Common core of knowledge, skills and culture

Public concerned: students in compulsory schooling from elementary schools, high schools* and colleges*, public or private under French National Education contract.

The Common Core of Knowledge, Skills and Culture covers the period of compulsory schooling, namely ten key years in the life and education of children, from six to sixteen years old. It mainly corresponds to the teachings of the elementary school and high school which both constitute a common school culture. Preceded for most students by a kindergarten schooling that has laid the foundation for learning and living together, compulsory education has the dual purpose of training and socializing. It gives students a common culture, based on the necessary knowledge and skills, which will allow them to achieve personal development, to develop their social skills, to engage in a successful learning pathway, to be active citizens of their ever-evolving respective societies. The Common Core of Knowledge, Skills and Culture should become a central reference for the work of teachers and actors in the education system, in that it defines the aims of compulsory schooling and that it demands that the school keep its promises for all pupils.

The Common Core of Knowledge, Skills and Culture should be balanced in its contents and its approaches:
- it opens to knowledge, forms judgment and critical thinking, from ordered elements of rational knowledge of the world;
- it provides a general education, open and common to all and based on values that allow to live in a society of tolerance and freedom;
- it promotes the development of the person interacting with the world around him;
- it develops understanding and creation, imagination and action;
- It supports and promotes the physical, cognitive and emotional developments of students, whilst respecting their integrity;
- It gives students the means to engage in school activities, to act, to exchange with others, to acquire autonomy and thus gradually exercise their freedom and their rights of citizenship.

A student engaged in his education learns to think, to apply acquired knowledge, to choose appropriate processes and procedures, to think, to solve problems, to carry out complex tasks or projects, especially in a new or unexpected situation. Teachers define the most relevant ways to achieve these goals by engaging students, and focus their teaching and the practices of children and adolescents on critical intellectual issues that are meaningful and leading to students' achievements.

* The source text mentions *collèges* and *lycées*. The terminology used in the translation (*high schools* and *colleges*) follows the terminology of the Australian education system.

The Common Core of Knowledge, Skills and Culture identifies the knowledge and skills that must be acquired at the end of compulsory schooling. A skill is the ability to mobilize one's resources (knowledge, skills, attitudes) to accomplish a task or deal with a complex or unprecedented situation. Skills and knowledge are not in opposition. Their acquisition involves taking into account, in the learning process, the experiences and representations of the students, to put them in perspective, to enrich and to evolve their experience of the world.

With the law of orientation and programming for the re-founding of the School of the Republic of 8 July 2013, the Republic of France is committed to enable all students to acquire the c

Common Core of Knowledge, Skills and Culture that supports a common culture. It is about contributing to the successful implementation and building of school success for every student, which combats exclusions and discriminations and which allows all students to develop to their fullest potential with the best possible education.

The logic of the Common Core of Knowledge, Skills and Culture implies a gradual and continuous acquisition of knowledge and skills by students, as recalled in the following titles of the cycles of compulsory school education and directed by the Common Core of Knowledge, Skills and Culture: Cycle 2 of Fundamental Learning, Cycle 3 of Reinforcement, Cycle 4 of Deepening the Engagement of Learning. Thus, mastering the components of the Common Core of Knowledge, Skills and Culture should be conceived within the framework of the student's school pathway and in reference to the expectations and training objectives presented by the programs of each cycle. This gradual mastery is assessed throughout the student's school pathway and especially at the end of each cycle. This helps monitor the student's learning. To support this mastery, specific strategies are to be implemented in the classrooms, or, where appropriate, reduced-size classes should be set up in that respect.

Domain 1: Languages as thinking and communicating tools

The domain of languages to think and communicate covers four types of languages, which are all objects of knowledge and tools: the French language; foreign or regional languages; mathematic, scientific and technological languages; the language of the arts and the body. This domain provides access to other knowledge and to a culture that enables critical thinking; it involves mastering codes, rules, sign systems and representations. It involves knowledge and skills that are used as thinking, communication, expression tools and working methods that are used in all fields of knowledge and in most activities.

Knowledge and skills targets for the mastery of the Common Core of Knowledge, Skills and Culture

Understanding and using oral and written French language
A student speaks, communicates, argues verbally in a clear and organized manner; he can adapt his level of language and his speech to the situation, he can listen and take into account his interlocutors.
He adapts and adjusts his reading and according to the nature and the difficulty of the text. To construct or verify the meaning of what he reads, he aptly and critically combines the explicit and implicit information from his readings. He discovers the pleasure of reading.

A student writes to tell, describe, explain or argue in a clear and organized way. When necessary, he can rephrase his writings to find the most appropriate wording and to clarify his intentions and thinking. He can make good use of the main grammatical and orthographic rules. He can use an accurate vocabulary in his speeches and written works. In various situations, he spontaneously and effectively uses reading and writing. He learns that the French language has various origins and that it is still evolving. He is aware of its history and its Latin and Greek origins.

Understanding and using a foreign language and, where appropriate, a regional dialect
A student studies at least two foreign languages or, where appropriate, a foreign language and a regional dialect. For each of these languages, he can understand oral and written messages, express and communicate oral and written messages in a simple but effective way. He willingly engages in dialogues and actively participates in conversations. He adapts his level of language and his speech to the situation, he can listen and take into account his interlocutors. He is sufficiently proficient in the code of the language used to fit into a communication related to everyday life: vocabulary, pronunciation, syntax; he also has knowledge of the cultural context specific to this language (lifestyles, social organizations, traditions, artistic expressions …).

Understanding and using mathematic, scientific and technological languages
A student can use the principles of the decimal system and the formal languages (letters, symbols …) specific to mathematics and scientific disciplines, in particular to perform calculations and to model situations. He can read maps and find his way on a map. He can produce and use representations of objects, experiences, natural phenomena such as diagrams, sketches, models, patterns or geometric figures. He can read, interpret, comment, produce tables, graphs and diagrams organizing data of various natures.
He knows that computer languages are used to program digital tools and perform automatic data processing. He knows the basic principles of algorithmics and computer program design. He can implement them to create simple applications.

Understanding and using languages of the arts and the body
Familiar with different artistic approaches, a student learns to express himself and to communicate through the arts, individually and collectively, by designing and producing visual, plastic, audio or verbal productions. He knows and understands the particularities of the different artistic languages he uses. He can justify his intentions and choices by relying on notions of analysis of works. He can express himself through physical, sport or artistic activities involving the body. He thus learns control and self-control.

Domain 2 : Methods and Tools for learning

This domain aims to enable a student to learn to learn, individually or collectively, in class or outside of school, in order to succeed in his studies and eventually to develop his lifelong learning. Learning methods and tools should be the object of an explicit learning in real-life situations, in all the teachings and spaces of school life. In class, a student is asked to solve a problem, understand a document, write a text, take notes, perform a service or create objects. He should be able to learn a lesson, write a homework, prepare a presentation, speak, work on a project, train by choosing the steps adapted to the learning objectives

previously explained. These skills require the use of all theoretical and practical tools at his disposal, the use of libraries and documentation centres, the ability to use digital technologies in a relevant way to research, access information, prioritize and produce content himself. The mastery of learning methods and tools develops autonomy and initiative; it encourages a student's engagement in group work, mutual aid and cooperation.

Knowledge and skills targets for the mastery of the Common Core of Knowledge, Skills and Culture

Personal work management

A student can look ahead, anticipate, plan his tasks. He can manage the steps of a production, whether written or not, and can memorize what must be. He understands the meaning of instructions; he knows that the same word can have different meanings depending on the subject. To acquire knowledge and skills, he can implement the essential skills of attention, memorization, resource mobilization, concentration, the ability to exchange, question, respect instructions and manage his efforts. He knows how to identify a problem, engage in a resolution process, use the appropriate knowledge, analyse and exploit his errors, test several solutions, pay particular importance to corrections. A student knows how to build personal tools through written works, including digital ones: notes, drafts, index cards, lexicons, lists, mind maps, plans, sketches, which he can use with the purpose of training, reviewing, memorizing.

Cooperation and group work

Students work as a team, share tasks, engage in a constructive dialogue, accept disapproval while defending their own points of view, demonstrate diplomacy, negotiate and seek consensus. They learn how to run an individual or a group project. They can plan tasks, set up the phases and assess the achievement of objectives. Students know that class and school environments are places where they can collaborate, seek mutual aid and share knowledge. They help the ones who do not know how to learn from others. The use of digital tools contributes to these methods of organization, exchange and collaboration.

Media, information research and processing

A student knows some elements of the history of writing and its various media. He understands the modes of production and the role of visuals. He knows how to use research tools, especially on the Internet. He learns to confront different sources and to assess the validity of the contents. He knows how to process the collected information, how to organize it, how to memorize it in appropriate forms and how to format it. He can make links to build his knowledge. A student learns to use digital tools of communication and information responsibly, respecting the social rules of their use and all his potential to learn and work. He knows how to access a safe, legal and ethical use of digital tools to produce, receive and disseminate information. He develops a digital culture.
He can identify the various media (printed, audio visual and web press) and knows their nature. He understands the stakes and the general functioning of digital tools in order to take a critical view and gain sufficient autonomy in their use.

Digital tools to exchange and communicate

A student knows how to make use of various digital tools to create documents integrating various media and to publish or transmit them, so that they can be consulted and used by others. He knows how to reuse collaborative productions to enrich his own achievements, in compliance with the rules of copyright. A student can use collaborative working spaces and learn to communicate, particularly through social networks while respecting himself and others. He understands the difference between public and private spheres. He knows what a digital identity is and is concerned with the traces he leaves on the internet.

Domain 3: Forming the person and the citizen

The School has a special responsibility in the training of a student as a person and a future citizen. Based on a coeducation approach, school shall not replace families, but its role includes transmitting to students the fundamental values and principles inscribed within our Constitution. It enables a student to acquire the ability to judge for himself, along with the sense of belonging to society. In doing so, it enables a student to develop, in actual situations experienced in his daily school life, his ability to live independently, to participate actively in the improvement of the common life and to prepare to commit as a citizen. This domain calls upon: - the learning and experience of the principles that guarantee the freedom of all, such as freedom of conscience and expression, mutual tolerance, equality, especially between men and women, the rejection of discrimination, the assertion of the capacity to judge and act by oneself; - knowledge and understanding of the meaning of rights and laws, of rules that allow participation in collective and democratic life and of the notion of public interest; - the knowledge, the understanding but also the elaboration of the principle of secularism, which allows citizenship and the engagement of each and every one in social life, in the respect of the freedom of conscience. This domain is implemented in all the actual situations of school life where knowledge and values find the conditions of an ongoing learning, appealing to sensitivity and consciousness, through the experience and the engagement of all.

Knowledge and skills targets for the mastery of the Common Core of Knowledge, Skills and Culture

Expressing views and feelings, respecting others
A student expresses his feelings and emotions using a precise vocabulary. He develops his intellectual and physical abilities, while being confident in his own ability to succeed and progress. A student learns to resolve conflicts in a non-aggressive way, avoiding the use of violence through his control of means of expression, communication and argumentation. He respects the opinions and the freedom of others, identifies and rejects any form of intimidation or influence. He is also able to show empathy and benevolence.

Rules and laws
A student understands and respects common rules, including rules of civility, within the class or the school, rules that both authorize and constrain, and that engage the entire educational community. He takes part in defining these rules in the appropriate framework. He is aware of the educational role and gradation of sanctions as well as the great principles and institutions of justice. He understands how, in a democratic society, common values

guarantee individual and collective freedoms, find application in rules and in the legal system that citizens can change in the context of specific procedures. He knows the great declarations of human rights (in particular the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen of 1789, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948), the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights, the International Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the founding principles of the French Republic. He knows the meaning of the principle of secularism; he measures the historical depth and importance for democracy in our country. He understands that secularism guarantees the freedom of conscience, based on the autonomy of the judgment of all and establishes rules allowing to live together peacefully. He knows the main policies regarding the institutional functioning of the European Union and the major objectives of the European project.

Reflection and discernment

A student is aware of the impact of his words and of the responsibility of his actions. He bases his judgments on his own reflection and mastery of argumentation. He understands the moral choices that people make in their lives; he can discuss these choices as well as some major ethical issues related, in particular, to social, scientific or technical developments. A student can check the authenticity of information and distinguish what is objective and what is subjective. He learns to justify his choices and to confront his own judgments with those of others. He knows how to question his initial judgments after a thought-provoking debate, he can distinguish the individual interest from the general interest. He applies and respects the great republican principles.

Responsibility, engagement and initiative

A student cooperates and is accountable for others. He keeps his commitments to himself and to others, he understands how important it is to honour contracts in civil life. He also understands the importance of getting involved in school life (collective actions and projects, various school organizations), of resorting to the tools of democracy (agenda, reports, votes) and of engaging in the different aspects of collective life and the environment along with other students. A student knows how to take initiatives, undertake and implement projects, after assessing the consequences of his action; he thus prepares his future educational career and his adult life.

Domain 4 : Natural and Technical systems

This domain aims to give students the foundations of the mathematical, scientific and technological literacy required to experience nature and its phenomena, as well as techniques developed by men and women. It is about awakening students' curiosity, encouraging students to ask questions, to seek answers and to invent, while introducing them to the great challenges facing humanity. Students then discover the surrounding environment, using a scientific approach. The goal is to lay the foundations for scientific and technical approaches. Based on observation, manipulation and experimentation, using the language of mathematics for their representations, the scientific approaches aim to explain the Universe, to understand its evolution, using a rational approach privileging verifiable facts and hypotheses while making a distinction between opinions and beliefs. They develop the students' intellectual rigor, manual dexterity and critical thinking, the ability to

demonstrate, to argue. The familiarization of students with the technical world requires them to know how some objects and systems work and to be able to design and make objects themselves. Students have the opportunity to be aware that the technological approach consists in seeking efficiency in a constrained environment (especially by resources) in order to meet human needs, taking into account social and environmental impacts. By getting familiar with these approaches, concepts and tools, students become familiar with developments in science and technology and their history, which constantly change our visions and our uses of the planet. Students understand that mathematics enable to develop a scientific representation of phenomena, that they offer modelling tools, that they feed on the questions raised by the other fields of knowledge and feed them in return.

Knowledge and skills targets for the mastery of the Common Core of Knowledge, Skills and Culture

Scientific approaches

A student knows how to conduct a scientific investigation. In that regard, he describes and questions his observations; he collects, organizes and processes useful information; he formulates hypotheses and tests them; he manipulates, explores several approaches, proceeds by trial and error; he conceptualizes to represent a situation; he analyses, argues, leads different types of reasoning (by analogy, by logical deduction ...); he reports on his approaches. A student uses and communicates the results of measurements or of research using scientific languages wisely. A student practices mental and written computation, he estimates and controls the results, in particular by using orders of magnitude. He can solve problems involving various sizes (geometric, physical, economic ...), especially in situations of direct proportion. He can interpret statistical results and graph them.

Imagining, designing, creating,

A student imagines, designs and creates objects and technical systems. He applies observation, imagination, creativity, aesthetics and quality senses, manual talent and skill, practicality, and draws upon the relevant scientific, technological and artistic knowledge and skills. A student knows how important it is to take responsibility for the environment and health as an individual or as a group. He becomes aware of the impact of human activity on the environment, its health consequences and the need to preserve natural resources and to maintain species diversity. He becomes aware of the need for a fairer and more attentive treatment of resources for the sake of future generations. He knows that health is based on coordinated biological functions that can be disrupted by physical, chemical, biological and social environmental factors and that some of these risk factors depend on social behaviours and personal choices. He is aware that well-being and health depend on dietary and physical activity practices. He can follow basic safety rules related to techniques and products encountered in everyday life. To reach the knowledge and skills targets of this domain, a student uses his knowledge on: - the main functions of the human body, the characteristics and unity of the living world, the evolution and diversity of species; - the structure of the Universe and matter; the main characteristics of the biosphere and their transformations; - energy and its multiple forms, movement and the forces that govern it; - numbers and magnitudes, geometric objects, data management, random phenomena; - the main features of technical objects and systems and the main technological solutions.

Domain 5: Representations of the world and human activity

This domain is dedicated to understanding the world that human beings both inhabit and shape. It is about developing an awareness of geographical space and historical time. This domain also leads to study the characteristics of the organizations and societies and how they operate. It introduces the diversity of human experiences and of the forms they take: scientific and technical discoveries, diverse cultures, systems of thought and belief, art and art works, any representation by which men and women try to understand the human condition and the world in which they live. This domain also aims to develop imagination, design thinking, action to create objects or produce services and works, as well as the taste for artistic, physical and sports practices. It also allows the formation of aesthetic judgment and sensitivity. Finally, it implies a reflection on oneself and others, an openness to others, and contributes to the building of citizenship, by enabling students to address the great issues of the contemporary world in a well-informed way.

Knowledge and skills targets for the mastery of the Common Core of Knowledge, Skills and Culture

Space and time
A student identifies the main issues and challenges of human development, is able to understand the causes and consequences of inequalities, sources of conflict and solidarity, or global issues concerning the environment, resources, trade, energy, demography and climate. He also understands that the past sheds light on the present and that it provides clues to the present. A student can locate in space at different scales, he understands the large physical and human spaces and the main geographical features of the Earth, of the European continent and of his own country: organization and localisations, regional entities, French overseas departments and territories. He knows how to locate a place or a geographic area by using maps, comparing them and producing graphical presentations.

Organisations and representations of the world
A student understands landscapes and can identify the assets and constraints of the environment as well as of past and present human activity. He can establish links between land and the organizing principles of societies. He can write or talk about how he feels about a literary or artistic work; he can support his analysis and views on the work; he makes assumptions about its meanings and suggests an interpretation, relying in particular on its formal and aesthetic aspects. He justifies his intentions and choices, relying on some notions of analysis of works of literature. He assimilates, directly or indirectly, particularly in the context of cultural school outings, literary and artistic works belonging to national and world heritage as well as to contemporary creation.

Inventing, developing, creating

A student imagines, develops and creates works of various kinds, including literary and artistic. In this regard, he implements the principles of design and object making and applies the concepts of creation. He takes into account the constraints of materials and of production processes while respecting the environment. He uses his imagination and creativity into the development of individual or group works. He develops his judgments, his tastes, his sensitivity, his aesthetic emotions. He knows the constraints and benefits of artistic, physical and sports activities, in group or individually. He knows how to benefit from this and can manage his physical activity and artistic production or performance to improve them, make progress and enhance his skills. He seeks to use relevant artistic or sports techniques, he builds strategies to achieve an athletic performance. In the context of group activities and projects, he plays a role in the group by being attentive to others in order to cooperate or confront in a regulated setting. In order to learn more about the world around him and to be ready to exercise his democratic citizenship in a near future, a student asks questions and seeks answers by using his knowledge on:

- the main periods of the history of humanity in a chronological order, the major changes and founding events, the notion of civilization;
- the main modes of organization of populated areas;
- the diversity of lifestyles and cultures, in connection with language learning;
- the key elements in the history of ideas, religious facts and beliefs;
- the major scientific and technical discoveries and the evolutions that they have generated, both in lifestyles and in representations;
- the artistic expressions and works, aesthetic sensibilities and cultural practices of different societies;
- the main forms of political and social organizations, republican and democratic principles and ideals, their history and their current condition;
- the main ways of conceiving economic activity, how it is distributed, the exchanges that they imply;
- the rules and founding laws of social and family economy, labour, health and social protection.

Document translated from French by Olivia Singier