



<https://londoncityoflanguages.org.uk/activity/home-language-taster-session/>

HOME-LANGUAGE TASTER SESSION

We want to celebrate all the different languages spoken in London.

Plan a short “taster” session for others (all ages) to learn your home language.

The goal isn’t to “teach a language” but to share a piece of yourself and help others feel the delight of understanding something new.

A home-language taster session works best when it feels light, friendly, and confidence-building for both the person leading it and the people taking part.

No need to be a teacher!

The focus could be:

COMMUNICATION

- (a) simple greetings / leave-taking
- (b) asking how people are / answering the question
- (c) saying that they like / love London + why (friendly, exciting, interesting)
- ... and anything else you might suggest!

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT LANGUAGE & CULTURE

- (d) learning the basics of any non-Roman script that applies to your language
- (e) noticing basic grammatical differences (e.g., omission of articles, verb at the end of the sentence)
- (f) knowing where the language is spoken
- (g) knowing how to be polite (and how not to offend!)

Here is a practical **How-To Guide** followed by a **Sample 20–30 minute lesson plan** that anyone — even total non-teachers — can run with ease.

HOW TO GUIDE: Running a Home-Language Taster Session *A friendly guide for people who want to share their language with others*

1. Keep the purpose simple

A taster session is not a lesson. It's a celebration. The aim is to help people:

- Say a few things confidently
- Notice something interesting about the language
- Feel connected to the speaker and their culture
- Leave with a smile and a new curiosity

2. Start with what *you* know

You don't need to be an expert. You only need:

- A few everyday phrases
- One or two fun facts about the language
- A sense of pride in your home language
- Willingness to help others try things out

3. Focus on communication, not perfection

Encourage participants to:

- Repeat after you
- Try the sounds
- Work in pairs
- Celebrate mistakes as part of the fun

4. Add a tiny bit of “knowledge about language and culture”

People love discovering:

- A new script (even 3–4 letters is enough)
- A grammar quirk (e.g., “we don't use articles”, “verbs go at the end”)
- Where the language is spoken
- How many people speak it
- A cultural detail (food, music, festivals)

5. Use visuals or props if you like

Optional but helpful:

- A slide or handout with the phrases
- A map
- A few words in the script
- A photo of your hometown
- A song clip or short video (if appropriate)

6. Keep it short and warm

20–30 minutes is perfect.

End with a moment of pride:

“Now you can greet someone in X language!”

■ SAMPLE 25-MINUTE LESSON PLAN

Adaptable to any language — from Yoruba to Polish to Urdu to Mandarin.

As they join you:

Play a song or some music from your culture.

0–3 min — Welcome & Purpose

- “Today I’m going to teach you a few phrases in [Language].”
 - “By the end, you’ll be able to greet someone, ask how they are, and say why you love London.”
- Invite a quick show of hands: “Who has heard this language before?”
-

3–8 min — Greetings & Leave-taking

Teach 2–3 simple phrases:

- Hello
- Goodbye
- Thank you (optional)

Steps:

- Say each phrase slowly
 - Ask them to repeat
 - Let them practise in pairs
 - Add a fun cultural note (e.g., “We often nod/bow/shake hands when saying hello.”)
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8–12 min — Asking & Answering “How are you?”

Teach:

- “How are you?”
- “I’m fine / good / very well.”

Mini activity:

- Participants walk around and greet three people
 - Encourage smiles and exaggeration — it breaks the ice
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12–16 min — Saying “I like/love London because...”

Teach a simple structure:

- “I like London because...”

Give 3–4 adjectives: friendly, exciting, interesting, beautiful.

Participants choose one and say it aloud.

Optional: ask a few volunteers to share their sentence.

16–20 min — Knowledge About Language & Culture

Choose **one or two** of the following — not all:

Option A: Script

- Show 3–4 letters or characters
- Let participants try writing them
- Keep it playful: “Your handwriting is now officially better than mine!”

Option B: Grammar

Share one fun fact:

- “We don’t use articles.”
- “The verb comes at the end.”
- “We have gendered nouns.”
- “We have tones.”

Give one tiny example.

Option C: Geography

Show a map or describe:

- Where the language is spoken
- How many people speak it
- One cultural detail (food, music, festivals)

Option D: Social etiquette — how to be polite (and how not to offend!)

Examples:

- “We always greet everyone when we enter a shop.”
- “Colleagues shake hands every morning and again when leaving.”
- “With friends, we kiss to greet each other: a brush of the left then right cheek with a kiss sound. We rarely hug.”

20–23 min — Quick Review

Ask the group to:

- Greet you
- Ask how you are
- Tell you why they like London

Keep it light and celebratory.

23–25 min — Closing

- “You’ve just spoken [Language] — well done!”
- “If you want to learn more, ask me anytime.”

Optional: take a group photo / make a recording with everyone saying the greeting.

Optional Extras You Could Suggest to Participants

- Bring a small object from home (flag, book, snack)
- Teach a simple gesture or cultural custom
- Share a proverb or saying
- Play a 10-second clip of music
- Teach numbers 1–5
- Show how names are written in the script