



## London City of Languages: Ways to Get Involved!

<https://londoncityoflanguages.org.uk/activity/lcol-festival-of-languages-2026-ways-to-get-involved/>

### 1. Introduction: What is London City of Languages? [LCoL]

London is one of the most linguistically vibrant cities in the world — a place where hundreds of languages are spoken, learned, shared, and celebrated every day. **London City of Languages (LCoL)** brings this richness to the forefront by championing the languages used across our communities, schools, colleges, universities, workplaces, and cultural institutions.

#### Our aim is simple:

- to **celebrate** London's extraordinary language diversity
- to **inspire** people of all ages to learn and enjoy languages
- to **engage** families, schools, and communities in supporting language education

**Whether you're part of a school, a business, a community group, or simply someone who loves languages, there are countless ways to get involved.**

**From May to July, we will be shining a spotlight on activities and events as part of our *London City of Languages: Festival of Language* – and we would love you to be part of it!**

### 2. Who can get involved?

#### Anyone can take part, including:

- **Education:** Early Years, Primary, Secondary, Further, Higher, Adult, Third Age; mainstream and supplementary
- **Institutions:** cultural, arts, humanities, sciences
- **Civic and political organisations:** councils, libraries, community centres
- **Businesses and employers**
- **Individuals** (including aspiring influencers!)

### 3. When?

- LCoL is a **year-round initiative** - activities can be one-off, ongoing, or seasonal
- Special focus: **May–July Festival of Language**

### 4. Where?

- In person / Online / Hybrid

### 5. How to get involved

This is your “quick-start guide”.

- Advertise the initiative / campaign; spread the word about the campaign
- Join existing LCoL-badged events
- Promote what you already do
- Create new activities
- Collaborate with others

### 6. Resources (referenced in item 7)

- LCoL site <https://londoncityoflanguages.org.uk/>
- British Council [BC] <https://www.britishcouncil.org/school-resources/languages>
- Languages Gateway [LG] <https://www.thelanguagesgateway.uk/>
- Lightning Languages [LL] resources [a team within Twinkl] <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/twinkl-partnerships/cities-of-languages-partnerships>

## 💡 7. What can you do? 🌟 Ten activities to start the ball rolling

Activity Type	What you could do	Example	Resources
<b>1. Advertise</b>	Promote LCoL opportunities and encourage participation.	Showcase the Poster Competition and display entries in your space.	LCoL <a href="#">activity page</a> : information sheet + PPT
<b>2. Presentation / Talk</b>	Share why languages matter in your context.	Deliver an assembly at school, staff briefing with colleagues, or a community talk.	ALL <a href="#">‘Why Study Languages?’</a>
<b>3. Create a Display</b>	Celebrate languages visually in your setting.	Build a <i>Language Identity Wall</i> featuring all languages spoken in your space.➦	LL <a href="#">Display pack</a>
<b>4. Celebrate your community</b>	Highlight the linguistic skills of staff, learners, families, or community members.	Weekly bulletin feature; video introductions; social media post on your multilingual team, family or friendship group (#LondonCityOfLanguages) – we can repost!	LL <a href="#">Display pack</a>
<b>5. Create Audio / Video</b>	Capture multilingual voices and stories.	“A Day in My Language” student videos; staff introductions; collect video clips of the same phrase spoken in different languages.	LCoL audio/video project – <b>To be launched May.</b>
<b>6. Competition / challenge / quiz</b>	Create a fun challenge linked to languages.	Organise a Duolingo contest; pub quiz; British Council Great Languages Challenge; LL board game and activity pack for schools; LG <a href="#">Competitions</a> .	LL <a href="#">Activity pack</a> LL <a href="#">Boardgame</a> BC <a href="#">Great Languages Challenge</a> LCoL ‘Duolingo contest ‘How to’ guide
<b>7. Themed session / day / Week</b>	Explore a cultural or linguistic theme to spark curiosity.	Music, theatre, dance, books, food, calligraphy, crafts, games. This could be activities, visits or show and tell at school; a visit or discussion at home, in your community or with your colleagues.	LCoL: <a href="#">Design an Arabic Tile</a> BC: <a href="#">EDoL resources</a>
<b>8. Discover new languages</b>	Offer taster sessions or revive dormant skills.	Teach greetings, songs, rhymes, politeness phrases, a dance, or phonics contrasts. <i>Who could you invite to attend?</i>	<a href="#">LCoL taster guide</a>
<b>9. Beyond Your Setting</b>	Organise an external visit or invite a guest speaker.	Trip to a museum, cinema, cultural centre, library, or partner school.	e.g. BC webinar <a href="#">‘Where will languages take me?’</a>
<b>10. Collaborate</b>	Partner with others to amplify impact.	School teachers could organise a joint event with a supplementary school; or shared workshops. <i>If you have a particular interest in one specific language or skills (a particular sport or music) – who could you contact to organise something together?</i>	<a href="#">Language Ambassadors Case Study</a>

## 8. Suggestions for different settings

- All settings
- Primary Schools
- Secondary Schools
- Supplementary Schools
- Cross-sector collaboration
- Businesses and Employers
- Higher Education

### All Settings

- **Co-badge an existing event**  
Already planning something? Turn it into an LCoL event! Tell us about your event here  
*Example:* End-of-term Culture Days in schools. <https://ncle.ucl.ac.uk/culture-days-with-european-languages/>
  - **Use ready-made resources**  
Run an assembly or classroom activity using resources such as the British Council's European Day of Languages materials:  
<https://www.britishcouncil.org/school-resources/languages/european-day-languages>
  - **Run a themed session or club**  
Conversation classes or discovery sessions (e.g. poetry, song, dance, food, film, or music).
  - **Set a languages challenge**  
Use the British Council Great Languages Challenge as a homework activity:  
<https://www.britishcouncil.org/school-resources/find/classroom/great-languages-challenge>
  - **Join existing events**  
Explore the LCoL festival schedule add a link and participate in activities already planned.
  - **Host your own event/assembly**  
Encourage participants to showcase their linguistic skills and invite families and the wider community.
  - **Celebrate staff language skills**  
Encourage staff to share languages they speak via email signatures, tutor time, or displays.
  - **Run competitions and enrichment activities**  
Explore opportunities from the Languages Gateway:  
<https://www.thelanguagesgateway.uk/explore/types/enrichment-competitions-awards-alt-qualifications/>
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## Primary Schools – emphasis family engagement and play

*The Lightning Languages resource packs provide a wealth of resources especially suitable for Primary.*

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resources/twinkl-partnerships/cities-of-languages-partnerships>

- **Work with supplementary schools**  
Strengthen links with community language education.
  - **Invite families into school**  
Parents/carers share stories in their home languages.
  - **Run a whole-school Culture Day**  
<https://ncle.ucl.ac.uk/culture-days-with-european-languages/>
  - **Set up a Language Café**  
Pupils practise ordering food in another language.
  - **Learn songs and dances**  
Simple and engaging ways to experience another language.
  - **Play games in another language**  
Use basic phrases such as “your turn”, “start”, and “stop”.
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## Secondary Schools – lively and student-led wherever possible

- **Collaborate with supplementary (Saturday) schools**  
Partner with local community language schools attended by your pupils.
  - **Language Ambassadors**  
Enable enthusiastic linguists to deliver taster sessions in feeder primary schools.
  - **Show and Tell presentations**  
Pupils present on a randomly assigned country, language, or culture.
  - **Organise a Culture Day**  
<https://ncle.ucl.ac.uk/culture-days-with-european-languages/>
  - **Run a Duolingo competition**  
Reward progress based on XP, time spent, or vocabulary learned.
  - **Create language quizzes**  
Students design interactive quizzes on languages, cultures, or countries.
  - **Design a language-focused walking tour**  
Pupils create a local or London-based tour highlighting linguistic landmarks (e.g. using Google Maps).
  - **Organise cultural trips**  
Visit cultural centres such as Institut Français, Goethe-Institut, or embassy libraries, museums and cinemas.
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## Supplementary (Saturday / Community / Heritage) Schools - Highlight heritage language pride

- **Host celebration events**  
Invite families and the community.
  - **“Proud of My Language” showcase**  
Students present poetry, drama, or projects in their heritage language with bilingual elements.
  - **Create exhibitions**  
Include migration stories, recipes, proverbs, calligraphy, and community history.
  - **Run student-led talks**  
TED-style presentations on “*Why My Language Matters*”.
  - **Intergenerational storytelling**  
Invite older community members to share stories.
  - **Collaborate with mainstream schools**  
Joint events and shared learning opportunities.
  - **Submit student-created content**  
Short videos such as “*A Day in My Language*” for LCoL.
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## Cross-Sector Collaboration

### Mainstream schools are encouraged to take the lead.

- Identify local supplementary schools and build partnerships.
  - Co-create:
    - Language taster sessions led by heritage learners (see [guide on the LCoL site](#))
    - Cultural workshops (e.g. calligraphy, music, food, dance)
    - Joint assemblies on multilingualism
  - Invite heritage learners to act as **Language Ambassadors**.
  - Develop a shared **Language Identity Wall** showcasing all languages spoken.
  - Strengthen mutual understanding between mainstream and supplementary education.
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## Businesses and Employers

- **Celebrate workplace languages**  
Share the languages spoken by employees on social media. Use our hashtag #LondonCityofLanguages
- **Host a multilingual event**  
Celebrate with food and cultural activities.
- **Promote language skills**  
Highlight the value of multilingual employees.

- **Engage with schools**  
Offer guest speakers to discuss careers and the importance of languages.
  - **Collaborate locally**  
Restaurants and community businesses can support campaigns and events.
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### **Higher Education (Universities and Language Centres) - Emphasise outreach and public engagement**

- **Run outreach sessions**  
Deliver language and culture workshops for schools.
- **Create a “Language Zone”**  
Offer activities such as:
  - Language tasters
  - Cultural workshops (origami, crafts, etc.)
  - Film nights and exchanges
- **Partner with cultural institutions to run or host an event**  
Libraries, museums, cinemas, bookshops, and music venues.
- **Work with community groups**  
Arts, sports, volunteering, and local organisations.
- **Organise academic talks**  
Use postgraduate students and networks.
- **Collaborate across departments**  
(e.g. Music, History, Science).
- **Co-badge existing university events**  
Include lectures, concerts, and public events under LCoL.