



Dragon
der Drache
dragonne
Continaur

Key
Taste
clé
llave

Neckes
Halsketten
Colliers
Collares

Multilingual Approaches through Art

Materials for Primary
and Complementary
School Teachers and
Learners

fire
Feuer
feu
fuego

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with Katy Ferguson, Elizabeth Dulemba and
Elina Karadzhova

Activities

Activities included in this resource pack

- offer a starting point for innovative activities for language learning and teaching
 - invite teachers to adapt and create their own activities suitable for their learners and their creative capacities
 - can serve as part of the L3 entitlement for P5–P7 pupils
 - can be used to develop all four skills: listening, talking, reading and writing
 - provide an opportunity to take learners beyond word level into the ability to communicate in phrases and sentences
 - integrate interdisciplinary, cross-curricular and cultural elements
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Activity 1 Language Portraits

Activity 2 Exquisite Corpse

Activity 3 Language Passports

Activity 4 Chagallian Idioms

Activity 5 Multilingual Comics

Activity 6 Frame it

Activity 7 Multilingual Colouring Book

Activity 8 Multilingual Calligrams

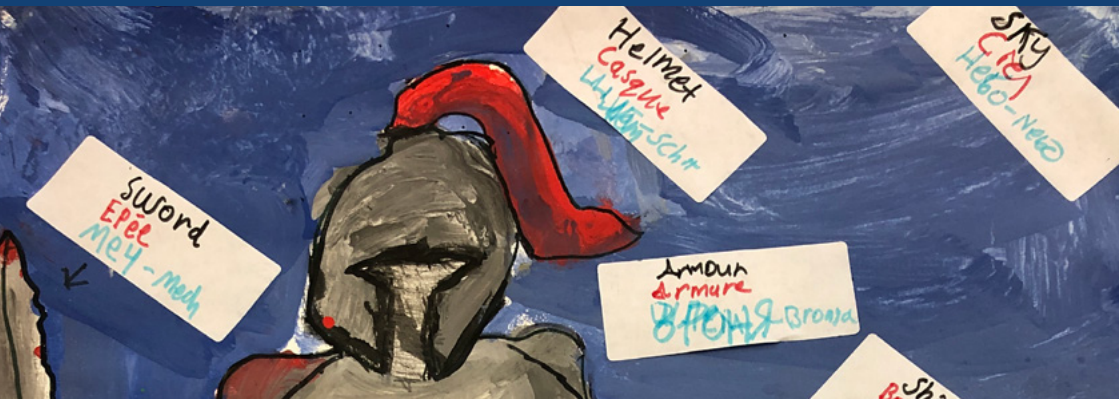
Activity 9 Soundwalk

Activity 10 Map of Dear Words

Overview

What happens when languages meet? We can declare one language as the target language and give it power over the others, but this oftentimes has negative, and even disastrous, effects: the approach of favouring one language over another can lead to silence and lack of confidence from those learners who are unable to use the target language.

An alternative approach would be to recognise that all learners, regardless of their language background, are creative, powerful and resourceful users of signs – signs that communicate and get the message across in the form of written word, spoken verse, body language, strokes of brush, moulded clay. In multilingual contexts, we want our learners to take advantage of learning opportunities that give them the power to use all their creative resources to communicate with others, to connect with their peers, to believe in their ability to learn and to keep the curiosity for knowing and learning more. We do this through art-based pedagogies. Now, art may seem daunting and many teachers who worked with us have often met us with the firm statement, "I am not an artist." And, the good news is that you don't need to be an artist to be able to use art as a medium for creative communication. You don't need to be an artist to explore the world from new and fresh perspectives that art-based pedagogies enable. You don't need to be an artist to be able to use your creative resources to communicate effectively. But you can use art to learn and share your knowledges, culture, and identity.



The activity pack we share with you is an outcome of the Multilingual Approaches through Art (MtA) project which grew out of a series of initiatives that we have been implementing in Scotland, in close collaboration with Scotland's National Centre for Languages (SCILT); with researchers and teachers from schools in Almaty (Kazakhstan) and in three provinces in Vietnam. In all these different contexts, we have developed our own methodology and drew on local artistic expertise to develop innovative activities. These activities use art as a content, medium and method for young people to explore who they are, how they can communicate multilingually, and how they build positive attitudes towards languages and language learning. We hope that it will provide inspiration to teachers and language educators who would like to use art-based approaches in their teaching. We also hope that teachers' and children's work created as part of this project entice you to look at art as an inclusive and generative medium, as a transformative way of learning by sharing and living languages together.



Rationale

Scotland is a multilingual country that welcomes many diverse languages, cultures and people. Beyond English, which is spoken by a majority of Scots, many of us speak indigenous languages such as Gaelic and Scots, as well as languages spoken in other parts of the world.

In 2023 there were 154 languages spoken in mainstream Scottish schools. Whilst those languages are mainly taught in complementary 'Saturday' schools, the Scottish government recognises the value of all languages – its flagship languages policy, Language Learning in Scotland: 1+2 Approach, offers an opportunity to introduce Scotland's local languages in mainstream schools and to teach them as an L3 either for a term, a year or the full 3-year cycle.

Such inclusion of local languages not only makes all our learners feel welcomed in Scottish schools and, by extension in Scotland, but it teaches that all languages are valuable and worth exploring and learning. Languages are resources that can enrich our learners both emotionally and culturally, as well as academically, and can facilitate the development of all learners' cultural and symbolic literacies, opening worlds of culture and knowledge to them.

We recognise that we are all multilingual – each of our learners already sits somewhere on the multilingual spectrum from which, they are developing their language skills. From knowing just a few words in another language to being bilingual or fluent in multiple languages they are already multilingual.



A multilingual approach to language teaching recognises that each learner has their own individual repertoire and opens the classroom door to languages and experiences learners bring to the classroom. It welcomes learners in their wholeness. bell hooks wrote that the word 'wholeness' is a root word of 'integrity', one may consider it to be a root word for integration too.

This approach to language learning and teaching does not require that a teacher knows all the languages their pupils speak; on the contrary, it accepts that, since each learner has a different repertoire, the process of learning will look differently for each of them. By recognising and welcoming it, the teacher acknowledges and expects that the responsibility and agency for language learning stays with the learner whose task is to merge the newly learned language features with their already existing repertoire.

We engage teachers and learners in this process by using art and creative methods. Teachers who tried our activities noted that an art-based approach is not only exciting and new, but also promotes inclusiveness, diversity, and community that altogether bring the sense of purpose to learning. These dimensions are crucial for building new inclusive and sustainable pedagogies that respond to the changing world in which we live, learn and teach. Teaching and learning languages always happen in relation – in relation to people, places, cultures and languages the learners already know and those they imagine. This project shows how art – when used as a method and as pedagogy – enables building on already existing relationships to make learning languages more meaningful, motivating and exciting.

The role of art in the MtA project was three-fold: 1) as content – through the selection of artists and topics it supported learning about other languages and cultures, 2) as medium – it enhanced pupils' motivation and enjoyment and 3) as a method – it encouraged creativity and criticality, and by authorising individual, and collective freedom of expression, strengthened their sense of agency.



Project description

The MtA project took place in 2023. Supported by funding awarded by the University of Glasgow Knowledge Exchange Fund, the project team worked with 12 teachers to explore how language learning can be approached in a way that integrates art and creative practices. This pedagogical approach allows learners to explore their multilingual identities and provides them with an opportunity to express themselves through art-based activities that are fun, creative and engaging.

In order to prepare for the implementation of the art-based activities in school, teachers engaged in a series of four in-depth professional learning workshops that were tailored to include a combination of research-informed theory and practice. We explored multilingual approaches to language learning and teaching, experienced and discussed how art-making activities can be used in supporting the learning and teaching of languages. Teachers had the chance to try out activities such as creating their language portraits and exquisite corpse and share these with the group. Alongside the online workshops, teachers worked in their schools to explore the approach with their learners.

This project was designed to provide meaningful experiences of language learning through art in a multilingual context. Teachers were encouraged to:

- share their existing knowledge and understanding at the start of the programme;
- undertake a self-evaluation and give feedback on lessons at the end of the programme;
- reflect on their learning journey over the course of the programme;
- create, implement and share activities in their own classrooms.

Teachers have since carried out these and other types of activities with their learners, adapted them and developed further to match their own context. You can view each masterpiece in the online gallery on the SCILT website:



Teacher professional development



The professional learning associated with the MtA project aligned closely with the GTCS Standards for CLPL, particularly that of **3.3 Professional Learning, 3.3.1 Engage critically with literature, research and policy**. It states, 'As an accomplished teacher you consistently demonstrate the enhanced skills and abilities working both individually and collaboratively to:

Critically review, examine and evaluate a range of educational literature, research, and policy to:

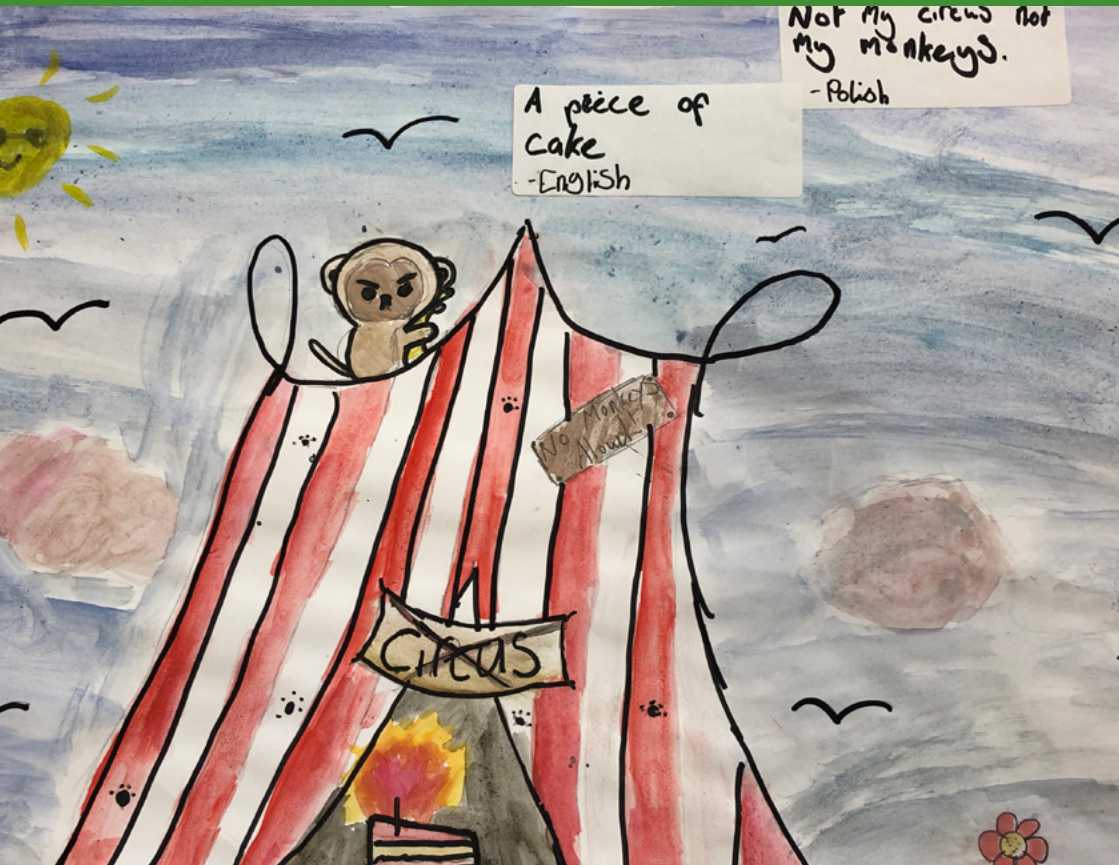
- critically question and challenge educational assumptions, beliefs and values of self and system; –
- ensure practice is informed, justifiable and adapted accordingly;
- enact key learning from professional reading and adapt to suit local contexts to ensure that practice reflects current educational thinking to support the needs of learners; and –
- participate and/or lead robust professional dialogue through both face-to-face and online discussions.'

Through active participation in the workshops, practitioners had the opportunity to engage with and critically examine literature and research that focused on multilingualism and art-based pedagogies. This gave them an opportunity to consider the pedagogical approach and the ways in which it could be implemented successfully in their classroom. We wanted to ensure there were plenty opportunities for teachers to share their thoughts, ideas and opinions and fully participate in professional dialogue with fellow colleagues in an online setting. Within this setting, teachers also had the chance to reflect on their learning and share their thinking and understanding in a variety of interactive ways.



Participating Schools

Antonine Primary School
Bowhouse Primary School
Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar
Low Port Primary School
Mile End School
Polish School in Glasgow
St Maria Goretti Primary School
St Patrick's Primary School
St Peter's RC Primary School
Williamston Primary School



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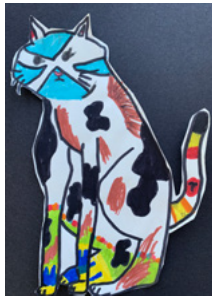
**Materials:**

Paint, brushes, paper, sticky notes, felt tip pens, examples of other portraits from the Mobile Deaf project: <https://vimeo.com/320747737> (Hyemi) and <https://vimeo.com/321217750> (Ole), Interview template.

Language portraits

Language portraits is an activity often used by teachers and researchers to visualise children's lived experiences of languaging and to teach language awareness. In this activity, participants are invited to consider their linguistic repertoires whilst painting and talking about their 'language portraits', and, by doing it, they create and visualise their multilingual identities. Painting the portraits also enables them to learn words for body parts, languages and colours.

Examples



Adapted for the project by
Dobrochna Futro

EXA 1-03a/2-03a,
EXA 1-05a/2-05a

MLAN 1-02b,
MLAN 2-03a/b,
MLAN 2-13a/b

HWB 1-10a/2-10a



Instructions

Step 1. Ask each learner to draw the outline of their body. You can use large paper sheets and ask them to work with partners who will draw the line around their bodies OR you can ask them to draw the outline in scale on smaller sheets of paper.

Step 2. Show examples of language portraits created by others.

Step 3. Ask your learners to discuss in pairs how they would visualise their languages and ways of communicating in their portraits as they start painting them.

Step 4. Walk around and ask questions encouraging learners to be creative and include even the smallest presence of other languages in their lives (e.g., adding to the portrait the language(s) represented only by a few words known to the learner), you may also talk about loan words in English.

Step 5. Ask your learners to share and annotate their portraits with words for colours, languages and body parts in various languages they know, and later annotate their portraits with the same words in a target language.

Step 6. Invite your learners to interview each other about their portraits. Encourage the use of a target language along English. They may record the interviews – in this case, allow for repeated recording until the students are happy with the outcome. You may use the 'Artist Interview' template to support your learners.

Step 7. Create an exhibition of the portraits and their descriptions either online or in the classroom. Invite other classes and parents to appreciate the artistic work.

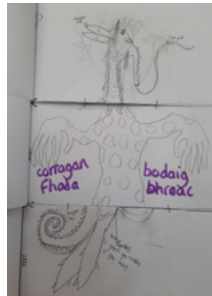
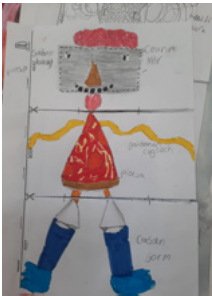
**Materials:**

A template printed out from the project website, pen, pencil or felt tip pen.

Exquisite Corpse

This collaborative artistic game was invented by surrealists to stimulate creativity through collaboration. Each participant contributes to a drawing, collage or poem without knowing what was added by others. The final artistic masterpiece is a combination of different, and oftentimes amusing, artistic styles which reveal their creators' imagination and cultural knowledge. Learners in this adapted activity are provided with a template on which they create their own drawings and annotate them with words in the languages they know including but not limited to the target language.

Examples



Developed by Elizabeth Dulemba,
adapted for the project
by Lavinia Hirsu

EXA 1-05a/2-05a

MLAN 1-05b/2-05b,
MLAN 1-07a/2-07a,
MLAN 2-11c



Instructions

- Step 1.** In groups of three, each learner receives a template page with three marked sections. The teacher announces the theme that will be drawn: a creature, a human body, a house, or any other cultural object that can be broken down in three segments: top, middle and bottom. The drawings can be drawn from children's lived experiences or from their own imagination.
- Step 2.** Each learner begins to draw with the top section (e.g. the head of the human body, the roof of their imaginary home, the head of a dog, the top part of a chair, etc.) and stops at the first "scissors" line.
- Step 3.** Learners annotate their drawing with descriptive words in the languages they are familiar with to name the elements of their drawing (e.g, fluffy ears, slimy skin, etc.). Encourage learners to use different languages to communicate fully what they intended to draw.
- Step 4.** Each learner folds their top drawn section and passes their piece of paper to the next learner. Then they repeat points 2, 3 until all the sections of the template are fully drawn and annotated.
- Step 5.** Now it's the time for the big reveal. The learners can unfold and look and explore their full collaborative drawing with all its parts and language labels.
- Step 6.** All the page templates can be stapled together to create a classroom booklet of exquisite creations. Learners can flip through the pages, mixing and matching different parts of their drawings, learning new words and proposing new labels for their creations.

**Materials:**

iPad or access to digital device

Digital Zines

This activity can be set as a fun home learning task to increase awareness of multilingualism in everyday life. Learners can go on a 'languages hunt' to find examples of languages other than English in and around their home over a given period of time. From food packaging to toy instructions, signs to branding, children can take pictures of their findings and then present them in a digital format. This is a great way to aid parental engagement in languages and build an appreciation of languages we already know from common observations but perhaps have not considered as 'multilingualism' before. Families can look at the pictures together and try to guess what the translation would be and/or use translation apps to find out the English meaning.

Alternatively, this task can be completed by collecting physical cuttings of the examples found and sticking to folded paper creating a physical booklet.



Developed by
Elizabeth Dulemba and
adapted by Katy Ferguson

TCH 1-01a/2-01a

EXA 1-01a / EXA 2-01a

MLAN 2-11c



Instructions

- **Step 1.** Send out home learning task: to find examples of languages other than English in and around their home over a given period of time. Encourage parents/carers to get involved with the language hunt.
- **Step 2.** Learners complete the task by taking photographs of language examples they find.
- **Step 3.** At home or back in class, learners create a page using an app such as PicCollage, Canva, PowerPoint or Book Creator and add their photos.
- **Step 4.** An optional extension task may include sorting pictures into categories e.g. by language (you can discuss to what language words such as 'pizza' belong), purpose or a type of item. Emphasise how some words find their place in multiple languages.
- **Step 5.** Share digital presentations with the class and discuss where items were found, why they are shown in different languages and not only English (instructions, signs) or the origin of words (brand names, labels).

**Materials:**

Paint, paper, brushes, PowerPoint presentation, printed list of the idioms, interview template

Chagallian idioms

This activity is inspired by paintings by Marc Chagall, an artist who knew many languages and depicted them in his paintings. Chagall's paintings often include unusual situations, actions or objects: flying people, a cat with a human face, a cow with a parasol, a painter with seven fingers. Several of them are literal depictions of idioms from languages he knew. He used his languages in his paintings in a very clever way so his artworks send messages that could be understood only by those who know the meaning of those idioms.

Example



Developed by
Dobrochna Futro

EXA 1-01a/EXA 2-01a,
EXA 1-05a/2-05a,
EXA 1-07a/2-07a

MLAN 1-05b/2-05b,
MLAN 2-11c,
MLAN 2-13b



Instructions

Step 1. Bring to the class a photograph of the painting by Marc Chagall 'Paris par la fenêtre' (1913). Introduce students to Chagall's biography and invite them to look at this painting. You can ask your learners questions such as:

What does the painting show? What does it tell us about Chagall's life? How does it do it? Can you see any strange things happening in his painting? What are these things? Why do you think he painted those things?

Step 2. Reveal to the students that many of the strange things in his paintings are painted idioms in languages he knew (check the Power-Point for examples). Ask your learners to find some idioms in the painting. Ask them to consider why the artist included idioms in his painting.

Step 3. Give your learners a list of idioms in English, in the target language and in other languages they may know.

Step 4. Give your learners paint and paper and ask them to select two idioms (each idiom from a different language) and combine them in one painting to say something about their life. Like in Chagall's paintings, the idioms in their work need to relate to their life and make sense together.

Step 5. Ask your learners to think about the meaning paintings they create may convey and consider how they can be 'read.'

Step 6. After the artwork is finished, ask your learners to interview each other about their work. You can use the interview template.

Step 7. Once your learners have formulated what they want to say about their artworks, ask them to create written descriptions of their artworks. Encourage the use of original languages the idioms came from when relating to idioms. Perhaps: Encourage your learners to say/read aloud the idioms in the languages they come from.

Step 8. Display artworks with descriptions.

**Materials:**

Paper, watercolour and brushes or any other tools to draw and write, examples of Szydłowska's work

Multilingual Comics

Stories can be told in many ways, some people like writing novels, others make films or act the stories on stage, others yet – draw comics. This activity is inspired by the work of Monika Szydłowska, an artist of Polish origins living in Scotland. Szydłowska drew people she met or others she saw on the street and wrote down conversations she heard around her. She used many languages in her comics and sometimes no languages at all. In this activity, learners are invited to create multilingual comics depicting imaginary stories or real encounters starting from a selected drawing created by Szydłowska.



Developed by
Dobrochna Futro

EXA 1-05a/2-05a,
EXA 1-07a/2-07a

MLAN 2-11a,
MLAN 2-13a



Instructions

Step 1. Share with your learners drawings created by Szydłowska, introduce her biography and discuss conversations recorded in her drawings. You can ask questions:

What do you think about the drawings? Are they funny? Strange? Usual? Why do you think she used more than one language? Do you speak like this, hear people speaking like this?

Step 2. Select one multilingual drawing by Szydłowska. You can print it out or copy it by hand on a piece of paper.

Step 3. Ask your learners to imagine what happened next. **Did a person in the drawing say something? Who might have answered? What did they say? What did they do?**

Step 4. Offer a piece of paper, a pencil, brush and paint, crayons or pens. Ask each learner to draw what they imagined. Remind them to add speech and thought bubbles with words or emoticons. Encourage the use of words in any language.

Step 5. And another drawing, and another, keep the story going.

Step 6. Ask your learners to work in pairs and use dictionaries to translate the conversations to the language you teach. Write translations on the page margins.

**Materials:**

A frame (or materials to create a picture frame), a chair, printout of the artwork or access to the internet

Frame it!

This activity is inspired by ‘The framed landscape’ created by the Vietnamese artist Duc Cuong Ha. This artwork consists of an empty frame hanging in the landscape and a single chair standing in front of it. The viewers are invited to sit on the chair and watch the landscape bracketed by the frame. The presence of the frame activates the expectation of an artwork, a photograph or a painting inside it and in effect, the empty space prompts the viewers to perceive the landscape bracketed by the frame as an artwork. However, what the viewer sees depends on how and where the frame and the chair are positioned. It is a great activity to inspire learners to think and talk about space and nature. Similarly to the artists, learners can use frames to capture parts of their everyday environment and direct the gaze of others to things they find important, inspiring or simply capturing attention.



Developed by
Dobrochna Futro

EXA 1-02a/2-02a,
EXA 1-05a /2-05a,
EXA 1-07a /2-07a

MLAN 1-05b/2-05b,
MLAN 1-07a/2-07a,
MLAN 1-13,
MLAN 2-13a



Instructions

Step 1. Use the internet to show 'The framed landscape' by Duc Cuong Ha to your learners or use a printed copy.

Step 2. Ask the children questions about the artwork. You can ask, for example:

How is this artwork similar or different from what they have seen elsewhere? How is it made? Is it an artwork or not? Why do you think the artist created it?

Encourage learners to share their ideas.

Step 3. Divide learners into groups and ask each group to create an artwork inspired by this work. They will need to make a frame (out of paper, sticks, any materials available or find an old frame they can use) and place it in a space of their choice. They should put a chair in front of the frame. It can be done outdoors or indoors. They can then invite other groups to come and view the landscape inside the frame. (Alternatively, each student can do it as homework, take a photo of their artwork and bring it to school).

Step 4. Ask each group to write or audio-record a label for their artwork in a target language. You can provide sentence starters or leading questions, such as for example: How is this work made? What can the viewer see in the frame? They can work in any language they want but eventually, the labels need to be created in the target language – a language you teach.

Step 5. Create an exhibition in school or online. Include the artworks (or their photographs), and labels created by learners. Invite other classes, teachers, parents, local community to admire these new encounters with the learners' environment!

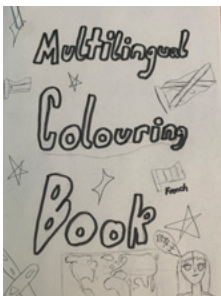
**Materials:**

paper, pencil, black pen

Multilingual Colouring Book

This activity is a fun task for all ages to enjoy. Children can design their own multilingual themed colouring book pages for others to colour. This works especially well with older pupils (P5-7) designing for younger learners (P1-4) to colour or older siblings designing for younger siblings. Pupils can engage in discussion between what has been drawn on their page and how they should colour it in i.e. the flag. For an added teaching point, children can omit the country name and leave the person colouring to research which country it could be using the images and phrases as clues.

Examples



Developed by
Katy Ferguson

EXA 1-03a/2-03a,
EXA 1-05a/2-05a

LIT 1-14a/2-14a

MLAN 2-13b



Instructions

This task can be adapted to fit various themes in Language Learning i.e. European countries only for European Week of Languages or French speaking countries only for bilingualism/ francophone learning.

- **Step 1.** Ask your learners to choose a country for their themed page.
- **Step 2.** Learners research the country and note down famous landmarks, local delicacies, popular culture, languages used in this country, etc. Encourage your learners to think beyond stereotypes and explore multiple traditions: diversity of groups, traditions, cultures, languages, etc.
- **Step 3.** Learners draw the outline: a variety of buildings, flags, food etc. and add popular phrases in bubble writing in the languages of the place allowing everything to have space and to be coloured.
- **Step 4.** Children can design a front cover and make space for name and date to emphasise they are making a resource to help others learn.
- **Step 5.** Children then go over all pencil lines with black pen for a neat, distinct outline.
- **Step 6.** Photocopy for others to colour.
- **Step 7.** Pages from the class can be bound together with paper clips or stapled to create a book.

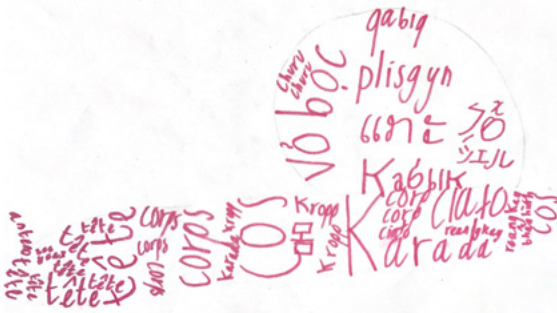


Materials:
paper, pencil, black pen

Multilingual Calligrams

Calligrams are drawings that blend words and images. One of the most famous creators of calligrams was the poet Wilhelm Apollinary Kostrowicki, more widely known as Guillaume Apollinaire or Guillaume Albert Vladimir Alexandre Apollinaire de Kostrowitzky. In this activity learners are invited to use calligrams to memorise new vocabulary. They are encouraged to make links to other languages they know. So, for example, when they draw a human head, besides the word 'głowa' they can use words such as head, la tête, सिर, голова, der Kopf, cabeça – words that mean 'head' in all languages you know.

Example



Adapted for the project
by Dobrochna Futro



Instructions

Step 1. Provide the learners with the list of words they already learned

Step 2. Ask them to consider those they still find difficult to remember

Step 3. Watch the video about animal calligrams here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GnkycT48RTw>

Step 4. Ask your learners to consider how changing the size, font, and position of the word or creating a contrast between the letters impacts the final drawing.

Step 5. Ask them to take a piece of paper and draw the object whose name they find difficult to remember by using its name in a target language and other languages they know; i.e. using words that mean 'a cat' to draw a cat.

Step 6. Collate the drawing to form a bigger piece, i.e., a book to support learners' language development in class, or a collaborative display to showcase learners' creativity and encourage a multilingual mindset.

**Materials:**

outdoor clothes, paper and crayons

Soundwalk

This activity is inspired by the soundwalks led by a Glasgow-based artist of Polish origins Marta Adamowicz. The term 'soundwalk' was coined in the 1960s by R. Murray Schafer, creator of the World Soundscape Project at Simon Fraser University. "A soundwalk is a form of active participation in the soundscape. (...) Its purpose is to explore sounds that are related to the environment and on the other hand, to become aware of one's own sounds (voice, footsteps, etc.) in the environmental context." (<https://www.hildegardwesterkamp.ca/sound/installations/Nada/soundwalk/>) During soundwalks, participants often follow an artist who leads them to various locations. In selected locations, participants are asked to close their eyes and, guided by the artist's words, to focus on surrounding sounds, one sound after another. A soundwalk may be later recorded in the form of a map - to reflect on the route and draw attention to specific sounds encountered during the walk. Teacher can take learners for a walk to a selected location or simply ask them to close their eyes in a classroom and explore their closest surroundings. In some cases the recording of the acoustic environment relevant to the lesson topic (e.g. sounds of the Amazon Forest or sounds of the Polish countryside) can also be used.



Developed by
Dobrochna Futro

EXA 1-04a/ 2-04a,
EXA 1-05a/ 2-05a,
EXA 1-07a/ 2-07a

MLAN 2-03a,
MLAN 1-07a/2-07a,
MLAN 2-13b



Instructions

- **Step 1.** Take your learners for a walk.
- **Step 2.** Stop in a specific location, ask them to close their eyes and listen.
- **Step 3.** Speak slowly and guide your learners to the sounds on which they can focus – the sound of a passing car, the singing of a bird, their breath, wind, etc. Focus on 3–5 stopping points or 5–7 for older learners.
- **Step 4.** Ask your learners to open their eyes and write down words describing what they heard (in any language they want). Leave it open or ask them to write down nouns or verbs or adjectives. If you want a more targeted activity, ask learners to identify feelings or colours in the sounds (if you want to teach colours, for instance).
- **Step 5.** Listen again in silence for a couple of minutes to make sure everyone remembers the sounds they noted down.
- **Step 6.** Move to another location and repeat points 2 – 6.
- **Step 7.** Return to school.
- **Step 8.** Draw a collaborative/group map of the walk.
- **Step 9.** Use sticky notes to annotate the map with learners' words in response to their sound experiences.

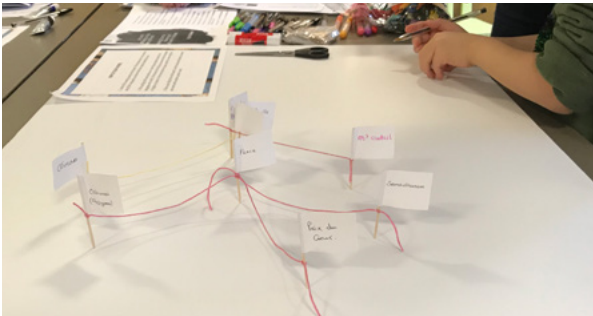
**Materials:**

foam boards, coloured threads, pencils and flag sticks

Map of Dear Words

When we do not share the same language, we often try to relate to each other by sharing some first welcoming words. Learning how to say “hello” or “welcome” or “how are you?” in other languages is oftentimes the first step towards others’ languages. Another way to encounter and open up to other people’s languages is to share “dear words” - words and phrases that carry great significance and emotional value. These words help to build connections - emotional, linguistic, embodied, and experiential.

Example



Developed by
Elina Karadzhova and Lavinia Hirsu



Instructions

- Step 1.** Begin by setting up a foam board or any other canvas (paper or cardboard) on which you can tape, glue or pierce in flag sticks.
- Step 2.** Ask learners to think about two or three phrases in languages they are familiar with that have great importance to them. These words can have special meaning, they may have been passed on from one generation to the next, or they may be liked for any other reason. Such words could be the first nickname you were given in your family, the name of your first toy, your first words, phrases you like to say often to your friends/family, etc.
- Step 3.** Ask learners to pick up flag sticks and write down their "dear words" in the language and script they belong to. On the back of the flag, they can write the translation of the words in a different language or leave it to their peers to guess the meaning.
- Step 4.** Learners can now place their word-flags on the board/canvas. They can begin to connect their words with other learners' words and phrase from the board based on similarities of sound, categories, or any other connecting principle by using the coloured threads.
- Step 5.** Invite learners to share their words and phrases and to explain why they have connected the words in the way they did.

Note: If you find the activity challenging and wouldn't like the learners to begin with an empty board/canvas, you may place a few flags with your own "dear words" to encourage follow-up responses from the learners.

Teacher Feedback

I found that this project was an effective way to apply previous learning in an engaging way. I revisited vocabulary for parts of the body with P6/5, which I had taught them in French the previous term. I showed pupils how to create calligrams using words in different languages to draw an animal, naming the parts of the body. Most pupils looked up words on their iPads in languages they had no experience with, but many added in French words without looking them up which was fantastic to see.

I used this project in 3 classes where English is the home language of the vast majority of children. The 3 pupils with non-English home languages were reluctant to use these languages or discuss them as part of these sessions, so this is something I will reflect on and aim to make future Multilingualism through Art projects feel like a safe space for sharing, to make them as inclusive as possible. What the project did achieve was allowing pupils with ASN a different medium through which to express themselves and explore languages.

Antonine PS

This project has shifted my thinking towards prioritising and awareness and celebrating multilingualism and the children that we have in our class, and with this appreciation and curiosity, we can weave our L1 and our L2 into our language learning from there.

Bowhouse PS



It was lovely to see and hear the children use their languages and gave all children ownership of the project as all contributed in various ways. They were comparing words across a variety of languages through speaking, writing and reading. They enjoyed looking at the different languages and finding links between them. The children were really inspired by the Chagallian idioms. Finding their own languages and languages they were curious and interested in, gave us lots of laughs and comparisons.

Mile End School

I ran MTA as a short input in one of the classes, just four weeks for four hours. The children appeared to love the sessions as they asked every time they saw me in the school if I would be returning to do more.

It was amazing to see children sharing their languages and for other pupils to take an interest in their learning their peer's language. Two new children didn't know they could use their language in class and were surprised by the activities.

I intend to include this as a project to complete with upper primary next year again.

St Maria Goretti PS



Teacher Feedback

When I started working with the Primary 6 classes on this project many of them told me they could only speak English, despite being taught L2 for several years and being introduced to L3 in P5. What became apparent was that some children didn't feel confident they knew enough of the language to have a go at using it and others didn't engage with the way language had been taught. Other children were fluent in languages other than English but didn't want to use them in school.

The Multilingualism through Art project has provided a pedagogy which is instantly motivating to the children. By allowing the children to take the lead on how they respond to the task, providing a variety of media and keeping the tasks creative with 'no right or wrong answer' barriers to engaging with a language activity were immediately broken down.

Being part of this project has started the ball rolling on our journey to becoming a school where multilingual languaging is standard practice and where the many languages of our school and community are represented by staff and pupils. I look forward to rolling this project out to involve more pupils and staff in this exciting way of language learning.

Williamston PS



The children had many thoughts and ideas about communication, how they communicate with different people and the different ways they use to do this. The children created pictures and videos and got the chance to become teachers, teaching a younger class using their new knowledge and skills. We gained a great deal from this project and everyone enjoyed it very much.

Bun-Sgoil Ghàidhlig Loch Abar

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