Francophone Connections in CT

history, culture, art
Cheshire Academy

- French Intermediate (level 2/3; intermediate novice to low intermediate) – grades 9 & 10
- IB French ab initio year 2
- IB French HL 1 & 2 combo
- Grade 10 seminar class, spring semester
Knowledge of local history is of critical value for a sense of place, a sense of belonging, and a sense of purpose. Seeing the ways in which various cultures and national identities have shaped the environments we think of as ‘everyday’ helps broaden our understanding of our community and our place in it.

In this highly experiential course, students will travel—both virtually and in person—to a variety of important local and regional Connecticut historical and cultural sites, focusing on the connections between U.S. History, French/French-Canadian culture, and the lives of the communities in and around Cheshire and the state of Connecticut.

10th-grade semester course - research, writing, skill building, community building, through a subject lens
Overview of Indigenous Peoples in CT - [Mashantucket Pequot Museum virtual tour](#)

Rochambeau’s Trail - marker visit, [Marion, CT](#) & [Southington Coffee House](#); [CT markers](#) [Washington-Rochambeau route](#); [Washington-Rochambeau revolutionary trail](#)

[Hillstead Museum](#) – [Impressionism](#) Manet, Monet, Degas, Cassatt; painting with Dollar Store supplies

French Canadians and [Windham Texttile & History Museum](#); [Chez Ben Diner, Manchester](#), [sugar on snow](#); guest speaker, [Chez Ben Diner, Manchester](#)

World War 1 and CT soldiers; CT State Library guest speaker Christine Pittsley; [CT solider in WW!](#); [Museum of CT history](#)

Haïtian immigrants in CT, [Pierre Sylvain artist](#); [Lourdes Creole restaurant, Waterbury](#)

Additional Food - crêpes (La Chandeleur); fondue with Aldi supplies; [Avert Brasserie, West Harford](#)
Rochambeau Trail

- Visit to a marker in Marion, CT
- Southington Coffee House
Rubbings
“Old fashioned” letter writing
Whist & currency
- Manet
- Monet
- Degas
- Cassatt
- Japanese woodblock prints
- Architecture
- Furnished home - per Theodate’s will
- Guided tours - English/French
- Archives
- Outdoor spaces; Sunken Garden
Interview with the Artist
Windham Textile & History Museum
FRENCH CANADIAN MILL WORKER

Middletown, Connecticut - It is a brisk morning as mill worker Jean-Pierre begins his long day at the American Thread Company. The 32-year-old French-Canadian immigrant has worked at the mill for six years, enduring long hours and difficult conditions to provide for his wife and three children.

Jean-Pierre arrives at the mill promptly at 6:00 am, along with hundreds of other workers. He punches in and heads to his station, where he will spend the next twelve hours operating a spinning machine that produces cotton thread. The noise of the machines is deafening, and the air is thick with dust and lint.

HOW WORK GOES
IN THE MILLS

For the first few hours, Jean-Pierre works steadily, stopping only briefly for a quick breakfast of bread and coffee. By mid-morning, however, he begins to feel the strain of the long hours and the repetitive nature of his work. His back aches from standing all day, and his eyes are strained from the dim lighting.

At noon, Jean-Pierre takes a brief break for lunch, eating a simple meal of bread and cheese that he brought from home. He chats with his fellow workers, most of whom are also French-Canadian immigrants, about their families and the latest news from their hometowns.

After lunch, Jean-Pierre returns to his machine and continues working until 6:00 pm, when the whistle signals the end of the day. He punches out and heads home, exhausted but grateful for the steady employment that provides for his family.

Life as a mill worker is difficult, but for Jean-Pierre and many other immigrants like him, it is the only option for earning a living in their new country. They endure long hours, poor conditions, and low pay, but they do so with determination and resilience, hoping for a better future for themselves and their families.
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