

# How can parents/carers help support students in Modern Foreign Languages?

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Thank You Köszönöm Tack  
Спасибо Dank Gracias  
谢谢 Merci Seé  
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## **Modern Foreign Languages GCSE**

As a school and as a Department we are committed to ensuring that your son/daughter achieves his/her full potential in their GCSE examinations.

I would like to take this opportunity to give you more information about the Modern Foreign Languages GCSE course.

The subject is examined in two tiers (Foundation and Higher) for all skills. The final GCSE grade awarded is upon the tier entry. GCSE grades from 9-1 will be awarded.

### **Writing examination in June of Year 11 (25% of total mark)**

Students complete written tasks for a variety of purposes and in a range of contexts, including translations into the target language. Students are required to produce written texts of varying lengths to express facts, ideas and opinions. There will be some choice of questions. The paper will also feature a translation from English into French. The use of dictionaries is not permitted.

### **Speaking examination in May of Year 11 (25% of total mark)**

Students are asked to complete a variety of tasks on different topics that they will have studied during the course of KS4. Students will be assessed through three tasks: a role play, questions based on a picture stimulus and a conversation. Students at either tier will be permitted 12 minutes preparation time to consider the questions and stimulus for the role play and picture provided.

### **Listening and Reading (each 25%)**

Listening and Reading are examined at the end of the three-year course, when students have had the opportunity to develop their listening and reading skills, using a range of reading and listening material. They will also be asked to complete a translation task into English. Home learning and revision clearly play an important part towards their performance. It is absolutely essential, therefore, that your son/daughter is completing all homework and revision for French, German or Spanish in order to do well in the forthcoming examinations. Weekly vocabulary tests and listening and reading tasks will be regularly set as homework.

Revision guides are available on Amazon for further exam practice:

- Edexcel GCSE French or German 9-1 translation and grammar workbook
- Edexcel GCSE French or German 9-1 revision guide
- Edexcel GCSE French or German 9-1 revision workbook

## **Building independence to improve performance at GCSE**

At home, your son/daughter should be doing a number of the following activities to ensure success in Modern Foreign Languages and these may also be set as homework by his/her language teacher:

- Improving answers to their speaking questions on a variety of topics: this should be completed by February half-term of Year 11 in view of the speaking exam which will take place immediately after the Easter holiday.
- Improving drafts of writing modelled answers to, and beyond, target grade. Room LA2 is available every lunchtime to do this.
- Practising memorising answers to their speaking questions on a variety of topics. Room LA2 is available every lunchtime to do this.
- Learning vocabulary words every week to maximise their performance in their listening and reading exams in May/June of Year 11
- Completing grammar and translation tasks in the Edexcel GCSE translation and grammar workbook, available on Amazon.
- Making notes from exercise books/booklets on vocabulary, grammar structures, and revision tips, signed by parent/carer to show that your son/daughter is building a revision folder at home.
- Using the Edexcel GCSE French or German 9-1 revision guide and/or revision workbook, available on Amazon to make notes on the key vocabulary and grammar structures and to practise essential listening and reading skills.
- Working through a variety of exam papers that will be issued over the coming weeks and are available on Google Classroom.
- Using websites such as BBC Bitesize, Memrise, [www.s-cool.co.uk](http://www.s-cool.co.uk) to gain extra information on vocabulary, questions and answers in the target language.
- Make mindmaps with vocabulary from Module 1 to 7 using your KO
- Practise vocabulary on Quizlet and Memrise platforms  
<https://quizlet.com/565287317/edexcel-gcse-french-module-7-flash-cards/>
- Complete past papers available on Google Classroom.
- Little and often (Vocabulary revision must be happening every day for 5-10 minutes max)
- Attend the French booster class on Tuesdays 3:15pm-4:00pm in LA2 or the German booster classes (See programme in LA1).
- Download the RadiosFrance app on your phone and listen to French radio regularly (on the way to school for example) or stream German radio online.

If students do not practise memorising their speaking questions and writing modelled answers regularly, and if they have not practised the essential skills of listening and reading for their final examination, then it is clearly more difficult to achieve a good grade overall.

## Top tips for the listening exam

### Before the exam

1. Build up your personal vocabulary - learn a small number of new words every day
2. Make sure you are familiar with the different types of task you may be asked to do.
3. Be careful! Sometimes there will be words on the tape, or words and pictures in the question that could distract you from the right answer!
4. Ask your teacher for recordings to take home. In the exam you will only hear each item or part of an item twice, but by listening to recordings at home beforehand, you'll build your confidence and train your ear (Go to Google Classroom)
5. If you read through the transcript **before** you listen to the tape, it could help your confidence when you realise how much you understand (Go to Google Classroom)
6. Try not to write when the tape is playing - it is hard to write and listen at the same time - trust your short-term memory!
7. If you are entered for the Higher tier, take every opportunity to listen to longer passages. Focus on the feelings, opinions and attitudes of the speakers.
8. Before you go into the exam, ask your teacher to offer the class a 'warm up' listening session of about 20 minutes - or just listen to a tape of your own.

### During the exam

1. You are usually given 5 minutes to read through the paper before the tape starts. Use this to your advantage by looking right through the paper to see what kind of tasks there are.
2. Look closely! Should you listen for precise information (like train arrival and departure times)? Or should you be listening to the whole passage, in order to draw a conclusion (for example, name the girl who has the best relationship with her parents)?
3. As you read the question, try to predict the sort of information that may be in the passage. It will help focus your mind.
4. Look at the title of the question or section very carefully. Make sure you understand **how** to give your answer. If there is an example, look closely at the answer given - it will show you whether you need to write a single letter, a single word, or more than one word.
5. Have a good look at any illustrations. They could give important clues as to what is coming.
6. Remember, you are **not** expected to understand **every** word - there is probably a lot of 'redundant' language you don't need. Be positive. Concentrate on what you do understand. Sometimes the passage can be difficult, but the questions are easy.
7. Use your knowledge of grammar. For example, it may be important to know whether someone is talking about the past, the present, or the future.
8. Use your knowledge of the countries. For example, if you hear someone was on holiday in Madrid / Paris / Berlin, it is unlikely they spent time on the beach.
9. Don't just listen to the words. The tone of someone's voice may also be helpful - for example in telling you if they are making a statement or asking a question.
10. If you have to write answers in the target language, remember you will not be penalised for minor spelling mistakes.

## Top tips for the reading exam

### Before the exam

1. Build up your personal vocabulary by learning a small number of new words every day.
2. Get plenty of regular practice. Use past papers (Go to Google Classroom). Use BBC Bitesize - both the Revision Bites and the Test Bites.
3. Make sure you are familiar with different types of task, for example, multiple choice, filling in a grid, matching, gap filling, answering in the target language, and answering in English.
4. Go over some questions with a friend. It will give you a chance to look at someone else's exam technique. You might learn from each other.
5. Try to find opportunities to read French/German for pleasure without the pressure of questions and time limits, for instance magazines, language CDs with song lyrics, comics. This will help you build up your vocabulary. (Go online for language magazines or songs). Use lyricstraining.com
6. Make sure you know how to use your dictionary to look up any words you don't know, and make a note of them so you can revise them before the exam. Look at the Revision Bite on [Using a dictionary](#) for more hints.

### During the exam

1. Don't panic! You are not expected to understand every word of the text.
2. Take a positive approach to your reading. Concentrate on what you do understand, not on the difficult words and phrases.
3. Have a good look at the title of the text as well as any illustrations. They may give you some important clues.
4. Read the whole text before attempting to answer any questions. It is usually better to read the text twice at a brisk pace, than to struggle along once, slowly.
5. Be clear as to exactly what each question wants. For example, should you be picking out precise details (for example, the date of someone's birthday) or should you be reading the whole passage in order to draw some broad conclusions (for example, a comparison of two people's attitudes to television)?
6. Can you guess the meaning of a difficult word in a sentence if you understand what all the other words mean?
7. Can you find similarities with English words? (eg *farmacia* = chemist's / pharmacy)
8. Can you find links with other words in the language? (eg *une maison* = a house : *une maisonnette* = a small house)
9. Are you aware of language patterns? (eg 're' in front of a word often means again: *recomenzar* = to start again)
10. Use your knowledge of grammar. For example, if you can identify a plural, a verb tense, an adjective, an adverb or preposition, you will be in a better position to make an intelligent guess at a meaning.
11. Use your knowledge of the countries. For example, knowing about the Spanish educational system could be very useful if you are working on a text about school.
12. If you have to write answers in the language, be as clear as possible; but remember you will **not** be penalised for small mistakes.
13. Don't spend too long on a difficult item. Come back to it later.

## Web sites for students to explore...

- <http://www.ngfl-cymru.org.uk/eng/vtc-home/vtc-ks3-home.htm>
- <http://www.learnanytime.co.uk/index.htm#>
- <http://worldlanguages.pppst.com>
- <http://www.mflresources.org.uk/#frppt>
- <http://www.languagesresources.co.uk/index.htm>
- <http://www.mflresources.org.uk/>
- [http://www.asisehace.net/?page\\_id=26](http://www.asisehace.net/?page_id=26)
- <http://www.didcotgirls.oxon.sch.uk/depts/mfl/exercises/exercisesindex.htm>
- <http://www.languagesonline.org.uk/>
- [http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/websites/11\\_16/index.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/websites/11_16/index.shtml)
- <http://www.linguacentral.co.uk/>
- <http://www.wildfrench.co.uk/>
- <http://www.ltsotland.org.uk/mfle/c4modernlanguages/#>
- <http://www.ltsotland.org.uk/mfle/c4modernlanguages/#>
- <http://www.ashcombe.surrey.sch.uk/Curriculum/modlang/index.htm> (click on: language resources)
- <http://www.prescot-school.knowsley.sch.uk/prescot-language/mfl-site/french.htm>