

Follow up No.2 – Additional Resources (KS2-Module 2- Speaking)

Doing a lot with a little – building conversations

During your Speaking session, you will have watched the video clip of French children having conversations in English. Many children, particularly in Lower Key Stage 2, really enjoy the opportunity to act out and perform what they have been learning in their language lessons, even though at times the early scenarios can be a little artificial. Follow up 2 looks at how you can introduce and develop children's ability to take part in conversations with their teacher and with one another.

The first term of learning a new language often starts with greetings and introductions. Having practised orally simple greetings as a class, give children the opportunity to practise in pairs and to play a little with the new language. We need to provide children with as many opportunities as possible to practise language, take risks and know it is all right to make mistakes. Whilst the children are practising their conversations, you will have an opportunity to walk round and gently support pronunciation.

Display a dialogue on the board and explain that it is a conversation between two children Jack and Emily.

Emily: *Salut Jack!*

Jack: *Salut Emily! Ça va?*

Emily: *Ça va bien et toi?*

Jack: *Ça va bien/mal.*

Emily: *Au revoir ...*

Jack: *Au revoir, Emily!*

Read the conversation aloud giving a different voice for Jack and Emily. If this is the first time children have *seen* this language written down, then take the opportunity to point out eg the silent 't' in *Salut*, and the cedilla in *Ça va*.

Remove the dialogue from the board. Give pairs of children cut-up strips of paper with the Jack/Emily dialogue. Ask children to order the strips correctly to make a simple conversation between two children and read it aloud using their own names. This will help develop children's understanding of the sound/spelling system they are learning as well as providing a prompt in the early stages. Invite some pairs to read their conversations aloud and encourage children to think about intonation for questions and answers.

This simple dialogue can be gradually extended as children widen their range of simple sentences and questions.

Bonjour! / Salut!

Comment tu t'appelles? Je m'appelle...

Quel âge as tu? J'ai sept/huit ans

As suggested in the training session, the conversations can be between two puppets or, to add a little drama, children could take on the persona of eg someone very shy/happy/cross or someone famous.

Once children have practised their conversation several times in pairs, they may then be ready to perform it to the rest of the class or during a class assembly. As adults we are less keen to 'perform' the new language to an audience but many (not all) young children are bursting to come to the front of the class and show what they can do.

Watch the video clip, 'Conversation Model', which shows how a teacher prepares children for their mini-performances in German. (A transcript and audio recording of the key language is provided in French and Spanish). The teacher throws a soft toy to individual children who must reply promptly as soon as they catch the toy to keep the conversation flowing. This activity could be a routine activity for everyday use, providing a chance to use recently taught questions and revising those learned previously.

If you now watch the video clip 'Conversation Performance' you will see how the children progress to standing up and showing what they can do in German. (A transcript and audio recording of key language is provided in French and Spanish). Throwing and catching a soft toy helps them to focus on the activity and keeps the conversation flowing. Performing to an audience gives children confidence and helps them to speak clearly and loudly. One of the girls in the third conversation makes a mistake when recalling 'birthday'. Her partner copies the mistake. Rather than interrupt the conversation, the teacher picks this up afterwards and corrects the error sympathetically by asking the whole class to repeat the correct words for 'my birthday'.

As the video clip suggests, these are performances and the children already know the answer to most of the questions. As children gain in confidence, we need to think about setting up conversations where children don't know the answers to their questions. The following activity, shown in the video clip 'Find your partner' is an excellent example of how to build on the children's skills we saw in 'Conversation Performance'. It is a natural next step. The video clip is in German but a transcript and audio recording of key language is provided in French and Spanish.

In this activity, children have to find their 'partner' by walking round the room and asking each other questions. They combine and reuse language similar to 'Conversation Performance', which is now very familiar to them. This activity revises and *extends* children speaking skills in an interesting, challenging and realistic context. The children need to find out the information to complete the task – there is an element of surprise! Space permitting, it is also an opportunity for children to move around the classroom.

The next step then, to lead to greater independence, would be to jumble the questions up so that children can't predict the order of the questions. Children can go on to ask longer questions on different topics, reusing familiar language and structures in new contexts.

