



PRACTICAL LESSON IDEAS FOR CLIL

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CPD-LV 41

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I. ACTIVATING FOR CLIL

1. Key word

Guess the topic of the lesson and explain useful words.
Write ten random key words about a topic on the board.

Ask learners to answer these questions:

- What will the lesson be about?
- Which words can you add to these?
- Which words are unfamiliar?

Provide definitions of the least familiar words.

2. Competition : quickest or most

Quickly list a fixed number of words or produce as many as you can, related to the topic of the lesson.

Write the topic of the lesson on the board. Learners work in pairs to either

- **be the first pair to write down ten verbs related to the topic; or**
- **be the first pair to write down the most verbs (or nouns) related to the topic.**

3. Questions

Write down ten questions about the lesson topic.

Write the topic of the lesson on the board. Learners work in pairs and write down ten questions about the topic - at least four should begin with who, what, how and why.

4. Scrambled sentence

Mix up the words of a sentence about the topic and ask learners to re-create the original sentence.

Choose one sentence or question which is relevant (humorous, interesting, controversial) to your topic and mix it up. Write the scrambled words on the board, or create small cards – one word per card. Ask the learners to create one sentence from your mixed up words. If it is a question, you can ask for their answers and discuss these.

5. Red and green cards

Decide if statements about a topic are true or false.

Create a list of ten true and false statements about a topic you are going to cover. Each learner receives one red and one green card. Read your true/false statements out one by one. The learners each decide if the statement is true (green card) or false (red card). Once the statement has been read out, they hold up a green or red card. After each statement, you can either discuss their answers, or leave them unanswered and repeat the activity once the lesson is over to check what they have learned.

This activity can also be done with agree/disagree statements, for example if you are discussing an ethical topic.

6. Props or visuals

Ask questions about objects or pictures connected to the topic.

Bring in and display a number of objects or visuals related to the lesson.

7. Video clip

Watch a short video clip related to the topic and answer questions.
Search for a video clip related to your concept or topic on YouTube or elsewhere on the Internet to show to your learners. Give them some viewing questions beforehand.
Discuss the questions afterwards.

8. Internet

Learners find information on the internet individually about a topic before the lesson and then sort all the information they have found into categories.
For homework, ask learners to bring an image or a text they have found on the Internet about the topic you are going to cover in the lesson. At the beginning of the lesson, they pool all the images or texts and then categorise them.

9. Spider diagram

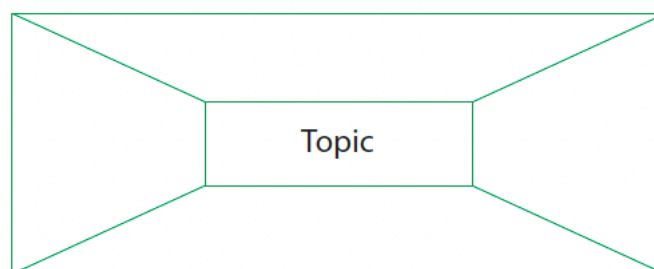
Create a mind map of useful words for a topic.
Choose a main concept related to the material you want to cover.
Place it in the middle of the board in a circle or square.
Ask learners to call out sub-topics related to your main concept.
Together, create a spider diagram related to the topic, with each leg of the spider relating to a sub-topic.
You can do this in two stages;
first ask for as many associations as possible, and then ask learners to put all the words into categories.
Once learners have made a number of spider diagrams, they can create them by themselves or in small groups.

10. KWL (Know/Want/Learn) Grid

Learners list what they know, want to know and have learned about a topic.
Learners complete the three columns of the KWL (know, want, learn) grid. In the first column, they write what they know; in the second column what they want to know. The third column is for summarising what they have learned at the end of the unit. To use this activity effectively and focus the learners, it is important that the desired final product is clear: it is hard to complete a KWL grid without an explicit aim.

11. Placemat

Learners write ideas about a topic individually and then compare and combine their ideas.
Make groups of four. Learners sit around a table with a large sheet of poster paper in front of them and a marker each. First ask the learners to draw a 'placemat' on their paper, like this:



Round One

Provide the learners with a question or issue. Write this in the middle of the placemat. Each learner then writes a comment or opinion in their own space on the placemat.

Round Two

The learners read what the others have all written (by turning the placemat around) and discuss a 'sponge' question. This is a question which aims to combine or categorise the ideas from Round One. It is important to have a fresh question at this stage which further processes the ideas from Round One.

12. Venn diagram

Complete a Venn diagram about a topic.

A Venn diagram is an excellent tool for activating prior knowledge in order to highlight similarities and differences. Learners write the two topics to compare in the circles, and then write similarities between the topics in the middle (overlapping) space, and differences in the outer spaces.

13. Think, pair, share

Learners answer a question first individually, then in pairs and then share their answer with the whole class.

Think, pair, share is a simple technique which gets everyone thinking about a topic. Individually, each learner writes down their answer to a key question (on language, knowledge or content) provided by the teacher. This gives them some time to think for themselves. Next, in pairs, learners compare and discuss their answers with each other. Finally, have a short plenary discussion of some of the groups' answers.

14. Predict, observe and explain

Present an event and ask learners to predict what they think is going to happen, then watch what actually happens and explain why they were right or wrong.

In a predict, observe and explain sequence, your learners are expected to predict the outcome of an event or experiment, observe what actually happens and then explain why their prediction was either right or wrong. This activity is best suited to science classes. It can be an individual assignment or a small group activity. The aim is not only to activate prior knowledge but also to promote personal involvement of your learners.

15. Sentence stem

Learners complete a sentence about a topic.

Think of a 'sentence stem' which can be completed in various ways related to an aspect of your topic. Write the stem on a worksheet or the board ten times. Use a sentence stem that learners can easily complete; nothing too difficult.

For example:

Shakespeare....

Shakespeare....

Shakespeare....

(etc.)

The learners have to complete the sentence in as many different ways as they can. The follow-up can be a Think, pair, share or Placemat activity.

16. Target practice

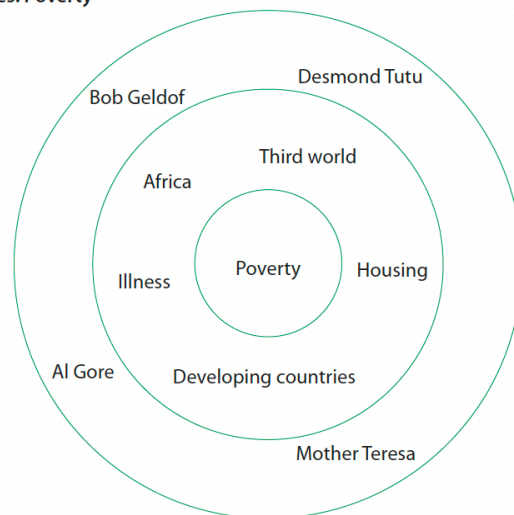
Learners complete a target image with ideas and people related to a topic.

Provide a handout of a target for each learner, with the lesson topic in the centre of the target.

In the second, slightly larger circle, learners brainstorm about the topic. In the outer circle, they write down the names of people who might have influenced thinking related to the topic (either their ideas or the topic in general).

For example

Social studies: Poverty



II. INPUT

1. Finding materials online

Provide varied resources and materials for input.

A Smart Board, computer room or data projector linked to a computer provides a great opportunity for providing varied online input. Here are some of our favourite resources for varied input.

Video clips

YouTube: www.youtube.com

This well-known site offers short video clips on many subjects. A search for ‘great depression’ reveals some vivid photographs from the time of the great depression, backed by music from that period (e.g. ‘This land is my land’). A search for ‘chemical reactions’ produces a motivating educational video on alkali videos with chemicals exploding in a bath.

Spoken text

iTunes: www.apple.com/itunes

The iTunes store has free downloadable podcasts of great speeches in history, such as Martin Luther King’s ‘I have a dream’, or J.F. Kennedy’s inaugural speech. There are many podcasts on historical, scientific or cultural topics, too.

Educational documentaries

TeachersTV (available from <http://www.schoolsworld.tv/videos/> and other sites)

TeachersTV offers a wealth of educational documentaries. These have been categorised by subject (English, ICT, maths and science) and level (primary or secondary school).

Written and spoken input

How Stuff Works: www.howstuffworks.com

This site is a goldmine of information on many school topics, with clearly-written texts backed by visual material such as photographs and videos.

Online news resources

Many teachers like to link their work in the classroom to topical subjects. Try using:

- CBBC Newsround: news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/default.stm
- Guardian online: www.guardian.co.uk
- BBC World Service: www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice
- BBC: www.bbc.co.uk
- Kidon Media-Link: <http://www.kidon.com/media-link/index.php>
- BBC Learning: www.bbc.co.uk/learning

Visuals

Google Images: images.google.nl

Use Google images to find photographs or other visuals for your lessons. The larger the image, the better the quality. For example, pictures measuring 400 x 300 pixels are not as good as ones that are 600 x 800. Through Advanced Search, you can further refine your search (cartoons, black-and-white only, etc).

Google Earth: earth.google.com

“Google Earth lets you fly anywhere on Earth to view satellite imagery, maps, terrain, 3D buildings and even explore galaxies in the Sky. You can explore rich geographical content, save your toured places and share with others”.

Lyrics

Lyrics search engines: www.metrolyrics.com or www.azlyrics.com

Although heavy with advertisements, these sites provide lyrics to most well-known songs.

Songs for teaching: www.songsforteaching.com

Here you can find songs for different school subjects.

2. Graphic organisers

Help learners organise and understand new vocabulary or concepts.

Provide a note-taking structure - or graphic organiser - for learners to complete as they work with the input. For more difficult input, you can provide partially-completed organisers which learners complete further.

A good website to start is <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/think/articles/graphic-organisers>.

3. Using pictures and asking questions

Support texts with visuals or hands-on activities.

Select a visual - a photograph, cartoon or other image - which is strongly related to your topic.

Then create a task around the visual to introduce your learners to the lesson topic and get them talking. Make sure that all the learners can see the visual. You might use a list of questions, a pile of cards with questions, or a mind map to complete. First ask the learners to think about it in pairs, and then discuss some ideas together in plenary.

4. Interview

Encourage spoken input.

Before you start a topic or provide some input, ask your learners to interview a person or people (preferably in English) about the topic. For example, they might interview a grandparent, elderly relative or neighbour about their experiences during the war, or an acquaintance about their job or thoughts about a topic in the news.

5. Hands on experiments or experiences

Support texts with visuals, hands-on activities or experiments.

Visualise your content with real objects, hands-on experiments or experiences. In this way, learners can reinforce their learning through a non-linguistic channel. Concrete vocabulary can be visualised through objects, and an experiment carried out at the start of a lesson can aid later understanding. For some ideas, see:

- Hunkin's experiments: www.hunkinsexperiments.com

This site describes experiments which you can do at home.

- Steve Spangler's Science: <http://www.stevespanglerscience.com/experiments>

Scroll down to find free experiments.

6. Mind the gap

Make a gapped text.

Select a dozen or so important words from your input which you would like learners to understand and eventually use. Make a gapped text (cloze test) of your input, providing the words to fit into the gaps. Ensure the gaps are numbered for easy reference later and that they are not too close together, so that learners can use the context of the text to guess the words. You can make it more difficult by providing extra words which do not fit the text, or easier by providing dictionaries.

This task actively engages learners with the important concepts of a unit.

7. Words cards 1

Help learners understand new words through categorising.

Before you provide input, copy 20-30 words related to your input onto as many cards. The words should be related to three or more sub-topics. Give a set of cards to a pair of learners and ask them to categorise the words according to the sub-topics. This will help them (and you) to see which words they already recognise and understand and which are new.

8. Words cards 2

Help learners to recognise and understand vocabulary.

This activity should be used with input that uses many word combinations or collocations.

Put one half of each collocation on a coloured card, and the other half on a different-coloured card.

Mix the cards up. Give each group of learners two sets of cards. They then try to find the correct collocations. Once they are done, they can guess the topic of the lesson that is to follow.

9. Spot the words

Help learners to notice language.

Make a list of verbs, nouns or adjectives. Add six words which are not in the same category.

Ask learners to find the words which do not belong to the category.

10. Make a gapped text

Help learners develop reading strategies.

To help learners develop reading strategies, blank out the new vocabulary or keywords in a text and see if they can understand without these.

III. GUIDING UNDERSTANDING FOR CLIL

PRACTICAL VOCABULARY IDEAS

1. Odd one out

Decide why a word does not fit in a group.

Create groups of 4-5 words or concepts related to a topic you have already covered. Ask the learners to discuss in pairs or groups which word is the odd one out. There should be no easy right answer or obvious word that doesn't fit. The learners should have to think quite hard and argue their point in order to discover their own odd one out.

2. Word cards

Sort words on a topic into sub-categories.

Choose 20-30 words related to a topic you are covering that you would like to emphasise or recycle. The words should be divisible into three or four categories such as related sub-topics (biology - bones, organs and other parts of body) or other types of sub-topics (colours, shapes, a continuum). Write all words in a jumble on the board. Learners categorise the words on a hand-out or in their notebooks.

3. Everyday, academic and subject language

Decide which words are more academic and which are more everyday language.

Ask learners to organise words and phrases into a table to show the difference between everyday language, subject language and academic language.

4. Crossword

Complete a crossword puzzle.

After a number of lessons around a topic, choose the words which are important for learners to retain and create a crossword with those words. This is easily done online.

5. Mnemonics

Create a mnemonic to recall vocabulary.

Remind the learners of a series or number of words which they need to remember in sequence. Provide or ask them to invent a mnemonic to help them recall the vocabulary.

6. Gapped text with academic words

Complete a text which includes gaps for academic words.

The AWL Gapmaker: www.nottingham.ac.uk/~alzsh3/acvocab/awlgapmaker.htm.

This online programme creates a gap filling exercise using the Academic Word List. Type or paste your text into the box on the site, select the sublist level (1-10) that you want to use and submit your text. This returns a new text with words from the selected levels of the AWL replaced by a gap.

7. Noticing

Helping learners to notice language features in a content text.

Use a text which includes a particular language feature. First, discuss with learners why it is used in this particular text. Then ask them to highlight or underline the particular language feature. At a later stage in your topic, you can provide tasks in which learners complete gap texts for themselves. Either suggest possible words yourself or, for more gifted learners, add extra words or get learners to think of appropriate words.

8. Ranking cards

List items related to a topic in order of importance.

This activity works well for a revision lesson or at the end of a series of lessons on a topic; the learners need to know something about the topic before you start.

Individual work

Learners or the teacher first write down ideas, concepts or facts about the topic individually; each of these must be written on a different card. Learners then mix up their sets of cards and spread them on the table face down. They then select two cards at random and discuss which is the most important. They put this one on the left. Learners then take a third card and compare it with the card on the right, asking the question Which of the two is more important? They place it on the appropriate side and continue until their cards are used up, thus creating a row of cards with the most important idea on the left, and the least important idea on the right.

Pair work

Once both learners have constructed their own lists, ask them to compare the lists and construct a new, combined list using the same procedure.

9. Jigsaw reading

Different learners read different information, then exchange the information.

This task works well with a text which can be divided into 3-5 sections, each of which contains separate information about the same topic.

1 Divide the class into groups of four learners, ABCD.

2 Divide your text into four sections.

3 Give each individual in the group a copy of a different part of the text. Provide a task related to each section of the text. Learner A gets text A, learner B text B, and so on.

4 Provide a new task which requires the four learners ABCD to communicate about what they have just read.

10. Graphic organizers

Learners organise information on paper.

A graphic organiser is a visual representation of information. It can be used to help learners manipulate - understand or transform - information into another form. For example, a tree map can help to categorise information, a bubble diagram to show sub-topics within a main one, a Venn diagram to compare and contrast, a time line to put events in chronological order.

Observation, listening and reading guides are types of graphic organisers: they help learners to organise or change information.

All subjects

- Give learners empty or half-completed graphic organisers, and ask them to complete them during reading or listening tasks. Differentiate by giving quicker learners an empty graphic organiser and slower learners a half-completed one.

11. Stickers

Play a sticker game related to difficult concepts.

This fun activity interests a class in (less exciting) material and is useful for revising difficult concepts.

1 Hand out one page of information about the topic that you want the learners to work with, e.g. a text with a drawing or diagram. Ask them to read it quickly in about five minutes.

2 Give each learner one small white sticker (6 x 3 cm). They choose and write ONE concept that they feel the class should know on their sticker. Collect the stickers.

3 Stick one label on to each learner's back, without telling them what it is.

4 Learners circulate around the classroom, asking each other YES/NO questions ("Am I an A?" "Am I related to B?" "Am I found in C?") to discover what their own label reads. For each question a classmate asks, they write an X on that classmate's label.

5 Once they have discovered their concept, they move the sticker from their back to their front, but keep on answering other learners' questions.

IV. ENCOURAGING SPEAKING OUTPUT

1. Hot air balloon debate

Have a 'balloon debate' to decide who deserves to be saved from a sticky situation.

Learners imagine they are in a hot air balloon which is losing helium and height and will soon crash because it is too heavy. Each passenger has an opportunity to make a speech outlining the reasons why s/he should be allowed to remain in the balloon. The audience decides which of the speakers has presented their case most persuasively.

Divide the class into a number of teams, each representing one passenger in the rapidly descending balloon. In these groups, the learners prepare to present their case about why they should stay in the hot air balloon. They can write short notes to help them remember what to say, but the speech should sound as spontaneous as possible. This preparation stage can also be given as homework.

Once the preparation has been completed, to ensure that everyone in the group contributes, randomly appoint the first contestants to give the speech from each group. You may want to provide learners with a scaffold or some questions to help them to prepare their speeches.

You could also give learners guidelines for structuring the presentation of their arguments, such as:

- a maximum of three minutes;
- begin with an opening statement;
- illustrate with examples;
- prepare at least three convincing arguments;
- end with a challenging closing statement.

You can also provide helpful words and phrases for giving opinions in a formal speech.

After each group's first speech, the class votes for the two most convincing characters. Learners are not allowed to vote for their own group! The two remaining survivors give a new speech, summing up the crucial reasons, and trying to add new ones, for their continued survival. Finally the class votes for the last remaining survivor.

This link lists websites on debate rules:

www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson/lesson304b.shtml.

This link gives examples of balloon debates:

www.kent.ac.uk/careers/interviews/balloonDebate.htm

2. The controversial question

Agree or disagree with a controversial statement.

Learners think individually about a controversial question. First, they spend a couple of minutes thinking for themselves and writing down their views. Then the teacher allocates buzz groups that are given five minutes to discuss their view on the question and to come up with an answer and an explanation. After five minutes the teacher asks one learner per group to give an answer.

3. Role play

Learners change input into a role-play.

Learners create a role-play after, for example, watching a DVD clip, reading a text, or doing a task.

4. Taboo guessing game

Describe a key word so that other learners guess what it is.

Divide the class into teams of three or four. Two groups compete against each other. Each has a clue giver and a checker. Team A's clue-giver turns over the first card and holds it in his hand so only

he and the checker from Team B can read it. The clue-giver describes the mystery word at the very top of the card without using any of the taboo words printed below it. No rhyming words, hand motions or sound effects may be used. If the clue-giver from Team A says one of the taboo words, the checker from Team B will say 'taboo' and a new card is turned over. The group must guess the word within 75 seconds.

Scoring

Each time a team guesses a word correctly within 75 seconds, their team scores a point and a new card is turned over. If the clue-giver says one of the taboo words or runs out of time, the team loses a point.

5. Elevator pitch

Sell an idea in two minutes.

An elevator pitch is a concise, carefully planned, and well-practised description that anyone should be able to understand in the time it would take to ride up an elevator. An elevator pitch could be held in almost any subject.

Learners prepare a short persuasive talk of no more than two minutes about a subject-specific topic, object or process. In this talk, they describe the specific features of the topic and convince their fellow classmates of the benefits or advantages of their choice. Their talk is a kind of commercial, and learners need to make sure their fellow learners will vote for their 'elevating idea'.

Art and design: the best painting

Learners choose a piece of art and present an elevator pitch to convince their fellow classmates that the painting they have chosen is the best of its kind. Other learners vote for the best performance and give reasons why they have selected one particular elevator pitch as best.

Variation

Alternatively, to encourage learners to read articles about art on a more regular basis, organise short presentations at the beginning of each class. Ask different learners at the end of each class to find an interesting article on art and to summarise it for the other learners during the next class, including an explanation of why they chose the article. This can lead to interesting discussions about art.

6. Government economies

Debate about the abolition of an object, organisation or system.

Provide information related to the possibility of abolishing something, for example an organisation, an object, or even a chemical. Learners now form small groups to discuss arguments for and against abolishing their object or organisation. The outcome of these talks will be discussed in a plenary session.

To check that learners have understood the texts, you can design a task for them based on the information from the two texts. This task should be impossible to complete without the missing information that the other learner has.

7. Talking about talking

Help learners understand and discuss what useful 'exploratory talk' is when doing group work.

Have a short plenary discussion about working in groups and what kind of questioning or feedback helps the group to work together. Introduce the term 'exploratory talk': people work critically but constructively with each other's ideas.

Write some of the points the learners make on the board. Next, give each learner a copy of the Exploratory talk handout below. Each learner completes the handout individually. Once everyone has finished, hold a small group or class discussion on the results. At the end of the activity, come up with some key points which are important to keep in mind when doing group work.

This activity can be used in all subjects.

Exploratory talk

Below are some suggestions which might help or hinder your group to work with and talk to each other. Read the suggestion in the left-hand column. Tick the 'helpful' or 'unhelpful' column first, then note down what particular effects you believe the contribution might have in the right-hand column.

V. ENCOURAGING WRITING OUTPUT

1. I am a ...

Write about a process in the first person.

Ask learners to write a story in the first person about a process in your subject. They explain what happens in the various stages of this particular system. The learners imagine they are part of an enormous system and that they are going on a journey through that system. Whether they survive or not, a report must be written in which learners describe what happens at every stage of their journey: which of their friends they encounter or lose at each stage. Create a handout for them like the one below. Make sure your learners know what to include in the story and how to structure it: where does it take place, what challenges must the character face and overcome, how does the character reach their final destination (or not!). They should tell their journey as a narrative, starting at the beginning of the process and finishing at the end.

2. The story of...

Write about a process in the third person.

Ask learners to write and illustrate a 300-word children's story in the third person about an object, describing what happens to the object when it is being transported from one place to another. In their story, learners describe: specific details of the object; its origin; and in detail, its journey from departure to arrival. Their account should read as a children's story, beginning with an introduction (who or what is this object), a middle (the actual journey with all sorts of events, unexpected hazards) and an ending (end of the journey, where the object is now and what has happened to its shape). Provide some scaffolding to help them to plan and write their story.

3. Dictogloss

Dictogloss: reproduce a short text you have listened to.

Learners listen to an audio text about a topic. They eventually need to reconstruct the text in as much detail as possible. In doing so, learners practise listening, writing and speaking, and use vocabulary and grammar to complete the task. The learners listen to your chosen text, read along at normal speed, and write down key words. Then, in groups of three or four, they work closely together to share, compare and discuss their individual notes and co-operate to reconstruct the text in as much detail as they can.

4. Three picture story

Develop a sketch and describe a process in the third person.

Provide learners with a series of basic sketches that represent a process you have covered in your recent lessons but in which certain steps have been left out. Learners add information (colour and details) to each sketch to show the steps in the process. They also write a descriptive text for each drawing.

5. What has just happened?

Reconstruct a table with missing information.

Ask learners to reconstruct something that is damaged or broken, by doing an experiment.

Then, ask them to write a report on how they carried out this investigation. In the report, learners describe their research method and give reasons for choosing this method. They write in the style of a police report, explaining in detail the various stages of the investigation, giving a detailed analysis of the research, and drawing a well-argued conclusion.

6. Learner generated questions

Create your own difficult questions and talk about questions.

Stage 1

You will need a classroom cleared of chairs or a gym or hall. Give the learners one coloured card each. Use a page from your course book which is challenging for your class; there should be quite a bit of information on the page. Remind learners of English question words such as what, when, why, how, where, and how many. Tell the class you are going to practise asking difficult questions. Each learner thinks of a difficult question about the course book page and writes it down on his/her card. Then everybody stands up and circulates, asking and answering the questions. When the learners have run out of energy, ask them to sit down again for the discussion which follows.

Stage 2

Carry out a class discussion about content and language, asking questions like:

- What makes a good question?
- Which question do you think was the best? Why?
- Which questions are more interesting? Why?
- Which questions were easy to answer? Why?
- Which questions were more difficult to answer? Why?
- Which questions were more difficult to formulate in English and why?
- Which question was written in the best English?

You can also give feedback on the language of questions.

7. A day in the life of ...

Write the story of an event from the point of view of a person who experienced it.

Learners write a story (with a minimum of one page) in the first person about a special event or day in the life of a particular person from your subject. They describe specific details about this person, and what a day in the life of this person could look like.

8. Class magazine

Write a magazine about subject-specific issues.

Learners compile a complete magazine for their peers about a topic you are covering. It is a class assignment, and each group will be awarded a mark for their contribution. Good organisation is an important part of the assignment, and this will also be taken into account.

9. Encyclopedia entry

Write an entry for a children's encyclopaedia.

Ask learners to design an entry for a children's encyclopaedia about different aspects of a topic you are covering. First, look at Wikipedia or another encyclopaedia for models. Discuss the difference between a children's and an adult's encyclopaedia.

10. Design a model to be tested in class

Non-linguistic process.

Ask learners to make a subject-specific topic design and model, which will also be tested.

VI. ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

1. Name and assess the content and language used in activities

Describe and assess speaking and/or writing aims related to assessments in your subject.

When you set an assessment, tell the learners both the subject focus and the language focus of the activity. Explain the language focus for speaking or writing and tell the learners you will assess both the content and how they use language to achieve the speaking or writing task.

2. Task with language and subject assessment criteria.

Assess in a task instead of a test and provide explicit marking criteria for both subject and language. Use a checklist to design an assessment task, rather than a pen-and-paper or digital test. Include language and subject assessment criteria when you give the checklist to learners.

Checklist:

- 1 What kind of written or spoken product could I use to assess the content of this topic?
- 2 What would be an appropriate, English-speaking audience for the product?
- 3 What content will I assess in the product?
- 4 What language will I assess in the product?
- 5 Should the assessment be individual, pair or group work?
- 6 How will I assess pair or group work?
- 7 How will I encourage a fair division of work in the group?

3. Assessment questions

Learners answer questions about their assessment before submitting it.

Write your assessment criteria in the form of yes/no questions to your learners. Give them the questions at the same time as you give the task so that they think more actively about what they have to do. The questions will vary according to the task you set. Here are some example questions which learners can answer to check they have completed a task properly, based on the geography example.

- 1 Is your message clear to the audience? (Does it persuade/argue/complain/narrate effectively?)
- 2 Does your work give a detailed explanation of...?
- 3 Does your work cover all of the required points?
- 4 Have you used an appropriate style for your audience?
- 5 Does your work suggest...?
- 6 Are your arguments convincing?
- 7 Do you give appropriate evidence to support your main points?
- 8 Is the presentation or layout clear?
- 9 Is it clear that all the members of the group participated equally?
- 10 Have you involved the audience by asking questions? Are the questions relevant?
- 11 Are you able to answer questions about the topic from your audience?
- 12 Does your work make an effective visual impact on the reader?

4. Rubrics

Making assessment criteria transparent.

Preparation

You will need a copy of an assignment or project for your learners on paper and an empty rubric (teachers) or learners, to clarify subject and language aims.

5. High or low demands

Using Cummins' Quadrants to balance cognitive and contextual demands.
Design an assessment which would fit into each of Cummin's quadrants. Use this to design assessments which vary the cognitive and contextual demands you make on learners across the years.

6. Relay race labelling

Assessing kinaesthetically.

Make four large, clear drawings of a picture you would like your pupils to label. You will also need 4 marker pens. Pin the drawings to the wall on the other side of the room. Make four teams. Teams stand at one end of the room; the drawings are at the other end. Teams have a pile of word cards (the labels for the picture). They send one member of the team at a time to label the drawing; learners are only allowed to complete one label at a time. Teams receive points for the number for labels they accurately place in a fixed amount of time. This can count towards their final grade at the end of term.

7. Inner/outer circle

Sit in two circles and answer questions about a topic.

Create two parallel circles of equal numbers of learners (e.g. five in the inner circle and five in the outer circle), facing each other.

Tell the learners they are going to have a test. They will revise together, and then take the test individually. Tell them the topic of the assessment. Show a question on the topic, which they discuss with the learner opposite them. Then say: outer circle move one person/two people to the left, so that they are then facing a new partner. Call out a second question which they discuss with their new partner. Call out: inner circle move two people to the left, and call out your third question. After all the questions have been asked and discussed, give the learners the questions in writing and allow them to write down their answers. Grade as a test.

8. Correction code

Give feedback selectively.

Use a correction code to give feedback on learners' language.

9. Common mistakes

Identify and correct common mistakes.

Draw up a list of mistakes that learners often make in their writing or speaking for your subject. Put them in a table, and ask learners to identify the type of mistake and then correct it.

10. Card game with typical mistakes

Learners play a card game correcting typical mistakes.

Draw up a list of mistakes that learners make during a series of lessons for your subject. Create cards. Form groups of four. Stack the cards in the middle of the table. Learners take turns to turnover a card. They read the sentence aloud and decide if it is correct or not. If the sentence is correctly identified as a correct sentence, they may keep the card. If the sentence is not correct, the learners say what is wrong with it and how it should be corrected. If their correction is accurate, they keep the card; if not, it is returned to the pile. The winner is the learner with the most cards when all the cards in the pile have been turned over.

11. False friend

Recognising false friends.

Some words seem similar in French and English but mean different things. These are called false friends. Collect examples of these in your subject, and compare and highlight their use in English and French with a table.

12. Record learners performing a speaking assessment

Giving feedback on spoken language.

Make a recording of learners performing a speaking assessment. Use the recording for feedback on spoken language or for peer or self assessment.

13. Let's talk

Giving feedback on writing during writing.

Talk to the learners as they write, and discuss what they are trying to explain.

14. Name cards

Note language mistakes on name cards and hand these out individually after an assignment.

Produce a name card for each learner, like this:

Name:

Good use of language:

Language mistakes:

Corrections:

As learners carry out an activity, note their mistakes on the card. At the end of the lesson, hand out the cards and ask the learners to correct the mistakes and return the card at the start of the next lesson.