



15th October 2012

Dear Parent / Carer,

Controlled Assessment for Speaking - Languages

I am writing to inform you about the controlled assessment for speaking that has been set for your child last week in Modern Foreign Languages (MFL). This assessment is worth 15% of your child's overall GCSE grade and it is, therefore, particularly important that they prepare for it adequately. This letter aims to help you to support your child in his/her preparation by answering some frequently asked questions regarding controlled assessments in MFL.

Your child has already been given a copy of the task which they should have attached into their exercise book – an electronic copy can be found on the Year 11 page of the MFL section of the school website.

Each controlled assessment has strict rules surrounding it which have been set by the examination board (Edexcel), the guidance below aims to answer any questions that you or your child may have:

- Students will be tested on 22nd- 26th October 2012 and will be given a specific time for their oral by their MFL teacher. These timings will also be displayed outside your child's MFL classroom in case they forget.
- Students are allowed a maximum of 6 hours preparation time for their speaking assessment. This will consist of 3 x 50 minute sessions in class time where they may produce a draft script and 3.5 hours research and preparation at home. We ask that you supervise your child at home to ensure that he/she is carrying out this preparation adequately.
- Students are allowed to use their resources to prepare for the speaking assessment, this includes: their exercise book, textbook, dictionaries and any other notes. They may speak to their classmates during the preparation time, but cannot produce extended pieces of language for one another. Internet resources are NOT allowed.
- The class teacher is not allowed to correct work or translate language for students once the task has been set. The work must be the candidates own (but they may use previously taught and / or marked work to help them – see previous bullet point).
- Students will be allowed to bring a prompt sheet of 30 words and 5 pictures into the exam with them. Words can be written in the foreign language and/or English. They are not, however, allowed to write full sentences and code (i.e. the first letter of each word in a sentence) is not acceptable. Students will write their words and draw their pictures on an official prompt sheet in lesson time.

- The test will last between 4 – 6 minutes (including the time the teacher speaks) if the student has prepared for a significantly shorter time than this then they will lose 2 marks.
- Students are expected to speak 'spontaneously' – this means that their classroom teacher is not allowed to simply give them a list of questions that they will be asked, but that rather they need to read the task sheet very carefully and think about what the teacher 'might' ask them for that particular scenario. Therefore, although it is a good idea to write out a draft script, students should be prepared to respond to questions and answers relating to the task in any order and should understand fully what they are saying in the foreign language. To this end, it is better for students to use language that they have been practising in class rather than to use a dictionary to translate large amounts of new vocabulary – this often reduces the level of accuracy.

I hope that this information is useful to you and your child and that it answers any queries that you may have had. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

Jane Driver
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