

Association for Language Learning  
**Language World 2018**



**Language Detectives**



**Sue Cave**

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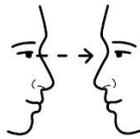
## Objectives

- Demonstrate activities for developing language learning skills and knowledge about language

The following activities were part of a 'Language Detectives Day' for able primary linguists. Children worked in teams throughout the morning. Depending on their success in completing the activities, the group earned points which helped to avoid time penalties in the afternoon. However, these resources could be used as stand-alone activities in the classroom for developing language learning skills and knowledge about language. All the resources can be found in the Smart Notebook file 'Language Detectives Day' on the Cave Languages website.  
<http://www.cavelanguages.co.uk/sharing-good-practice>

## Language Learning Strategies

- Gesture and mime
- Eye contact and repetition
- Memorisation strategies
- Use of prior knowledge



Through participation in the following activities, the children then drew conclusions as to how they could help them learn a language.

## Gesture and Mime



I love fishing  
with my friend.

The cinema is  
on the left.

Swimming with  
dolphins is great.



Pigs can't fly.

Babies must drink  
plenty of milk.

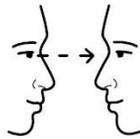
I love fishing  
with my friend

Butterflies are  
very fragile.

The children had to mime the statements on the cards to others in their group. The group tried to identify the exact wording on the card. They discovered that using gesture and mime can be an effective aid to communication but it was not sufficient alone. The types of words which they found particularly difficult to convey were conjunctions, modal verbs, adverbs and some adjectives.

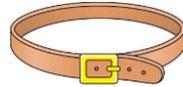
## Eye Contact and Repetition

- Chinese Whispers



The children arranged themselves in a line. A word in Chinese was whispered to the first person in the line. This person had to whisper the word to the next person and so on along the line. They could not look at the person or repeat what they had said. The last person was asked to say what they had heard and it was compared with the original. Then the same process was repeated but this time the word could be repeated as many times as they wished and they could look at each other. The results were found to be much closer to the original. This reinforced the importance of eye contact and repetition for communication.

## Memorisation Strategies



The children were presented with the objects above and were given the words for them in Welsh, Italian, Spanish or German depending on which team they were in. They could ask as many times as they wished for repetition. After a few minutes, they were asked to name the objects themselves. They discovered that looking at the mouth of the speaker helped them to work out how to pronounce unfamiliar sounds. Also by making associations with the sound of the word and its meaning, this helped them to recall them. When subsequently presented with the written word for the objects, they discovered that without knowing the phonics of the knowledge, this did not help.

## Prior Knowledge



Arboretum



Aqueduct



Genuflect



Pisciculture



Quadruplets



Pentacle



Septuagenarian



Solarium

Terrarium



Zoophobia



The children were presented with the photos above and given a list of words which they then had to match correctly to each photo. This activity was designed to identify the strategy of using prior knowledge of other languages to help discover the meaning of a word.

## Knowledge about Language

- Word classes and sentence structure
- Using a bi-lingual dictionary
- Rhythm and intonation
- Letter and sound connections



The following activities are to practise ways to decode language. A variety of languages was used but in particular Welsh, German, Italian and Spanish as knowledge of these languages was needed to solve the mystery in the afternoon of the Language Detectives Day.

## Word Classes



n.



vb.



conj.



pron.



adj.



adv.



prep.

Knowing the meaning of the word classes and their abbreviation is essential for dictionary use. The images represent the concept of each word class. There is an explanation of each action on the Cave Languages website.

<http://www.cavelanguages.co.uk/sharing-good-practice>

Once the children were familiar with the actions, a game of Simons says can be played to consolidate them e.g. Simon says 'noun' and they must perform the action unless Simon does not say.

## Sentence Structure



### JABBERWOCKY

Lewis Carroll



(from *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*, 1872)

`Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!  
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!  
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun  
The frumious Bandersnatch!"

The children were asked to work out which words were adjectives, verbs and nouns.

## Sentence Structure



### NOUNS

toves  
wabe  
borogroves  
raths  
Jabberwock  
son  
jaws  
claws  
Jubjub bird  
Bandersnatch

### VERBS

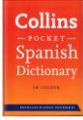
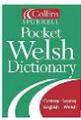
'Twas  
gyre  
gimble  
were  
outgrabe  
beware  
bite  
catch  
shun

### ADJECTIVES

brillig  
slithy  
mimsy  
mome  
frumious

The children were asked how they decided to which word class they belonged. Then a discussion took place about how an understanding of the sentence structure of languages aids comprehension.

**Using a bi-lingual dictionary**














Esgid  
 Geiriradur  
 Las gafas  
 Die Schachtel  
 La cuchara  
 Der Bleistift  
 L'etichetta  
 Das Blatt  
 El vaso plastico  
 Die Flasche  
 Il fazzoletto  
 El reloj

Each group of children was given 4 bi-lingual dictionaries – Welsh, Spanish, German and Italian in addition to the list of words above. They had to identify which language it was and then use the appropriate dictionary to find its meaning. Having done that, they had to seek the item in the room. The first team to find all the items was the winner and was awarded points. In order to do this successfully they needed to use their knowledge of dictionaries and the structure of each language, in particular the definite article.

## Rhythm and Intonation



	1	2	3	Spanish Malay
	1	2	3	Latvian German
	1	2	3	Welsh French
	1	2	3	Chinese Finnish

A question in one of the languages above was heard and then 3 replies in different languages. The children had to determine which language it was and match the correct answer to the question. They were encouraged to listen for the pattern of the rhythm and intonation to help them. This activity was designed to heighten their awareness of patterns in language.

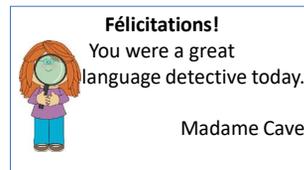
## Phonics – Letters and Sounds



German	French	Welsh	Spanish	
Jeder	Bonjour	Ji-binc	Julio	Mejor
Projekt	Jaune	Jocan	El reloj	
Kaiser	Mai	Ailenu	El aire	Fraisier
Mai	Calais	Braich	Bailar	

Two words in each of the above languages were read aloud. Each word contained an identical letter. Having identified the sound for this letter in each language, they then heard an additional word with the letter within it and they had to say which language it was. This was to make them aware that letters can sound different in different languages and the learning of the letter/sound connections for a language is needed.

## Language Detective Cards



The template for these language detective cards can be downloaded from the Cave Languages website and given as recognition in the classroom of good language detective skills.

<http://www.cavelanguages.co.uk/sharing-good-practice>

## Crime Puzzle



Dear Detectives

Having successfully completed your detective training, we need you to solve your first case.

It has been discovered that an international criminal gang is planning a crime. This gang speaks several languages, this is why this crime has been selected for you to solve.

Your job is to use your language detective skills to find out **who** will commit the crime, **in which city**, **at what time** and the **exact map reference**. It is known that by apprehending a certain object from this criminal, the crime will be stopped. You will only be able to discover what this **object** is by finding out the information above.

In this envelope you will find some clues which have already been intercepted and given to us by other detectives from around the world.

Read each clue carefully and find out what you must do. Remember, time is running out and you must solve all three clues if you are to find out the name of the object.

Good Luck!

In the afternoon of the 'Language Detectives Day' each group of children was given a set of clues which would lead them to finding out the name of the criminal, the place and time as well as an object to apprehend to prevent the crime taking place. The criminal gang speaks several languages and therefore they will need their newly acquired language skills and knowledge from the morning to solve the clues. Depending on how many points were accrued in the morning, some groups were delayed by a time penalty.

## Clue 1

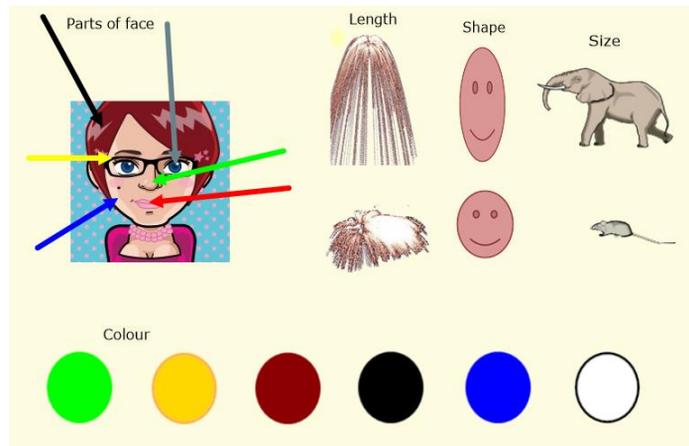
Here is the description of the criminal but who is it?

**Ganddo fe gwallt golau hir, llygaid glas, wyneb hir, trwyn mawr, a ceg bach.**



A telephone conversation in Welsh has been intercepted and a description of the criminal has been recorded. The children must listen to the recording, read the description and work out which person matches the description.

## Clue 1



To help the children decipher the description in Welsh, they are given audio files of the parts of the face, adjectives of size and colour in Welsh.

## Clue 2

### Clue 2

#### Where and when will the crime be committed?

Look at the message called 'Clue 2' which has been intercepted. You will find it in the envelope. In the message you will find the answer to where and when the crime will be committed. The message is written in different languages. This is what you must do.

- Decide in which language each sentence is written.
- Use the dictionaries to decode them. Each sentence is a puzzle. Find the answer to the puzzle and write down the word in **English**.
- If you solve all the puzzles, you will have all the words to find out where and when the crime will be committed.
- Write down your answer on the Mystery Solved sheet in your envelope.

**Do not allow people in other groups to see or hear your answer. They may be spies.**



### Clue - 2 INTERCEPTED MESSAGE



IL SOLE NON TRAMONTA AD ESTE,  
IL SOLE TRAMONTA AD \_\_\_\_\_.

¿Cómo se llama la capital de Inglaterra ?

Rhannu pedwar ar ugain â pedwar

**Eine Person die statt einem jungen  
König ein Land beherrscht.**

*Un luogo nella città con alberi ed erba.*

La cuarta letra y l tercera letra de simpatico.

#### Handy Hints

The word for a person who rules instead of a young king is called a 'regent'.

Ad = in the

In German verbs can be found at the end of a sentence.

The second clue is a series of sentences in different languages. The children must work out which language it is, use the dictionaries to decode the message and then use these words to find out where the criminal will be – West London Regent's Park 6pm.

## Clue 3

### Clue 3

#### Where exactly will the criminal go?

A contact in Germany has just managed to send, by video link, directions to the exact location in a park. However, until you have managed to solve clue 2, you will not know which park map you need to solve Clue 3. You will find several maps in the envelope. This is what you must do.

- Select the correct map from the envelope.
- Open and play the video recording from the German contact
- Listen carefully, observing the hand gestures and follow the directions to discover exactly where the criminal will go.
- Write down your answer on the Mystery Solved sheet in your envelope.

**Do not allow people in other groups to see or hear your answer.  
They may be spies.**

### Directions in German



Having selected the correct map from the three provided, they watch a video recording in German of the directions to follow to find the exact place in the park.

Here is the final piece of the puzzle.

- You will be given letter cards which spell the name of the object which must be found in order to prevent the crime being committed.
- For each incorrect answer for the who/when/where questions, you will receive one fewer card.



- Which object is yours?
- In which language is the word?

Y

mb

ar

el

The final clue is a word cut up into phonemes. Having identified which language they think it is, they must rearrange the letters and using a dictionary find its meaning. This will tell them which of the objects above they must apprehend from the criminal to prevent the crime being committed.

## Language Detective Day Resources

The resources, including sound files, for all these activities as well as a detailed plan for the 'Language Detective Day' can be downloaded from the Cave Languages Website.

Scroll down to the bottom of the Sharing Good Practice page

<http://www.cavelanguages.co.uk/sharing-good-practice>

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