



European Day of Languages 2026



Annual competition for schools throughout the UK (organised in North-East England).

Together ALLNE, NfLNE and partners are organising an annual European Day of Languages writing competition for Schools, and in 2026 it is once more open to the whole country!

To celebrate European Day of Languages 2026, we invite pupils across the UK to take part in our annual EDoL competition exploring how **carefully chosen words can make a difference to someone who reads them.**

This year's competition is designed to support and contribute to the **National Year of Reading 2026**, a UK-wide initiative encouraging children and young people to rediscover the enjoyment and relevance of reading in their everyday lives.

The organising committee invites language learners in any key stage to create a piece of text in a language they are learning on the theme:

A few words that mean so much

At its heart, this competition demonstrates that languages are an integral part of reading, literacy, and communication. Reading is not only about English: it is about understanding and expressing ideas, emotions and cultures across different languages.

Our suggestion for Primary pupils: One Kind Word – Write a simple message that makes someone smile.

Create a short, illustrated message in a language you are learning, e.g. write a kind message to a friend, your teacher, a family member, etc. (or to more than one of course!)

Our suggestion for Secondary students: One Powerful message – Write a message that matters.

Create a text including a meaningful message (it could be a poster, blog, advert, letter, narrative, poem etc.) in a language you are learning. Your message could inspire, support or connect with someone, showing how carefully chosen words help us express ideas that truly matter.

'Those who bring sunshine into the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves.' (J.M. Barrie)

The judges are always amazed at the range of interpretations learners bring to the theme! There will be certificates and prizes! The text must include words in a language or languages other than English, and could include imagery relating to the concept. The judges look for tidy and attractive presentation but prefer handwritten text; they are less interested in AI creations, but understand that some learners may need that support. (Teachers are requested to make a note to that effect, please). Artwork makes a powerful contribution, but judges will look principally at the language in the text, rather than the quality of any images. No entry can be larger than a sheet of A4 paper.

Pupils should write their name, age, language used, class, teacher and school **on the back of their entry.**

Please give teacher contact details on the **pro forma** below (page 3 of this document) to include with your bundle.

Please send entries to the following address: Network for Languages North East, c/o Professor René Koglbauer, Newcastle University, King George VI Building, Newcastle, NE1 7RU.

NB Entries cannot be returned, so you may wish to celebrate them before sending them in. Given the nature of this year's competition, you may encourage pupils to create a copy of their work to give to the person they are thinking of. We reserve the right to use winning entries for display or promotional purposes and potentially for publication (including online) and will inform you accordingly through newsletters or e-bulletins.

The intention is that this might form an activity in your school around the European Day of Languages itself (26th September), so the deadline for submission of entries will be: **Wednesday, 7th October 2026.**

Vouchers will be offered to any winners identified by the judges, for each key stage, up to and including KS5. Further prizes may also be awarded at the

judges' discretion. In the event of insufficient entries of good quality in any specific key stage no prize will be awarded; the judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into on decisions. The judges are made up of the competition organisers and our supporters.



Prof. René Koglbauer

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Network for Languages NE



Steven Fawkes

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ALL NE

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EDoL Resources from European Council of Modern Languages:

At <https://edl.ecml.at/en/> you will find resources and activities, including the 2026 Class Language Challenge and the Poster Competition.

And more here:

<https://www.ecml.at/en/Resources/ECMLresources?q=European%20Day>

Barrhead High School's video (at the end of this recording) shows a great way of bringing languages to the community:

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/school-resources/languages/celebrate-speaking>

NSPCC Kindness Challenge 2026: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/support-us/charity-fundraising/schools-fundraising-ideas/kindness-challenge/sign-up/>

2025 ALL EDoL e-book :

https://read.bookcreator.com/5S1C2SwE7fQVuIscBfF0igGECsh2/20QqZG05RnOpAD5vdEYvaQ/e30hQPEWSb-1y9r99_LI0w

Calligrams

Primary colleagues are reminded that ALL hosts a multilingual Calligrams Celebration for pupils around the UK in January and February each year. More details will be posted on this page: <https://www.all-languages.org.uk/news-events/challenges-and-competitions/>



A few words that mean so much

Teacher contact details pro forma (to be returned with entries)

School name:

Address:

Head teacher's contact email address:

Teacher's contact name:

Teacher's contact email address:

We request these details in order to send congratulations, certificates and news of prizewinners for schools to celebrate.

