

THE INTERROGATIVE FORM WITH POURQUOI (WHY)

Goal: By the end of this lesson, you should be able to ask questions in French that target the reason/ motivation behind an action (Why/Pourquoi). Also, you should also be able to provide an answer to such questions by using the French conjunction “*parce que*” (because).

I'm very certain that members of this program who have an *inquisitive* nature will love that lesson, because not only will they be able to ask “WHY” in their respective languages, but they will also enjoy doing so in French☺.

I – WHY → POURQUOI

By now, you all must be aware that there are two main methods of asking questions in French. You can either invert the order subject-verb, or you can also use the magic expression “est-ce que”. For example: *Does she speak French?* → « **Parle-t-elle français?** » (inversion method), or « **Est-ce qu'elle parle français?** »

Important:

In case she in question above is replaced by a real name (Anne or Leslie) or any subject different from a personal pronoun, simply place the real name first, then add the rest of the question as if elle was the subject. (Elle is the corresponding personal pronoun for Anne or Leslie. → **Anne parle-t-elle français?** (Inversion).

With est-ce que, simply replace elle by the real name (Anne): → Est-ce qu'Anne parle français? (No inversion).

Now, when dealing with questions involving POURQUOI (WHY), all you have to do is place pourquoi at the beginning of your question no matter which method you use, and you're done!☺
For example, let's ask: “WHY does she speak French?”

Method 1 (inversion): **Pourquoi parle-t-elle français?**

*(Can you ask similar question if Anne is now the subject?) Use the inversion method

Method 2 : (with « est-ce que »/ no inversion) : **Pourquoi est-ce qu'elle parle français?**

*Can you ask similar question if Anne is the subject?) Use the est-ce que method

In order to put the questions above in the interro-negative form, all you have to do is apply the formulas of the negative to each interrogation. For example: *Why doesn't she speak French?* =

Method 1: Pourquoi ne parle-t-elle pas français ?

Method 2 : Pourquoi est-ce qu'elle ne parle pas français ?

II – BECAUSE → PARCE QUE

If you need to justify yourself in French, or provide an explanation about anything, the most logical conjunction to use is *parce que* (*because*). Simply write your statement (argument) after *parce que*. The best way to illustrate this is by studying some questions involving pourquoi and by providing their answers using parce que.

- 1- **Pourquoi** Luc ne mange-t-il pas? → (**Why** isn't Luc eating?)
Luc ne mange pas **parce qu'**il n'a pas faim. Luc is not eating **because** he is not hungry.
- 2- **Pourquoi** Anne porte-t-elle un manteau? → (**Why** is Anna wearing a coat?)
Anne porte un manteau **parce qu'**elle a froid → Anna is wearing a coat **because** she is cold.
- 3- **Pourquoi** étudiez-vous le français? → (**Why** do you (all) study French?)
Nous étudions le français **parce que** nous aimons cela. → We study French **because** we like it.

Important: Note that parce que can also be replaced by the conjunction “car”. So:
Je mange **parce que** j'ai faim = je mange **car** j'ai faim. → (I'm eating because I'm hungry)
Elles dorment **parce qu'**elles sont fatiguées = Elles dorment **car** elles sont fatiguées. → (They are sleeping because they are tired).

You may now [practice](#) what you've just learned here. ☺