



Year 9 GCHQ Language Challenge

GCHQ and the Association for Language Learning have joined forces to offer schools an exciting project to use with Year 9 classes. Starting with class competitions in the autumn term, those schools wanting to go further are invited to enter the competition to attend a finals event to be held at GCHQ in Cheltenham in March. This day will feature the school teams presenting to each other and the judging panel, as well as insights into the work of GCHQ and taster lessons from GCHQ linguists in less commonly taught languages.

Teachers can use the project as an add-on to a unit of work about the local area or tourism, or even as a discreet unit of work in itself. Pupils work in groups of between three and five to prepare a presentation about a town or region in a country where the target language is spoken. Whilst working on the challenge, pupils should be encouraged to demonstrate the skills and qualities that GCHQ linguists need in their working lives – teamwork and communication skills, research and analytical skills, an interest in the language and culture of their chosen location, and confidence in presenting their findings to an audience.

Schools can organise the initial stages of the challenge in a way best suited to their circumstances, but it is important that pupils have an opportunity to present their project to an audience. The entire presentation and any visuals or text used should be in the foreign language. It is not a requirement that pupils use computer presentation software at this stage (visual props can often be just as effective).

After a winning group of pupils from each teaching group is identified, schools wanting to go further in the competition should arrange a school finals event, where an overall winning group is identified to represent the school in the final stage of the competition. This school finals event could take place at lunchtime, after-school, in an assembly slot, or at some other time suitable for the school.

Schools can then choose to enter their overall winning team into the competition to win a place at the finals event at GCHQ in March. Entries at this stage must include a PowerPoint presentation and a film of the group presenting to an audience (for an absolute maximum of ten minutes). GCHQ will provide a certificate of participation to each member of the team whose entry is submitted to the GCHQ-ALL judging panel. Prizes will be awarded at the finals event to the winning team and to the second- and third-placed runners up.

Timeline:

Autumn term	Classes work on the challenge and class winners are identified
Autumn term / January	School finals event identifies the overall winning group in the school
Friday 17 January 2014	Deadline for entries for schools wanting to take part in the overall final
Friday 31 January 2014	Schools will be notified if their team has won a place at the overall final
Friday 28 March 2014	Finals event at GCHQ Cheltenham (10 schools teams will be invited)

This project brief, the entry form and PowerPoints to introduce the project to classes can be found at:

http://www.all-languages.org.uk/community/branches_and_networks/list_of_branches_and_networks/west_of_england

or:

<http://tinyurl.com/k4td53e> (you may find this tinyurl address is filtered on your school network, in which case please use the full address above)



Further Information & Rules

Schools must be located in one of the following local authorities – Gloucestershire, South Gloucs, Bristol, North Somerset, Bath & NE Somerset, Somerset and Wiltshire.

Entries can be in any language. Participating pupils must be in the Year 9 age range (13-14 years old). Any native speakers should be evenly distributed throughout the teams in any particular class group, and if making up part of the school team entering the final competition, native speakers should not dominate presenting duties.

Schools are free to organise the project in a way that suits their particular set of circumstances, and devote as much curriculum time as they feel suitable for their students. The in-school finals event should take place in a setting and manner appropriate to the fact that the winning team will go on to represent the school in a formal competition.

GCHQ and ALL are not in a position to provide any teaching resources beyond the project brief; schools will already have suitable resources for teaching and group presentation work on the topic of describing a town or region.

The information contained in the introductory PowerPoint presentations on the ALL website may be modified to suit a school's particular set of circumstances; however the GCHQ logo must not, under any circumstances, be modified or used on any other resources in the classroom or anywhere else.

Schools who submit an entry to the GCHQ-ALL judging panel will receive certificates of participation for each member of that team.

Each school can only submit one entry to compete for a place at the overall finals event. The team representing the school and entering the competition to win a place at the GCHQ finals event must comprise between three and five students of Year 9 age.

The entry submitted to the GCHQ-ALL judging committee must include a presentation in Microsoft PowerPoint format and a video of the team presenting their work (for a maximum of 10 minutes) to an audience. The video should be in a common file format (such as .wmv or .mp4) and the audio must be of suitable quality to enable judging. Both the video and PowerPoint must be submitted in electronic format, either by emailing the PowerPoint file with a web link to the video (uploaded for example to YouTube or on a school website), or by saving both files to a recordable CD or USB memory stick to be sent through the post. Full details can be found on the entry form.

Entries must be received by post or email before 12pm on Friday 17 January 2014. No late entries will be accepted. The GCHQ-ALL judging panel will then meet to identify the ten school teams who will be invited to the finals event at GCHQ in Cheltenham. Winning schools will be notified by Friday 31 January 2014 and will then have until the end of February to submit full teacher and pupil details to GCHQ for security purposes, prior to the finals event taking place on Friday 28 March 2013.

The judging panel's decision (both in selecting the ten participating schools and in selecting the winners at the finals event) is final and no discussion will be entered in to.



Judging Criteria

There is no expectation that the level of language used by groups of Year 9 students will be of a particular standard, reflecting the fact that some pupils may be in their first or second year of learning the language.

The following aspects will be considered when the GCHQ-ALL judging team makes decisions, both in selecting the ten school teams invited to the finals event and in awarding prizes at the finals event itself. It is suggested that teachers and schools use this as a guide when selecting their class winners and overall school winning team.

Language Skills

- Demonstration of a good accent and pronunciation
- Evidence of a good variety of language
- An ability to get across the desired message in the foreign language

Teamwork and communication skills

- Evidence that each member of the team has played a role in preparing the presentation
- Each member of the team visibly plays an important role in delivering the presentation – each member of the team should speak, but there is no requirement that each pupil speaks for an equal amount of time

Research and analysis skills

- The town or region is in a country where the foreign language is the main language spoken
- Relevant and sensible information is presented in a logical and interesting way

An interest in the language and culture of their chosen location

- Teams show a genuine interest in particular aspects of their presentation content
- Presentations show more than a basic level of understanding of cultural or historical backgrounds

Confidence in presenting findings to an audience

- Pupils speak confidently and fluidly in the foreign language
- The presentation maintains the interest of the audience



Entry Form 2014

If you are completing this form electronically, it should be emailed to tom.hockaday@ansford.org.uk along with the team's PowerPoint presentation. Your email should also include the link to the team video.

If you are posting your team's entry on a recordable CD or a USB memory stick, please include this form with the entry. Send to ALL Committee, c/o Tom Hockaday, Ansford Academy, Castle Cary, Somerset BA7 7JJ.

The closing date for entries is Friday 17 January 2014. Entries must be received either by email by 12pm or in the post on this day. No late entries will be accepted.

School Name	
Teacher Name	
Teacher Email Address	
School Phone Number	
School Postal Address	
Language of the Winning Presentation	
Focus of the Winning Presentation (Town/Region and Country)	
Names of Students in the Winning Team (min 3 and max 5)	

The teacher contact details on this form will be used to make contact with the winning school teams invited to take part in the finals event at GCHQ. For the ten school teams invited to the finals event, GCHQ will require further details of the teacher and participating pupils for security purposes.