
BUILDING TIME FOR CREATIVE TASKS TO REDUCE LANGUAGE ANXIETY



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AIMS OF THE SESSION

- Exploring the reality of being a student of a foreign language in school
 - Understanding the concept of language anxiety
 - What we mean creativity and authenticity from the perspective of the Creativity in MFL
 - Examples in practice with students' testimonies
 - How to join the Creativity in MFL Group
-

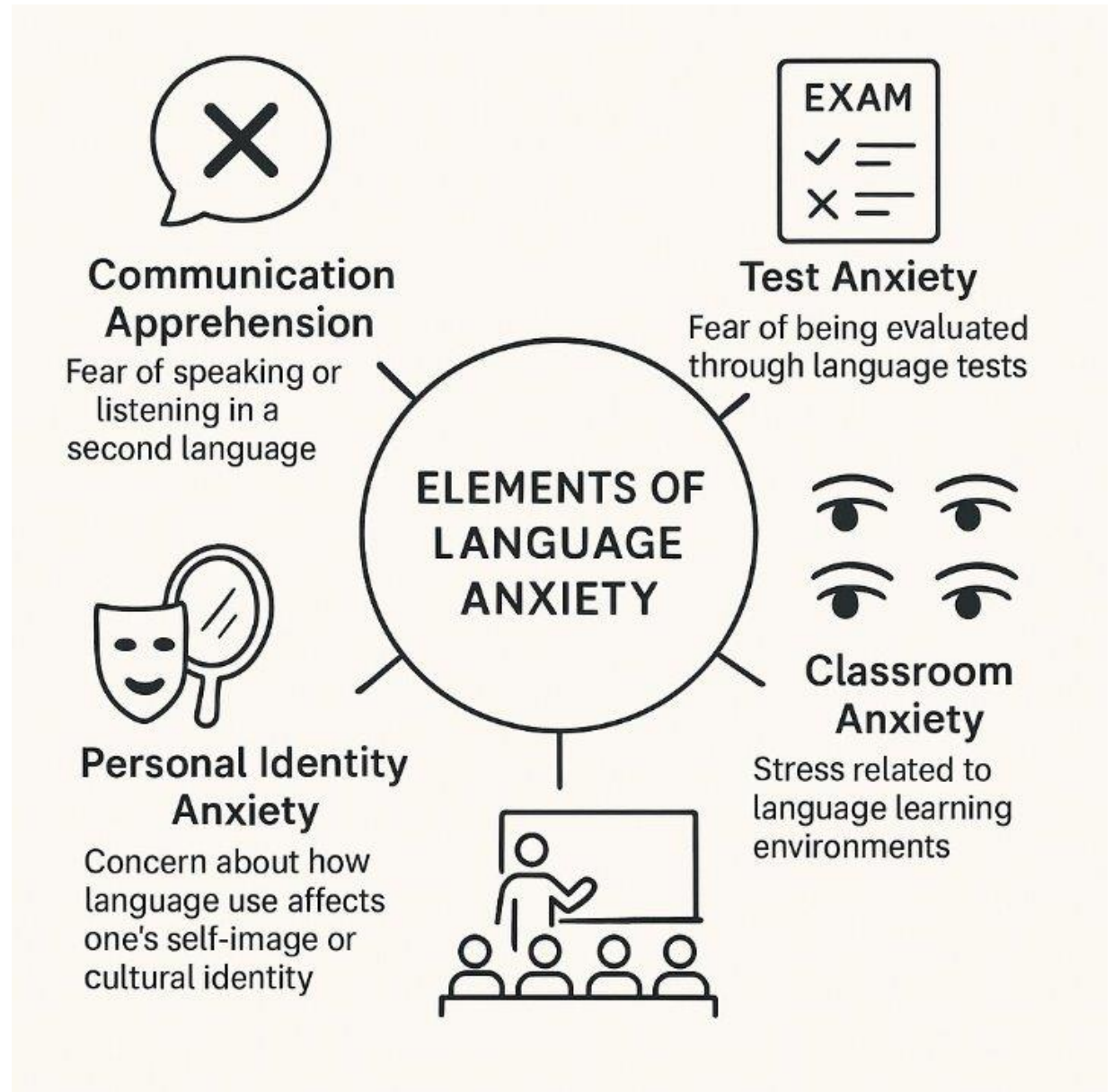
What is it like to be a student/pupil/language learner in your classroom?
What is the go-to activity in your classroom?



DID YOU KNOW?

- Foreign language anxiety is real.
 - **Xenoglossophobia** is the feeling of unease, worry, nervousness and apprehension experienced in learning or using a second of foreign language.
 - May stem from fear of using the productive skills; speaking and writing, or receptive skills; reading and listening.
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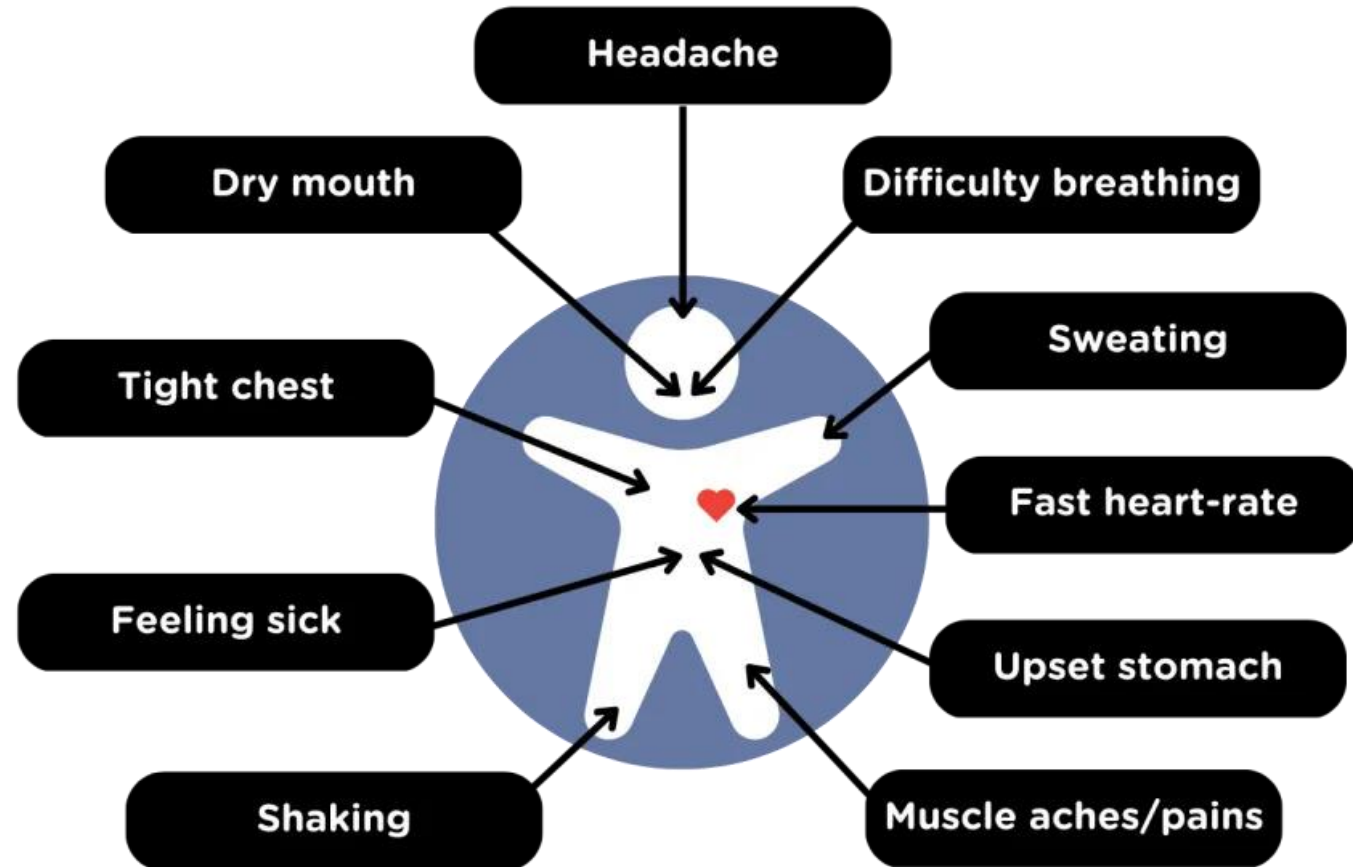
LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ANXIETY



LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ANXIETY

- Speaking aloud in front of others
 - Stuttering
 - Inability to read a text aloud – skipping words
 - Self-harm – pinching, squeezing, scratching, picking, hair pulling
 - Getting the sound spelling links wrong
 - Heightened fear causes amygdala to kick in and often results L1 pronunciation
 - Incorrect intonation
 - Inability to project voice
-

LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ANXIETY



SO, WHAT CAN ***WE***
DO ABOUT THIS?



HOW DO CREATIVITY AND AUTHENTICITY MERGE IN THE MFL CLASSROOM?

'A stretch of real language, produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience and designed to convey a real message of some sort' (Gilmore 2007 – Morrow 1977 p98)



Bring diversity and inclusion in their classroom moving away from a Eurocentric approach to language and culture as often presented in pre-made resources and textbooks (Ryland 2023).

'The contrived materials of traditional textbooks have often presented learners with a meagre, and frequently distorted, sample of the target language to work with and have failed to meet many of their communicative needs' (p103)

THE PROBLEM WITH AUTHENTIC RESOURCES AND CREATIVITY IN PRACTICE...

BARRIERS TO CREATIVITY ' & AUTHENTICITY IN MFL

Lack of Curriculum Time (Conti, 2016)

- Overcrowded curriculum limits space for creative, open-ended tasks
- Pressure to 'cover content' reduces opportunities for authentic communication
- Creativity seen as a luxury rather than a core pedagogical tool

Complexity of Creative Pedagogy (Smith, 2017)

- Creative tasks require planning, scaffolding, and risk-taking
- Teachers may feel unsure how to structure creativity without losing rigour
- Perception that creativity = chaos leads to avoidance

Subject Knowledge Gaps

- Teachers lacking confidence in linguistic or cultural knowledge avoid open-ended tasks
- Authentic materials feel intimidating
- Creativity requires flexibility that depends on strong subject foundations

Accountability & Performative Measures

- Exam-driven culture pushes teachers toward predictable, measurable tasks
-

SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY

WITHIN LANGUAGE LEARNING



.....→ **WHY PEOPLE
WANT TO LEARN
A LANGUAGE**

WHAT STUDENTS FROM THE ALL SIG ON CREATIVITY TELL US (2024-2025):

1. They like to feel they are good at it (small wins)
2. They see a purpose and relevance
3. They connect with the cultural input (music, media...)

Top 3 most engaging to remember more:

1. Games where they can create
2. Songs
3. Chorus repetitions
4. Online platforms
5. Films/ movies/ series

WHAT STUDENT VOICE SAY IS **NOT** HELPFUL:

- Reading our power point at them
- Talking too much
- Grammar without context
- Vocabulary without context
- Being corrected all the times
- feeling they never improve
- Talking about GCSE in year 7
- Exam pressures/ assessments

118. One 12-year-old girl in Clacton:

“I do wish my Maths teacher would stop going on about GCSEs. It’s in four years’ time.”[\[footnote 108\]](#)”

119. From our survey with young people who are NEET, 81% thought that the current curriculum is too focused on children and young people passing exams.[\[footnote 109\]](#)

120. In addition, more than half of the young people (55%) felt that the current education system did not suit people like them.[\[footnote 110\]](#)

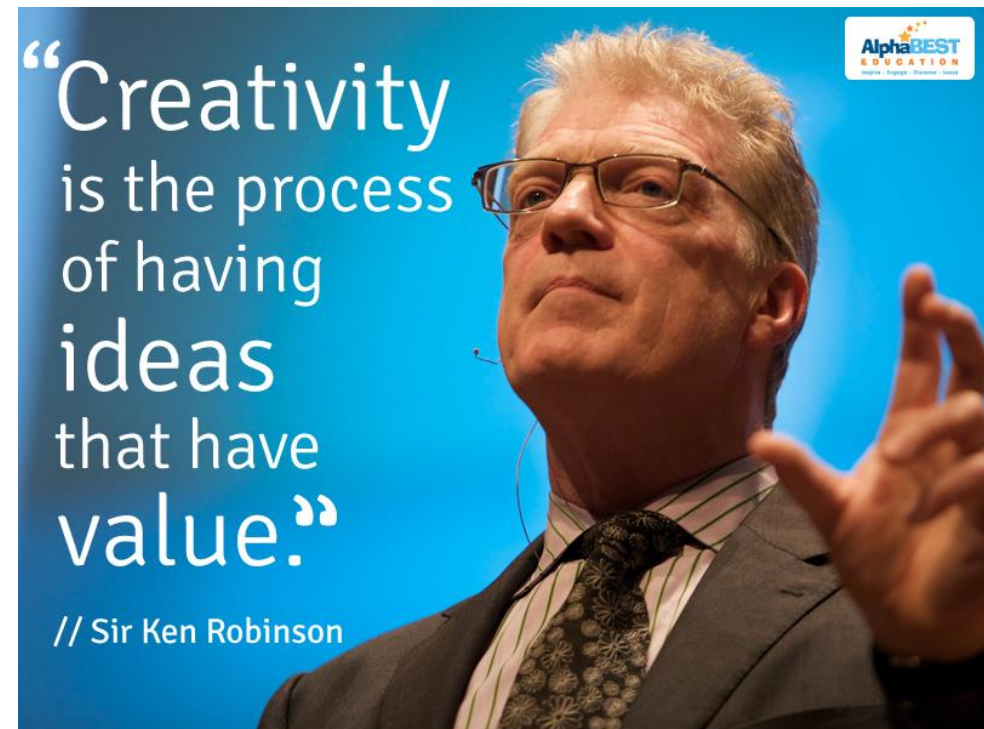
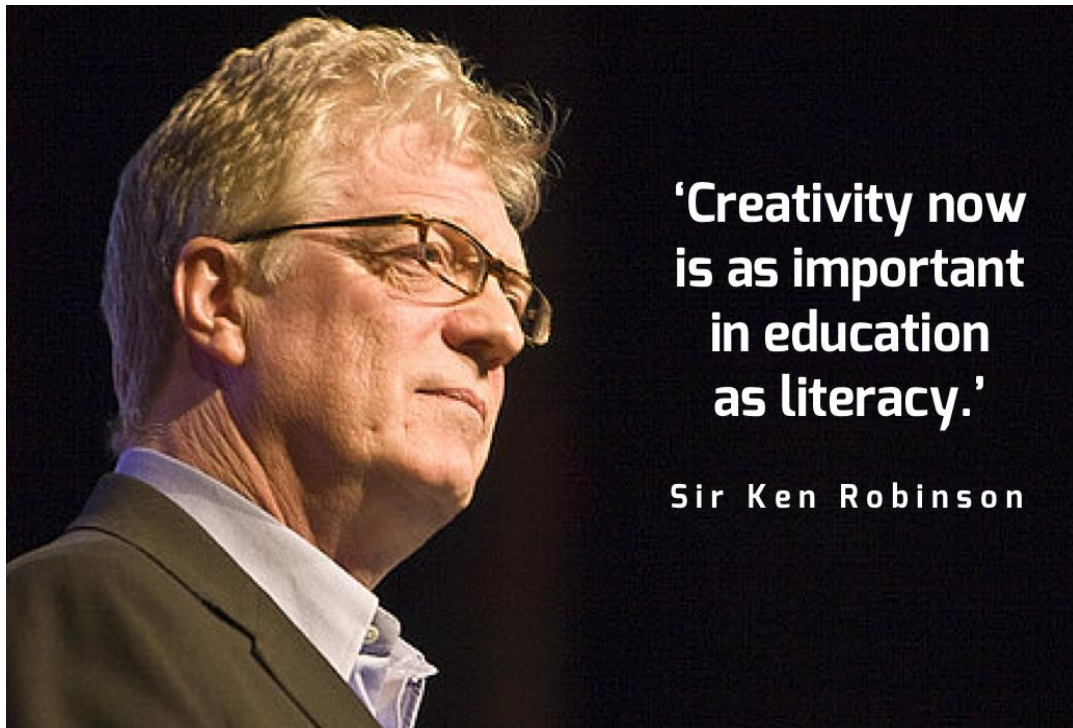
[Young people and work: interim report - GOV.UK](#) (Milburn Report: Department of Work and Pensions, 2026)

MEANINGFUL AND SYSTEMATIC CREATIVE TASKS IN LESSONS



What makes creative tasks meaningful rather than ad hoc?

How can this be systematised in a standardised curriculum?



EXAMPLES IN PRACTICE

- Student-produced **short films** in the target language
 - **Digital pen-pal exchanges** with partner schools
 - **Creative retellings** of cultural stories
 - **Mini-documentaries** on cultural themes
 - **Music, rap, or poetry** in the target language
 - **Cultural artefact projects** (menus, posters, festival guides)
 - **Lived** (daily routines, youth culture, humour)
 - **Diverse and global** (not just Paris/Madrid/Berlin)
 - **Critical** (challenging stereotypes)
 - **Comparative** (UK ↔ target culture)
 - **Student-led** (research, inquiry, presentations)
-

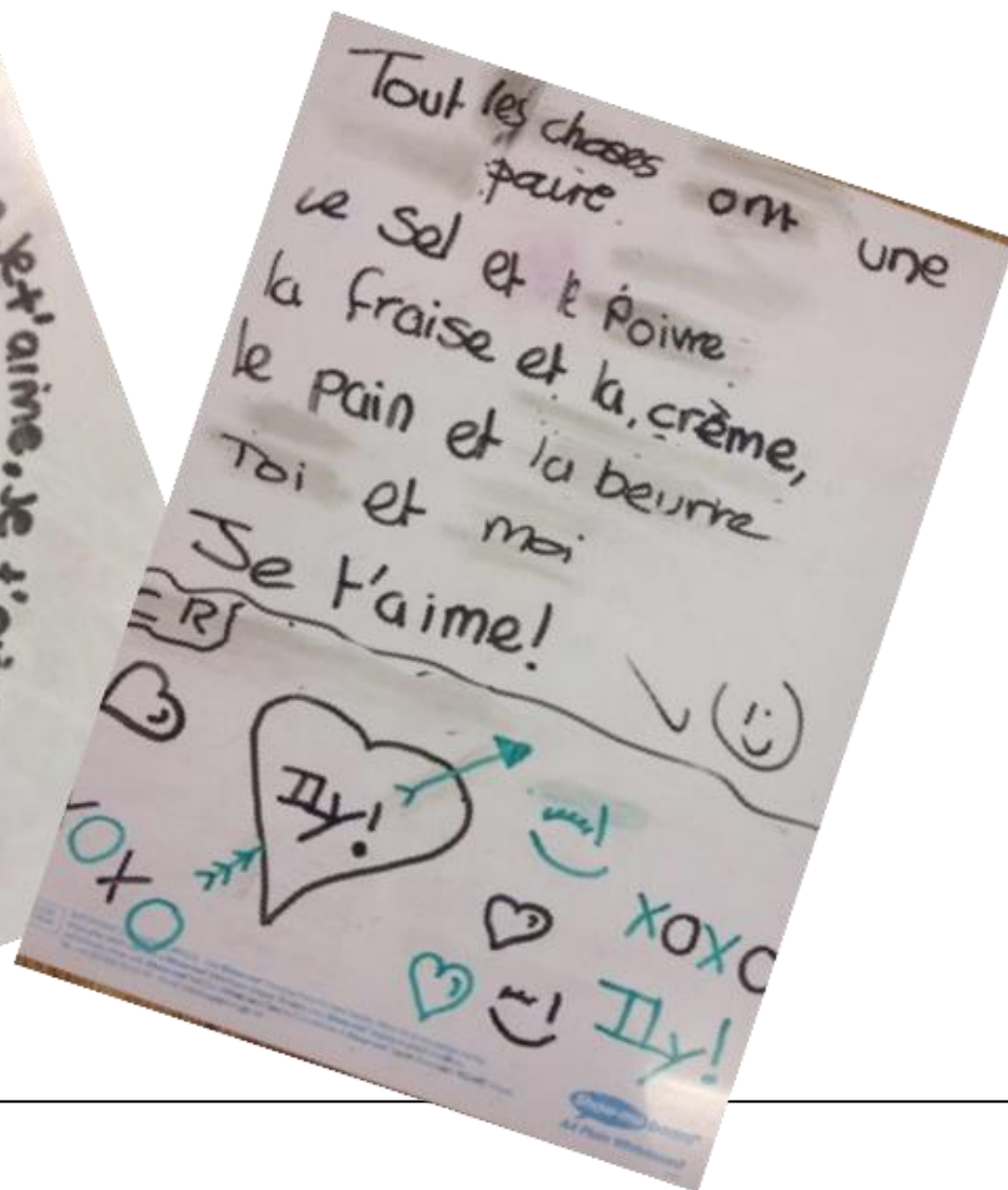
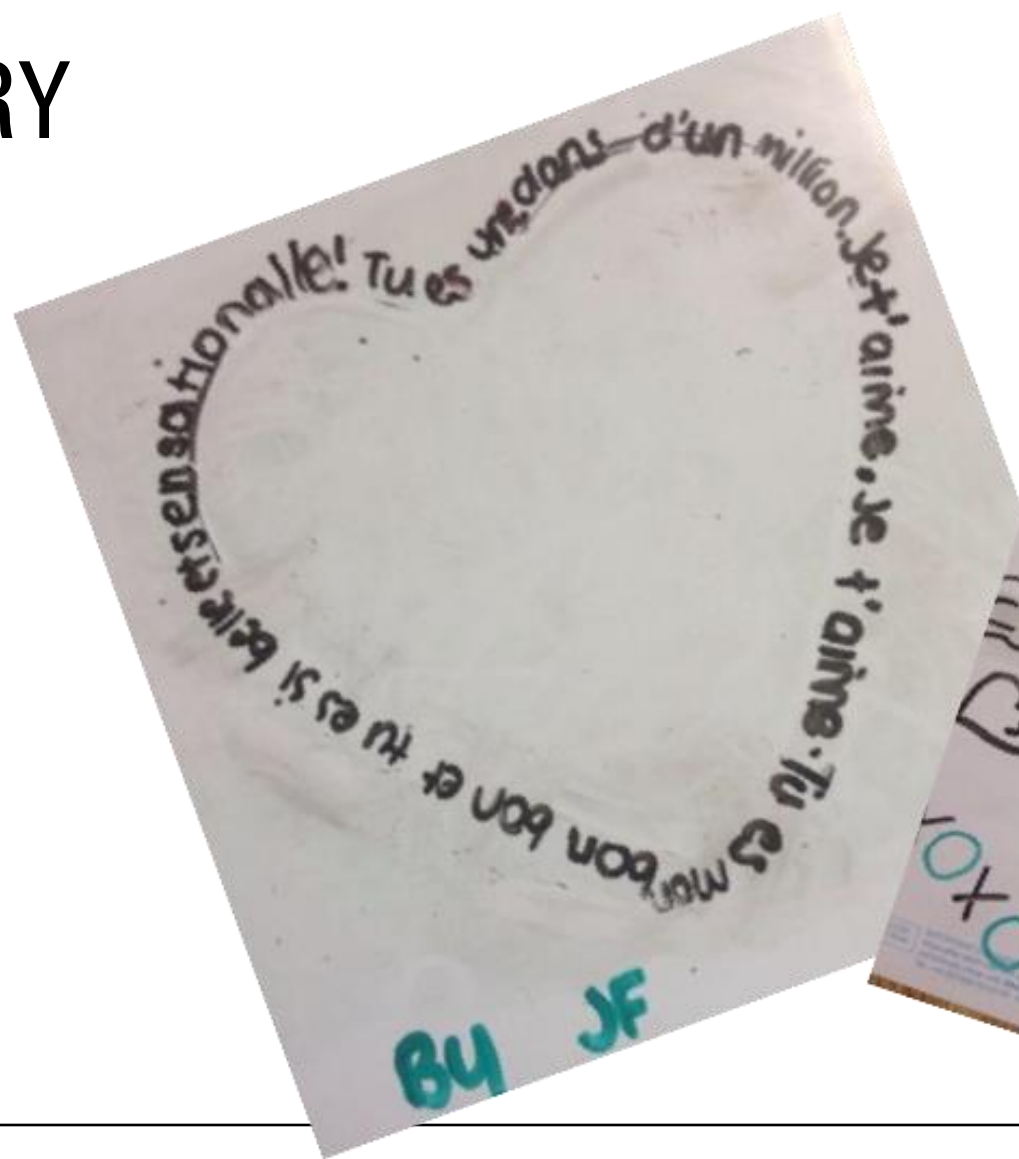
TONGUE TWISTERS

Lady Gaga porte une robe de poisson
en tissus croissant
pour avoir une boisson poire
avec le roi de Côte d'Ivoire
qui avait soixante-trois ans



created with assistance from Tom Hunt
9b.f1

POETRY



BEST SENTENCE

J'aimais
J'aime jouer avec mon x-box 360 parce que c'est génial! J'aime
le netball avec Mme Hamond parce que c'est super! Cependant
Je détestais faire du shopping parce que ~~cela~~ ce n'est pas amusant
et c'est barbant.

J'aime faire du ~~shop~~ Shopping ^{avec mes grand-parents} c'est cool
et amusant Je n'aimais pas jouer avec mon
PlayStation 3 car c'est ~~barbant~~ barbant et c'est ~~ennuyeux~~

J'adore jouer ~~golf~~ au golf et
faire du ski parce que c'est amusant
et je suis fort en ça!

Je n'aime pas ~~faire du tricot~~ tricoter
parce que c'est difficile ^{et} ce n'est
intéressant!

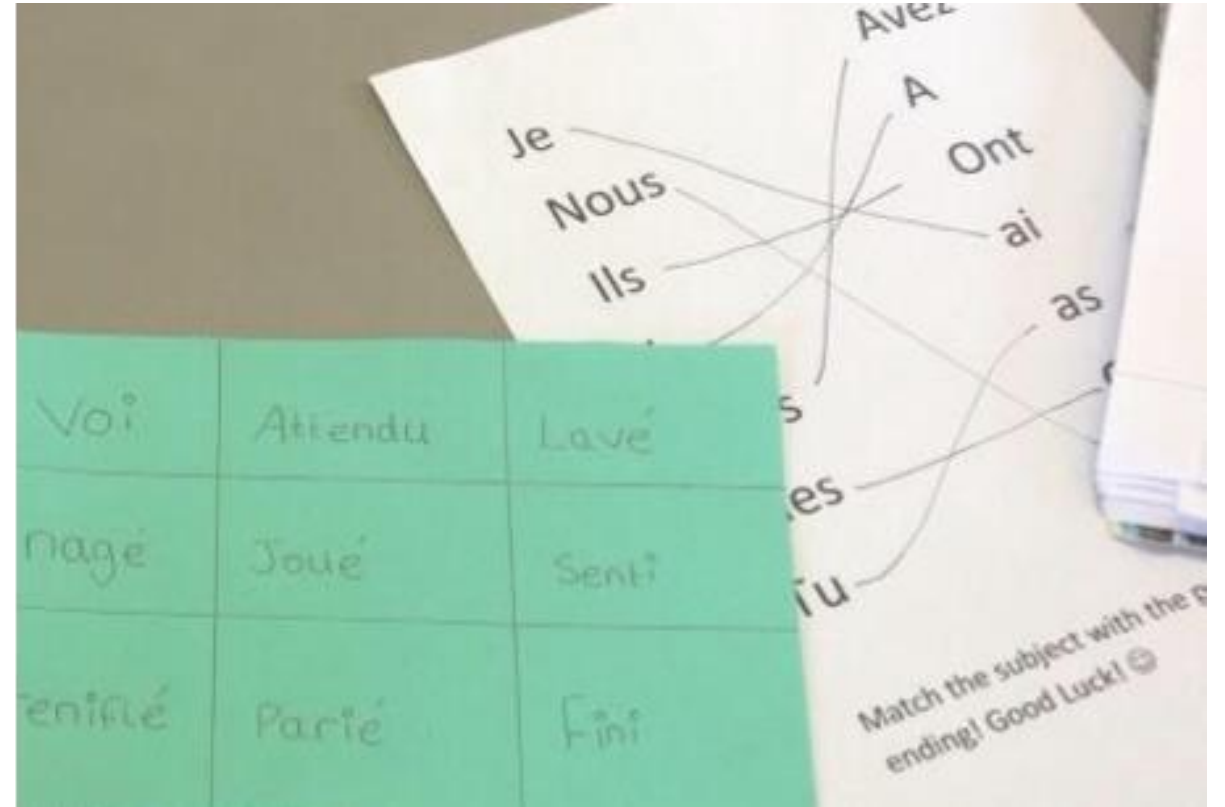
C'est délicieux. Aussi, j'aimerais
Prendre ma mère dans une grande valise
Parce que elle est agaçante. Je suis
allé à un hôtel de luxe quand

J'ai vu Cristiano Ronaldo à la plage
à Lisbon. Le Portugal est super parce que
d'habitude c'est vraiment beau. J'adore l'Espe

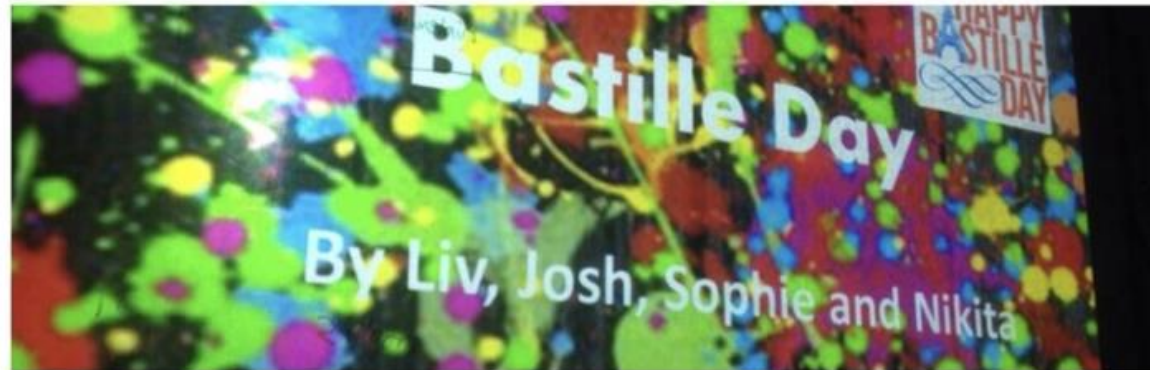
incroyable l'année dernière, Je suis allé au
de Galles et je l'aimais parce que ma mère
n'est pas gênée ce jour-là. Je

BEST PARAGRAPH

GRAMMAR GAMES



SURPRISE ME HOMEWORK



FASHION SHOW



PUPPETRY









ASSESSMENTS IN THE NEW LANDSCAPE

Ta Mission

- Tu vas créer une courte présentation créative autour du thème **Spécial Vacances**, en utilisant le vocabulaire des 5 unités suivantes :
- 1. Questions de vacances
- 2. J'adore les sensations fortes
- 3. C'est indispensable !
- 4. Quel désastre !
- 5. À la base de loisirs

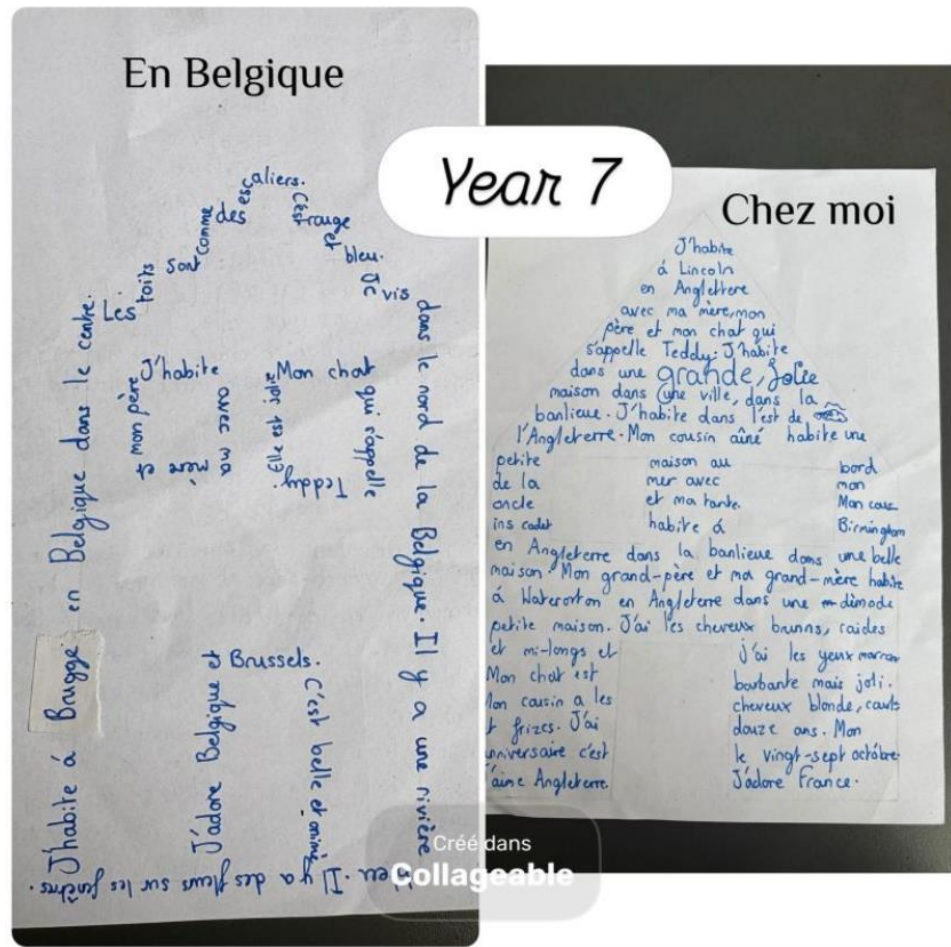


Choisis ton format créatif

-  Présentation orale (5 mins)
-  Newsletter d'une page
-  Bande dessinée (3–5 vignettes)
- Utilise du vocabulaire de plusieurs unités et sois créatif !

- **Podcast episode** on a cultural theme
- **Photo essay** with captions in the target language
- **Short story** incorporating cultural references
- **Role-play** based on real-world scenarios
- **Mini-exhibition** of cultural artefacts
- **Collaborative class magazine**
- Blog writing - story boards

CREATIVE ASSESSMENTS



Before getting the usual assessment books out, we embarked on a little research journey 🌍. As a class, we explored where people in the francophone world live and how we could use the vocabulary and structures we had studied so far to describe those places. I then set them the task of not only writing about where they currently live in a calligram in the shape of their house, but also planning how they could write as if they lived somewhere else in the francophone world (that wasn't France!). They rose to the challenge beautifully and produced some excellent examples featuring typical buildings in Bruges BE, chalets in Canada CA, riads in Morocco MA, and many more. They loved looking up new words to help add depth to their descriptions and see the beautiful pictures from some places they didn't know existed! A personal win was managing to convince one of my students that Belgium is indeed a country, not just part of Germany! The conversations we had even prompted one student to bring in photos of her grandparents' house in Guadeloupe GP, which sparked even richer discussions. Were the pieces of writing all written in perfectly polished French? No! Had they recycled key vocab and structures? Yes! Did they come away feeling good and have a wider knowledge of the world they live in? Yes!

IN A SCHEME OF LEARNING...

- **Week 1–2:** Cultural exploration
- **Week 3–4:** Language input + creative modelling
- **Week 5–6:** Creative project development
- **Week 7:** Authentic assessment – production of language in a creative form
- **Week 8:** Reflection + cultural comparison

YEAR 7 FRENCH

Name:

Form:

Google classroom Code:

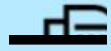
YEAR 7 FRENCH UNIT 1 TOUT SUR MOI

I can...	covered	RAG
1. Say my name		
2. Use my understanding of phonics to pronounce familiar words correctly		
3. Give 5 countries in French		
4. Say where I am/people are from using the correct form of the adjective		
5. Say where I live using EN / AU		
6. Count up until 31		
7. Ask 5 questions to someone		
8. Say when my birthday is and how old I am / people are		
9. Explain the difference between masculine and feminine using UN/UNE		
10. Describe myself and other people		
11. Conjugate the verb AVOIR		
12. Name 5 French speaking countries		
13. Understand a poem in French about Black History		
14. Phonics [gn] sound – Espagne, Allemagne [qu] sound – quatre, quinze, quand, quoi		
Best vocab test score :		

YEAR 7 FRENCH MON MONDE PERSO

I can...	covered	RAG
1. Describe personalities		
2. Use 5 new adjectives		
3. Conjugate ETRE		
4. Say THANKS/YOU'RE WELCOME		
5. Talk about family members		
6. Use POSSESSIVE ADJECTIVES like mon, ma, mes – ton – ta –tes		
7. Talk about my friends and how long I know them for using DEPUIS		
8. I can use direct object pronouns LE, LA, LES to say " I know him/ her /them"		
9. Say 5 school subjects		
10. Give opinions about school subjects		
11. Justify my opinions using PARCE QUE C'EST...		
12. Make comparisons using PLUS...QUE and MOINS ...QUE		
13. Talk about Christmas		
14. Phonics feminine adjectives – consonant sound at the end [z] heureuse, [v] créative a. [ou] roux, courts		
Best vocab test score:		

GCSE – KS4 CULTURE AND CREATIVITY



On traduit le refrain

Je te partage ma vie, au lieu de la vivre

Tu me partages la vie des autres pour me divertir

Je ne regarde plus le ciel depuis que tu m'as pris mes yeux dans tes applis, baby

Je ne sais plus vivre sans toi à mes côtés

Ton regard pixelisé m'a envoûté,

Toi mon précieux, mon précieux, mon précieux

Mon précieux, mon précieux, mon précieux

Quand tu sonnes ou quand tu commences à vibrer

Je perds la tête, comment pourrais-je te quitter,

Toi mon précieux, mon précieux, mon précieux

Mon précieux, mon précieux, mon précieux

EXTRA -for a point!

Can you spot the complex negative? Rewrite it with "never"

AIDE-MOI

partager = to share

au lieu = instead

depuis = since

divertir = entertain

sans = without

mes côtés = my side

ton regard = your look/ eyes

envoûter = to put a spell

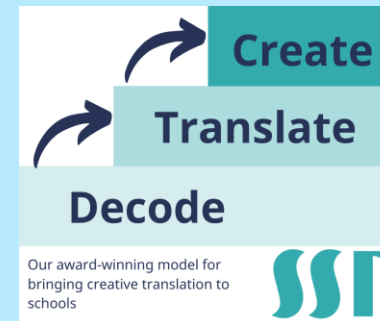
sonner = to ring

perdre = to loose

pourrais-je = could I

la tête = head/mind

quitter = leave you



THE POWER OF MUSIC

- Using music to engage and relax
- [By themes and ability](#)
- [Suno | AI Music](#)
- [Text to Speech | ElevenLabs](#)

- Create easy content
 - Get students to create lyrics using sentence builders or prior learning
 - Get students to use AI tools to create content
-

Listening (yr9)

Ecoutez la musique :
écrivez les mots
manquants



Quand j'..... 10 ans, je mon anniversaire chez moi avec ma famille et mes amis. C'..... vraiment spécial parce qu'il y beaucoup de nourriture et de musique. Je à des jeux et je des cadeaux, ce qui me très heureux. En général, je toujours une excellente journée.

Correction

Quand j'**avais** 10 ans, je mon anniversaire chez moi avec ma famille et mes amis. C' **était** vraiment spécial parce qu'il y**avait** beaucoup de nourriture et de musique. Je **jouais** à des jeux et je **recevais** des cadeaux, ce qui me **rendait** très heureux. En général, je **passais** toujours une excellente journée.

EXAMPLE FROM
FRANCE - ENGLISH AS
A FOREIGN LANGUAGE)
FANNY HORY –
TEACHER OF ENGLISH,
FRANCE



WHY SHOULD OUR STUDENTS READ IN MFL?

The Benefits of Reading in a Foreign Language, Callum McGee, 2021

1. It enhances your **skills** in the foreign language.
2. It forces you to use your **initiative**.
3. It helps improve your native language.
4. You discover wonderful international **writers**.
5. It's **fun**!



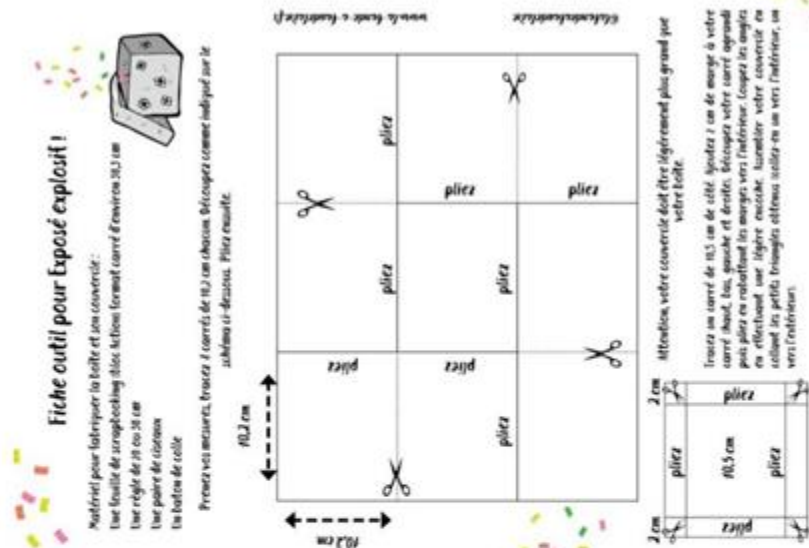
“There is something magical about being able to understand a language you haven’t grown up with. It is like **cracking a code** and entering an **enchanted new universe** where everything is more vibrant.”

THE IDEA

Consignes tâche finale Gangsta Granny

FABRICATION DE LA BOITE

1. Fabriquez la boîte en suivant les consignes suivantes :



2. Indiquez votre nom, prénom et classe en dessous de la boîte.
3. Sur la grille d'évaluation, écrivez votre nom, prénom et classe puis pliez la grille en 6 et insérez la dans le couvercle de votre boîte.

CONTENU DE LA BOITE : les expressions écrites devront être écrites sur une feuille puis collées au bon endroit

Illustration centrale : Représentez votre passage préféré. Le dessin, les collages, les pop-up sont autorisés.

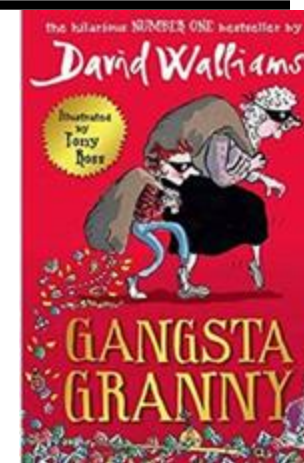
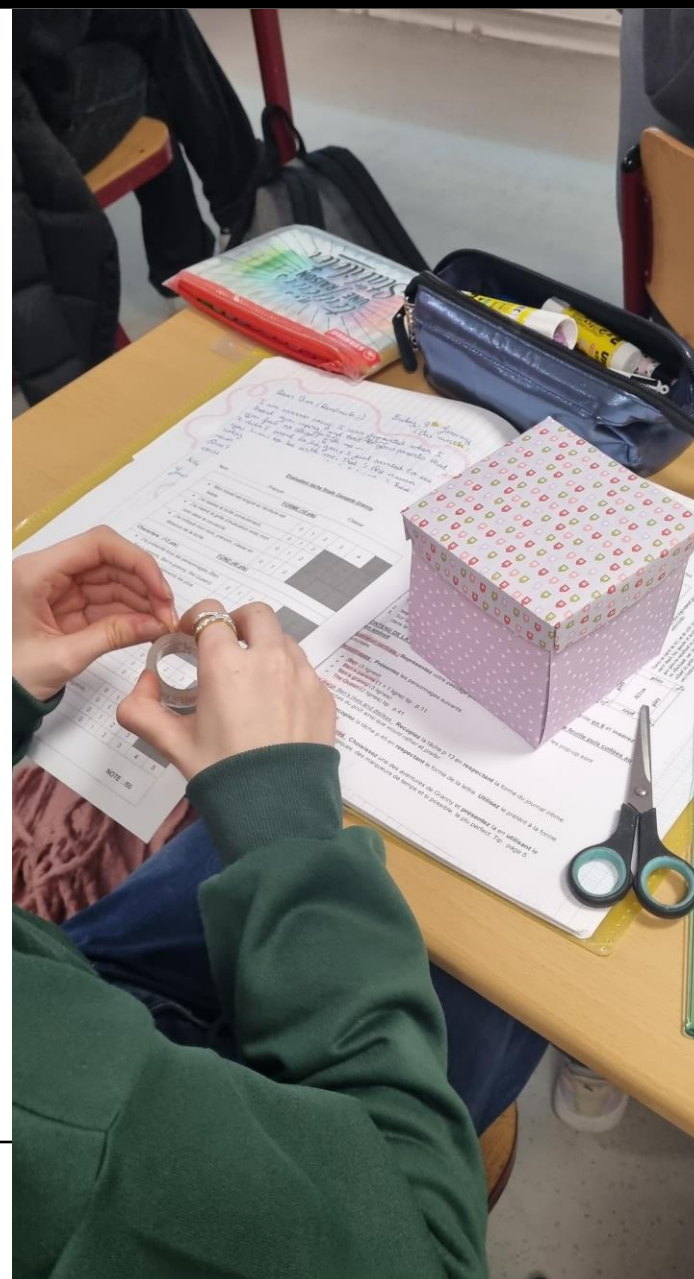
Personnages : Présentez les personnages suivants :

- Ben (3 lignes)
- Ben's parents (1 + 1 ligne) tip : p.11
- Ben's granny (3 lignes)
- The Queen (2 lignes) tip : p.41

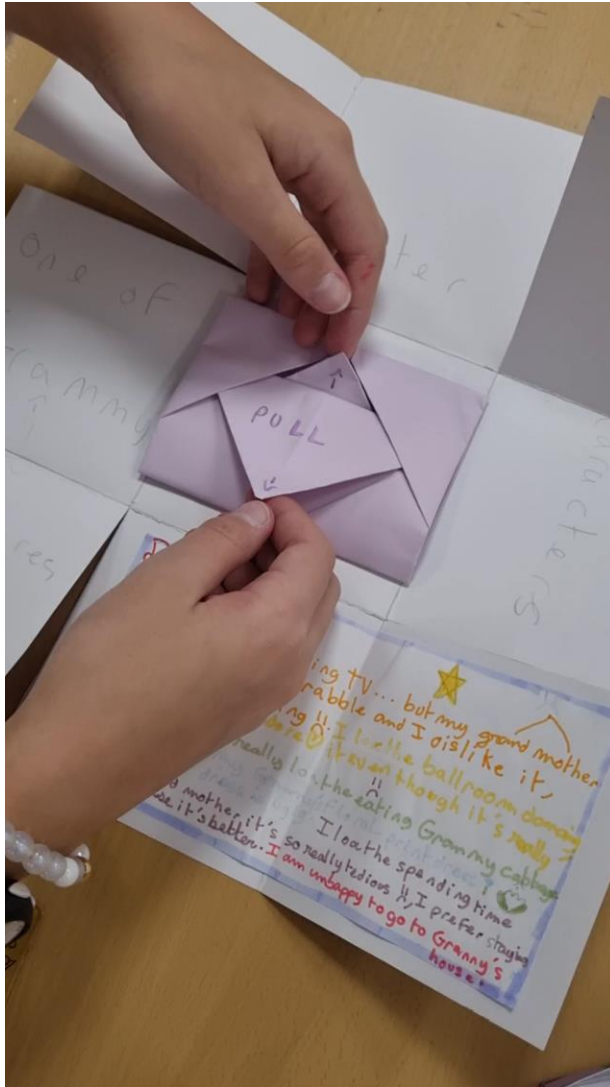
Ben's diary > Ben's likes and dislikes : Recopiez la tâche p.13 en respectant la forme du journal intime. Utilisez les verbes du goût ainsi que *would rather* et *prefer*.

Granny's letter : Recopiez la tâche p.45 en respectant la forme de la lettre. Utilisez le prétérit à la forme négative et affirmative.

One of Granny's adventures : Choisissez une des aventures de Granny et présentez la en utilisant le prétérit, des connecteurs logiques, des marqueurs de temps et si possible, le plu perfect. Tip : page 5.

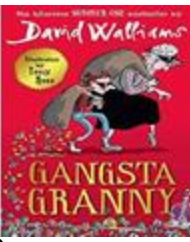


LEARNING BY DOING





A CREATIVE BOOK REVIEW



THE CHARACTERS

Ben is an eleven year old boy. He appreciates watching TV, or playing video games... Whereas, he hates spending time with his granny because when he sees her, she eats vegetables and he plays scrabble... Ben's dad is a security guard in the local supermarket. Ben's mum works in the local nail salon "Gail's Nails". She is a manicurist! Ben's granny is an old person who enjoys playing scrabble and eating cabbages. However, she has a secret: she is a GANGSTER!!

The Queen is a good person who loves helping people. She is majestic and she wears a crown with many diamonds!

BEN'S DIARY

B E N + L E A =

Dear diary,

Today, mom and dad **ABSOLUTELY** surprised me with terrible news: They said this weekend I will visit my granny...

I really enjoy watching TV, whereas, when I go to my granny's, I play Scrabble. Soooooo T E D I O U S... (I would rather play video games! Or, maybe vegetables!! That's terribly disgusting! I would prefer eating pizza (I really appreciate it) I am sure in her TV it will be written "error 406: internet hasn't been invented yet"!!!

Oh! sorry I have to my Granny's... Bye dear diary!

L O V E U

ONE OF GRANNY'S ADVENTURES

I had a big project! Stealing the Queen Elizabeth's crown with Ben! First, we had to imagine a plan to get in the Queen's castle. It was a little bit dangerous because there were guards... we had to be very clever and discreet! First, we went into the sewer pipes to be the most discreet, it's very dirty!! I am lucky because Ben's favourite activity is plumbing! So, then we managed to enter the Tower of London with a mask, a snorkel, and a wet suit to be waterproof! Finally, we were in the Queen's castle!

GRANNY'S LETTER TO BEN

Dear Ben,

I am so sorry. I was so disappointed when I heard you crying and telling your parents that you feel so bored with me. I didn't want to lie to you. I just wanted to see you happy to be with me. That's the reason why I invented all those fake stories. I have never been a gangster. I have never stolen anything in my entire life.

Don't forget that I love you so much my dear, and I want you to know that I'm so sorry Ben...

Kiss
Your Granny

idea: la Bande à Baudelaire

HOW TO EVALUATE THE TASK

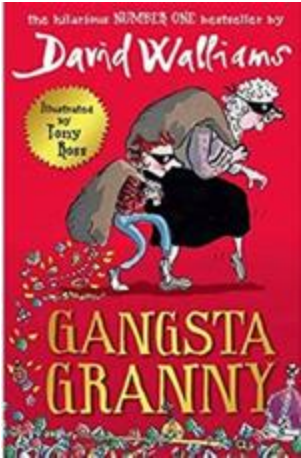
THE BOX →

Language →

Evaluation tâche finale Gangsta Granny

Nom : Prénom : Classe :

<u>FORME (10 pts)</u>						
• Mon travail est soigné et l'écriture est lisible.	0	1	2	3	4	
• J'ai réalisé la boîte correctement.	0	1	2			
• J'ai inséré la grille d'évaluation avec mon nom dans le couvercle.	0	1	2			
• J'ai indiqué mon nom, prénom, classe en dessous de la boîte.	0	1	2			
<u>FOND (40 pts)</u>						
Characters : (13 pts)						
• J'ai présenté tous les personnages (Ben, Ben's parents, Ben's granny, the Queen).	0	1	2	3		
• J'ai mentionné les éléments les plus importants.	0	1	2	3		
• Je maîtrise BE / HAVE.	0	1	2	3		
• J'ai réutilisé les nouveaux mots.	0	1	2	3	4	
Ben's diary : (4 pts)						
• J'ai respecté le format d'un journal intime.	0	1	2	3		
• J'ai ajouté de petites illustrations (doodles).	0	1				
One of Granny's adventures : (9 pts)						
• J'ai utilisé le prétérit.	0	1	2	3		
• J'ai utilisé des marqueurs temporels.	0	1	2	3		
• J'ai utilisé des connecteurs logiques.	0	1	2	3		
Granny's letter (9 pts)						
• J'ai respecté le format d'une lettre.	0	1	2	3		
• Je maîtrise le prétérit à la forme négative.	0	1	2	3		
• Je sais exprimer le regret.	0	1	2	3		
Illustration centrale (5 pts)	0	1	2	3	4	5
Bonus +2						
COMMENTAIRE :				NOTE : /50		

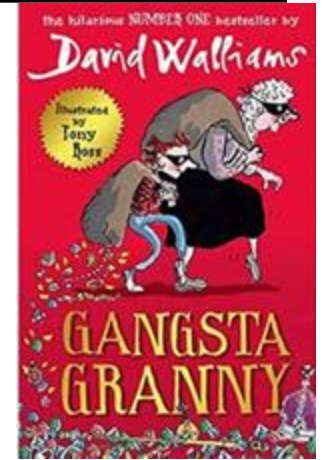


WHAT STUDENTS REMEMBER



"We are working while **having fun**"

Héloïse



" I'm a very nervous student.
It helps me **settle down** in
class »

Océane



"We can **memorise**
the story more
easily"

Aline

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR THE FUTURE

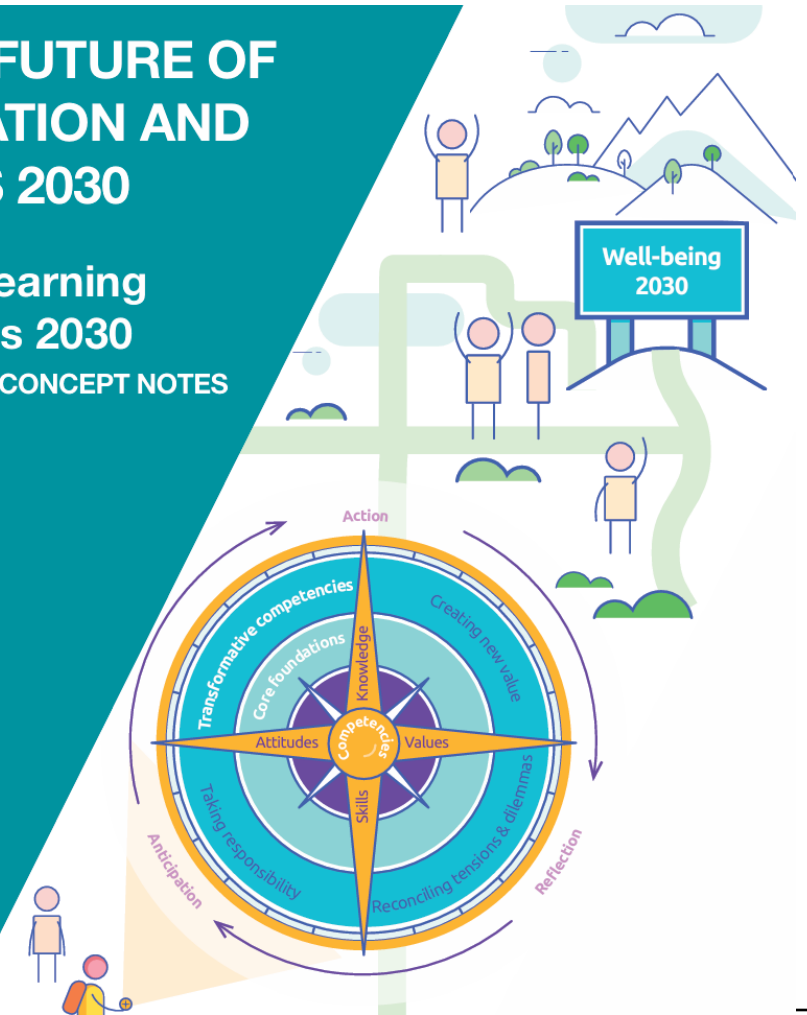
Social skills and collaboration:

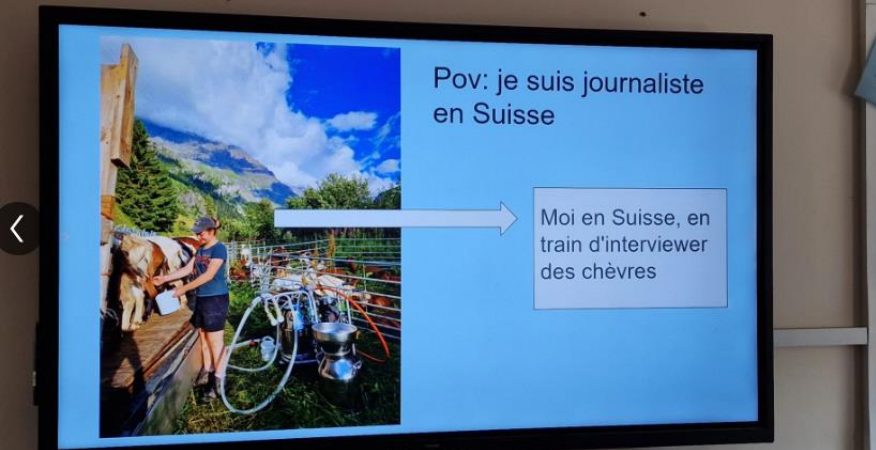
1. Researching with peers
2. Presenting to peers
3. Creating or building content with peers
(on paper or multimedia)
4. Debating real life matters in target language
(accepting other people's views)
5. Performing in front of others
6. Problem solving with others

OECD FUTURE OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS 2030

OECD Learning Compass 2030

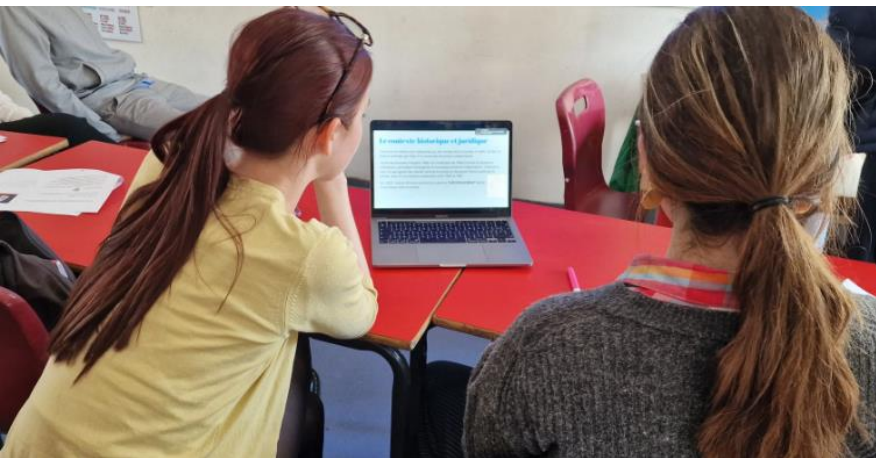
A SERIES OF CONCEPT NOTES





A-LEVEL AND IB

- Starters: use key words in sentence on a previous topic.
- Weekly presentations made by students for students
- Weekly discussion on articles/ press with debate and discussions
- Authentic resources every lesson
- Anthea Bell and Translation Exchange and Stephen Spender Trust resources integration
- Integration of the Common European Framework for Language Learning with A-Level teaching (DELTA, DELE...)



PADLET OF RESOURCES



Padlet

julietteclaro + 6 • 1d

Creative Resources in the MFL classroom SIG

Thank you for sharing your resources for colleagues to use and print with their classes - please add level /proficiency and theme/topic

French

+

Year 7 Le Saint Valentin

0

0

+

 Add comment

julietteclaro
15 days ago



Le mur des je t'aime est un monument dédié à l'amour érigé dans le quartier du Marais à Paris. Cette œuvre imaginée par Frédéric Bonin et Claire Dymond est devenue un lieu de rendez-vous pour les amoureux du quartier.

DOCX

Le mur des je t'aime

Le Mur des Je t'aime reading year 7

0

0

German

+

Silvia Bastow
a day ago

Franz Kafka

Franz Kafka hatte am dreizehnten Juli 1883 Geburtstag.

Franz Kafka war im Prag geboren.

Franz Kafka hat als Anwalt gearbeitet.

Er hat seine Arbeit langweilig gefunden.

Deshalb hat er abends geschrieben.

Drei von seinen bekanntesten Romanen heißen:

- "Die Verwandlung" - the metamorphosis
- "Das Prozess" - the trial
- "Das Schloss" - the castle

PPTX

Kafka lesson adapted from Goethe Inst materials for the German week 14-18.03.25

This is a lesson create by my colleague Claire Dymond from Ercall Wood Academy - adapted from the Goethe Institut materials for the German Language week in March 2025. We will be using it with our yr.9 students.

Italian

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Lucy Manikon
11 days ago



IL CARNEVALE

PPTX

Il carnevale competition 2025

Year 7/8 cultural competition to create venetian masks and learn about the Carnival traditions

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 Add comment

Spanish

+

julietteclaro
a month ago



drive.google.com

Cuando te veo beginner and intermediate

Cuando te veo song (year 7 and year 9 version) Gumley House School

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 Add comment

Stephen Spender Trust Creative Translation

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julietteclaro
3 months ago



Resources

Resources to use in the classroom by theme, topic and level of proficiency

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 Add comment

JOIN OUR CREATIVITY IN MFL HERE:



Creativity Competition

Creativity Competition: FAQs for teachers

The ALL Creativity SIG announces its first competition: Student Creativity Competition.

The 2026 edition of the competition is now closed. A review of the competition and examples of work can be found [here](#).

We are thrilled to announce that the 2027 edition of the competition is now open!

Deadline: 15 March 2027

Submit entries to: permissiontobecreative@gmail.com

We warmly invite teachers across all phases and sectors to participate. Whether you are experimenting with a new creative homework task, embedding creativity into GCSE preparation, or exploring cross-curricular projects, we would love to see your students' work.

Let's continue giving ourselves and our learners permission to be creative!



-
- Looking at your Schemes of Learning, ask 'Where is the creativity in that?'
 - Where are the opportunities for bringing joyful creativity, authenticity and culture in your lessons?
 - Where is your teacher agency to focus learning on the process rather than the finished product?



Key
Takeaways

REFERENCES AND IDEAS FOR CREATIVE LINGUISTIC MINDS

- [The GCHQ National Language Competition - Sample Challenges - GCHQ.GOV.UK](#)
 - [Anthea Bell Prize for Young Translators - The Queen's College, Oxford](#)
 - [Stephen Spender Prize – Stephen Spender Trust](#)
 - [French Pop Video Competition - Institut Français · Royaume-Uni](#)
 - [Debating Competition - Goethe-Institut United Kingdom](#)
 - [ALL Calligrammes competition 2026](#) [Ages 7-9](#) [Ages 9-11](#) North East [National competition](#) and [here](#)
 - [Mother Tongue Other Tongue Celebration 2026](#) Digital Anthology
 - [Poésíæ](#) Ages 7-18, Global project – 'where language speaks, where art breathe, where creativity clicks'
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 - **Mitchell, R., 2023.** *Language education policy in England: A case of benign neglect*. *Language Learning Journal*, [online] Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2023.2257705>
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 - **University Council of Modern Languages (UCML), 2024.** *Closures and Restructurings in UK Modern Languages Departments: July 2024 Update*. Available at: https://university-council-for-languages.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Closures-and-restructurings_July-2024.pdf
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THANK YOU FOR
LISTENING AND
COMING TO THIS
SESSION,
ANY QUESTIONS?

