

Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Fostering a love of languages

The Language Futures toolkit

Introduction

Who is this toolkit for?

- Language teachers in primary and secondary schools and community settings
- Senior Leadership Teams in schools that want to explore alternative models of delivering language learning
- Parents, community groups and those who wish to support this programme
- Students who want to take more control over their language learning and to become more independent language learners

The toolkit provides practical advice, ideas for planning and delivering lessons, and examples of useful materials and resources.

The Language Futures approach is based on four key features in order to foster student engagement.

Relevance

- Students choose the language they wish to learn. They choose a language relevant to them. In this way we tap into their own intrinsic motivation.
- There is an emphasis on learning by doing with thematic and extended projects. Ideally, these

projects are presented to an external audience.

- There is a balance between the knowledge and skills, with learning-to-learn skills seen as essential for students to be able to manipulate the language.
- Students identify their own learning needs with support, and engage in research and problem-solving.

Co-construction

- Teacher, students and mentors plan the curriculum, the content and the modes of delivery, together.
- There is an emphasis on learning in a variety of settings with a variety of resources.
- “The lessons can be based on what you need / want to learn, not what the teacher thinks you do, even though they are still structured” (Year 8 Student).
- Students take responsibility for their learning.

Blurring of in and out of school boundaries

- There is an emphasis on learning beyond the classroom. Languages are not just another school subject. Learning a language is a lifelong skill.

- The school is the ‘base camp’ but informal and virtual learning take place away from the classroom using emerging technologies.
- Support is given in class and at any time, via emails, by the language mentors. These are volunteers, with an in-depth knowledge and skill in a particular language, recruited to provide good models of the language.
- Families are also recruited to support and monitor progress. Often the importance of the language to students stems from their own family histories.

Learning communities

- Each language has at least two students studying it so that they can support and learn from each other.
- Students learn knowledge about language from each other by sharing the learning across language groups.
- The teacher is part of the learning community and carries out a variety of roles: the expert in how to learn; supporting and facilitating; tutoring and organising learning; giving one to one tuition; training and assisting the mentors; negotiating the curriculum with all interested parties; setting

up assessment and presentation opportunities.

- The mentors are key in providing good models of language and in dealing with the specific language queries and learning tasks.

In summary, everything is geared towards students taking more responsibility for their own learning. The teacher acts more as a learning manager. Students appreciate the trust put in them.

“We control our own learning which I like – we also control what we learn at home.”

“When you are put in charge of your own learning, it means that it is up to you to make the most of the year you have.”

“We aren’t getting spoon-fed information. We have to find it and learn it for ourselves. We have to keep ourselves on track.”

“We feel valued and trusted as learners.”

“(I chose Language Futures) because I didn’t just want to be told how to learn it. I wanted to be independent and learn how to learn independently. I like that we can learn how we want to, and that we have the technology to help along with it.”

Curriculum Models

The Language Futures model can be implemented in a variety of curriculum contexts. Some of the models have been trialled in pilot schools whilst others are suggested approaches.

As a first language choice:

- as a way of introducing languages into primary schools where there is not a pool of trained language teachers. Mentors are used to provide models of language.
- as a first language class for students in Key Stage 3.
- replacing French for low ability linguists in Year 8 or Year 9 who have become disenchanted with their language learning.
- as part of a Year 12 enrichment programme with any students who want to start a new language.

As a second language choice:

- in Year 8 or Year 9 whilst continuing with the set first language prescribed by the school.
- as a cross school extra-curricular club for gifted linguists or bilingual learners who either want to become more literate in their own home language and gain accreditation or who wish to add another language not studied in class time.

As a means of introducing new teaching and learning approaches:

- by integrating short term projects that give a choice of themes and ways of working within the mainstream languages curriculum.
- as a way of implementing enquiry-based learning in mainstream language lessons where the students have to research, solve problems and present outcomes to peers and a public audience.
- by extending the use of volunteer mentors throughout mainstream language lessons. This will require greater use of group work so that mentors can work in depth with groups.
- by including greater emphasis on Language Learning Strategies and Knowledge about Language in lessons to assist students to become more independent learners.
- by setting extended pieces of work to be completed in groups, and involving out-of- school learning.
- by running lunch time language clubs in a variety of languages. Audit the language skills of staff and parents to use their skills and recruit language mentors.

In addition to the students and their parents / carers, there are three key roles in a successful Language Futures programme:

- **The teacher:** manages the students' learning and the deployment of the mentors to aid this learning; is a languages teacher rather than a teacher of one language, who ensures that students know how to learn independently.
- **The mentors:** are volunteers who are expert linguists. They present good models of the spoken language and support students face-to-face and via emails to develop all their language skills.
- **The co-ordinator:** is at the hub of the communication and liaison with all other stakeholders; recruits and trains mentors and carries out necessary administrative tasks.

The remaining sections in this toolkit outline the roles and responsibilities of each of these key people, explaining the practicalities of the programme and supporting readers to consider how the approach might best be adapted to their setting.

Pedagogy and the Role of the Teacher

The teacher in Language Futures is a learning manager and should:

- Identify clear Learning Objectives. The success criteria for each language group will be different. These need to be identified by the students and mentors.
- Identify the skills, grammar and types of vocabulary to be developed in every theme / topic area and discuss these with the mentors.
- **Support the students in developing strategies for learning languages and to become more independent learners.** The role is not to be the expert in one particular language. The mentors and the online materials provide the good models of language.
- Ensure that the different language groups are working well together.
- Build in opportunities in class time for the different language groups to share their learning and their questions with each other.
- Carry out observations of how the groups are working and plan well-timed interventions.
- Work with the mentors to make available a range of resources. Web-based materials are crucial so that students can work at their own pace and in out-of-school contexts. Try to avoid students spending time surfing the net vaguely looking for activities. There is a selection of suggested resources at the back of this pack – and more available on the online community at www.padlet.com/wall/languagefutures.

- If possible, provide laptops or iPads for each student, or language group, to use.
- Provide open-ended tasks and challenges which can be carried out over an extended period.
- Use plenaries to share and fix the learning. This does not need to be in every lesson.

The teachers' perspective

Teachers who have piloted Language Futures describe their experiences:

"The main difference between teaching mainstream language lessons and Language Futures lessons is that my role is that of a languages teacher, not a teacher of a specific language. It has been fascinating for me to take a step back and think about language learning more generally, rather than the finer details of a specific language. It means the lessons are more focused on developing students' skills, for example, how to cope with unfamiliar language or what strategies can be used to learn."

"As I know a lot less than the pupils about their chosen language, it completely changes the position of the teacher in the classroom. I enjoy learning alongside the pupils, who enjoy seeing their teacher have a go at Mandarin pronunciation, for example!"

"When the mentors are in the lesson, I usually do the introduction to the lesson, sharing the learn-

ing objectives and then I give the pupils and the mentors the rest of the lesson (until about ten to) and then we have a ten minute plenary. This is either a discussion or describing what we've learnt or how it is going to link with the out-of-school challenge."

A typical Language Futures lesson

Set up/ Learning objectives/ Modelling

- Specify clear learning objectives
- Emphasise strong link to home learning
- Model language in French or another language
- Make links to French lessons (Year 7 & 8)
- Discuss language learning strategies

Student learning/ Mentor involvement

- Plan mentor involvement
- Monitor pupil learning
- Develop opportunities for peer learning
- Teachers learn alongside pupils

Plenary/ Links to next lesson/Links to home learning

- Discuss learning from other language groups
- Share learning strategies
- Explain links to National Curriculum levels
- Make links to homework and home learning
- Encourage learning of key vocabulary

Planning the Learning

As a languages teacher, rather than an expert teacher of one language, planning Language Futures can be slightly different to traditional lesson planning. Elements that need to be included are:

- A strong emphasis on Language Learning Strategies and Knowledge About Language to support students in becoming independent learners.
- Time to develop enquiry-based learning and thinking skills.
- Opportunities for students to learn in language groups and across the languages.
- Quick gains in speaking to build up students' confidence.
- Clarify the role of the mentors.
- Space in the programme for co-construction of learning.
- Flexibility in the themes to reflect current issues and to build on students' interests.
- Challenges to be set which require research and investigation outside of the classroom.
- Resource lists to be identified.

Planning needs to take place on a yearly and medium term basis, and then for each lesson.

Yearly overview of themes

The example below is drawn from Linton Village College's 2011-12 Language Futures programme:

September – October half-term

- All about me
- Language Learning Strategies
- Intercultural Understanding

October half-term to Christmas break

- Speaking assessments (mentors to do)
- Reading strategies
- Celebrations
- Food and drink with opinions
- Christmas in target country/countries
- Reading assessment (mentors to arrange this)

January to spring half-term

- Free-time – sport and hobbies
- What you did last weekend (past tense)
- Telling the time
- Listening assessment (mentors to arrange this)

Spring second half-term

- Easter celebrations / Chinese New Year
- Comparisons on how and where we live

Summer term

- Future plans
- Sport and the Olympics
- Writing assessment

Medium term planning

The structure of the medium term planning should include certain headings. An example from Castle Manor Academy's 2011-12 Language Futures programme is given overleaf:

Theme	Functions	Grammar	Resources	Challenges	Role of mentor and assessment
Come Dine with Me Approx 7 lessons	Accessing different text types; Giving opinions, likes and dislikes; Team building; Preparing and delivering team presentations	Present tense in 1 st and 3 rd person singular and plural; use of negatives; Adjectives to describe food; Use of plural nouns with appropriate verb endings	TV programme – Come Dine with Me	Pre-lesson challenge: do research on names of foods that you like and dislike	Mentors to prepare a bank of useful phrases to use at a dinner party and of opinion phrases to use

Lesson planning

“The main thing is just to plan the Learning Objectives really clearly and to set up the activity clearly so that the students know what they are doing... the purpose of the activity and how they can work on it.” (Teacher in pilot school)

In planning lessons, the most important thing is to identify the Learning Objectives. The activities will then be those processes which help learners to be successful in meeting those Learning Objectives. These are often identified by the learners as Success Criteria.

For the **Come Dine with Me** theme the Learning Objectives are:

Lesson 1: Students will be able to design a menu in their language

Lesson 2: Students will be able to invent a dinner guest and get into character

Lesson 3: Students will be able to give opinions about likes and dislikes of food in the plural and to write a paragraph giving opinions

Lesson 4: Students will be able to talk about the personality of their dinner party character. Students will be able to work together in a team and identify team roles.

Lesson 5 and 6: Students will develop their team working in practising and producing their presentations

Lesson 7: Students will be able to do their team presentations and to carry out peer assessment and give feedback.

Once the Learning Objectives are clear, the activities can be flexible to meet the needs of the different students and to involve them in the decision-making about the progress of the learning.

Role of Mentors

Mentors are an integral part of the Language Futures programme. Mentors are volunteers from the local community who are expert linguists in the target languages – they may be native speakers or people who are fluent due to an extended period of study or time spent abroad.

“The success of the programme has been the introduction of the mentors. I have three mentors who are enthusiastic and very supportive of their students. All three mentors have marked work, set challenges and chivvied students along, as well as researching websites, creating games and giving rewards.” (Teacher at pilot school)

Lessons

Mentors come into Language Futures lessons to work alongside the students, helping with language investigation, co-construction, pronunciation and role plays. Mentors do not need to come into all of the lessons but at least once a fortnight would be the minimum requirement.

“I think the thing I like best about Language Futures are the mentors. They are great advisors, they help us to learn about the culture and the pronunciation. It is nice to have a change in the style of teaching because mentors are more relaxed and informal.” (Year 8 Student)

Assessment

Using the National Curriculum levels, the mentors assist with assessments in the four key skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. These assessments take place during the Language Futures lessons.

Email

Mentors and students email each other on a weekly basis which again helps to immerse the pupils in their target language as well as giving them an opportunity to ask questions and explore issues independently with their mentor.

“The mentors guide us. They aren’t like teachers; they are more there to help. The good thing is that you can email them, so whenever you’re stuck at home you can ask them over email.” (Year 8 student)

Clubs

Some mentors also run lunchtime clubs in their target language, bringing a cultural and fun element to language learning. The clubs also increase exposure to the student’s target language. Clubs can be run on a weekly or fortnightly basis and shared out amongst the mentors.

“The mentors are very helpful in lessons. They are the main source of info that we have. They are good because you can email them any work you have done and they’ll reply with any mistakes you’ve made and how to fix them. We have a club every Tuesday lunchtime and you can get extra one-to-one tuition with them and can learn some vocabulary”. (Year 8 pupil)

[See Mentor Recruitment and Supervision for practical tips and examples of how to find volunteers.](#)

The Language Futures Co-ordinator

The role of the Language Futures co-ordinator is fundamental and of great importance to the success of the programme. She / he is at the centre of the relationships between all staff and volunteers involved in the initiative. This support allows the teacher to focus fully on teaching and learning.

The co-ordinator needs to be proactive, well-organised and forward thinking, with the ability to work on various levels and with all types of people.

The pilot schools have found that the role is more successful if the co-ordinator already works in some capacity as a teaching / languages assistant, preferably within the languages department. The co-ordinator can then also be timetabled into Language Futures lessons to help as an assistant to both the teachers and the mentors.

The co-ordinator will typically need to spend three hours each week on the core activities described below (not including any additional time spent in lessons).

Job Description

To support the development of Language Futures by:

- Communicating and liaising with teachers, mentors, students, parents, and the Senior Leadership Team.
- Recruiting, training, scheduling and supervising mentors.
- Researching and procuring resources.
- Carrying out all administrative tasks, such as phone calls, emails, notices of meetings.
- Assisting with the writing and presentation of reports and project evaluation to the school's Senior Leadership Team.

- Assisting with marketing and the promotion of the project.
- Supporting Language Futures lessons and clubs as a languages assistant (optional, but strongly recommended).

Depending on the ambition of your programme and resources required, the Co-ordinator may also provide support by researching opportunities for partnership and practice-sharing outside the school, including seeking sponsorship or grants.

Further resources, including a suggested timeline of activities and template letters, can be found on the online community at www.padlet.com/wall/languagefutures.

Mentor Recruitment and Supervision

Once the students and teacher have identified which languages will be studied, a key role for the co-ordinator is to recruit appropriate volunteer mentors. This section outlines tips and templates for recruitment and management of these volunteers.

Recruitment

There are many opportunities for recruiting mentors from within the school community and beyond – many of the most successful mentors have been native speaking support staff working elsewhere in the school.

- send out recruitment information on parent mail or in the school newsletter
- circulate a recruitment poster around the locality: in the library, sports centre, health centre, garages, supermarkets, churches, etc.
- contact your local Volunteer Centre (local agencies that promote and develop volunteering – you can search for your local centre by postcode at www.do-it.org.uk)
- find out about other community networks, such as cultural associations and over 50s clubs
- contact local radio stations and local papers
- advertise via local government websites

There are an estimated 5,000 'supplementary', 'complementary', 'community' or 'Saturday' schools in Britain. They come in a variety of shapes and forms. In general they offer out-of-school-hours educational opportunities for children and young people, many of whom come from minority ethnic communities.

Working in close partnership with local supplementary schools offers many advantages for mainstream schools and their students. Many supplementary schools have a focus on home and community language learning, and may be able to offer support and advice for identifying specific language mentors. Several of the Language Futures pilot schools have found supplementary schools to be extremely helpful in recruiting mentors. Linton Village College, for example, is now working closely with the Russian Saturday school in Cambridge.

To find out more or to search its database of member schools, visit the website for the **National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education**.

www.supplementaryeducation.org.uk

Mentor Recruitment and Supervision

Appropriate safeguarding procedures must be followed when recruiting volunteers – all schools and organisations working with young people should have a policy in place.

Suggested timeline of activities: mentor recruitment and induction

1. Upon receipt of the application, two references should be sent for and an interview date set with the applicant. References must be followed up and kept on record.
2. Applicants must be interviewed with child protection issues in mind – this is best carried out by the co-ordinator and a member of staff trained in Safer Recruitment (www.bit.ly/12Detpj).
3. Once an applicant is selected, an initial induction date is set up and Disclosure and Barring Service checks (formerly 'CRB check') carried out (www.bit.ly/10JtCAb).
4. This induction session should include a tour of the school, information on signing in and out procedures, fire and safeguarding regulations, meeting key people and organising school badges.
5. An introductory lunch for the pupils and mentors (provided by the pupils) is a nice way to begin as soon as all the mentors have been recruited. Mentors can then give a 5 minute presentation about their relevant countries in English with pupils asking questions.
6. Ideally, early in the first term, a joint training session should take place with the parents on expectations of the students' behaviour and learning. Parents are often keen to meet the mentors and can support them with managing any issues which may arise, for example, if their child is inclined to take a too relaxed approach in their relationship with the mentor.

Supervision and communication

The co-ordinator organises the involvement of mentors in lessons, lunchtime clubs, half term assessments, etc., working closely with the teacher to identify requirements and dates. It is important that they also keep regular email and telephone contact, and log dates and times of attendance. This ensures the mentors feel valued and keeps the teacher informed.

Key tips and activities

- Where mentors email pupils weekly on their school email addresses, the co-ordinator needs to chase pupils who aren't keeping in regular contact.
- The co-ordinator supervises, supports and continues to offer training to the mentors. There should be an informal termly meeting between the co-ordinator and mentors to deal with any queries, concerns and issues and to do an on-going evaluation of progress.
- It is important for the co-ordinator to value the mentors as volunteers, for example, by sending Christmas cards, thank you cards, and arranging an end of year lunch.
- Further training needs to be offered on assessment before the first assessment activity – this may be managed by the teacher or delegated to the co-ordinator.
- The co-ordinator must liaise between the teacher, mentors and students on an on-going basis, building a team spirit and involving each person involved in the programme.

Examples of mentor application materials

Applicants can be sent an application form, information about the project and the personal information sheet (important for child protection). A suggested template is provided below.

[Form 1: Mentors Application Form Language Futures](#)

Name:

Address:

Email:

Telephone / mobile:

Language spoken and level:

Time availability:

Computer applications available: (e.g. broadband, email, skype)

Previous experience working with or dealing with young people:

Reasons for wanting to be involved as a mentor:

Two References : 1.

2.

Contact details (preferably email)

Relationship (please note if a family member or friend of current student)

Do you agree to having a CRB check? Y/N

Signed:

Date:

Form 2: Language Futures mentors / What can you offer and what suits you?

Once applications have been received and mentors interviewed, a short form can be used to establish their availability and help the teacher and co-ordinator to plan. An example template is below.

I can	Yes	No
Attend lessons (maximum of 2 a fortnight)		
Run a weekly lunch time club		
Email the students on a weekly basis – can be in English and the target language		
Help with half-termly assessments		
Main areas to cover: Target language exposure – general greetings and instructions Cultural input (can be in English) Encourage student to student usage of the language in the lessons – building self confidence Help with pronunciation and corrections Encourage co-construction of their language learning		

Dates for your diary

1. **First informal meeting with the pupils:** (add date), Meet in reception at 1pm for lunch with pupils. 2-3pm Language Futures lesson.

Please prepare a short presentation (5mins max) about your country in English with a few questions for the whole class to answer. We will also ask you to look at the self-descriptions the pupils have prepared and help them with pronunciation.

2. **Assessment Training:** (add date), 4.30-5.30pm

3. **First speaking assessment:** (add date), 9.45 -10.45am

Further details to follow.

Please confirm your attendance for the above to (add co-ordinator contact details).

Please always sign in at reception, and wear a visitor's badge.

Assessment

Assessment

Language Futures' approach to day-to-day assessment is taken from the 2008 DCSF Assessment for Learning Strategy by which:

- Learning objectives are made explicit and shared with pupils
- Peer and self-assessment is in use
- Pupils are engaged in their learning and given immediate feedback

Language Futures uses the National Curriculum levels and national standards to periodically assess. Mentors must be trained to understand National Curriculum levels so that they can best support assessment.

The Language Futures pilot schools have been carrying out assessments on a half-termly basis. Each half term one of the language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing is assessed. Over the course of a year, each student should, therefore, have 5 formal assessment tasks as well as the informal feedback and observation notes kept by the mentors and teacher.

As part of their planning, the teacher needs to give mentors support in developing assessment activities in each language. This is to ensure a consistent approach to levels of difficulty across the languages. The teacher can give mentors example assessment activities in English, as this is the common language.

To educate the ear and to promote talk for learning, start with the emphasis on speaking and listening. This also builds learners' confidence that they can make progress quickly in the language.

Some example assessment activities are given below. Further templates can be found on the online community at www.padlet.com/wall/languagefutures.

Speaking assessment 1: individual assessment

Brief for students: presentation task

You should **present** information in your chosen language on either;

- A friend
- A family member
- A celebrity (preferably from a country where your language is spoken)

You can present your information in whatever format you like

- e.g. Powerpoint, Word, One Note
- You should speak for approximately two minutes using prompts from your presentation

You must include the following information:

- What age the person is
- Where is she/he from
- What she/he looks like
- What is her/his personality
- What are her/his hobbies and interests

Assessment framework

The mentors use the Speaking and Listening assessment sheet giving the National Curriculum Attainment targets in the categories of pronunciation, delivery, length of utterances, content and grammar. The Language Futures pilot schools have so far used levels 3-5.

A. Pronunciation

Generally accurate, meaning clear	3
Accurate with acceptable intonation	4
Pronunciation and intonation quite good	5

B. Delivery

Speak with confidence and expression	3
Speak with little hesitation	4
Speak with more fluency	5

Assessment

C. Length of utterance

- Ask and answer 2 or 3 exchanges 3
- Structured conversation of 3 or 4 exchanges 4
- Short conversation, more open ended 5

D. Content

- Express personal responses in short phrases 3
- Seek and convey information and opinions 4
- Give more complex opinions, ask for clarification 5

E. Structures

- Understand and use simple grammatical structures 3
- Adapt language using familiar structures 4
- Draw on knowledge to create own sentences 5

Speaking assessment 2: group assessment

A group assessment task enables each language group to learn from each other and to work together as a team. It also involves the class in peer assessment.

The table below is used by the rest of the class and feedback is given. This approach could be used, for example, with the Come Dine with Me example activity described in 'Planning the Learning'.

Circle the most appropriate level in each category

Award an overall level _____
(including a,b,or c)

a = secure at this level; b = good level; c = just achieving this level

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Notes- feedback and advice
How smooth is the <u>delivery</u> of the dialogue?				
Does every member <u>contribute</u> enough?				
Is <u>gesture</u> used effectively?				
Is <u>intonation</u> used effectively?				
Does the <u>team</u> work well together?				
Are <u>props</u> used effectively?				

Reading assessment

For reading assessment, the teacher can give mentors an example assessment activity in English. This links in with the themes identified in the planning to support learners in accessing different types of texts in their chosen language.

Guidance for mentors:

Please write four short paragraphs (approx. 4-6 sentences each), in your language, which will be put into speech bubbles. Include a name. Here is an example in English:

I love playing tennis on Saturdays. I usually play with my sister. I also like to go swimming on Saturday afternoon. I can also play football, but not very well. I don't play a musical instrument, but I love listening to music. *Annie*

On Sunday afternoons I like to go cycling with my best friend, Daniel. We cycle for the whole afternoon. After we are usually tired afterwards but it's really fun. We also like to play football in the park. *Jack*

Every Thursday I go to the swimming pool with my sister. We love swimming and we are very good at it. Afterwards, we often go for a coffee in town. *Laura*

My favourite hobby is horse-riding. I have a horse called Blossom. She is ten years old. She is really friendly and very fast. I have done horse-riding for six years. It's brilliant! I also love playing the trumpet. *Sarah*

Please also create a number of questions in English for students to answer about the paragraphs. Here is an example for the above paragraphs:

Reading – Activity 1

Give the name of the person who does the following activities;

1. Who goes swimming on a Thursday?
2. Who talks about their best friend?
3. Who is ten years old?
4. Who says they are not very good at football?
5. Who plays a musical instrument?
6. Who says they play football in the park?
7. Who has done their hobby for six years?
8. Who says they like listening to music?

Reading for detail

1. Give two details that Sarah mentions about Blossom (2 marks)
2. Name two activities that Daniel and Jack do (2 marks)
3. Which musical instrument does Sarah play? (1 mark)
4. Name two activities that Laura and her sister do (1 mark)
5. What does Annie say about music? (2 marks)

Listening assessment

Here is an example listening assessment activity.

Guidance for mentors:

Please could you write two short paragraphs (about 5 lines each). Students will not see these paragraphs as you will be reading them aloud to them.

Students should get a short vocabulary list, containing perhaps four / five words that they may find difficult.

Please write three or four questions relating to each paragraph.

Students don't need to write full answers, but they should be listening out for gist and detail in the text.

Here is an example of what could go in the assessment. The two questions below have two parts (Part 1 – listening for gist; Part 2 – listening for detail).

“Last weekend I went to the cinema in London with my best friend, Sarah. We watched a comedy, it was funny. We took the train home and talked the whole way about the film. Jane”

Question ideas

1. Who did Jane go to the cinema with? Give a detail about this person. (2 marks)
2. How did they get home? Give a detail Jane mentions about the journey? (2 marks)

Writing assessment

Here is an example writing assessment activity.

Brief for students: pen friend

You are writing an e-mail to a pen friend from a country where your language is spoken. You should write in a clear e-mail format and use paragraphs where necessary. You should write at least ten lines in your chosen language.

Your pen friend would like to know:

- What your name is (one sentence)
- How old you are (one sentence)
- When your birthday is (one sentence)
- Whether you have any brothers or sisters (one or two sentences)
- Where you live (one or two sentences)

They would also like to know some details about:

- What your personality is like
- What food you like and dislike
- What you did last weekend
- Your plans during the Olympics games (can be imaginary!)

Parents' Guide

A key aim of the Language Futures approach is to blur boundaries between home and school learning. In order to maximise their learning, it is important that students devote as much time and energy to home learning as classroom learning. The Language Futures pilot schools have developed a template Parents' Guide, below, that schools can adapt and use to help parents and carers understand the commitment their child has taken on and to give practical ideas for how they can best support them.

A key aim of the Language Futures approach is to blur boundaries between home and school learning. In order to maximise student learning, it is important that students devote as much time and energy to home learning as classroom learning.

Included here are many ideas and strategies to help you support your child at home. The aim is to give you and your child a range of strategies to choose from when working on language learning outside of school. We advise you to try out as many of the ideas as possible and decide which ones work best for you and your child.

Key considerations

Value of parental engagement

The Language Futures project takes the view that parents' attitudes towards language learning can play a considerable role in a child's success. This includes general interest shown in your child's learning, as well as supporting them while they learn and even learning alongside them.

Learning within an everyday family setting is the natural way that we pick up language as children. You know your children better than anyone, their strengths and weaknesses and also their likes and dislikes. The great thing about learning languages is that learning can easily be tailored to individual interests and hobbies and we strongly encourage this.

Your child will gain a lot in learning alongside an adult who knows 'how to learn', even if you do not know the language they are studying. ,

we Students can enjoy and gain from being one step ahead of you, and teaching you about their language. You may even wish to learn the language yourself alongside your child.

Frequency

Learning a language can be likened to learning to play a musical instrument. Above all this means frequent practice, perseverance and patience.

Frustration and making mistakes

Some children can become frustrated by their inability to express more complex thoughts in a foreign language, as well as they can in English. Frustration can often be overcome by setting short-term targets e.g. "I will learn eight new words today and try to put them into sentences", "I will listen to a Spanish radio station for 20 minutes a day a few days a week". Students can also be overly concerned about making mistakes. As mistakes are part of the learning process, children should be encouraged to experiment with language and not worry too much. Of course parents can assist with some error correction, but should also give students the time to correct their own mistakes.

Fun!

Nowadays there are so many ways to learn a language, including the wealth of online material, such as language learning games and activities, foreign radio stations and TV programmes, online newspapers and magazines, etc., as well as other everyday opportunities for foreign language exposure, such as watching a film or reading a book in a foreign language or even changing the language settings of household devices. Of course, language learning doesn't always have to be a sitting down experience. Practising language informally, for example, in the car, can allow for a more natural learning environment.

Ideas for language learning at home

- Make your own word games e.g. snap, pairs, hangman.
- Write words on cards (English on the back) to learn from and use for games.
- Help children record vocabulary in a useful way e.g. in a vocabulary book or a mind map.
- Record words and phrases on a mobile phone and listen to on the bus, in the car etc.
- Invent funny or silly rhymes or mnemonics to help remember new words or concepts.
- Put labels / post-it notes on everyday life items until you have learned their names.
- Make a survival word kit with your child and display somewhere useful.
- Ask your child to teach other family members and friends some of the things they have learned in class, especially high frequency words like greetings, days of the week etc.
- Visit the local library and look for books in the target language.
- Find short stories (online or paper) in the language and read several times.
- Look for magazines (paper or online) in the language.
- Use a language pin board to display work, key things they are learning that week, interesting articles found, useful websites etc.
- Keep a language learning journal.
- Encourage your child to listen to music in the foreign language.
- Watch a familiar film together in the foreign language, with English subtitles.
- Follow a recipe in the target language.
- Change language settings on a home device e.g. mobile phone, sat. nav., computer.
- Read books about the culture of the target country.
- Pick up leaflets in other languages.
- Arrange a holiday and try to book it together with your child in the foreign language.
- Find cultural events connected to the language and culture being studied. Put dates in calendar and research a bit about them.

Dissemination, resources and next steps

Dissemination

Language Futures is most successful when key people in and outside school are actively involved and engaged in supporting the students' learning. Schools and other language learning settings interested in developing the approach need, therefore, to ensure that the work is effectively shared and celebrated with:

- parents
- the wider student body
- the local community
- all other language teachers in your setting
- your Senior Leadership Team, governors, and all staff across the school
- other schools and language learning settings in your locality

The Language Futures pilot schools have approached this in a number of ways, and their most effective ideas are outlined below.

- Become an active participant in the Language Futures online community, sharing resources and giving feedback on resources developed by teachers in others schools.
- Invite other teachers to come and watch a Language Futures lesson.
- Encourage other teachers to talk to the students involved in the approach.
- Provide opportunities for Language Futures students to share their learning with families and peers (e.g. assemblies, parents' evenings, community festivals).
- Ensure there is an up-to-date display of students' work in a prominent place in the school.
- Present the project in staff meetings.
- If the school has a newsletter, include regular articles to update parents.
- Hold termly meetings of the parents of the Language Futures students.
- Ensure Language Futures is on the agenda of network meetings to share findings with partner schools and other organisations locally.
- Write articles for educational magazines and newsletters, such as Primary Teacher, the Association for Language Learners Newsletter, and the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education e-Bulletin.

Visit the online community at www.padlet.com/wall/languagefutures for more ideas, or email educationassistant@phf.org.uk to be put in touch with other schools and organisations who are trialling the approach.

Resources

Templates to photocopy

The remaining loose leaf pages in this toolkit consist of a selection of templates and resources that can be photocopied and adapted by teachers and educators interested in trialling the Language Futures approach. Many more teacher-created tools and resources are available on the Language Futures online community. Visit www.padlet.com/wall/languagefutures to find out more, or email educationassistant@phf.org.uk to receive a termly Language Futures e-Newsletter highlighting the latest resources and case studies.

Online resources

Language Futures was originally part of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation / Innovation Unit 'Learning Futures' initiative, a national, cross-curricular programme designed to get young people engaged actively and positively with their learning. Its suite of free, online planning and teaching resources include [Work that matters: the teachers' guide to project based learning](#), [The Engaging School: A Handbook for School Leaders](#), and [Spaced Learning](#), a tool developed by Monkseaton High School for embedding information very quickly into students' long-term memories. All these resources can be downloaded at www.innovationunit.org.

The following websites have been found useful by the Language Futures pilot schools (2010-13). Teacher comments and recommendations are included below, but please note that neither the schools nor the Paul Hamlyn Foundation are responsible for the content of external links or affiliated with their authors.

www.linguascope.com "A great website that many schools subscribe to. Content includes language relating to the KS3 and KS4 curriculum. Many language games for a range of language, including French, Spanish and Italian"

www.languagesonline.org.uk "Great for vocabulary and grammar (French, Spanish and Italian)"

Dissemination, resources and next steps

www.bbc.co.uk/languages "Great for Spanish, Italian and Chinese e.g. Spanish steps – basic course, Talk Spanish – videos for listening skills."

www.practicerrussian.com "Free learning games and materials for Russian."

<http://www.languageguide.org/russian/vocabulary/> "Useful audio pronunciation for Russian vocab"

www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips "Video clips in a range of languages, often including cultural aspects of different countries." "Primary (for younger children – quite fun)" "Secondary (for older children - choose topic and browse)"

www.masteranylanguage.com "Topic vocabulary and grammar for Chinese, Italian and Spanish."

www.mylo.dcsf.gov.uk "Fun website with basics in Chinese and Spanish (Get ready, jump in, use it)"

www.newburypark.redbridge.sch.uk "A wealth of ideas for promoting language learning. Of particular interest is the Language of the Month section. Enter site, select language of the month, resources for schools and teachers - select language - basics (first words)"

www.wordreference.com "A good online dictionary for many languages"

www.lm-Translator.net "Translation with pronunciation"

www.lonweb.org "Short stories in a wide range of languages including parallel English translation"

www.ielanguages.com "Go to 'Languages' to find an excellent array of phrase banks for many languages, particularly students of Italian and Spanish. An excellent resource for our Italian students is under the 'Comparative Tutorials' section, where students can compare language in French and Italian."

www.ilovelanguages.com "A website for those who love languages! Go to 'Languages - By Languages' to find a huge array of web links to explore"

www.mylanguages.org "An excellent website for vocabulary and pronunciation practice in many languages. This website is particularly good for

students of Mandarin."

www.busuu.com "A range of multimedia resources for lots of languages"

www.verbix.com "A great verb conjugation website"

www.italian.about.com / www.mandarin.about.com / www.spanish.about.com "A useful reference website for all things to do with a wide range of languages. More aimed at adult learners, but very comprehensive and useful."

www.mandarin-tools.com "A website with many tools to install on your computer to assist Mandarin learning. Some fun tools, such as, find out your Chinese name!"

www.musicalspanish.com "A nice website with a range of Spanish songs with lyrics"

www.moltobeneitalian.com "A good website to learn Italian vocabulary relating to a variety of situations"

www.speakitalian.co.uk "Good for learning phrases you may need when visiting Italy"

www.italianresources.org "Resources for primary language learners"

www.mondoerre.it "An online Italian magazine"

www.masteranylanguage.com "Chinese, Italian, Spanish. Topics and Grammar."

www.mamalisa.com "Songs from around the world."

What next?

Join the Language Futures community of interest by emailing educationassistant@phf.org.uk We offer on- and off-line support and guidance, including a growing collection of planning and co-ordination tools and a termly Language Futures e-Newsletter highlighting the latest resources and case studies.

Language Futures is a member of the Whole Education network. Whole Education is a partnership of like-minded schools, organisations and individuals that believe that all young people should have a fully rounded education, developing the knowledge, skills and qualities needed to help them thrive in life and work. Find out more at www.wholeeducation.org

Follow us at twitter.com/languagefutures

Paul Hamlyn Foundation has funded this toolkit as an integral part of its support for the research and development of the Language Futures approach. We want to thank the schools that have piloted this project over the past few years: Linton Village College, Swavesey Village College, Castle Manor Academy and Gladesmore Community School. The ideas, suggestions and advice contained in this Toolkit are based on the work of these schools. In particular, we would like to recognise the important contributions of Vivien Corrie-Wing, Beth McNicoll and Tina Rice of Linton Village College.

This Toolkit has been compiled by Bernadette Clinton with contributions from Vivien Corrie-Wing, Beth McNicoll, Tina Rice, Rachel Hawkes, David Jackson, Sam Whear and Andy Jackson. Cover photography by Emile Holba, and with particular thanks to Radu Botez for design.

Language Basics

As a challenge at the beginning of their language learning, you can set the students this task.

TASK: You are going to design a “**Language basics page**” in your exercise book. This will cover two pages in your book.

- Start planning this on a rough piece of paper. You will complete the final version as a homework challenge.
- Include all of the vocabulary and phrases listed below.
- You may also add in other useful words **you** would like to learn and that you would find useful.

Questions and answers

- What is your name? (and your answer)
How old are you? (and your answer)
- Where do you live? (and your answer)
How are you? (and your answer)

Numbers 1-31; Days of the week; Months of the year; Colours

My top ten “Emergency words”

First words

- Welcome
- Hello
- Goodbye
- Good morning
- Good afternoon
- Thank you
- Sorry
- Please
- Yes
- No
- Well done

TIPS:

- Your textbook will be very useful for this task.
- Remember to use the online resources list.

A very good website for this activity is www.mylanguages.org or www.newburypark.redbridge.co.uk for the sounds as well.

Grammar Exercises

You can use English or another shared language as the medium of discussion about grammar items. If you have students with home languages, or if the students all learn French outside Language Futures, then you can use these languages as a model for them to use to develop an understanding of structures in their chosen language. Here are two examples.

THE PAST TENSE

VERY USEFUL WEBSITE FOR TENSES: www.verbix.com

1. In English, give some examples of when you could use the past tense;
2. Ask your mentor to tell you some useful regular and irregular verbs in the past tense. You should make some suggestions in English e.g. I danced, We wrote. **Don't ask for any explanations yet.** Write the verbs in the space below and **see if you can notice any patterns.**

<u>Regular verbs</u>	<u>Irregular verbs</u>

3. Can you complete the following table for your language?

I played	
You (informal) played	
He played	
She played	
It played	
We played	
You (formal/plural) played	
They (masc./fem.?) played	

I went	
You (informal) went	
He went	
She went	
It went	
We went	
You (formal/plural) went	
They (masc./fem.?) went	

4. "Regular verbs" follow some sort of pattern. Ask your mentor to show you how to form regular verbs in the past tense in your language and make some notes here. In particular, you may want to note down endings of groups of regular verbs.
5. Irregular verbs" don't follow a pattern. We need to learn them. Use the space below to note any useful irregular verbs in the past tense in your language;
6. What other important things have you learnt about the present tense in your language? How is the past tense similar/different to the past tense in English.



Descriptions of appearance and personality

With a partner, brainstorm French sentences you know that use “j’ai” and “je suis” to describe people’s appearance or personality.

Complete the two tables below with the correct forms of “avoir” and “être”;

“avoir” =	
Person/Subject	Person/Subject
Je	
Il	
Elle	
Nous	

“être” =	
Person/Subject	Person/Subject
Je	
Il	
Elle	
Nous	

Now try to find the same verb forms for your language;

Person/Subject	Person/Subject
(I)	(am)
(He)	(is)
(She)	(is)
(We)	(are)

Person/Subject	Person/Subject
(I)	(am)
(He)	(is)
(She)	(is)
(We)	(are)

Now start making some sentences! First describe yourself, then describe your friends and/or family.

How could you make your sentences “interesting”? What extra details could you add when describing people?

“The ‘nuggets of gold’ that Language Futures has highlighted are the motivational dimension of choice, the self-efficacy that planning and carrying out your own language learning can engender, and the potential for blurring the boundaries between classroom learning and learning beyond the classroom.”

Dr Rachel Hawkes
TES Languages Advisor
President Elect of the Association for Language Learning

Language Futures is a highly personalised, learner-led programme for modern and community languages, which builds on learning from Paul Hamlyn Foundation’s well-received ‘Musical Futures’ and ‘Learning Futures’ initiatives. Taking place in mixed-language groups, the approach engages students by democratising choices about what, how, and where language learning takes place. It develops independent study skills and fosters a love of language learning.

This toolkit is published at an important moment in considering how languages are learnt by young people. Languages will be a statutory part of the Key Stage 2 curriculum from September 2014. There is renewed vigour to develop the work in Key Stage 3 in order to engage and motivate learners, and schools are required to offer a language at Key Stage 4 so that students can be successful in gaining the English Baccalaureate.

These resources present suggestions and advice for school leaders and language teachers in mainstream and community settings who are interested in adopting Language Futures and its resources.

twitter.com/languagefutures