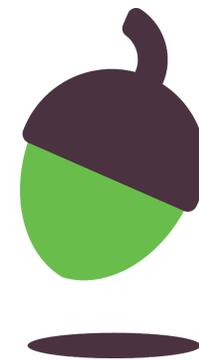


Modern Foreign Languages - Principles

Secondary: Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4

Curriculum plan 2020-21



OAK
NATIONAL
ACADEMY

Curriculum Principles

Years 7-8

Coherence and flexibility

Language education is inherently cumulative. In a low exposure classroom setting, education is most effective when language knowledge is logically sequenced and frequently revisited. For that reason, we foreground coherence. This then allows pupils to use their core knowledge flexibly when they need to.

Language knowledge

We set out to teach and practise three main bodies of knowledge that research indicates are fundamental to progress for beginner language pupils in a classroom setting. These are: phonics (sound-writing relations), vocabulary, and grammar.

Knowledge organisation

We set out this knowledge clearly, week by week, with an explicit spine of grammar and sets of high-frequency vocabulary. Phonics feature in every lesson as regular and frequent short bursts of practice.



Knowledge selection

In years 7 and 8, the aim is to avoid introducing too much language too fast, in line with the MFL Pedagogy Review, a report published by the Teaching Schools Council (2016), which drew on research into language education and teaching and on the knowledge and experience of a wide range of experienced practitioners. Over time teaching includes a range of grammar features on nouns, verbs, and adjectives (for persons, number, gender, subjects, tenses, and key syntax). Vocabulary selection is based on word frequency; sets of words from different parts of speech, with a special emphasis on the most common verbs, allow pupils to manipulate verbs and regularly create their own sentences in speech and writing.

Inclusion and ambition

Given the mixed picture of primary FL provision and transition arrangements, we seek to achieve maximum inclusivity by assuming little prior knowledge on arrival in Y7. However, foregrounding knowledge of phonics, grammar and vocabulary naturally de-emphasises traditional thematic topics often taught in primary settings, and so our lessons provide new education opportunities to challenge most pupils on arrival at secondary school.

Pupil engagement

Carefully designed input (listening and reading) activities compel students to pay close attention to the meaning and form of the new language. Each week practice extends to production, which ensures that pupils have to actively recall and manipulate language to communicate where there is a genuine 'information gap' (where information must be successfully expressed and understood by the pupil).



Motivation through education

Teaching is carefully planned to compel thinking, thinking drives education, and success in education is motivational.

A curriculum of quality

We support curriculum planning with resources that emphasise transparent explanations and abundant practice, building in frequent feedback to maximise confidence and success. Regular and frequent revisiting of knowledge is explicit and systematically integrated into planning.

Planning in years 7 and 8 is in line with the Review of MFL Pedagogy and NCELP (National Centre for Excellence for Language Pedagogy). In years 9, 10 and 11, the planning prepares for current GCSE content and examinations, which builds on the core grammar and high-frequency vocabulary outlined in the programmes of study for Key Stages 2 and 3.

Additional notes for Years 9-11

Coherence and flexibility

Year 9: The Y9 languages curriculum is designed to be used flexibly and to meet a range of pupil needs. Its grammar spine is a condensed version of the essential grammar required to start a GCSE course of study. For that reason, teachers may want to make use of Y9 material to fill knowledge gaps or provide additional reinforcement to pupils at KS4, as well as those in Y9.



Years 10 and 11: Here the three core knowledge strands (phonics, vocabulary, grammar) are retained, though the requirements of external examination bring topic content closer to the fore. Nevertheless, each lesson contains opportunities to practise the sound-writing relationship, revisit high-frequency vocabulary and practise paying close attention to the meaning and form of grammar structures.

Knowledge selection

Year 9: The language content, selected on the basis of word frequency and core grammar, together with a sustained focus on establishing the sound-writing relationship through explicit phonics teaching, ensure that Y9 lessons have substantial value, both as standalone education opportunities and as preparation for progression to the KS4 curriculum. The Y9 curriculum could also be used as an initial introduction year to a new, second language that pupils might then take for GCSE.

Inclusion and ambition

Years 10 and 11: planning is carefully designed to build on KS3 knowledge, whilst including essential revisiting. They feature:

- Systematic retrieval of 175 non topic-specific high-frequency words through the low stakes entry quiz
- Accessible entry to each sequence of lessons to establish the knowledge base
- Incremental challenge build over the course of two to three lessons



- Sounds of the language (including sound-symbol correspondences (phonics), stress, syllables, liaison, and pronunciation)
- Cognates knowledge-building, linked to phonics
- Differentiated guided writing lessons at the end of each module that provide useful homework support
- Role play tasks that include read aloud with immediate feedback, and an extension to phonics work
- Additional 'stand alone' higher lessons for pupil and teacher to explore content that would not typically feature in the mixed ability classroom

