



PARMITER'S SCHOOL

FOUNDED 1681

Headmaster: Mr M Jones BA MEd

20 March 2023

Dear Year 8 & 9 Parents and Carers

Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) Learning Strategies

Most students in Year 8 and 9 have recently completed their end of module assessments in Languages and will soon be sitting their school examinations, so we thought it might be helpful to once again share our Learning Strategies document with you. These were shared with you last spring and we hope you found them useful in supporting your child with their learning for Language module tests and their KS3 language examinations. All students in Year 8 and 9 should have a copy of the strategies on their Google Classroom to support their learning in French and, depending on the second language studied, either German or Spanish.

We know that students often need a gentle reminder to use these ideas and spend a realistic amount of time memorising words and phrases, as this significantly improves outcomes and progress for most students.

As mentioned last year, by mixing and matching some of the ideas below, we hope to make the learning process more successful. Hopefully, improved scores in tests and a recognition that they have a better understanding of the texts they listen to and read, will show students that by using these strategies they are committing more effective time and effort to learning homework and revision. We tend to teach by topic, so students will regularly be given a list of words and/or phrases which they will be tested on in class, just as spellings were tested in primary school.

We have suggested using the following strategies, which are not in any particular order, however, the first one is perhaps a logical starting point for everyone. Teachers regularly refer to the list to remind students of the strategies. Students should refer to the list whenever they have learning homework or are revising for Module tests or examinations. We have included different ideas, as students learn in different ways, but we would stress that every student would benefit from using a variety of them during their learning time to ensure the words are fully embedded in their short term memory. Revisiting the words and/or phrases in class and, from time to time at home after a test, will then help move them to their longer term memory.

We hope both parents/carers and students again find this helpful.

Kind regards

Ms J O'Donnell
Head of Languages

Nemo sibi nascitur:

Our values of community, aspiration and opportunity enable every individual to grow and flourish

Parmiter's MFL Department: A guide to more successful vocabulary learning

Before starting, identify the best time to sit down and learn your list of words/phrases e.g. after playing football in the garden, after eating, first thing in the morning or perhaps when you get in from school. Short, repeated sessions are better than one long one, so spend about 10-15 minutes learning, on several occasions. Check ahead to see if you have learning homework and you don't leave it until the night before the test. Learn to SPELL the words - spend time writing them down and ask someone to test you to check you know them.

Learning strategies - these are in no particular order but make sure you do **number 1**.

1. **Learn, cover, write:** Always include the le/la or un/une. On paper, write the words in a list in French and English 2 or 3 times. Then cover the English and try to write the meaning of the French words in English - how many do you know? Repeat until you know most. Then cover the French words and use the English list to try to write out the French. Check how many you have written correctly - repeat if you need to. Go away and come back twenty minutes later. Can you do it now? - cover the English and write the French again. Repeat this at spaced intervals.
2. **Test yourself in a random order:** use Quizlet, if possible, or create your own test using an online word generator. There are lots of online tools, but make sure you can input the list you need to learn.
3. **Teach the words to someone else:** even the dog! This means you are repeating them again - don't forget to tell that person how to spell them and check you do this correctly.
4. **Record the words/phrases on your phone:** you can learn them on the bus, in the car. If the teacher has recorded the list, use this to listen to them on your phone/computer as well.
5. **Record yourself reading the words aloud:** Firstly record the French words and the English meanings. Then record the French words on their own and finally record the English separately as well, but in a different order. Use the first list to learn the words. Then listen to the French - can you remember the meaning in English? Listen to the English list - can you say those in French? (Remember you have to be able to SPELL them too before the test.)
6. **Make flash cards:** French on one side and English or a picture on the other. Alternatively, or as well, use post-it notes around the house or your room. Once you know them, remove them. You will now only have the ones you find tricky dotted about the house. If these flashcards or post-its are kept safely, they will be a handy revision tool before assessments and exams.
7. **Retrieval:** try and recall as many words from your list as possible without looking at the list and then write the French next to them. You can do this the other way round too. You will then know which you are not so familiar with or sure of.
8. **Kinaesthetic learning:** you will have to sit and learn at some point but if you prefer to be active, put your earphones in and use the words recorded on your phone so you can listen, repeat and learn while you kick a ball, walk the dog or jog. You could even do it while you wash up.
9. **Phone a friend:** When you first start learning the words, you could contact a friend online from the same French class as you and work with them - this is a good way to help you both learn.
10. **Ask someone to test you:** parent, sibling, friend. When you think you know how to write the words correctly, ask someone to test you but in a random order and help you check your spellings.