



ιπποπόταμος  
WoLLoW the HIPPo

<https://theworldoflanguages.co.uk/>

## **‘WoLLoW’: the four-legged animal [or perhaps friend].**

### **1. The way we live now**

It is generally agreed and often said that the teaching of languages in KS2 and the transition to KS3 are problematic and do not provide the best introduction to and preparation for languages study in secondary school. In particular, the present KS2 provision can differ in content, scale and quality and is not linked effectively into other areas of the curriculum. The inevitable result of this is that teaching in secondary school goes back the beginning of language learning. Furthermore, current provision does not give any space for the increasing linguistic experience and diversity of the pupils. In such a world, the National Curriculum requirement that language teaching should pursue ‘proficiency in one language’ may not be the best approach.

### **2. The World of Languages and Languages of the World: ‘WoLLoW’**

‘WoLLoW’ has been developed over a number of years by experienced, indeed some very experienced, teachers and has been trialled in a number of schools, state and independent, across the country. It has the capacity to address four big issues in the KS2 – and KS3 - curriculum:

- language readiness: ‘WoLLoW’ offers an exploration of how languages work, how they convey meaning, how they can be deciphered and thereby will prepare pupils for the study of languages, any language, in KS3.
- literacy: ‘WoLLoW’ encourages thought about languages, their relationship and their history, which will develop pupils’ understanding and use of English, thereby supporting the development of literacy.
- multilingualism and cultural diversity: ‘WoLLoW’ enables the pupils to share and celebrate their own linguistic knowledge and history which not only generates greater awareness of diversity in all pupils but will also encourage pupils to value and develop their heritage languages in the future.
- languages and the wider curriculum [and world]: ‘WoLLoW’ links the study of languages into all other aspects of the curriculum and key issues: local, national and global history, geography, religion, empire and colonialism, science and mathematics, thereby encouraging pupils to see the long-term value in language study.

### **3. 'WoLLoW' at work**

We believe that 'WoLLoW' has the capacity to make a real difference to the language experience of pupils in KS2 so that they arrive at KS3 with understanding, enjoyment, curiosity and a sense of the value and centrality of languages. We also believe that it works for two different reasons:

- 'WoLLoW' has been designed so that it does not need to be delivered by a language specialist. That's partly because the curriculum resources provide not only teaching materials and work for the pupils but also a detailed guide for the teacher, and partly because the lessons make as much use of the pupils' knowledge and ideas as the expertise of the teacher: the lessons are truly dialogic.
- 'WoLLoW' can be used in a variety of different ways, for different age-groups, in different contexts. So, for example, it can be used:
  - as a complete year-long curriculum in any year group from Year 4 onwards.
  - as a supplement and enhancement to existing teaching of a single language in KS2.
  - as a Year 6 post-SATS, pre-transition programme.
  - as resources for independent/state school partnerships.
  - as the basis for a language club outside lesson time.
  - as material for special language/cultural celebrations.
  - as enrichment and exam preparation for pupils, predominantly in the independent sector, who move into secondary school in Year 9.
  - as an introduction in KS3 to the study of languages.
  - as an alternative language curriculum for SEND pupils.

Our intention is to package the resources so that they can be used to meet these different purposes.

### **4. 'WoLLoW' and the world**

Although 'WoLLoW' was born in the independent sector, we have been working with a wide range of different schools and organisations in the last two years, from inner-city state primaries to university departments of languages and education, from the British Council to the Birmingham Schools Partnership. Over 400 schools have downloaded our resources, which are available for free to any school or teacher, and the feedback of teachers in a range of contexts has been overwhelmingly positive. The issues of assessment and evaluation are also being addressed in schools and research is being conducted into the impact of 'WoLLoW' by the University of East Anglia.

#### **The co-founders of 'WoLLoW'**

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