> )	14–15 ans	ninth grade
Le lycée	seconde (2 <sup>e</sup> )	15–16 ans	tenth grade
	première (1 <sup>re</sup> )	16–17 ans	eleventh grade
	terminale	17–18 ans	twelfth grade

A student (**un/une élève**) who does not do well in a given grade has to repeat that grade the next year. This is called **redoubler**. About 50% of the French students are kept back at least once during their secondary school studies.

At the end of high school, French students take a two-part national examination called **le baccalauréat**, or **le bac** for short, which they have to pass in order to enter the university.

- The first part, which focuses on the French language, is administered at the end of **première**.
- The second part, which is given at the end of **terminale**, offers students over twenty options reflecting their area of specialization.

Only 75% of the students who take the **bac** in a given year pass the exam. Of those who are successful, about 85% continue their studies either at the university or at a specialized professional school. Since education in France is considered a responsibility of the government, tuition is free at all public universities.

## Des élèves vous parlent



*David Souliac, 14 ans*

J'habite à Bergerac, une petite ville  
dans le sud-ouest° de la France.  
Je suis élève de 4<sup>e</sup> au collège Jacques Prévert.  
Là, j'étudie l'anglais et l'espagnol.

*southwest*



*Antoine Restaut, 14 ans*

J'habite à Paris.  
Je suis élève au collège Jeannine Manuel.  
C'est un collège international.  
J'aime les maths et les sciences.  
Je voudrais être pilote comme° mon père.

*like*



*Pauline Lescure, 16 ans*

Je suis élève de première au lycée Schoelcher  
à Fort de France en Martinique.  
J'étudie les sciences.  
Je veux être médecin.°  
Je voudrais aller° à l'université à Paris.  
Mais d'abord,° je dois être reçue° au bac.

*doctor*

*to go*

*first/pass*

## Le programme scolaire *(School curriculum)*

At the middle school (**au collège**), all French students take certain required subjects (**des matières obligatoires**). In **quatrième**, for instance, these subjects include French, math, one foreign language, history and geography, science (**sciences de la vie et de la terre** – life and earth sciences), and art. Depending on their preferences and career plans, they can also choose among a certain number of electives (**des matières facultatives**). Many opt for a second foreign language (**une langue**).

Here is a list of subjects taught in French middle schools. (Note that no school offers all the languages listed, but most schools offer three or four.) How many of the subjects can you identify?

### Matières obligatoires

français  
maths  
1<sup>ère</sup> langue moderne  
histoire  
géographie  
physique-chimie  
sciences de la vie et de la terre  
technologie  
éducation civique  
éducation physique et sportive  
arts plastiques  
éducation musicale

### Matières facultatives

latin  
grec  
2<sup>ème</sup> langue moderne

### Langues modernes

allemand  
anglais  
arabe  
espagnol  
hébreu  
italien  
portugais  
russe

## Comparaisons Culturelles

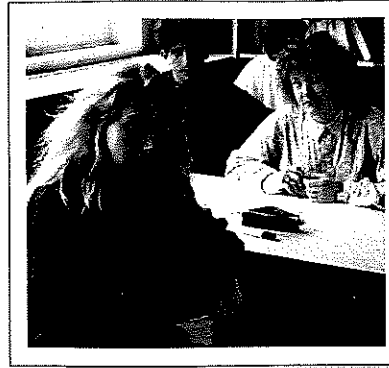
Compare the curriculum of an eighth grader in the United States with that of a French teenager in the equivalent grade (**quatrième**). You may first want to list the subjects offered in your school system for grades six through nine.

- a) Matières obligatoires
- b) Matières facultatives
- c) Langues modernes

Do you prefer the French or the American curriculum? Explain.

## L'emploi du temps de Nathalie

Nathalie Aubin est en seconde au lycée Jean-Baptiste Corot. Voici son emploi du temps.



### LYCÉE JEAN-BAPTISTE COROT

Étudiante: AUBIN, Nathalie

	LUNDI	MARDI	MERCREDI	JEUDI	VENDREDI	SAMEDI
8h30 à 9h30	Histoire	Allemand		Informatique <sup>a</sup>		Français
9h30 à 10h30	Anglais	Français	Anglais	Physique	Allemand	Français
10h30 à 11h30	Sport	Français	Informatique	Maths	Latin	Latin
11h30 à 12h30	Français	Latin	Maths		Sciences vie et terre	Histoire ou civilisation
13h00 à 14h00						
14h00 à 15h00	Sciences vie et terre	Maths		Allemand		
15h00 à 16h00	Géographie	Maths		Sport		
16h00 à 17h00	Physique	Anglais				

*informatique computer science*

## Comparaisons Culturelles

Compare Nathalie's schedule with that of an American student in the same grade (tenth grade). You may want to make a chart:

	France	United States
number of classes per week		
number of foreign languages		
number of hours per week for sports		
other differences		

On the basis of your comparisons, do you prefer the French system or the American system? Explain.

### Mon emploi du temps

Write out your own school schedule in French.