

How a lesson fits together — A4 summary

Nineteen activities, ordered the way a language is learned. Stretch the shape across two or three lessons on one topic, or take five activities for a single hour. There is no house method here — only a sequence you can explain.

01 Start with what they already hold

Recall before anything new. Done cold and in silence, it tells you in one minute who has retained what. Match pairs · translate into English · gap-fill · dictation.

02 Meet the structure inside a text

The new language appears in real text before anyone names the rule. They highlight it, say what they notice, try one. The help box can be printed or withheld.

03 Make the rule explicit, then check

Worked through with examples and exceptions, then checked three ways — because memorised words pass some checks and fail others. Two listenings · word order · find the deliberate error.

04 Practise with support, then without

Closed and scaffolded first, open last. The builder columns let them write more than they could unaided — then the columns go. Closed translation · sentence builder · picture, no columns.

05 Read it, then close it

The long text sits late on purpose: a cold unseen text at the start produces guessing, not reading. Reading · stretch task for those who reach it · oral plenary.

Four ways to run it — the same nineteen activities

One hour, one focus. Recall, meet, apply, check, close.



One topic across two lessons. Meet the structure, then read it and produce it. Both lessons close with the plenary.



One topic across three lessons. The same sheet, opened three times — nothing new to find in between.



A lesson you are not there for. Everything a cover teacher can set without speaking the language.



Reorder them however you like — the numbering never moves, so the dictation is still activity 17 even when you teach it third. The print selector decides which of them reach the desk.

If someone is watching

- ✓ Retrieval happens first, and it is visible.
- ✓ New language is modelled before it is practised.
- ✓ Understanding is checked three ways: in the ear, in word order, against an error.
- ✓ Scaffolding is deliberate and it comes off.
- ✓ Feedback is live — every answer is already on the teacher sheet.
- ✓ Differentiation is by depth, not by worksheet.

Why this shape

Rosenshine's principles describe the same architecture: review prior learning, present in small steps, model, guide practice, check often, scaffold, then release.

Ofsted's languages review accepts there is no single way to teach a language well. This is a sequence, not a method you must adopt.

Rosenshine, Principles of Instruction (2012) · Ofsted, curriculum research review: languages (2021)