

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision.

Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

Activity: European Day of Languages

Celebrating the European Day of Languages can be both fun and educational, offering a glimpse into the rich linguistic and cultural diversity of our world.

This role-play activity provides an opportunity for children to be actively involved in pretend play while sharing their language/s and or exploring a new, different language.

Learning aims

- To celebrate and respect the linguistic diversity within the setting
- An opportunity for children who speak other languages to share their knowledge and expertise with others
- To introduce different cultures and languages, helping children to understand and appreciate cultural diversity.



Resources

- Set up a temporary role-play area as a food stand - this could be a table decorated with flags from your chosen countries and some relevant props and pictures
- A selection of food and drinks from your chosen countries
- You can also play music from the countries and provide dual-language books for customers to read
- Map and stickers or markers etc.

Activity outline

1. Prior to this activity, if possible, choose countries that reflect the cultures and backgrounds of the children and team in your setting. Ask the children to share their knowledge and/or research the countries, learning some key language phrases, and discovering what the country is famous for. Seek assistance/advice from parents or the wider community who will be able to provide valuable information and resources. Information and language resources are also available from the website: [European Day of Languages - Activities](http://www.ndna.org.uk/myndna)

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2. Show the children a map of the world and point out your chosen countries. If none of the children have family connections to other countries, consider countries the children may have an interest in, such as where other family members or friends are from, places they have visited on holiday or even where some of their favourite animals or TV characters live. Mark the map in some way to highlight the countries you are talking about
3. Talk to the children about how countries have their own languages
4. Ask the children which language/s they speak at home
5. Invite the children to share a word or phrase with the group for everyone to learn. Common words such as 'hello', 'goodbye', 'please' and 'thank you' are a good place to start. If none of the children speak another language you can share the language/s you choose prior to the activity and share some phrases. Encourage the group to share any existing or prior knowledge
6. Add actions like waving and giving a thumbs up to help them remember the new words or phrases
7. Tell the children about the new play area - a food stall - where they can purchase food from different countries, such as pierogi (dumplings) from Poland, sarmale (cabbage rolls) from Romania, croissants from France, pizza from Italy, and pretzels from Germany
8. Encourage the children or the practitioner who speaks the focus language/s to be available in the area to model the language from the chosen country/countries and to encourage the other children to give it a try. This is a wonderful opportunity to show how much you value the children's language/s and a chance for the child to be the expert
9. Keep the activity light-hearted and fun. Encourage curiosity and exploration of the languages and model enthusiasm by having a go.

Extension ideas:

- During rhyme time, sing songs like 'Head, shoulders, knees, and toes', substituting the main words with those from other languages.

NDNA products to support you with this activity:

- Online course - [Vocabulary and Early Language Skills](#)
- Factsheet - [Children with English as an Additional Language in nurseries](#).