

Helicopters Experiment

Context

A French specialist teacher is working with the class teacher to teach the children aspects of the curriculum through the medium of French. Here the class is carrying out a science experiment about gravity, using paper helicopters.

Exploration

This school provides a high level of integration of subjects by teaching some subjects through the medium of French. Collaborative planning is essential for a Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) approach to be successful. While both teachers are responsible for the lesson content, they take turns leading parts of the lesson appropriate to their individual areas of specialisation while the other works in a supporting role. In this lesson the language specialist is teaching an aspect of the science curriculum. Children follow instructions for making the helicopter in French. They have developed very high levels of understanding of spoken language and gradually they will be able to increase the amount of French they use themselves. The primary specialist follows up the work of the language specialist by discussing the experiment and summarising its outcomes in English. The children go on to write the conclusions in English. Cross-curricular work can be introduced at different levels and can be a gradual process, depending on level of confidence in the language and resources available: At a basic level you can integrate aspects of the languages programme into daily routines, e.g. greetings, praise, register, date, weather, familiar work in literacy and maths, ICT, PE and music. At a higher level you might teach aspects of the curriculum using the language, e.g. internet use and email in ICT, a dance in PE, a song in music, a picture in art, making things in D&T, a new concept in maths, aspects of a country in geography, grammatical knowledge in literacy, a topic in science. At an even higher level some schools such as this one have developed immersion programmes, teaching a subject using a language other than English, with a good deal of success. This approach is known as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). You can find further guidance and case studies of cross curricular links and integrated work in Part 3 of the KS2 Languages Framework, pages 33 – 45.

Learning Outcomes

The children:

- listen attentively and understand instructions, everyday classroom language and praise words listen for specific words and phrases
- listen attentively and understand more complex phrases and sentences
- recognise some familiar words in written form
- recognise question forms hear main word classes
- use context and previous knowledge to help understanding
- plan and prepare – analyse what needs to be done in order to carry out a task look and listen for visual and aural clues
- use language known in one context or topic in another context or topic listen for clues to meaning e.g. tone of voice, key words
- make predictions based on existing knowledge



Next steps

Children might follow up this lesson by reading some of the key words and phrases from an interactive whiteboard and writing down some of the words to remind them of the experiment. Their level of listening comprehension is high and they will go on to respond more and more in French.

- write simple words and phrases using a model and some words from memory
- write words, phrases and short sentences, using a reference

Development

What are the benefits of an integrated approach? With a colleague explore ways of developing cross- curricular work with your classes.

How might you use ICT to present and practise this work?