An tSraith Shóisearach do Mhúinteoirí

Junior**CYCLE**
for teachers

Introduction to the Specification for Modern Foreign Languages
Assessing Student Learning in Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages

Resource Booklet

MFL

Jan. – March Cluster

2018

Ionad Oideachais Mhuineacháin

AN ROINN OIDEACHAIS AGUS SCILEANNA | DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Contents

Introduction to Junior Cycle

Junior cycle education places students at the centre of the educational experience, enabling them to actively participate in their communities and in society and to be resourceful and confident learners in all aspects and stages of their lives. Junior cycle is inclusive of all students and contributes to equality of opportunity, participation and outcome for all.

The junior cycle allows students to make a greater connection with learning by focusing on the quality of learning that takes place and by offering experiences that are engaging and enjoyable for them, and relevant to their lives. These experiences are of a high quality, contribute directly to the physical, mental and social wellbeing of learners, and where possible, provide opportunities for them to develop their abilities and talents in the areas of creativity, innovation and enterprise. The learner's junior cycle programme builds on their learning to date and actively supports their progress in learning and in addition, supports them in developing the learning skills that will assist them in meeting the challenges of life beyond school. (Specification, p. 3)

Aim of the Specification for Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages

The Specification for Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages aims to develop communicative language skills broadly aligned with the A band (A1 to A2, basic user) of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and its descriptors. It also aims to enable students to explore the interdependence between language and culture, to develop their appreciation of the relevance of languages to their lives for personal, social, educational, vocational and leisure purposes, and to derive enjoyment from language learning.

More specifically it encourages all students to

- actively engage in language activities and tasks, developing the capacity to understand written and spoken language
- communicate effectively and confidently in the target language in familiar contexts through a range of media
- develop their capacity to use appropriate structures and vocabulary for the purposes of communication, both written and oral
- enjoy a language-learning experience that will facilitate and encourage them to continue learning languages in future
- be reflective and autonomous in their language learning, and become actively involved in monitoring and assessing their progress
- appreciate their own and other cultures
- develop skills that they can apply to other areas of study and to their lives.

Learning another language is not only learning different words for the same things, but learning another way to think about things.
                                                                                              – Flora Lewis

Statements of Learning

The statement	Examples of relevant learning
SOL 2: The student listens, speaks, reads and writes in L2 and one other language at a level of proficiency that is appropriate to her or his ability.	Students will develop their communicative language competence by actively engaging in language activities and tasks in the integrated language skills of listening, reading, spoken production, spoken interaction and writing.
SOL 6: The student appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which she/he lives.	Students will reflect on the values, beliefs and traditions of another culture. By doing this, they will gain deeper insights into their own culture and develop a positive attitude towards as well as respect and curiosity for diversity. They will also develop an awareness and appreciation of the multilingual and multicultural society in which they live.
SOL 16: The student describes, illustrates, interprets, predicts and explains patterns and relationships.	Students will learn how the target language works; they will explore, describe and explain patterns such as word order, word endings, sentence construction, the verb system. By comparing the target language with other languages they know, students will look at the relationships between languages and will gain deeper insights into how their own language works.
SOL 24: The student uses technology and digital media tools to learn, communicate, work and think collaboratively and creatively in a responsible and ethical manner.	Students will use digital technologies to access information related to the target language and culture, to engage with a range of formats (written, audio, video) and to communicate with speakers of the target language using appropriate tools in a responsible and ethical manner.

Key Skills in the MFL Classroom

Key skill	Student learning activity
BEING LITERATE	Students will engage in meaningful communicative activities and tasks across all strands. They will learn to communicate effectively and confidently in the target language in familiar contexts.
MANAGING MYSELF	In all strands, students will monitor, reflect on and evaluate their progress by considering feedback from others and from self-assessment.
STAYING WELL	In all strands, students will develop a positive attitude towards language learning as they engage with diversity and reflect on their successes.
MANAGING INFORMATION&THINKING	In all strands, students will use a range of digital technologies to research and manage content as well as to communicate.
BEING NUMERATE	In all strands, participation in language activities will offer students many opportunities to reinforce concepts such as number recognition, sequencing, date, time, value, measurement, and percentage. They will also notice linguistic and cultural patterns and trends as they develop their language and intercultural awareness.
BEING CREATIVE	In all strands, students will have opportunities to explore options and make choices as they engage in communicative activities and become increasingly more autonomous learners.
WORKING WITH OTHERS	In all strands, students will engage in pair and group work, as well as in peer-assessment.
COMMUNICATING	In all strands, students will become familiar with the language of routine classroom interactions. The target language will be the principal medium of teaching and learning.

The Specification for Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages aims to develop communicative language skills broadly aligned with the A band (A1 to A2, basic user) of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)[1] and its descriptors. (Specification, p. 6)

The Common Reference Levels – self-assessment grid

		A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
UNDERSTANDING	**Listening**	I can recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.	I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided I have some time to get familiar with the accent.
	Reading	I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.	I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.	I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.	I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.
SPEAKING	**Spoken interaction**	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.
	Spoken production	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
WRITING	**Writing**	I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.	I can write short, simple notes and messages relating to matters in areas of immediate needs. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can select a style appropriate to the reader in mind.	I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.

[1] Council of Europe (2001). Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment. Cambridge University Press. The full text is available on the Council of Europe website.

The Common Reference Levels - global scale

Proficient User	C2	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	C1	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
Independent User	B2	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	B1	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
Basic User	A2	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	A1	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

Strand 1: Communicative Competence

Communicative competence enables students to communicate in the target language for meaningful purposes. In this strand, students engage in language activities and tasks involving the integrated language skills of listening, reading, spoken production, spoken interaction and writing.

Elements	Learning outcomes
	Students should be able to
Listening	**1.1** identify the general topic of a conversation on familiar topics when it is expressed clearly
	1.2 recognise frequently-used words and phrases related to areas of immediate relevance and experience, including the language of routine classroom interactions
	1.3 identify specific information in texts related to familiar topics such as announcements, conversations, simple news items
	1.4 source, select and share audio stimuli such as songs, conversations, advertisements through appropriate digital technologies
Reading	**1.5** recognise the meaning of familiar words and phrases to include everyday signs and notices in public places
	1.6 understand the general sense of a text on familiar topics
	1.7 identify specific information in a range of texts dealing with familiar topics
	1.8 source and use authentic texts to explore topics of relevance through a range of media
Spoken production	**1.9** pronounce words accurately enough to be understood, with appropriate intonation
	1.10 convey simple descriptions, presentations or announcements on familiar topics
Spoken interaction	**1.11** interact in routine exchanges with pronunciation and intonation which is clear enough to be understood and with appropriate non-verbal language
	1.12 use simple polite forms in formal and informal situations such as greetings, thanks, introductions, and respond appropriately
	1.13 ask and answer questions and exchange ideas, emotions and information on familiar topics in everyday situations
	1.14 understand and use numbers as appropriate in everyday situations such as shopping, exchanging numbers, sequencing events
	1.15 take part in routine classroom interactions such as pair and group work, asking questions, language games and activities, asking for help and repetition where necessary
	1.16 communicate orally with others using digital technologies such as social media
Writing	**1.17** write words and create short sentences using various media (emails, letters, blogs, postcards…) on everyday topics with accuracy
	1.18 write a series of phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors such as but, and, or, as
	1.19 create texts about aspects of their lives and topics that interest them such as family and friends, school, holidays, leisure activities, fashion, sport, celebrities
	1.20 write short descriptions of present, past and future events, activities and personal experiences, as well as imaginative texts
	1.21 fill out forms relevant to their age group and experience
	1.22 produce and edit texts and interact with others in writing using appropriate digital technologies

Strand 2: Language Awareness

Language awareness enhances the students' general awareness about languages. In this strand, they analyse how the target language works, they compare the languages they know (English, Irish and/or their mother tongue) and they reflect on their own language-learning strategies.

Elements	Learning outcomes
	Students should be able to
Reflecting on how the target language works	**2.1** recognise, describe and use language patterns such as word order, verbal system, nouns, adjectives, spelling and punctuation conventions
	2.2 apply all language learning to creative activities such as producing simple poems, posters, presentations, games and drama
	2.3 recognise how gender and social conventions influence target language usage
Comparing the target language with other languages they know	**2.4** identify similarities and differences between the pronunciation, intonation and rhythm of the target language and that of other languages they know
	2.5 compare grammar and vocabulary of the target language with that of other languages they know, making connections and distinctions as appropriate
Reflecting on how they learn languages	**2.6** identify, share and explain their preferred language-learning strategies
	2.7 monitor and assess their own learning, using feedback they receive to reflect on what they need to improve and to set goals for improvement

Strand 3: Socio-cultural Knowledge and Intercultural Awareness

Socio-cultural knowledge and intercultural awareness gives students access to new cultural dimensions and encourages them to reflect on their own culture. In this strand, students acquire cultural information about the target country/countries and are encouraged to compare other cultures to their own.

Elements	Learning outcomes *Students should be able to*
Learning about relevant facts, people, places and history about the country/countries related to the target language	**3.1** name and describe some features of the target language country/countries such as geographical features, weather, places and landmarks, food **3.2** discover and use facts and figures related to the target country/countries such as statistical data, festivals, inventions, famous people **3.3** reflect on what they have learned about the country/countries associated with the target language
Learning about traditions, customs and behaviours	**3.4** identify and explain some aspects of the target language country/countries in areas such as everyday living, interpersonal relations, customs and behaviours, social conventions **3.5** identify and reflect on common stereotypes about the target culture/s, including their own, and explain if and how their attitude towards the target country/countries is evolving **3.6** select, process and present information through the appropriate use of digital technologies, and evaluate it for truth and reliability
Comparing their culture with that of the country/countries related to the target language	**3.7** analyse similarities and differences in relation to their peers' lives in the target language country/countries in areas of daily life such as school, socialising, sport, eating habits **3.8** compare and contrast aspects of personal interest in the target language country/countries with those in their own country and present them using a range of media **3.9** appreciate how cultural differences influence social relations, such as in greetings and eating together **3.10** compare and contrast the use of numbers in the target language country/countries and in their own, with regard to familiar topics such as prices, age, dates, seasons

Balancing Assessment in the Junior Cycle MFL Classroom

1. *Read the statements below and consider what all the purple statements have in common and what all the green statements have in common:*

This teacher uses oral exams as part of the end of year assessment. These oral exams vary depending on the age and stage of learning. The results are reported as part of the summer exam.

This French teacher, when returning written assignments to students, asks them to take 5 minutes to review his feedback and correct their own mistakes. They must ask two peers before they can ask the teacher for help with corrections.

The Final Examination at the end of junior cycle evaluates student learning over the three years of junior cycle. The examination is set and assessed externally by the State Examinations Commission. Results are reported on the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement.

This Spanish teacher gives students a list of words to learn for homework. The next day she asks students to peer-assess each other, paying attention to correct pronunciation. At the end of this task the teacher asks each pair for the most difficult word to pronounce. She spends some time during that lesson teaching the students how to pronounce these difficult words.

At the end of a unit of learning this teacher sets a test, evaluates the students' answers and keeps a record of the students' achievements. She communicates these evaluations to students and parents at Parent Teacher Meetings.

After a series of lessons on greetings in the target language, this teacher creates an Ed Puzzle video with questions as a homework assignment. When analysing the responses, it becomes apparent that students are confused by formal and informal greetings. She begins the following lesson with a renewed attempt at explaining the concept.

At the end of 1st year these German students complete a presentation in the target language as part of their summer assessments. It is assessed and graded by the teacher and results form part of their 1st year grade.

At the end of each term this teacher asks students to evaluate which learning goals they have achieved with the help of Can Do Statements. Students can choose from "On my own / with help / need to revise". Students use the next lesson to clarify any learning goals with the help of their peers and /or their teacher.

After a series of grammar lessons on the past tense in Italian this teacher sets a grammar test for students. The tests are then graded by the teacher, who communicates the grades to parents using students' journals.

During Spanish class students are completing a writing task. The teacher moves around the room monitoring the students' progress. After some time, he stops and asks the students to check with the person sitting to their right how to write the date in Spanish. He then takes feedback from the class and writes the date on the board.
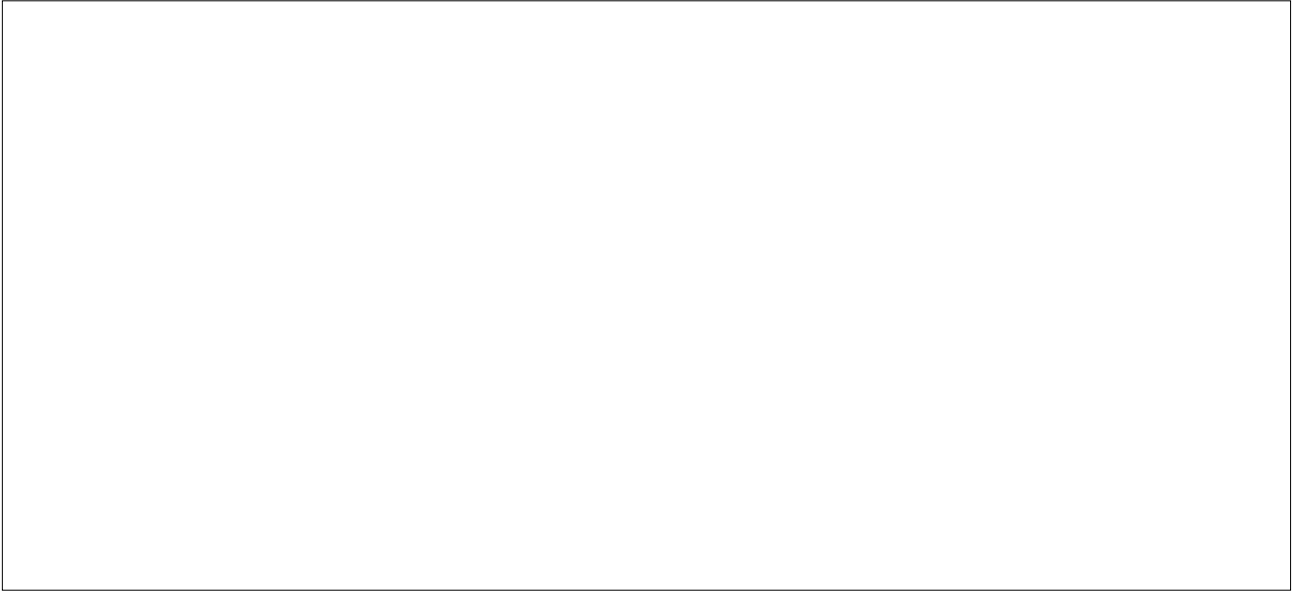
2. *Test your theory now; which of these scenarios should be "purple" and which should be "green"?*

This Spanish teacher assigns several projects throughout the term which ask students to demonstrate agreed key aspects learned. These projects form part of the end-of-term descriptor.

This teacher assigns a project at the end of 1st year. He uses facts from this project to create a Kahoot quiz for his students when they return to school in September.
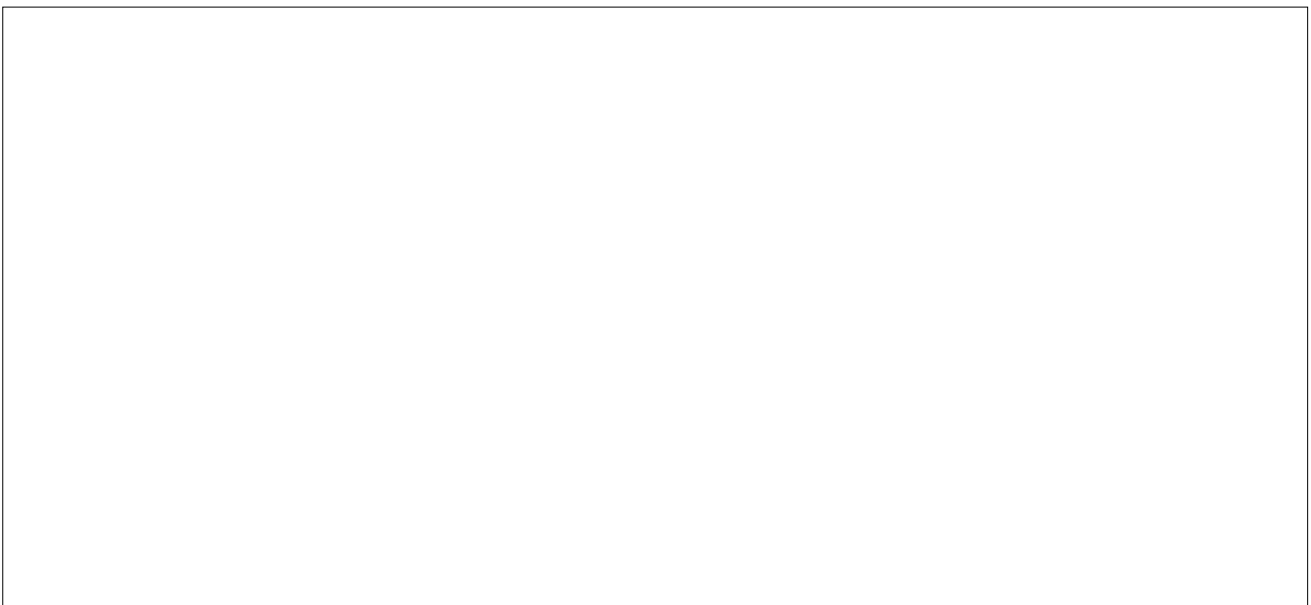
This MFL department has agreed that students will submit three pieces of work from their student language portfolio at the end of each academic year as part of their end-of-year assessment.

3. Working in pairs write down the critical attributes for the purple and the green scenarios:

4. Reflect on the assessments you have used in your MFL classes over the last number of weeks. These prompts may help to inform your thinking:

- *Were they formative or summative?*

- *Was there an element of student choice?*

- *How did they move the learning forward?*

- *Which language skills (Listening, Reading, Spoken Production, Spoken Interaction, Writing) were assessed?*

- *Were the learning outcomes integrated across the three strandsWere they formative or summative?*

Aspects of Formative Assessment

Sharing learning intentions and success criteria

Discussion and Questioning

Formative Feedback

Activating students as resources for each other

Activating students as reources for themselves

Adapted from Dylan Wiliam (2011) Embedded Formative Assessment

Summary of Key Aspects of Formative Assessment

LEARNING INTENTIONS
The WHAT and the WHY

They ensure that you and your students are clear about what the intended learning is. In order to be effective, they need to …

- identify what students will be learning
- explain the reason for the learning
- be expressed in student-friendly language
- be revisited throughout the learning process

There is no "right way" to share the learning. They may emerge as a consequence of students and teacher assessing where they currently are, or they may evolve through an inquiry process such as concept attainment.

Learning intentions are linked to learning outcomes. The "core" of the learning outcome includes an action verb and thus provides clarity as to what the students should know, understand or be able to do. This helps when developing learning intentions from learning outcomes.

SUCCESS CRITERIA
How to recognise success

They improve understanding by ensuring that you and your students are clear about what success looks like from the outset. They empower students and encourage them to become independent learners by providing a concrete basis for feedback. They do not have to be different for each lesson/activity. Success criteria:

- allow students to excel at their level of ability and therefore should not limit students
- are student-centred and therefore need to be created in student-friendly language
- can be co-constructed as appropriate - this is developmental

FORMATIVE FEEDBACK
How to move the learning forward

Can be in many forms - written, spoken, etc. It helps students set goals for future learning and helps them become independent learners. Feedback is most effective when it:

- is focused on the quality of the student work
- is related to agreed success criteria
- identifies success and achievement
- indicates suggestions for improvement
- prompts student thinking
- allows time for improvement to take place

Feedback can be in many directions – peer to peer, teacher to peer, self-directed feedback. Should be more work for the student, not more onerous on the teacher

EFFECTIVE QUESTIONING

Assessment will focus on supporting learning. In order to support learning, we need to know what students are thinking. Research suggests (Mason. J., Watson. A.) that if we know what children are thinking we can find out a lot about how and what they are learning.

To do this we need to ask questions that:

- interest, challenge or engage
- assess prior knowledge and understanding
- mobilise existing understanding to create new understanding
- focus thinking on key concepts
- extend and deepen learners' thinking
- promote learners' thinking about the way they learn
- are planned and related to the learning intentions
- are accompanied by wait time
- allow for collaboration before answering
- are carefully graded in difficulty
- encourage learners to explain and justify answers
- allow all students to participate e.g. using mini whiteboards, or questioning each other
- follow up both correct and incorrect answers asked by students

STUDENTS REFLECTING ON THEIR LEARNING

Whilst most people engage in reflection on a daily basis, much of this occurs in quiet moments by ourselves. Most students are not used to reflecting on their learning in a structured manner. They will need some help to develop skills in reflective thinking and writing. Whilst this skill may be new to them at first, they will become more familiar with it as they progress through junior cycle. Being able to reflect on one's learning and learning how to become a better learner are key elements of the junior cycle key skills. When students learn to reflect on their learning through dialogue, writing or using a computer, they are developing many of these skills.

Through reflection 'in' and 'on' learning students can

• become more aware of the knowledge and skills that they have developed

• identify strengths and areas for development

• develop an action plan for future learning

• gain greater understanding of themselves and how they learn

• take more responsibility for their learning

Further information on aspects of formative assessment is available in the NCCA Assessment Toolkit

Changing Approach to Assessment

NB Please consult the Specification for Modern Foreign Languages and the Assessment Guidelines for all information regarding assessment in junior cycle modern foreign languages.
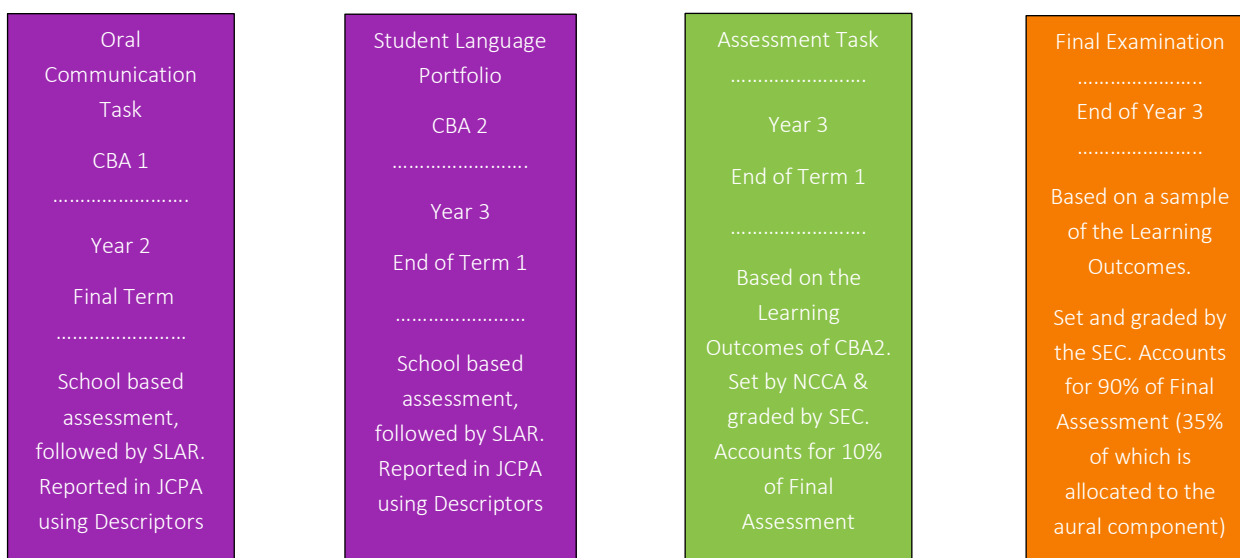
A new dual approach to assessment increases the prominence given to classroom-based assessment and formative assessment: students learn best when teachers provide feedback that helps students to understand how their learning can be improved.

Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs) are completed in class time. They should closely resemble what happens on a daily basis in the classroom. They aim to create opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning in areas that are difficult to capture in a pen and paper timed exam. For example, the 1st CBA is an oral communication task. It offers students the opportunity to focus on an aspect of the target country / countries; or on a simulation of an experience in a target language country; or on a topic or stimulus of interest. Students can communicate their findings through a range of formats.

To support teacher judgement in the CBAs, Features of Quality are set out in the Assessment Guidelines. **Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR)** meetings provide teachers with the opportunity to share and discuss samples of their assessments of student work and build a common understanding about the quality of student learning. Teachers' judgement is recorded for the purpose of the Subject Learning and Assessment Review meeting and for the school's reporting to parents and students.

An Assessment Task (AT) will follow the 2nd CBA. It is a written reflection task completed by students during class time and is sent to the State Examinations Commission along with the final examination for correction. It accounts for 10% of the final grade, the written exam will account for the other 90%. Results of the CBAs and the overall SEC result are recorded on the **Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA).**

A dual approach to assessment, involving classroom-based assessment across the three years and a final externally-assessed, state-certified examination can enable the appropriate balance between preparing students for examinations and also facilitating creative thinking, engaged learning and better outcomes for students.

Oral Communication Task	Student Language Portfolio	Assessment Task	Final Examination
CBA 1	CBA 2	……………………	……………………
……………………	………………….	Year 3	End of Year 3
Year 2	Year 3	End of Term 1	……………………
Final Term	End of Term 1	……………………	Based on a sample of the Learning Outcomes.
……………………	……………………	Based on the Learning Outcomes of CBA2. Set by NCCA & graded by SEC. Accounts for 10% of Final Assessment	Set and graded by the SEC. Accounts for 90% of Final Assessment (35% of which is allocated to the aural component)
School based assessment, followed by SLAR. Reported in JCPA using Descriptors	School based assessment, followed by SLAR. Reported in JCPA using Descriptors		

Reflection

Developing the Skill of Active Reflection and teaching students to reflect... how are we doing?

Work either individually or with a partner and then discuss how well you have developed your classroom practice in developing students' reflection skills.

Traffic light your responses to the questions below using the code indicated:

In my classroom…	Always	Sometimes	Never
I allow time for students to reflect on their progress at the end of a lesson / lessons.			
I encourage students to think about not only what they have learned but how they learned it.			
I encourage students to plan the next steps in their learning.			
I provide questions and tools to help students reflect on their learning.			
I use language associated with reflection in class, such as, 'let's pause to reflect on what you've just learned'.			
I provide opportunities for students to self-assess as part of the reflective process.			
I allow time for students to reflect on feedback that they receive from me and their peers.			

Further Ideas for developing the Skill of Reflection

Learning Log

A learning log is a planned, purposeful, follow-up written response to their learning experience. These reflections can be kept online or in a special journal. They can enable a dialogue between the student and teacher on the learning journey. In some cases, reflections might be shared in a small group or with a partner.

The purple pen for reflection

If you don't want students to separate their reflections from their day-to-day learning, then you can ask them to use a blue / black pen when they are completing their work and a purple pen to write their reflections on their work. This will make it easier for them and for you to see their reflections in their copybooks.

Reflection and 'self-talk'

Given our culture, students have difficulty realising that they need to engage in 'self-talk'. To help students develop the internal voice of reflection, they can be asked to do the following:

•   Write a letter / text to themselves detailing what they learned from an experience.

•   Send themselves a letter of advice, reminding themselves what they can do to improve their learning / work next time they do something.

Sharing their reflections

The opportunity to share one's reflections is helpful because it helps students develop both the language and practice of reflection. Here are suggestions for helping students develop the capacity for sharing their reflections:

•   Sit in a circle. Ask each person to share one reflection about how they learned within the class or small group today.

•   Invite students to reflect on their areas of difficulty or concerns and then share problem-solving strategies.

•   Invite students to think about a recent mistake or error they made and how they have learned from it.

Many of us grow up thinking of mistakes as bad. To maximise our learning, it is essential to ask: 'How can we get the most from every mistake we make?'.

Assessment Toolkit, NCCA

Teacher Reflection Template Example – September to Midterm

The following is an example of a reflection template used by a language teacher to reflect after a longer period of learning to inform next steps in planning for teaching, assessment and learning.

Guiding questions:

- Did I combine learning outcomes from different strands to create a learning unit?
- Was there an element of student choice?
- Were all five (5) language skills assessed?
- Was my assessment mainly formative or summative or was it both?

Strand 1	Strand 2	Strand 3
1.2 x 2 1.3 1.6 1.9 x 2 1.12 1.14 1.15 1.19	2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 2.5 2.6 2.7	3.1 x 2 3.2 3.10

Learning Outcomes	Students can…	End of unit task
2.5, 3.1, 3.2	…name a range of French / German / Italian / Spanish words we use in English …name the countries where the TL is spoken …create a factsheet about one of the TL countries using a range of information	
1.12, 2.3, 2.6	…greet someone, introduce themselves, and thank someone in the TL …respond appropriately and accurately to greetings in formal / informal situations …identify their preferred strategy for learning new words	
1.9, 2.2, 3.1	…make the sounds associated with the alphabet of the target language …pronounce a range of cities and landmarks accurately …locate a range of famous cities and their landmarks in the TL country	
1.2, 1.9, 2.4	…pronounce words and phrases stressing the correct part of the word …identify silent letters when listening to words and phrases in the TL …identify the beginning and end of a word when listening to entire sentences in the TL	
1.2, 1.15, 2.7	…name items in the classroom in the target language …follow simple instructions in the target language …use the target language to ask their peers for classroom items, evaluate work using simple phrases, give simple excuses	
1.3, 1.14, 3.10	…use a range of numbers in the TL? …identify a range of numbers when heard in the TL in isolation and in short sentences …identify similarities /differences in the way age is expressed in the TL	
1.6, 1.19, 2.1	…name the members of their immediate family in the TL …describe their family members using a range of adjectives …present a written piece of their choice describing their family	

The Specification in the Classroom

Planning a Learning Unit

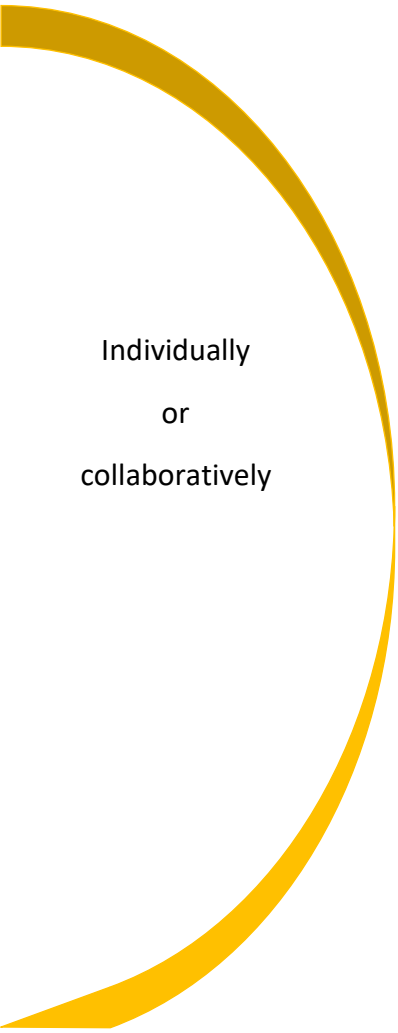| First Year MFL |
| --- |
| **Learning Outcomes in focus: (What I want students to know/understand/be able to do in the TL at the end of this unit)**

1.10 Convey simple descriptions, presentations or announcements **on familiar topics**

1.13 Ask and answer questions and exchange ideas, emotions **and information on familiar topics** in everyday situations

2.1 Recognise, describe and **use language patterns such as** word order, verbal system, **nouns, adjectives**, spelling and punctuation conventions

3.4 **identify** and explain **some aspects of the target language country/countries in areas such as everyday living**, interpersonal relations, customs and behaviours, social conventions |
| **Assessment: (How I know they know?)**

Students can describe a house/apartment in the target language using a range of nouns and a variety of adjectives

Students can ask and answer questions related to a house |
| **Possible learning activities: (What I will do to get them there)**

Introductory placemat activity: Students create their own list of words /expressions needed for talking about a house (names of rooms, adjectives to describe the rooms, I like…because…). The teacher may then supplement the students' list with additional vocabulary in order to create a glossary of terms/expressions for this unit

Practise: Reinforcement of new vocabulary and structures

Information Gap activity: In pairs or groups, students match the descriptions to the correct house and find the house that is missing a description. Students then create a description for that house using the information from the written descriptions

Extension Activity: Students describe one of the houses orally to another student who attempts to draw it / highlights features on the picture

Practise: Aural / Oral revision of questions and answers related to the house through various strategies, such as "Snap" and / or "3 Truths and a Lie"

Reading Activity: In groups of three, students devise a range of questions you expect to be answered when researching accommodation online. They then research accommodation online using www.casamundo.de / www.casamundo.it/ www.casamundo.de / www.casamundo.fr in the target language

End of Unit Task: Students prepare and deliver a short presentation describing a house / apartment they would like to rent in the TL country using a range of nouns and a variety of adjectives. This is followed by questions from students and / or the teacher

Activities recognise the integrated nature and sequence (receptive → productive) of second language acquisition |
| **Resources:**

House-themed flash cards: these can be used throughout the unit with descriptions / questions / as matching exercises / for aural and oral reinforcement
Websites advertising accommodation in the TL country |
| **Reflection:**
What worked well?

Even better if… |

Notes

As an MFL
Department

Individually

or

collaboratively

Action Planning

Step 1

KEY POINT

Consider age and stage of students

⬇

Step 2

Select the learning outcomes

What do I want my students to know, understand and be able to do?

⬇

Step 3

Integrate across the 3 strands using up to 4 learning outcomes per unit

⬇

Step 4

Align assessment with learning outcomes

How will I know they know?

⬇

Step 5

Choose appropriate activities

What will I do to get them there?

Guiding Questions on Integrating the Learning Outcomes across the Strands?

How do I integrate the learning outcomes across the three strands?

These questions may help guide you through the process:

Strand 1:

- What do I want my students to be able to do in the Target Language (TL) at the end of this learning unit?
- What is their age and stage in the learning process?
- What have they learned already and where do we want to go now?
- Do I want to focus on a particular language skill or do I want to combine a receptive skill with a suitable productive skill? *

Strand 2:

- What do they already know about learning languages that will help them?
- What do my students need to know/ understand about the TL or about the process of language learning that will help them achieve this?

Strand 3:

- What is the "real" TL context where students would /could need to use those communicative outcomes?
- What do my students need/want to learn about life in the TL country/countries that is appropriate to their age and stage of learning?

Communicative competence

Language awareness

Socio-cultural knowledge and intercultural awareness

Notes

* All language skills will be used and therefore will develop, through the unit of work, but all may not be assessed.

Learning Unit Template

Learning Outcomes (vertical label)

Assessment (vertical label)

Learning Activities (vertical label)

Learning Outcomes in focus: (What do I want students to know / understand / be able to do in the TL at the end of this unit?)

Assessment: (How do I know they know?)

Possible learning activities: (What will I do to get them there)

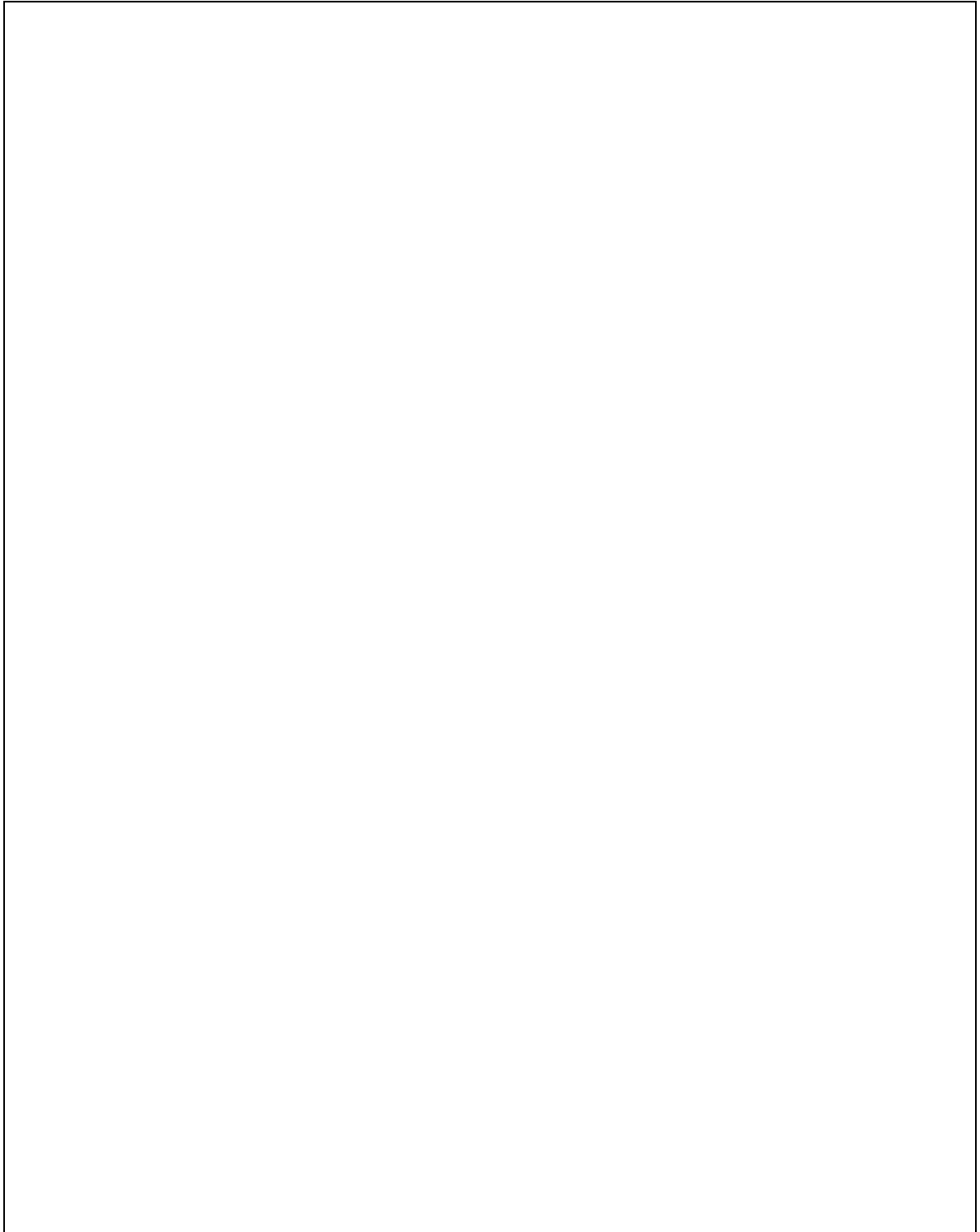*Activities recognise the integrated nature and sequence (receptive → productive) of second language acquisition*

Resources:

Reflection:

What worked well?

Even better if…

Through the Lens of a Student

We are learning to…

- name a range of different rooms and key features of a house / apartment

- ask and answer questions about a house / apartment

- describe a house / apartment in the different target language country / countries to our peers

- prepare and deliver a presentation to our peers

Information Gap Activities

IHA location vacances

Wikimedia commons

publicdomainpictures.com

Geograph

IHA Holiday lettings

IHA Holiday lettings

IHA Holiday lettings

Wikimedia Commons

Information Gap Activities contd.

PxHere

Pixabay.com

Wikimedia Commons

Wikimedia Commons

Pixabay.com

IHA.com

IHA.com

Wikimedia Commons

Answer Key - Concept Attainment Activity:

This Spanish teacher assigns a number of projects throughout the term which ask students to demonstrate agreed key aspects learned. These projects form part of the end-of-term descriptor.

This teacher assigns a project at the end of 1st year. He uses facts from this project to create a Kahoot quiz for his students when they return to school in September.

This MFL department has agreed that students will submit three pieces of work from their student language portfolio at the end of each academic year as part of their end-of-year assessment.

Concept Attainment

Rationale:

Concept Attainment is an inductive instructional strategy or model of teaching developed by Jerome Bruner and explained in the book "*A study of thinking*" (1986). Research shows us that the brain is a pattern-seeker. Concept attainment helps to uncover those patterns, pushes the analysis level of critical thinking and helps students to retain the information longer and understand the concept on a deeper level. It encourages students to develop or clarify their understanding of a concept.

Concepts:

In order to use this strategy, it is essential to have a clear understanding of the concept in question.

'A concept is anything you can see, feel, touch or taste. The greater the clarity about the concepts around us the more likely we are to understand and communicate with others'. (Bennett and Rollheiser, "*Beyond Monet*", 2001: 189)

A concept has four (4) elements:

1. **A name or label** (i.e. past tense, nouns, verbs, love, racism, dog)
2. **Examples/Exemplars**: The model cases should all share one or more characteristic or attribute (i.e. for the concept *dance*, the examples could be *Waltz, Tango, Jive*)
3. **Attributes:** every concept has essential and non-essential attributes
4. **Value Range:** Some attributes are outside our current understanding of the characteristics of concepts (our understanding of colours of apples are red / green / yellow, but maybe there are others that we have never seen?)

Preparation of the lesson:

1. Select and define a concept
2. Select the attributes
3. Develop positive and negative examples

Teaching the concept takes place in three phases:

1. Present the data sets accompanied by a focus statement:
   - Data Sets contain YES examples of a concept and NO examples of a concept. The NO examples may or may not have something in common.
   - The Focus statement focuses the learner on what to look at and what not to look at. (i.e. "You will see examples of food. The YES examples have something in common; the NO examples do not. Please think to yourself and do not share your ideas with anyone at this point.")
2. Now the learners share their hypothesis; possibly first with a person beside them and then with the whole group. You may have to find a few more examples to eliminate or clarify a concept at this stage.
3. Now students share their thinking; they may discuss the purpose of the concept or discuss the essential attributes. This phase should be done in groups and can involve other instructional strategies such as Team Analysis, 6 Thinking Hats, Placemat, etc. This is the most important stage of Concept Attainment as it helps the learner clarify the attributes of a concept.

Application in the MFL classroom:

Concept Attainment lends itself to teaching grammar concepts such as tenses, word forms, punctuation conventions as well as concepts such as stereotypes, customs, social conventions.

References

Council of Europe (2001). Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment. Cambridge University Press. The full text is available on the www.coe.int

Department of Education and Skills (DES) (2015). Framework for Junior Cycle 2015. DES. The full text is available on www.education.ie

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) (2016). Specification for Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages. DES. The full text is available on www.curriculumonline.ie

Department of Education and Skills (DES), Inspectorate (2016). Looking at our schools 2016, A Quality Framework for Post-Primary Schools. The full text is available on www.education.ie

Where can I get more Information?

www.curriculumonline.ie
This is the website of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) where you will find key documents such as:
The specification for Modern Foreign Languages,
Guidelines for the Classroom Based Assessment and Assessment Task

www.juniorcycle.ie
Here you can find the Assessment Toolkit which is designed to support and assist teachers in their work on junior cycle assessment

www.jct.ie
Our aim is to support schools in their implementation of the new Junior Cycle Framework through the provision of appropriate high quality continuing professional development for school leaders and teachers, and the provision of effective teaching and learning resources.

Follow us @JCTMFL for regular updates

Digital Resources Suggested by and for Teachers of MFL

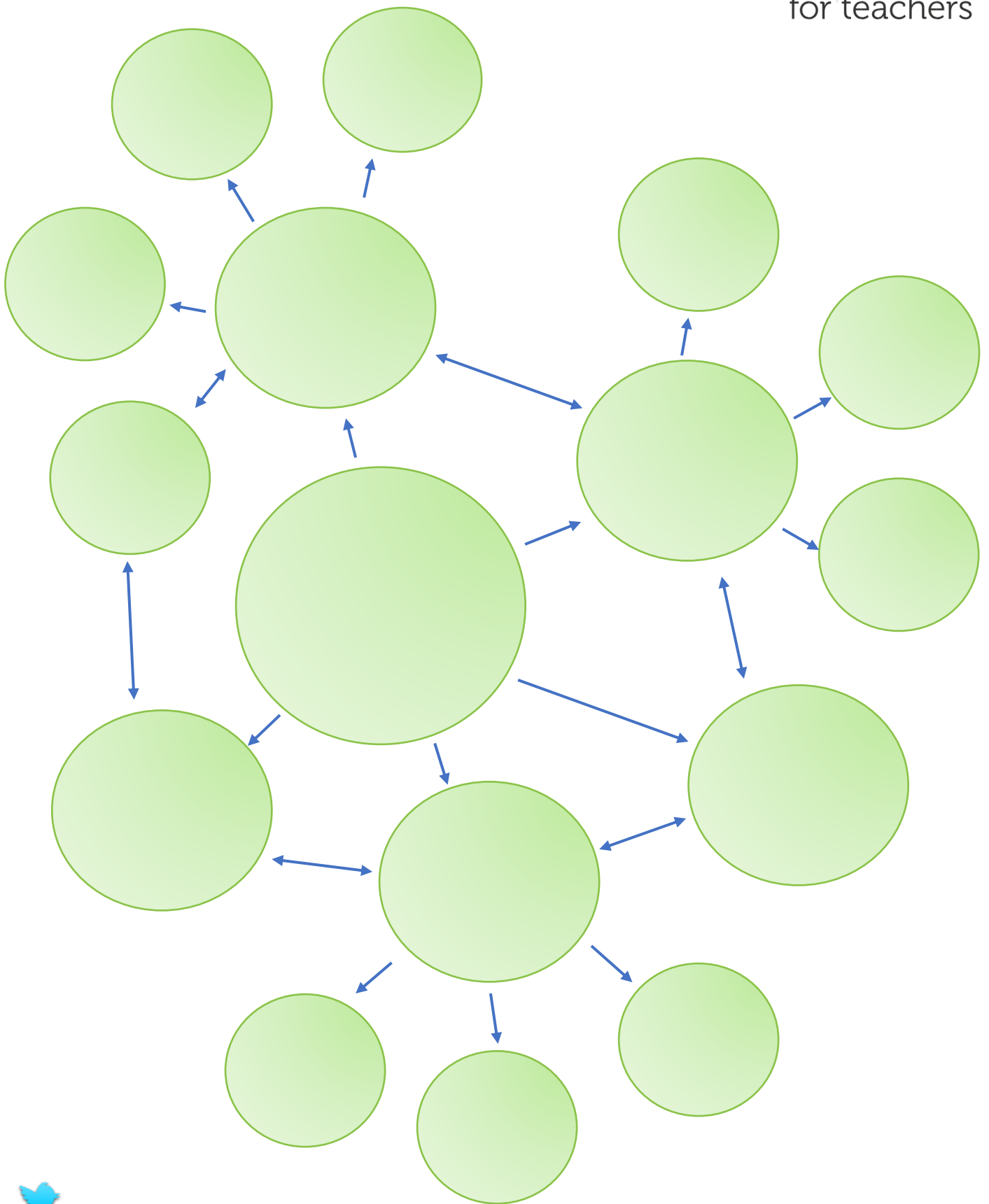|	
Post-it® Plus (notes taking)	Trading Card Creator (flashcards game)
Pearltrees (virtual resource organiser)	Deutsche Welle (German international broadcasting service that also contains online German lessons)
Storify (Create your social media stories)	TES teach (A platform to create digital lessons)
Popplet (Collaborative mind mapping tool)	Flipboard (News aggregator)
Mindmeister (Collaborative mind mapping)	LibriVox (Free public domain audiobooks)
Google Earth (Earth view)	eTwinning (A community for schools in Europe)
ipadio (Broadcast live via a phone call)	Sway (Create presentations and newsletters)
Flubaroo (A grading tool)	PodOmatic (Podcast platform)
Mindomo (Collaborative mind mapping)	Thinglink (Annotate images or videos)
Trivialang (a game app for language learners)	Second Life (virtual world platform)
Tumblr (simple microblogging w. media	Rhinospike (audio recordings by NSs)
PollDaddy (online poll creation tool, embeddable in WordPress)	PB Works (wiki website creation tool)
Moodle (course management system or VLE- virtual learning environment)	Voki (talking through avatars)
Photopeach (slide presenting tool turning images into slides)	Langblog (an audio/videoblog for oral production)
Weebly (simple website creation tool)	Wordle (word cloud creator)
Voicethread (visual presentation tool + slide presenting)	
Bliu Bliu (vocabulary, authentic materials)	(mobile phone audience polling tool)

RubiStar (rubric creator)	Shakespeak (students vote and ask questions with their mobile)
Lang-8 (native speakers correct your writing)	goo.gl (url shortener)
ReadLang (click words to make flashcards)	Memrise (create and take quizzes)
Skype (audio-conferencing tool)	Wheel Decide (Online spinner tool)
Vocaroo (share voice messages online)	TuneIn (radio/podcasts)
Socrative (mobile response quizzer/poller)	Mentimeter (mobile polling tool)

Mindmap Your Day!

Creativity is contagious. Pass it on. – Einstein