



Unit 1 Lesson 3 What makes a language?

Teacher's Crib Sheet

Slide 1: Introduce today's topic and lesson intentions. We will look at how we learn a language, what constitutes a language and we will think about the rules of conversation.

Slide 2: Watch the clip of babies communicating. Ask pupils what are the rules of conversation that these babies have already learnt? Pupils may think of taking it in turns, using facial expressions, varying their tone, using eye contact, using gesture and touch and mimicking sounds.

Are they already using a language? They are communicating using rules of communication – it is an early form a language – the beginnings.

How are they communicating? Sound, touch, eye contact, smiling, screeching, laughing.

Slide 3: Ask pupils what are the components of a language. The list on the board is designed to get them thinking. I.e., can all languages be heard (sign language), are they all made of words (is music a language?) Can they all be written down? (What about languages before writing came about) Do they follow a set of rules (yes) Are they shaped by other languages (yes, when they come into contact with other languages) Are they constantly changing (yes, as our culture and our world changes, new words are created or borrowed, grammar is often simplified).

... other ideas?

Slide 4: Read out the information on the board. Some pupils may be very interested in terminology.

Slide 5: Ask pupils if they think that sign language and text speak are languages?

Slide 6: Discuss the following points concerning language, identity and prejudice. Pupils may raise thoughts, are people who can't communicate less human? Why do we learn/value European languages in school more so than others?

Slides 9 and 10: Read through the information about language acquisition and watch how babies learn to communicate. Ask pupils to make notes in their workbooks.

Slide 11: Pupils write their thoughts on the questions asked on the slide. (Oral discussion if preferred).

Slide 12: Pupils write 5 ideas in their books as to how we can use this knowledge to inform language teaching and learning in the classroom.