French Tutor

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"French Tutor" is a helpful study aid designed for those learning or strengthening French vocabulary and translation skills—English to French, or French to English. Written for the VIC-20, we've added a version for the Commodore 64.
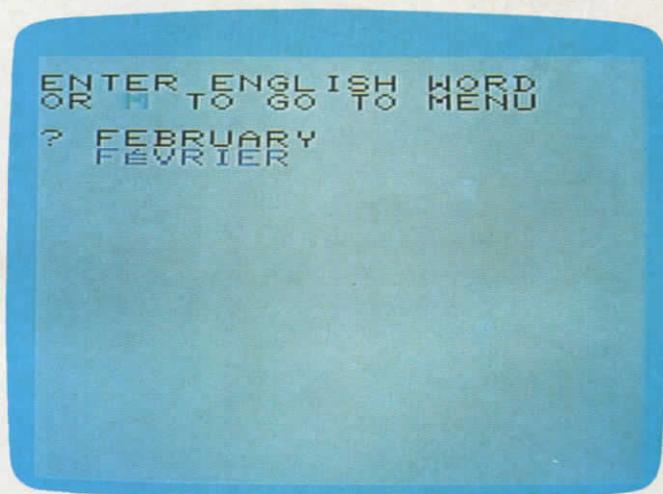
With two children studying French in elementary school, one of my reasons for buying the VIC-20 was to create some French instructional programs.

"French Tutor" was suggested by Steve Steinberg's "Language Lab" (COMPUTE!, July 1982), which provided for both drill and translation. It was relatively easy to adapt to the VIC, with a few minor modifications. For example, a dummy word (XX) is needed as the last item in the DATA statements to prevent the program from running out of DATA if a particular word is not in the list.

Custom Accented Characters

Another modification involved the use of accents, which Language Lab did not include. The solution was to create the accents with programmable characters, as described in "Custom Characters for the VIC" by David Malmberg (COMPUTE!'s First Book of VIC). Program 1 describes which keys have to be pushed to obtain accented characters.

In addition to the familiar accented vowels, this program includes some which are used less frequently—the umlauted ë as in Noël, ü as in Saül, and ö for words of German origin. Also
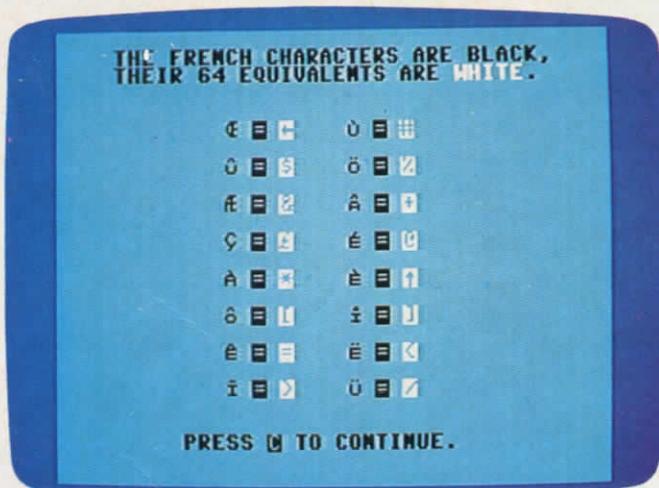

A correct translation is entered in "French Tutor (VIC version).

included are the combined œ for words like œuvre and æ as in Cæsar.

Program 1 also has a musical signature (which could be eliminated if it begins to pall).

Language Drills

Program 2, which is loaded by Program 1, is made up of four sections: French to English vocabulary drill, English to French vocabulary drill, French to English translator, and English to French translator. Because of severe restraints on the VIC's memory in Program 2, there are only 101 words, most of which employ accents and are no longer than five letters. With more memory, this total could be increased. If you do

"French Tutor" also includes French accents and symbols (64 version).

have more memory, make the corresponding change to the number in line 43 (line 1610 in Program 3 for the 64) which randomly selects the words.

Additional memory can also be used to add more sound, but that will necessitate relocating the programmable characters. Also, the random selection of words can be changed so that, for example, if eight words are chosen, none will be repeated, which is not possible as the program is presently written.

Using the program with a disk drive opens up even more interesting possibilities. The four sections of Program 2 could be transformed into four individual programs, which could then be accessed by the menu. The disk drive's speed is an asset in jumping from one program to another, or to the menu itself.

Use The Keyword Abbreviations

Memory in Program 2 is at a premium, and no extra spaces should be inserted. In order to make some lines fit in the maximum 88-character length, BASIC keywords should be abbreviated—PRINT becomes ?, GOSUB becomes GO followed by SHIFTed S, DATA becomes D SHIFT-A, and so on. (See *Personal Computing on the VIC-20*, pp. 133–34, or pp. 263–64 of the *VIC-20 Programmer's Reference Guide*.) In particular, lines 1–5 and several of the DATA lines require abbreviations.

Don't attempt to RUN the finished Program 1 more than twice to see if it works, or you will get an OUT OF MEMORY message. SAVE it on tape often when creating it, so you can always go back to your previous version if this should happen.

Adding Words

The maximum number of words allowed for each Vocabulary Drill section in Program 2 is nine. This is because the VIC recognizes only the first integer with the GET A$ statement in line 10, which doesn't require the user to hit the RETURN key; that is, 20 words would become 2 words. In order to increase this number to 10 or above, eliminate the question mark from line 9, and make the following substitution for lines 10 and 11:

```
10 INPUTN:IFN<1THEN10          :rem 83
11 IFCO=NTHEN14                :rem 162
```

This now requires use of the RETURN key after the number is input.

For the 64 version, change lines 1280–1290 to:

```
1280 INPUTN:IFN<1THEN1280      :rem 39
1290 IFCO=NTHEN1320            :rem 109
```

To make the program work with a disk drive, give Program 2 the name "F". Then, in Program 1, delete line 555 and make the following changes:

```
390 IFA$="N"THENPOKE36869,255:GOTO560
                              :rem 163
580 POKE7993,34:POKE7994,6:POKE7995,34:PO
    KE7996,44:POKE7997,56     :rem 121
590 POKE198,1:POKE631,131:END :rem 161
```

See program listings on page 146. ∎