

Grand Union Language Network Newsletter

October 2025

The National Launch of LEO

Motivate and engage your learners!
Strengthen your subject knowledge!
Improve outcomes for your pupils!

Develop your languages teaching with **free, flexible CPD** from the National Consortium for Languages Education (NCLE)

Developed by the UCL Institute of Education and funded by the Department for Education, **Languages Educators Online (LEO)** offers a free professional development platform created just for languages teachers.

Whether you're an early career teacher or a seasoned MFL lead, you know the power of fresh ideas, inspiring practice, and professional confidence.

Click to learn
more about LEO
here

Click to register
for your free
account

Click to attend
NCLE's webinar
on 8th October

Languages Leadership
official launch module

**Principled Practice and
Assessing for Success**
Coming up soon

- Bite-sized modules will be launched intermittently.
- Modules cover key aspects of languages pedagogy
- A special thread on AI in the languages classroom will support your existing classroom practice.



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Upcoming Face-to-Face Teach meets

How do you
prepare for the
new GCSE
speaking exam?

The West Midlands Language Network are hosting 3 teach meets in 3 different locations to enable you the opportunity to take part in our exciting event centred around preparing for and marking the new GCSE speaking exam.

How do you
encourage and
develop genuine
spontaneous
speech?

How do you mark
against the new
assessment
criteria?

**Register your
place below**

Don't miss out on your opportunity to network with other MFL colleagues and hone your skills!

Grand Union Teachmeet	• Wednesday 22nd October • 13:00-16:00 • Register at Tudor Grange Academy
Trent and Tame Teachmeet	• Tuesday 18th November • 13:00-16:00 • Register at Arthur Terry School
Swanswell Teachmeet	• Wednesday 3rd December • 13:00-16:00 • Register at Sidney Stringer Academy



Culture in the curriculum

As we progress through the Autumn term there are ample opportunities to celebrate the cultures of target language speaking countries. Events like Día de los Muertos, der Tag der Deutschen Einheit (and of course Christmas!) offer vibrant opportunities for cultural exploration and meaningful exposure to the lived experiences, values, and perspectives of other communities.

However, as educators we must be mindful of presenting traditions, symbols or language in an authentic, rather than decorative or exotic manner, and ensure that all materials are responsibly sourced and suitably contextualised. An insightful CPD webinar on Día de los Muertos in July from Jane Lavery at the University of Southampton raised questions about how we teach about this celebration and honour its complexity in a way that is representative of Mexican culture. Please follow the link to the CPD recording.

**Click here
for CPD
recording**

Event Schedule for 2025-2026

Grand Union Teachmeet	• Wednesday 22nd October • 13:00-16:00 • Register at Tudor Grange Academy	Spontaneous Speech and the new GCSE speaking exam In person Teach Meet
Trent and Tame Teachmeet	• Tuesday 18th November • 13:00-16:00 • Register at Arthur Terry School	During the session we'll consider how we can develop genuine spontaneous speech, with examples and emerging success stories shared by schools across the region. We'll also consider how to prepare students and staff for the upcoming mock speaking exams and engage in some moderation of sample speaking scripts. This face-to-face event will be run three times in different locations. Click on the school name where you want to attend the session (on the left) to sign up.
Swanswell Teachmeet	• Wednesday 3rd December • 13:00-16:00 • Register at Sidney Stringer Academy	
Grand Union Webinar	• Thursday 13th November • 15:30-16:30	Embedding Phonics Click to register
Swanswell Webinar	• Wednesday 14th January • 15:30-16:30	Supporting Home Language Qualifications at GCSE and Beyond https://Click to register
NCLE Webinar	• Wednesday 26th November • 16:00-17:00	Curriculum and Assessment Review: Languages education fit for purpose? Hear from stakeholders from the languages community discussing the recommendations from the Curriculum and Assessment Review. Click to register
Trent and Tame Webinar	• Thursday 29th January • 15:30-16:30	Using AI for spontaneous speaking development Click to register
Grand Union Webinar	• Wednesday 4th March • 15:30-16:30	Exploring different Curriculum models Click to register



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Introducing Our National Priority Projects

Driving change through research-informed action in classrooms

Grand Union: A deep dive into curriculum models

Project objectives:
Defining optimal curricular conditions for language learning, including the logistical, financial and motivational impacts of different curriculum models.

Swanswell: Celebrating multilingualism

Project Objectives:
To support and collaborate with Coventry City of Languages to promote and celebrate the linguistic and cultural diversity across the city.

Trent and Tame: Exploring KS2/3 transition

Project Objectives:
To develop a compelling, cross phase narrative about the value of language learning and how it enriches lives now and in the future.

We look forward to updating you as our research progresses!

Looking back at European Day of Languages

We hope that you enjoyed celebrating European Day of Languages with your students as much as we did, and that the ideas shared in [Swanswell's CPD webinar](#) gave you fresh inspiration for events and activities in your own school.

"I found the webinar really informative from a non-language speciality. Great to hear a wide range of ideas for inspiring diversity in schools by passionate and skilled professionals"

Swanswell also celebrated with a Bake off, a movie night and a treasure trail around the school.



Year 7 students from Swanswell decorated mugs to commemorate the theme of European Day of Languages this year which was 'Languages open hearts and minds'.



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Partners in Language

Routes into Languages, now managed by the University Council of Modern Languages, continues to support schools to access wider curricular and outreach activities to promote love of languages.

The West Midlands branch operates through the University of Warwick.

Watch out for this upcoming event for year 11 language students focused on careers.

This event is part of the outreach and widening participation work delivered to local schools by the School of Modern Languages and Cultures through the Routes into Languages network. This new event is for students in Year 11 and will be a forum to explore the academic skills, personal enrichment and careers opportunities that the study of languages can provide. Students will develop the following:

- language skills
- societal and cultural awareness
- careers and employability skills

Students will access three different sessions throughout the day, a taster session in a new language (Korean, Russian, Chinese TBC) a society and culture session and a careers and employability session. The sessions will be delivered by our SMLC academics, Warwick alumni and finalists returning from their year abroad. The day will be supported by our wonderful team of SMLC student ambassadors!

[Click here to view events and sign up for newsletter](#)

[Click here to view event details and sign up](#)

How to get in touch with Grand Union



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