

TALLIS 16+

THOMAS TALLIS SCHOOL POST 16 CENTRE

SUPERCURRICULAR READING LIST

SUBJECT: French

Non-fiction and academic works

- Le cinéma selon François Truffaut (François Truffaut, Anne Gillan, 1988)
- De la littérature beur à la littérature de banlieue: un changement de paradigme (Mireille Le Breton, 2013) [ici](#)
- Regards sur l'emploi des ressources des membres de France Générosité (2018) [ici](#)
- Report on death sentences and executions (Amnesty International, 2021) [ici](#)
- Global Prison Trends 2023 (Penal Reform International, 2023) [ici](#)
- Article on overpopulation of prisons (Radio France, 2022) [ici](#)
- Obituary for Jean-Luc Godard (The Guardian, 2022) [ici](#)
- Interview with Haitian director Gessica Génésus on the realities of filming in Haiti (2023) [ici](#)
- Article on birth rates in the UK – reasons for this very applicable to France, too (2022) [ici](#)
- Article on postcolonial architecture in Dakar, Senegal (2022) [ici](#)
- Article on music as a way of preserving the Occitan language (2023) [ici](#)
- Encouragement for young people to vote in the European elections (2024) [ici](#)
- Article on the status of disabled athletes (RFI, 2024) [ici](#)
- Article on rising antisemitism, islamophobia and xenophobia in France (RFI, 2024) [ici](#)
- Article looking at racism and police violence a year after the murder of Nahel Merzouk (RFI, 2024) [ici](#)
- Et cetera, et cetera: la langue française se raconte (Julien Soulié & M. la Mine, 2020) Beautiful, entertaining history of French told through cartoons.
- Lingo: A Language Spotter's Guide to Europe (Gaston Dorren, 2014) A very engaging whirlwind tour of sixty languages spoken in Europe.
- Babel: Around the World in Twenty Languages (Gaston Dorren, 2018) A fascinating exploration of the twenty languages with the most speakers worldwide.
- Ad Infinitum: A Biography of Latin (Nicholas Ostler, 2007) Worth reading at least the chapter on how Vulgar Latin became the Romance languages we study today!
- Latin Alive! The Survival of Latin in English and the Romance Languages (Joseph B.Solodow, 2010)

Literary works supporting contextual understanding

- The Island beneath the Sea (Isabel Allende) Follows Zarithé, an enslaved woman in Saint-Domingue (Haiti), as she endures immense hardships and eventually finds freedom, with her journey taking her through Cuba and ultimately to Louisiana during the Haitian Revolution.
- Les impatientes (Djaïli Amadou Amal) (French only) Explores the lives of three Cameroonian women—Ramla, Hindou, and Safira—each confronting forced marriage, polygamy, and the oppressive expectations of their patriarchal society, as they struggle for autonomy and justice.
- So Long a Letter (Mariama Bâ) Written in the form of a letter from one friend to another, this is the story of two women in Senegal reacting against their marriages which have been broken, in part by the polygamy practised in their culture.

- *The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* (Jean-Dominique Bauby) A memoir detailing the author's life after a stroke leaves him with locked-in syndrome, conveying his thoughts and experiences through dictation using his only movable part, his left eyelid. An astonishing book: humorous and moving.
- *Shantytown Kid* (Azouz Begag) An autobiographical novel about Begag's childhood as a son of Algerian immigrants in the Lyon suburbs, detailing his experiences of poverty, racism, and his determination to overcome these challenges through education and integration into French society.
- *L'Étranger* (Albert Camus) Follows Meursault, an emotionally detached Algerian Frenchman, whose indifferent reaction to his mother's death leads to a senseless murder and his subsequent trial, exploring themes of absurdity and existentialism.
- *Papillon* (Henri Charrière) Purportedly an autobiographical novel focusing on Charrière's wrongful conviction for murder, his harrowing experiences in French Guiana's penal colonies, and his relentless attempts to escape, ultimately highlighting his resilience and quest for freedom.
- *The Lady and the Unicorn* (Tracy Chevalier) Weaves a fictional tale around the creation of some famous medieval tapestries, focusing on the intertwined lives of a French noble family, a talented but unscrupulous artist, and a determined weaver, all navigating love, ambition, and art in 15th-century France.
- *My Life in France* (Julia Child) An autobiographical account detailing Child's transformative years in France, where she developed her passion for French cooking, co-authored the influential cookbook "Mastering the Art of French Cooking," and became a beloved culinary icon.
- *Claudine at School* (Colette) Portrays the mischievous and rebellious Claudine navigating the strict rules and social dynamics of an all-girls boarding school in early 20th-century France, offering a vivid and satirical glimpse into adolescence and societal expectations of the time.
- *Tales from the Heart* (Maryse Condé) A collection of interconnected stories that delve into themes of identity, love, and cultural heritage through diverse characters and settings, offering a rich exploration of Caribbean life and its complex relationships.
- *Ségu* (Maryse Condé) An historical novel following the path of Segou, a powerful West-African kingdom, and its inhabitants as they navigate the impact of Islam, slavery, and European colonialism during the 18th century.
- *The Last One* (Fatima Daas) A novel that chronicles the inner struggles and journey of a young Muslim woman named Fatima, as she grapples with her identity, family dynamics, and societal expectations in contemporary France, exploring themes of religion, sexuality, and personal liberation with raw honesty and introspection.
- *The Meurseult Investigation* (Kamel Daoud) A retelling of Albert Camus's *L'Étranger* from the perspective of Harun, the brother of the unnamed Arab killed by Meursault. Through Harun's introspection and exploration of his brother's life and death, the novel critiques colonialism, existentialism, and the consequences of violence.
- *At Night all Blood is Black* (David Diop) A semi-historical imagining of the memories of a Senegalese woman and a French naturalist in the 18th-century.
- *Beyond the Door of No Return* (David Diop) An award-winning novel that follows the journey of El Hadji, a Senegalese soldier fighting for France during World War I, as he grapples with the brutal realities of war, racism, and colonialism.
- *All the Light We Cannot See* (Anthony Doerr) Depicts the lives of a blind French girl and a German boy amidst the challenges and moral complexities of living under Nazi occupation in World War II.
- *Elise or the Real Life* (Claire Etcherelli) Traces the life of a young French woman as she navigates love, independence, and societal norms in post-World War II France, intertwined with the industrial action of her North African immigrant lover.
- *Standing Heavy* (GauZ) A novel that explores the complexities of identity, migration, and belonging through the experiences of characters navigating the vibrant and multicultural streets of Paris, reflecting on themes of cultural heritage and societal integration in contemporary France.
- *Discretion* (Faïza Guène) Alternating fragments from Yamina's Algerian past with those of her Paris present, *Discretion* spans the history of colonial conflict from the Second World War to the present day.

- *Memoirs of a Porcupine* (Alain Mabanckou) narrated by a porcupine spirit that inhabits the body of a young boy named Kibandi, detailing his descent into sorcery and violence as he seeks revenge against those who wronged him, offering a unique exploration of identity, power, and spirituality in Congolese culture.
- *The Last Life* (Claire Messud) A novel that follows three generations of a French-Algerian family, exploring themes of identity, exile, and the search for belonging across France and North Africa amidst political and personal upheavals.
- *The Hundred Foot Journey* (Richard C. Morais) Centres on the clash of cultures when a young Indian chef moves with his family to a small village in France and opens an Indian restaurant just across the street from a prestigious Michelin-starred French restaurant, unfolding a story of culinary rivalry, cultural collision, and the pursuit of culinary excellence.
- *The Languedoc Trilogy* (Kate Mosse) A series of historical novels set in Languedoc, intertwining the lives of characters across different centuries, from the medieval Cathars persecuted during the Inquisition to resistance fighters during World War II and a present-day archaeologist uncovering ancient mysteries, all against the backdrop of the region's rich history and landscapes.
- *Three Strong Women* (Marie Ndiaye) Weaves together three distinct narratives of women from Senegal and France, each grappling with their own challenges and identities amidst societal expectations and personal struggles, offering a profound exploration of resilience, family dynamics, and the complexities of contemporary womanhood.
- *Madame Bâ* (Erik Orsenna) (French only) An extraordinary book structured around the multipage application for a French visa, made by a Malian grandmother desperate to save her young grandson, who has disappeared in France, consumed by the ogre of the French football team.
- *Forgotten on Sundays* (Valérie Perrin) The story of a woman who is nearly 100 and the young woman who looks after her and other residents in a retirement home, listening to stories and alleviating loneliness of more than one person.
- *I am not your Eve* (Devika Ponnambalam) The story of Teha'amana, Tahitian muse and child-bride of the painter Paul Gauguin.
- *The Dream-Maker* (Jean-Christophe Rufin) Follows the journey of a skilled craftsman in 16th-century France who becomes entangled in a quest to fulfil the dreams of King François I, blending historical intrigue with personal ambition and the pursuit of artistic mastery.
- *Bonjour Tristesse* (Françoise Sagan) Portrays the tumultuous summer of a seventeen-year-old girl whose carefree life on the French Riviera takes a darker turn with the arrival of her father's new lover, leading to a provocative exploration of youth, love, and moral ambiguity in post-World War II France.
- *God's Bits of Wood* (Ousmane Sembène) Chronicles the struggle of African railway workers in Senegal during a historic strike against French colonial authorities in the 1940s, highlighting themes of solidarity, resistance, and the quest for social justice amidst harsh working conditions and cultural upheaval.
- *The Country of Others and Watch us dance* (Leïla Slimani) A thought-provoking exploration of cultural clash and identity, where the deracinated party is from France rather than the Morocco her husband and children call home.
- *Perfume* (Patrick Suskind) A darkly comic novel that follows the life of an 18th-century Frenchman with an extraordinary sense of smell but no body odor of his own, as he becomes obsessed with creating the perfect scent.
- *The Book of Salt* (Monique Truong) Delves into the life of a Vietnamese cook in 1930s Paris, who works for two women while reflecting on his past in Vietnam, his identity as an exile, and his complex relationships and yearnings.
- *No et Moi* (Delphine de Vigan) A poignant novel about the unlikely friendship between a gifted yet socially awkward teenager and a homeless young woman as they navigate their personal struggles and the complexities of life on the streets of Paris.
- *The Way to Paradise* (Mario Vargas Llosa) A dual narrative novel that intertwines the lives of Paul Gauguin, the rebellious French painter, and his socialist grandmother, Flora Tristán, as they each pursue their own visions of utopia and struggle against societal norms in the 19th century.

- La toile du monde (Antonin Varenne) (French only) An historical novel set during the 1900 Paris Exposition, following an investigative journalist as she navigates a web of political intrigue, espionage, and personal discovery while uncovering the mysteries surrounding the fair.
- Harmattan (Gavin Weston) Tells the story of a young girl growing up in a remote village in the Republic of Niger, with aid sponsors in Ireland, against the background of increasing civil strife, illness of her mother and her father's plans to take a second wife.
- Germinal (Émile Zola) Often considered Zola's masterpiece and one of the most significant novels in the French tradition. An uncompromisingly harsh and realistic story of a coalminers' strike in northern France in the 1860s.

Film and TV

Ama Gloria (Amachoukeli, 2024)
 Fréda (Gessica Généus, 2022)
 Connected : Surveillance (TV, 2022)
 Kanaval : A People's History of Haiti in Six Chapters (TV, 2022)
 African Renaissance: When Art Meets Power Episode 2: Sénégal (2021)
 The Social Dilemma (TV, 2020)
 Royal Academy of Arts on YouTube :
[Painting the Modern Garden : Monet to Matisse](#) (2020)
 RAA Hélène Binet
 RAA Matisse
 RAA Gauguin and the Impressionists
[The Allure of Art Nouveau : Paris](#)
 Our Planet : Coastal Seas (TV, 2019)
 Les Misérables (Ly, 2019) (not the musical !)
 Le grand bain (Lellouche, 2018)
 The Circle (TV, 2017)
 Bienvenue à Marly-Gomont (Rambaldi, 2016)
 Il a déjà tes yeux (Jean-Baptiste, 2016)
 Ils sont partout (Attal, 2016)
 A Little Chaos (Rickman, 2015)
 The Hundred Foot Journey (Hallström, 2014)
 Qu'est-ce qu'on a fait au Bon Dieu? (de Chauveron, 2014)
 La famille Bélier (Lartigau, 2014)
 Her (Jonze, 2013)
 Tomboy (Sciamma, 2011)
 Midnight in Paris (Woody Allen, 2011)
 The Artist (Hazanavicius, 2011)
 Intouchables (Nakache & Tolédano, 2011)
 La tête en friche (Becker, 2010)
 Potiche (Ozon, 2010)
 Coco Before Chanel (Fontaine, 2009)
 Julie & Julia (Ephron, 2009)
 La vie en rose (Daha, 2007)
 Tanguy (Chatiliez, 2001)
 La Haine (Kassovitz, 1995)
 Délicatessen (Jeunet, 1991)
 Au Revoir Les Enfants (Malle, 1987)
 Le Dernier Métro (Truffaut, 1980)
 La nuit américaine (Truffaut, 1973)
 Jules et Jim (Truffaut, 1962)
 À bout de souffle (Godard, 1960)
 Bonjour Tristesse (Preminger, 1958)

Listening material

In French

rfi.fr any podcast under...

« [Parents, enfants, d'ici et d'ailleurs](#) »

« [Chronique des médias](#) »

« [Ensemble à la maison](#) »

« [Agenda culture Afrique](#) »

« [Chemins d'écriture](#) »

« [Diasporas : la cuisine en héritage](#) »

« [40 ans de rap français](#) »

rfi.fr diffusion sur l'éducation numérique à Madagascar, en Côte d'Ivoire et au Sénégal [ici](#)

rfi.fr reportage sur la migration au Canada [ici](#)

In English

BBC World Service - Digital Planet - any episode!

BBC : [The Belle Époque : A Golden Age ?](#)

You're Dead to Me episodes [here](#)

Young Napoleon

The Haitian Revolution

LGBTQ History

Joan of Arc

Eleanor of Aquitaine

Emma of Normandy

Sarah Bernhardt

Julie d'Aubigny

The Bayeux Tapestry

Chevalier de Saint-Georges

Josephine Baker

The Harlem Renaissance

The Columbian Exchange

Notting Hill Carnival

Mansa Musa

In Our Time episodes [here](#)

Archaeology and Imperialism (14/4/05)

Architecture in the 20th Century (25/3/99)

The Avant Garde's Decline and Fall in the 20th Century (25/2/99)

The Baroque Movement (20/11/08)

The Battle of Crécy (13/04/23)

Berthe Morisot (13/10/22)

Camus (3/1/08)

The Carolingian Renaissance (30/3/06)

Catharism (17/1/02)

Cave Art (24/9/20)

Chivalry (13/2/14)

Christine de Pizan (8/6/17)

Colette (27/01/22)

Condorcet (11/01/24)

Cultural Imperialism (27/6/02)

Delacroix's Liberty Leading the People (20/10/11)

Democracy (18/10/01)

The Devil (11/12/03)

The Druids (20/9/12)

Emilie du Châtelet (4/02/21)

The Encyclopédie (26/10/06)

Epistolary Literature (15/3/07)

Existentialism (28/06/01)

The Franco-American Alliance 1778 (22/04/21)

George Sand (6/2/20)

Germinal (26/10/23)

The Grand Tour (30/5/02)

Le Morte d'Arthur (10/1/13)

Lévi-Strauss (23/5/13)

Louis Pasteur (18/5/17)

Louis XIV: The Sun King (25/05/23)

Madame Bovary (12/6/07)

Marguerite de Navarre (23/11/23)

Marie Antoinette (8/11/18)

Medieval Pilgrimage (18/02/21)
The Medieval University (17/3/11)
Modern Culture (21/1/99)
Montaigne (25/4/13)
Montesquieu (14/6/18)
Napoleon's Hundred Days (18/04/24)
Olympe de Gouges (21/04/22)
Pascal (19/9/13)
Proust (17/4/03)
Rome and European Civilization (20/12/01)
Sartre (7/10/04)
Simone de Beauvoir (22/10/15)
The Song of Roland (4/11/21)
The Statue of Liberty (14/2/08)
Surrealism (15/11/01)
Voltaire's Candide (3/5/12)
The 12th Century Renaissance (20/10/16)