Becta
ICT Advice

Using **web-based resources** in
Secondary EAL

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Many good resources to support the teaching and learning of English as an additional language (EAL) can be accessed using the internet. These can be bookmarked and set to be used offline. Some can be downloaded and adapted by the teacher to meet specific learning objectives. The examples given here describe a number of lessons in which ICT is used effectively to support the learning and teaching of EAL students in Key Stages 3 and 4. They are simply that – examples of how a particular type of web-based resource can be used. The approaches can be adapted for all subjects by all teachers to support the English language development of bilingual students.

If you have learners of EAL in your class, you will recognise how varied their experiences can be. Some may use English confidently in most situations. Some may be beginners in the English language. Some may be literate in their first languages and English as well. Some may be learning literacy skills for the first time in your school. Some may be expert in your subject while it may be completely new to others. Some may be accomplished web surfers whilst others may have had very little chance to use ICT resources. All these students need to develop their English skills and achieve in your subject at the same time.

Students do not acquire English as a second language (or curriculum knowledge) by magic. They need to be taught how English works and shown how it is used to express different ideas. Using English to communicate is vital. Pupils need frequent opportunities to speak, read and write in English and in their first language too. Pupils also need support to make sense of new information and language and to make links with what they already know. This is where the skills of the teacher are so important.

The approach to learning English in the context of the curriculum is different from that of learning a second language out of interest or as a school subject. For this reason, most EAL specialists use curriculum-related websites to develop students' English in context. Students can also benefit from using web resources to practise and consolidate their knowledge and understanding of English and how it works. This can often be done in small groups with a very specific focus. After-school clubs and homework are also useful for specific English skills practice.

Teachers have traditionally used a range of resources to develop students' English and ensure access to the curriculum. The introduction of web-based resources means that ICT can have a real impact on teaching in the lesson. Teachers are no longer limited by the physical, linguistic and cultural resources of a single classroom. One of the most effective ways of harnessing these resources with learners of EAL is to create a collaborative task based on an agreed topic.

The role of the teacher and other staff is key. They can use web-based resources to model language, introduce ideas, and share meanings and strategies. They can use them to demonstrate, explain and stimulate discussion. They can use them to invite predictions and interpretations. Using ICT to create web-based resources is just as effective, as it helps students to communicate and explain their ideas and understandings to a real audience.

All web addresses have been checked and were correct at time of printing.

A visiting EAL specialist language teacher used this British Council site to extend the reading comprehension and writing skills of a small group of EAL students who were beginning to be familiar with the English language. The students worked with the teacher in a short withdrawal session on a weekly basis.

The teacher chose one of the magazine articles to read; initially, students looked at the graphic and predicted the key words/answers they expected to find. In pairs, the students read the article on screen, checking unfamiliar words using the 'click' dictionary. The students then completed the comprehension tasks and printed off their results. After a group discussion of their responses, the students wrote a short summary of the text – using the comprehension questions as a guide and adding their own information and sentences.

Subject teachers in the school became quite enthusiastic about the articles, but used them in a different way. Using a data projector or interactive whiteboard, they talked through relevant magazine articles with the whole class, usually as an introduction exercise.

The teachers particularly liked the clear graphics, the themed links, the drag-and-drop word games and the 'clickable' dictionary. They felt that these helped them to develop the language skills of all learners while providing a clear stimulus to curriculum topics like 'slavery' or 'refugees'.

British Council Learn English

This site has a huge range of articles to read. Each has access to an online dictionary and double clicking on any word brings up a new window that sets out a very clear and unambiguous meaning for the word, as well giving examples of it in use. Each article is followed by a comprehension exercise – complete the exercise, click the 'submit' button and the answers are marked. The word games use the article key vocabulary in cloze or matching activities. The site also features grammar exercises, games and a variety of other resources.

URL: **http://www.learnenglish.org.uk/**

Relevant to the following:

Key Stage 3
National Strategy – English

Cross-phase
Suitable for students beginning to be familiar with the English language

Cross-curricular
Can be used in all subject areas

Portsmouth EMAS (Ethnic Minority Achievement Service)

This site hosts a wide range of resources, information and insights concerned with EAL and minority ethnic pupils. There is a strong focus on intercultural and multilingual education.

URL: **http://www.blss.portsmouth.sch.uk/resources/ks3maths.shtml**

(Many of the activities on this site require the latest Macromedia plug-ins.)

Relevant to the following:

Key Stage 3
National Strategy – mathematics:
- *handling data, Units 1 and 2*
- *number and measures, Unit 3*

Cross-curricular
Has resources and ideas to support work across the National Curriculum

A maths teacher and an EAL specialist language teacher used this site with a Year 7 class to teach a unit of work focusing on mathematics around the world and how the four basic number operations are carried out.

Following the eight-lesson unit plan on the site, the class explored their existing knowledge of number systems, sent subject-specific emails, gathered information and prepared graphs and charts. They investigated the multilingual number puzzles and games on the site, finally preparing and presenting their surveys and findings to the rest of the class.

The teachers found that the focus on investigation and collaborative work was valuable with all pupils. In particular, the discussion, investigation and presentation activities gave support to the only more advanced learner of EAL to express and present his subject-specific knowledge appropriately. All the pupils in the class benefited from looking at number operations from a range of cultural perspectives.

Teach-nology

Teaching and learning with technology. This large American website allows teachers to create word searches, webquests, KWL charts, graphic organisers and word puzzles quickly and easily.

URL: **http://teachers.teach-nology.com/ web_tools/word_search/**

Relevant to the following:

Key Stage 3

All National Curriculum subjects

In a large school with many newly arrived beginner EAL students, Year 7 subject teachers used the tools on this site to introduce and discuss key vocabulary with those learners new to the English language. Departments created a 'keyword' list for each new series of lessons and used the site to generate a word search.

At the start of the new lessons, the teacher gave students copies of the word list and word search. Working in pairs, the students located a definition of the words in English and their first language using online English and bilingual dictionaries.

This identified and clarified the meaning of key words for all students. It also helped the bilingual students identify what they already knew in their first language. Students completed the word search for homework and the bilingual students added the new keywords to their bilingual subject vocabulary lists.

BBC World Service - News in 43 Languages

This site has world news in 43 languages – as audio and text.

URL: **http://www.bbc.co.uk/ worldservice/index.shtml**

Relevant to the following:

Key Stage 3

QCA scheme of work – geography: Unit 1: Making connections (see section 3 What do we know, think and feel about other places?)

Unit 24 Passport to the world (see section 3 How can we find out about places? – The world in my life)

A Year 7 teacher in a multilingual school used this site to support a section of a unit of work on exploring connections with other places.

The class chose a country. The teacher asked them what they already knew about it and what they would like to find out. She listed their ideas in a simple KWL chart (What I KNOW, What I WANT to know, What I LEARNED) on the interactive whiteboard. She then showed the pupils how to access the country profiles and modelled making notes from the facts page. She asked the pupils "How well has this answered our questions?" and showed them how to access the additional information in the multilingual audio and written world news section.

Later, pupils chose a country to research and made their own KWL charts. Many of the learners chose countries they had a personal connection with or whose language they could speak. The pupils used this site (and others) for their own research, which eventually they incorporated into individual presentations.

USGS – Water Science for Schools

This site, run by the US Geological Survey, provides information on many aspects of water, along with pictures, data, maps, and an interactive centre where students can give opinions and test their water knowledge. It also contains a diagram of the water cycle in 30 languages.

URL: **http://ga.water.usgs.gov/edu/watercycle.html**

Relevant to the following:

Key Stage 3

QCA scheme of work – geography:
Unit 4 Flood disaster – how do people cope?

A Year 8 teacher and an EAL teacher in a multilingual school used this site as part of a unit of work on flood disaster. The teachers planned a revision activity based on the 'water cycle' as an introduction to the topic of flooding.

The teachers suggested three websites to the students and then, on individual cards, gave the steps for reaching the right information at one of the sites. They asked the students to work in pairs to sequence the cards in the order they thought would lead to the right page. The students then checked their answers as the teachers navigated to the page using the data projector.

The students then had to independently research and write a description of the water cycle. The teachers gave the students a task note card and a key visual – an unlabelled diagram of the water cycle. Students read the task note card, located and read the information on the three suggested sites and recorded some key notes in a notebook.

For homework, they used information from their notes to label the diagram and write sentences explaining the water cycle. In this way, the teachers made sure that students expressed their ideas in their own terms rather then copying and pasting a lot of textual information. Two students new to the English language were able to use the water cycle diagram from the website to label the key visual elements in Arabic (and in English) and write some simple explanatory sentences in English.

BBC Religion and Ethics

This site has information and activities on most ethical issues and religions. The site also has news, an A-Z of religions, statistics, quizzes, a multifaith calendar and more.

URL: **http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/ethics/euthanasia/**

Relevant to the following:

Key Stage 4

Religious education: euthanasia

A Year 10 teacher used this site to support students' coursework in which they developed an essay on euthanasia. The class included an EAL student who needed considerable support to develop appropriate written English. Although the school had an excellent module of work on euthanasia, there was little to guide the planning and drafting of the students' final written assignments.

The teacher grouped the students making sure that the EAL learner was grouped with competent writers of English. The teacher identified the BBC website and a number of others and then set a task for the group – to research the recommended websites and use the information to create one of these pages:

- an introductory page
- a facts page including definitions, legal position and data
- a page on the attitude of a major religion to abortion.

In the next session, each group gave a short presentation to the class and their pages were combined. The teacher and the class then worked together to develop a concluding page. In this way, the teacher used the websites to develop a model essay plan and also provided the earlier stage learner of EAL with support through writing collaboratively with others in her group.

Birmingham Grid for Learning (BGfL) – Secondary Area

This site has information plus resources and activities on all National Curriculum subjects. Each subject has activities for teachers and pupils, with whiteboard versions available for many activities. Some of the activities are translated into Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, English, Somali and Urdu.

(Many of the resources on this site require the latest Macromedia plug-ins and Windows Media Player.)

URL: **http://www.bgfl.org/bgfl/custom/resources_ftp/ client_ftp/ks3/science/acids/index.htm**

Relevant to the following:

Key Stage 3

National Curriculum – science:
Sc3 materials and their properties, 3 acids and bases

QCA scheme of work – science:
Unit 7E Acids and Alkalis
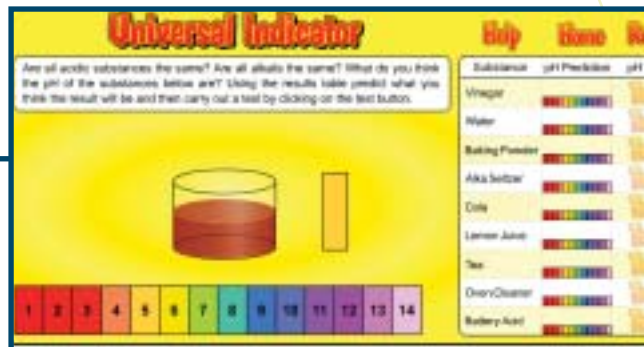
A Year 8 teacher used this site to support two recently arrived Somali pupils who were new to English. Using the interactive whiteboard version of the activity, the teacher led the class through the litmus test. Working in pairs, pupils discussed each substance in turn and made their predictions as to acid or alkali. The two new pupils used a computer to follow the activity in Somali, discussing their own predictions in Somali.

Later, the pupils worked in small groups on the online Universal Indicator Reactions activity. Each pupil in the group had a table to record the results, showing substance, indicator colour, pH value and acid/alkali/ neutral. Each pupil had to write this up. The teacher gave the two newly arrived pupils a model statement: 'Oven cleaner has a pH value of 14. It is an alkali'. They used this statement to produce similar sentences of their own about the other nine substances they had tested virtually.

At homework club, the pupils were able to visit the Somali version of the activity. One of the pupils who had not studied science previously returned to the activity on a number of occasions to check her understanding and to get it right.

Secondary EAL

Your Dictionary

There are 6,800 known languages and 2,261 have writing systems. This site has access to language facts, resources, and online dictionaries in 300 languages. It is one of a number with access to a wide range of dictionaries in different languages.

URL: **http://www.yourdictionary.com/ languages.html**

Relevant to the following:

Cross-curricular

Bilingual students in all National Curriculum subject areas and monolingual students for modern foreign languages (MFL)

A Key Stage 4 EAL teacher introduced new EAL students to this site as part of their induction into the school. The induction included talking about useful strategies to support their learning in subject areas, as well as finding out about which subjects they had studied before.

Students who were literate in their first language were shown how to use online translators and bilingual dictionaries. As these dictionaries vary, the students were encouraged to explore a number and to make a note of the ones they found most useful and reliable. They were encouraged to use these sites in their subject lessons when they had internet access.

As access to the internet in class was not always possible, students unfamiliar with the English language were encouraged to make notes of the key terms and vocabulary used in subject lessons, and then to make their own subject glossary and bilingual dictionaries.

Activities for ESL students

This site has over 10,000 graded (in 4 levels) grammar, vocabulary and crossword quizzes including picture quizzes and bilingual quizzes in around 30 languages. Bilingual quizzes use Roman script transliteration. Teachers have contributed many of the resources to this website. The site is run by the Internet TESL Journal.

(Some sections of the site require the latest Macromedia plug-ins.)

URL: **http://a4esl.org/**

Relevant to the following:

Key Stage 3

National Curriculum paragraph – English: EN3 writing
7a word classes or parts of speech and their grammatical functions

Cross-phase
Learners at all stages of acquiring English as an additional language

A Key Stage 4 English teacher working on GCSE assignments with some advanced EAL learners found that they had consistent errors in their writing which were quite different from the errors of students who spoke English as a first language. The difficulties included using the right article, choosing the correct preposition, noun-pronoun agreements, use of modals and incorporating detail into noun phrases.

The teacher decided to recommend specific exercises from an EFL site to give these learners additional practice in this area. The quizzes were set for homework and she asked students to comment on what they had learned and whether it was helpful. The students liked the right/wrong nature of the quizzes and the teacher encouraged them to discuss their understanding of sentence grammar and to use what they had learned in their own writing.

Other teachers in the school also used the bilingual vocabulary quizzes with literate pupils who were new to English.

Secondary EAL

Google

This is one of the most popular search engines on the internet and an excellent source of images.

URL: **http://www.google.co.uk/images**

Relevant to the following:

Key Stage 3

QCA scheme of work – history: Unit 13 Mughal India and the coming of the British, 1526-1857 how did the Mughal Empire rise and fall?; and many other units of the scheme of work for history

Cross-curricular
Can be used across all National Curriculum subjects

A Year 8 history teacher found using an image search on a key historical concept word an extremely effective way of developing the understanding of the concept by EAL (and other) students. As a stimulus at the start of a unit of work, the teacher gave students a 'key concept' word (in this case 'empire').

Working in groups, students typed the key concept word into the Google image search. Groups then had five minutes to select an image and develop a few sentences on the connection between the image and the concept. Using a data projector to display their image, each group then fed back their sentences to the whole class. The teacher sometimes collected these to create a 'concept map' for display.

The wide-ranging nature of the images that the Google search brought up meant that students made links between key concepts at different points in time and in different places, often helping them to link known aspects of the key concept with new ones. The visual nature of the stimulus linked to the sentence-making language task provided a context for students to talk through their understanding of historical concepts.

Some search engines are safer to use when looking for images than others. For more information visit the Superhighway Safety site [**http://safety.ngfl.gov.uk/safeimages**].

Moving Here

Moving Here is the biggest database of digitised photographs, maps, objects, documents and audio items from 30 local and national archives, museums and libraries that record migration experiences of the last 200 years.

URL: **http://www.movinghere.org.uk/default.htm**

Relevant to the following:

Key Stage 3

QCA scheme of work – citizenship:
Unit 4 Britain – a diverse society?; and many other units of the scheme of work for citizenship

Cross-curricular

Can be used for the National Curriculum for geography and history

A Year 8 class used this site extensively to trace how and why different people migrate, and reflect on migrants' different experiences of arrival and settlement. One part of the topic was to create a multimedia timeline based on a 200-year history of migration to the UK.

Working in groups, students researched and collected images of migration in different historical periods. Each group used their images to create an ICT-based presentation that included a voice-over recorded by the group. The mix of media and the visual timeline supported the EAL (and other) students' understanding of the topic.

This site was used extensively by an EAL teacher and a history teacher working in partnership on this unit of work. The teachers developed a webquest for Year 9 students.

During the webquest, students worked collaboratively in groups to research different topics using sites recommended by the teachers. These included websites about the life of Malcolm X, the life of Martin Luther King, whether equality is a reality, and the history of the civil rights movement.

Each group prepared and gave a presentation of their research. The presentation was structured as introduction, facts, survey, and media. A representative from each group joined a new group to synthesise the information and students shared resources to reach and support conclusions about the approach to civil rights of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King.

Providing directed tasks gave extra support to those students in the early stages of learning English.

BBC News World Edition

This site contains extensive material on the civil rights movement, including news footage, video extracts, sound recordings, eyewitness accounts and comments.

URL: **http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/ 3150657.stm**

Relevant to the following:

Key Stage 3

QCA scheme of work – history:
Unit 15 Black peoples of America from slavery to equality?

Becta

British Educational Communications
and Technology Agency