

Modern Languages, First Public Examination ('Prelims'): Literature in French

All French students at New College will be studying four papers in first year (Prelims). (French Sole students study others, about which they'll be informed separately.) The first two are language papers: Paper I (French Grammar, Translation, and Summary) and Paper II (Unprepared and Prepared Translation into English); these will be explained to you in more detail when you arrive.

The literary element of the Prelims course in French is made up of two papers, numbered III and IV. For Paper III, you read four short texts, and write commentaries on these as course work; currently this paper is not examined, but 'certified', i.e. your Tutors certify to the examiners that you completed the requisite amount of work to a passable standard. Paper IV is an introduction to the study of prose fiction, for which you read four longer works, and write an essay about any three of them in an examination at the end of the year. The set texts for each paper are listed below, and ~~essential~~ to have read these before you arrive at College in Michaelmas.

In some cases, we have suggested which editions we think most useful. In all cases, you should buy serious scholarly editions by reputable French publishers (this usually means Gallimard or Garnier-Flammarion). Do not buy cheap, print-on-demand versions, which are often inaccurate and incomplete.

Paper III: Short Texts

Montaigne, 'Des cannibales' from ~~Essais~~ Essais: 'Des cannibales' et 'Des cochons'.
by Michel Tarpinian (Paris: Ellipses, 1998)

Jean Racine, Phèdre recommended ed. Phèdre ed. by Raymond Picard (Paris: Gallimard Folio, 2015)

Paul Verlaine, Romances sans paroles recommended ed. Romances sans paroles ed. by Arnaud Bernadet
(Paris: Flammarion, 2018 [2012])

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