

Guidance for Observation and Target Setting in Primary Languages

National Curriculum Purpose of study: Languages are an integral part of the curriculum. Learning a language is ‘a liberation from insularity’ and provides an opening to other cultures. It helps to equip pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life. It encourages pupils to appreciate and celebrate difference. The languages curriculum should also provide the foundation for learning further languages. It should enable pupils to study and work in other countries. In doing this, the languages curriculum has a potential positive impact on business and the economy.

Six key questions to ask when observing primary languages lessons:

	Question	Additional Information
1	Does the teacher make appropriate use of target language in the transactional language of the classroom with <i>appropriate scaffolding</i> ?	<i>Do they use carefully chosen phrases that are used repeatedly so they are known/ recognised by learners (avoiding cognitive overload)? Do they use visuals or the written word to support comprehension and language acquisition? Is teacher’s target language gradually increased in a logically sequenced and age-appropriate way?</i>
2	How does the teacher ‘flood’ comprehensible input in the lesson?	<i>Do they focus on repeated use of language of a particular bank of vocabulary / structures with multiple examples in different modes (reading, listening, speaking, and writing) over time to help learners acquire the language?</i>
3	Are learners given opportunities to speak in the target language? Are they encouraged to pronounce words accurately (<i>with attention to phonics</i>)?	<i>Speaking opportunities can be through whole class, pair work and group work. Teachers may use games, competitions or a rewards to encourage learners. Student teachers give consideration to the learning environment, ensuring learners feel safe to have a go without worrying about making mistakes. In attending to phonics, student teachers should draw learners’ attention to sound-letter correspondences and learners should practise these with reading, listening and speaking activities.</i>
4	Is grammar taught and presented in a clear and concise way that is <i>understandable</i> to learners? Are learners encouraged to <i>notice grammatical structures</i> in reading and listening work as well as being asked to accurately <i>produce</i> it in speaking and writing?	<i>Do student teachers build on prior knowledge with grammar teaching? Are they careful to avoid cognitive overload? Are learners encouraged to discuss and apply their grammatical understanding? Is grammar taught in context rather than an over-reliance on discrete, decontextualised teaching?</i>
5	How does the teacher make creative use of topics and materials that are <i>salient</i> to learners’ interests?	<i>Is the foreign language taught and learnt in contexts that are motivating?</i>

6	Are learners given opportunities to explore the target language culture(s), comparing similarities and differences with their own and to critically consider reasons for these? Does the teacher promote <i>openness to other cultures</i> in their incorporation of the cultural dimension?	<i>Do teachers embrace the role of language in belonging and identity?</i> <i>Are cultural stereotypes challenged?</i> <i>Is the intercultural representation balanced and representative of the global world e.g. Francophone world v France?</i>
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Potential Primary Languages Specific Targets on Lesson Analysis Forms

Lesson design and delivery, including sequencing and choice of teaching methods
Provide lots of highly structured controlled productive language tasks which recycle language modelled through receptive skills (should also draw on 'old language' taught a while ago).
Develop learners' awareness of relationship between English and the L2 (i.e. drawing on prior knowledge) when teaching grammar.
Show aspects of grammar, e.g. what a verb is, in more than one way.
Introduce fast response activities to improve fluency.
Use visual aids and put new language in context to aid memory skills when learning new language
Model and demonstrate new language clearly and unambiguously

Adapting planning and teaching to ensure that individual needs are met
Offering memory aides (e.g. for vocabulary) for those who need memory scaffolded
Signposting of patterns relevant to successful language learning when useful, often from other languages e.g. English grammar, phonetical comparisons
Offering speaking aids (e.g. puppets) or alternative recording for pupils with SEMH or communication needs
Offering challenge to stretch learning in terms of complexity of structure or stimulus rather than requiring greater outputs
Awareness of pupil prior knowledge and lived experience with relevant adaptations to intercultural exploration

Pupil progress in this lesson and use of assessment (including questioning)
Share success criteria through modelling / exemplification, prompting learners to identify 'desirable' structures / phrases / parts of speech etc.
Provide plenty of opportunity to practise vocabulary – eg through pair or group work, games, rhymes, songs
Provide opportunities to recycle, revisit and assess knowledge of previously taught grammar / structures with new vocabulary / in new contexts

Developing Subject Knowledge and Pedagogy
Ensure your target language (in spoken form and resources) is accurate and understood by learners
Carry out independent study on any grammar / vocab that you feel less confident with (to be specified as appropriate)

Develop or adapt existing resources to provide phonics practice
Plan a unit of work set in a cultural context of the target language to promote intercultural understanding / competence.
Learn a set of command requests to use in class
Ensure you know all vocabulary needed in the lesson

Further Resources:

Department for Education (2013) *Languages programmes of study: Key stage 2*. GOV.UK.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-languages-programmes-of-study>

Ofsted (2021) *Research review series: Languages*. GOV.UK.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/curriculum-research-review-series-languages/curriculum-research-review-series-languages>