

What Are Social Conventions and Politeness in French?

Worksheet

Social conventions and politeness in French encompass the formal vous, informal tu distinction, proper greetings (Bonjour/Bonsoir), thank-you phrases, and acknowledgment of personal boundaries — they are the backbone of French respect and connection.

Questions

1. You meet a stranger at a café. What greeting is most appropriate?

- A) Salut!
- B) Ça va?
- C) Bonjour
- D) Yo!

2. Complete: 'S'il _____, pourriez-vous m'aider?'

- A) vous plaît
- B) te plaît
- C) plait
- D) m'aît

3. You are speaking to your best friend. Which pronoun?

- A) Vous
- B) Tu
- C) Monsieur
- D) Madame

4. What does 'À votre service' mean?

- A) Enjoy your food
- B) At your service / how can I help
- C) Goodbye
- D) Sorry for the trouble

5. How would you greet a teacher formally? Informally?

6. Use politeness to refuse an invitation from your professor.

7. How do you politely ask for help from a stranger?

8. Define: When do you use 'vous'?

9. Define: When do you use 'tu'?

10. Define: What does 'Bon appétit' mean and when is it used?

Answer Key

1. C) Bonjour — Bonjour is the formal, polite greeting for strangers and professional settings.
2. A) vous plaît — 'S'il vous plaît' (if it pleases you) is formal politeness — correct form.
3. B) Tu — Tu is informal — appropriate for close friends and family.
4. B) At your service / how can I help — 'À votre service' is a polite offer to help, often used in customer service or formal settings.
5. Formal: 'Bonjour, Madame / Monsieur. Comment allez-vous?' Informal (friend): 'Salut! Ça va?'
Teacher = vous, formal address Friend = tu, casual greeting
6. 'Merci beaucoup pour l'invitation, Monsieur. Malheureusement, je ne peux pas venir ce jour-là.'
Merci beaucoup = strong gratitude Malheureusement = softens refusal Monsieur = formal respect
7. 'Excusez-moi, Madame/Monsieur, pourriez-vous m'aider, s'il vous plaît?' Excusez-moi = polite introduction Pourriez-vous = conditional politeness S'il vous plaît = formal please (vous)
8. With strangers, elders, authority figures, or in professional settings — formal respect.
9. With friends, family, peers, or close colleagues — informal intimacy.
10. 'Enjoy your meal' — used when someone is about to eat or dining.

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