

Students as Mentors

About Language Futures

The Language Futures approach is not designed to ‘teach’ a language, but to equip students to be independent language learners, supported by school, home and the wider community. There are 5 key features to the approach:

- **Student choice and motivation** - students choose a language that they wish to learn and there may be several languages being studied in any one classroom. Students are also encouraged to work together in language groups and across language groups to share learning.
- **Teacher as facilitator** - the teacher sets up the learning and manages the classroom, but doesn’t necessarily speak all of the languages being studied in the classroom.
- **School as base camp** – school is not the sole place of learning and students are encouraged to take their learning home, use online learning etc.
- **Project-based learning** – students design, plan and carry out projects with a concrete outcome e.g. a presentation.
- **Building a learning community** – students are supported in their learning by mentors who provide good role models of the language and advise students on language and learning tasks.

Why mentor? How will you benefit?

Mentors are a very important part of the Language Futures approach. Students speak very positively about working with mentors face to face and how they can bring both the language and culture of the language learnt alive. Mentoring is also a highly rewarding experience for the mentors. As a mentor, you will experience at first hand the satisfaction of seeing other students develop their skills and confidence as a direct result of your support.

What are the other reasons for mentoring?

- You have a passion for language learning and want to pass that on to others.
- You want to share your language skills.
- You want to experience and support (language) teaching.
- You want to develop your communication skills.
- You wish to support a language for a particular reason e.g. to support EAL students.
- You would like to volunteer (e.g. as part of a Duke of Edinburgh scheme or [#iwill campaign](#)).
- You would like to become a [Language Leader](#).
- To support a personal statement within a UCAS form.

Role of the mentor

Mentors attend Language Futures’ clubs to work alongside the students, helping with language investigation, tasks, projects and pronunciation etc. At the start of each session, you will be given guidance by the teacher about how you can support the students. It is likely that there will be at least two students studying each language so you may be asked to support a pair or small group of students.

If you would like further information on the Language Futures approach, explore the [website](#).

Language Futures was originally developed by Linton Village College as part of a Paul Hamlyn Foundation initiative. This guidance was produced as part of funding provided by The Mercers’ Company. When using and/or adapting resources, we would ask you to acknowledge the Language Futures initiative. ALL does not recommend or endorse any specific resource, website or activity contained in this list and all resources and activities must be checked to ensure they are age appropriate.

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Below are some language learning ideas which you could discuss with your learners. Remember to ask the teacher for recommendations for language specific websites and books.

- Use the Language Futures immersion chart.
- 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 students to record vocabulary in a useful way e.g. in a vocabulary book or a mind map.
- 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 and display somewhere useful.
- Ask the student to teach family members and friends some of the things they have learned in class, especially high frequency words like greetings, days of the week etc.
- Encourage students to read in the target language.
- Keep a language learning journal.
- Encourage the student to listen to music in the foreign language.
- Read books about the culture of the target country.

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