



Why Springboard to Languages? Why language awareness?

Quotations from the Nuffield Languages Inquiry

Give young children a flying start

The government should declare a firm commitment to early language-learning for all children and invest in the long-term policies necessary for pupils to learn a new language from age 7. To spearhead this commitment, it should fund international primary schools and **introduce *Language Awareness into the National Literacy Strategy***.

Language awareness would enhance the National Literacy Strategy

During the primary school years ***there are clear advantages in developing pupils' general awareness of language issues*** alongside learning another language. Language-awareness programmes involve a planned exploration of how different languages look, sound, and relate to their cultures. They can be taught by the class teacher, drawing on the specific language resources available within a school or local community. Crucially, ***language awareness could be valuably woven into the National Literacy Strategy***, as well as into the curriculum for geography, history and citizenship. For pupils who have not yet started another language, it can generate enthusiasm and curiosity, and help 'train the ear'.

Language awareness should contribute to the Literacy Strategy

Recommendation 6.6

Modules of language awareness should be introduced into the National Literacy programme in primary schools. The content would be designed to bridge the gap between English, literacy and foreign languages. A number of models of effective language-awareness teaching already exist and could be used as the basis for trial schemes before wider implementation.

From *Languages: the next generation*, the final report and recommendations of The Nuffield Languages Inquiry, Nuffield Foundation (2000), pages 8, 42, 43.

Web site: languages.nuffieldfoundation.org