Module 1: Leçons préliminaires
Topic 1 Content: French Diacritical Marks

Introduction

French uses five diacritical marks: *l'accent aigu*, *l'accent grave*, *le circonflexe*, *la cédille*, and *l'accent tréma*. Click on the image thumbnails or the **NEXT** button to learn more about the five diacritical marks used in French.

Acute Accent

L'accent aigu

The acute accent is called *l'accent aigu* in French. It only appears over the letter *e*. Take a look at some examples of French words that have *l'accent aigu*:

étudiant = student
été = summer
médecin = doctor

Grave Accent

L'accent grave

The grave accent is called *l'accent grave* in French. It only appears over the letters *a*, *e*, and *u*. Take a look at some examples of French words that have *l'accent grave*:

là = there
très = very
où = where

Circumflex

Le circonflexe

The circumflex is called *le circonflexe* in French. It appears over the letters *a*, *e*, *i* , *o*, and *u*. Take a look at some examples of French words that have *le circonflexe*:

gâteau = cake
forêt = forest
île = island
hôtel = hotel
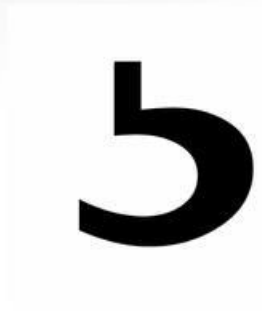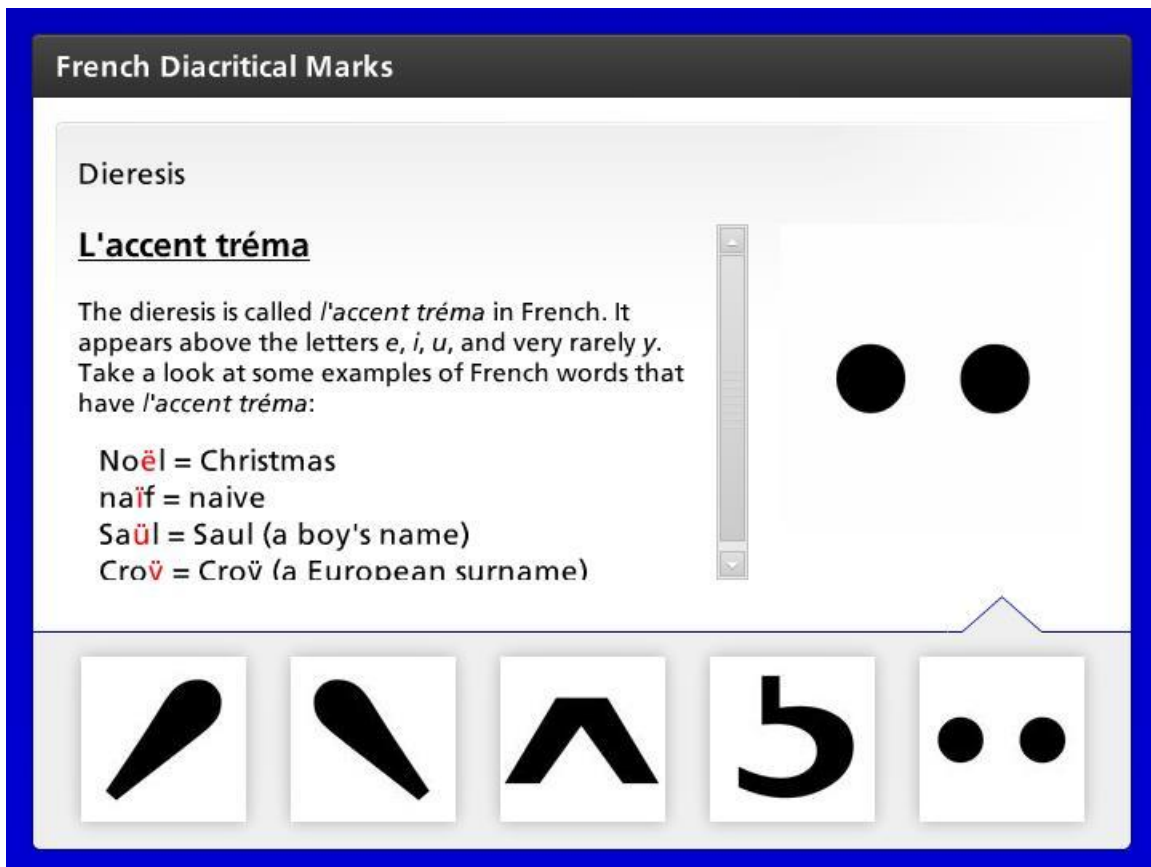
Cedilla

<u>La cédille</u>

The cedilla is called *la cédille* in French. It appears as a curved tail under the letter *c*, which all together is referred to as *la cédille*. Take a look at some examples of French words that have *la cédille*:

garçon = boy
français = French
leçon = lesson

Dieresis

L'accent tréma

The dieresis is called *l'accent tréma* in French. It appears above the letters *e*, *i*, *u*, and very rarely *y*. Take a look at some examples of French words that have *l'accent tréma*:

  Noël = Christmas
  naïf = naive
  Saül = Saul (a boy's name)
  Croÿ = Croÿ (a European surname)