

Modern Foreign Languages - Ideas for how to stretch your Gifted and Talented son!

- Arrange for your son to spend as much time as possible in the countries where the target language is spoken. There is nothing better to improve motivation and skills, extend vocabulary and develop an authentic accent, as well as cultural knowledge.
- Arrange for your son to read a newspaper in the target language on a regular basis. We would recommend subscribing to Authentik, which provides a round-up of the weekly news taken from Target Language newspapers in French, Spanish or German, plus a CD of extracts from radio programmes: www.authentik.com , or AUTHENTIK, 27 Westland Square, Dublin 2, Ireland. Tel: +353 677 1512
- Have available a set of Magnetic Poetry in the Target Language. These are available in a number of shops including Waterstones. A metallic surface is needed. You can provide a larger area by covering a suitable space with "attract-a-magnet paint", available from The Happy Puzzle Company Tel 0800 367 3728, www.happypuzzle.co.uk.
- Try to organise work experience with a company that has links with the Target Language countries. Try contacting connexions via the school, or on www.connexions-direct.com. We also recommend a visit to the Languages Work website, www.languageswork.org.uk.
- Use interesting picture books, with no words, as the stimulus for a piece of writing. As there is no text, the pictures can be interpreted at any level of sophistication and in any language. Books such as *Clown* by Quentin Blake are very suitable.
- Borrow books from the LRC in the Target Language. We have lots of books in French and Spanish, such as Asterix, Harry Potter and others.
- Contact local universities to see what they are able to offer. This might involve advanced days in a language such as German or sampler days in languages such as Japanese, or a session on linguistics - how languages are constructed.
- If you are in Year 7 or 8, attend language club on Monday lunchtimes. If older, would you be willing to come and help in language club?
- Take a look at the resources provided by European Schoolbooks limited, The Runnings, Cheltenham GL51 9PQ Tel 01242 245 242 www.eurobooks.co.uk.

- Subscribe to a language magazine. ELI Magazines have been a familiar medium for language learning worldwide for more than 20 years. There are also more interactive games and activities on the ELI Magazines' website at www.elimagazines.com
- Make use of the school's subscription to the excellent Linguascope website at www.linguascope.com You can access it using Username: rbksch and Password: mfl. For more able learners who have already grasped the basic vocab games, we recommend using the blue Linguastars tab on the homepage to take you to some more challenging activities.
- Another excellent website for more advanced language learners is www.languagesonline.org.uk
- Get involved in twinning activities if there is a suitable opportunity in your locality.
- Have available a really good dictionary. Get your child to explore its wealth. Nominate a particular letter and then ask your child to put together a picture made up of objects starting with that letter in the target language. Also advise that "abstract" words, such as the horizon or an emotion, can be portrayed.
- Play games such as Scrabble and Lexicon but in the target language. Decide with your child whether the scoring system needs to be changed or the frequency of letters changed, to take account of differences in the use of particular letters in other languages. That discussion itself would be most instructive.
- Build up a collection of novels and poetry in the target language. There are books available in school in the LRC, and most public lending libraries have a foreign languages section.
- Get your child to set a crossword where the answers are in the target language. The clues can be in English or in the required language to make the challenge much more difficult. These can also be created online at <http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com>.
- Through a recognized organization, involve your child in a pen-pal scheme with the country required. Contact can now be made by email. The mfl department may be able to help if your child would like a pen-pal.
- Organize as much contact as possible with anyone who speaks the target language - family members, friends, native speakers and other visiting adults.