



CONTACT

Semester 1, 2025



Participants at the MLTA ACT conference in April

Vice-President Report

Hello and welcome to the 2025 Semester 1 issue of CONTACT, the newsletter of the MLTA-ACT! As we approach the Winter break, I encourage you all to take time to focus on activities that you love and to recharge your energy. Remember, each day brings an extra minute of daylight! A special thank you to Myriam Davies, our Editor, for compiling this edition and for reaching out to members for contributions. Waiting for submissions can

often be challenging, so we truly appreciate the articles and photos showcasing language learning in our vibrant community.

This year, we held the Meet and Greet alongside the AGM on Thursday, 6 March. Although it was a much smaller gathering than usual, with a dozen attendees, it was an opportunity to express our gratitude to Fiona Arthur Language Teacher Award recipient, Frances Szeremet. Frances has been a dedicated



Frances Szeremet, recipient of the Fiona Arthur award

member of the language teaching community in the ACT and Queanbeyan region, contributing to community languages and teaching in schools. Her passion for language learning is evident not only in her work teaching Italian, French, and English but also in her volunteer

roles within MLTA-ACT and the ACTED French Language Network, where she has shared her classroom experiences and strategies. Merci beaucoup and grazie mille, Frances! We thank her for returning to Canberra for the event and wish her well in her next chapter.



Frances, presenting at one of our Teach Meets

It was equally rewarding to welcome new volunteers to the MLTA-ACT committee: Naomi Lamb (Secretary), Orion Lethbridge, Ravi Krishnamurthy, and Meri Dragicevic. Naomi began collaborating with the committee last year, Orion teaches Korean at the college level and through CIT Solutions, Ravi is a Community Language Schools teacher of Sanskrit and other languages, and Meri, who teaches casually since retiring, brings invaluable experience from her previous committee roles, including serving as President.

We also thank our continuing committee members for their dedication: Lena Britton (Treasurer), Frank Keighley (Webmaster & Special Projects), Myriam Davies (Newsletter Editor & French Section Representative), and Margo Smith (General Committee). Mei Turnip has transitioned from Secretary to CLSA Coordinator, delivering engaging PL sessions to CLSA members, while Annemarie Power has returned as a General Committee member after many years as Secretary. A heartfelt farewell goes to Joanne Chilver, the outgoing Vice-President & CLSA Coordinator, and Nicola Barkley, a former President and General Committee member. Their contributions have been invaluable, and we are immensely grateful for their passion and hard work.

Due to personal reasons, I have made the difficult decision not to accept the nomination for President this year. However, I have taken on the role of Vice-President to ensure the smooth delivery of professional learning sessions early in the year and to mentor incoming leadership. We are actively seeking individuals to step into the roles of President and Vice-President, and I encourage members to consider joining the committee to make a lasting impact on our association.

To address the evolving needs of MLTA-ACT, a Special General Meeting (SGM) will be held soon to amend the Constitution. This initiative will introduce additional elected roles, distributing responsibilities more equitably and ensuring the workload is manageable. These changes aim to define clearer roles while aligning with contemporary requirements.

During the planning day in November 2024, the committee decided to return to the format of holding four events per year—a tradition reflected in our slogan: "MLTA ACT works 4 U!" The dates were set with brief outlines to help members coordinate with their schools for PL approval and to streamline decision-making for the committee. Organising events involves numerous tasks, from finding a venue and securing presenters to advertising and submitting TQI accreditation applications. At the 30 April PL session and the Dr. Gianfranco Conti PL, in collaboration with ACTED Language Networks, on 6 May, it was fantastic to reconnect with members, new and continuing, including colleagues from the NSW South Coast, as part of our reciprocal arrangement with other MLTAs in Australia.



Prue Roveta and Philippe Messer at the PL in April

Looking ahead, the 25th AFMLTA International Languages Conference 2025 will be held from 11 to 13 July at the University of South Australia (City West Campus), Adelaide. We promoted this as a focus for granting Semester 1 FIPLV scholarships, particularly for early-career language teachers or those who have never attended a conference before. Unfortunately, no applications were received for this purpose. Myriam Davies will be attending, supported by her school, and we wish her a fantastic experience and look forward to hearing her insights. I will represent MLTA-ACT at the Presidents' Meeting and AFMLTA Assembly preceding the conference.

I will be taking a leave of absence for a few months. While I will not be handling day-to-day responsibilities, I will devote some time to addressing key issues in language education as well as representing the French Section. During my absence, I encourage members to support the committee, especially Naomi, as she settles into her role as Secretary. Your assistance will be invaluable during this period.

Please consider volunteering at the next SGM. Assistance is needed with tasks such as social media updates, photography, PL and event poster design, catering coordination, and representation at expos and information sessions. Participation is vital to ensure all school languages are represented, enhancing our efforts and forming a united representation in the languages arena. This is a chance to contribute while gaining leadership experience and expanding your network. Your support drives the association forward—join us today!

Prudence Roveta

Vice-President & Immediate Past President



Nabila Aliane presenting about differentiation at the April PL

Future of senior secondary languages

By Frank Keighley

Making the case for centrally delivered, BSSS-accredited, senior secondary language education programs to continue in the ACT

Context

At the end of 2023, the Canberra Academy of Languages (CAL) completed its seventh and final year of program delivery. Since that time, throughout 2024 and 2025, equivalent programs have been delivered by the Centre for Modern Languages (CML) at CIT Solutions.

On 17 April this year (2025), it was reported in The Canberra Times that CIT had decided to transition the commercial business of its subsidiary, CIT Solutions, into CIT and wind up the company. Some programs would be transferred to the parent organisation, Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT), while other programs would be discontinued.

On 17 June 2025, CIT committed to delivering senior secondary language courses until the end of this year. Two key questions now remain about plans for programs in the ACT:

- Will programs continue with CIT next year (2026)? Students in the current Year 11 cohort are relying on their language courses to contribute towards their ACT Senior Secondary Certificate and their ATAR. At this stage in their Year 11 studies, it is too late to commence and complete a different subject for a major. In any case, they enrolled in their language courses because that is a focus area for them. Other subject areas are not a satisfactory substitute.
- What will be done to ensure there is a central delivery pathway for senior secondary language programs from 2027, for students to undertake language courses that are not available in their day schools? What will be done to ensure that the ACT becomes a leading jurisdiction, as it should be in its role as the national capital, in senior secondary languages?

Some key contacts

-Yvette Berry, ACT Education Minister	Berry@act.gov.au
·Michael Petterson, ACT Training Minister	Petersson@act.gov.au
·Dr Margot McNeill, CITCEO	Margot.McNeill@cit.edu.au
·Kate Lundy, CIT Board Chair	CITBoard@cit.edu.au
·Senator Katy Gallagher	Senator.Katy.Gallagher@aph.gov.au
·Senator David Pocock	Senator.David.Pocock@aph.gov.au

Some key considerations

Below are some points for the decision-makers to consider.

- The ACT should have a long-term plan beyond 2026 that is made known to the public for students who need a study pathway outside their day schools for their senior secondary language studies. This is not to replace strong language programs in day schools, but is to complement them. It should be run by an entity that is visibly committed to the concept and will deliver it well.

- This is particularly important given Canberra's role as the national capital where many government departments interact regularly with their overseas counterparts, its multicultural profile, and its proclaimed status as "the knowledge capital".
- Government-run centrally delivered language education programs exist in NSW, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland and the Northern Territory, supplementing (not replacing) programs available in day schools. If program delivery ceased, the ACT would be in a minority of educational jurisdictions in Australia without such a facility.
- From one year to the next, there is no way to forecast the range of schools that will be impacted if central delivery ceases, because a range of factors, including staffing, will always affect the capacity of schools to run language programs in-house.

If you would like additional information, please visit the CAL website at <https://cal.act.edu.au>.



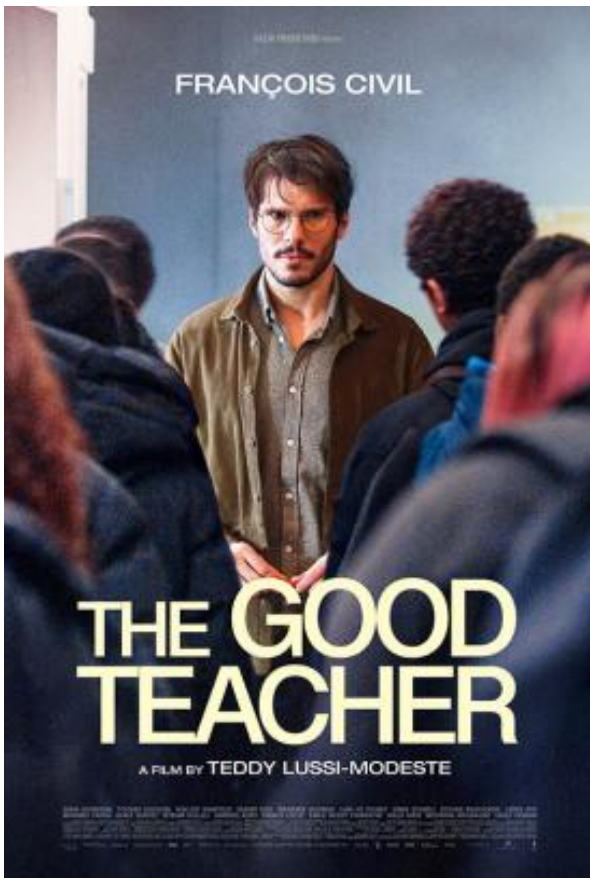
Upcoming MLTA-ACT PL and Events for 2025 SAVE THE DATES!

- **Term 3: Sat 9 August**
A half-day PL event, free for members, featuring local presenters.
 - **Term 4: Fri 17 October**
We will celebrate World Teachers' Day, honouring our language teachers. After school event.
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From the French Section

by Myriam Davies

The French Section has had a dynamic and enriching first semester, with a wide range of events designed to support, inspire, and connect French language educators across the ACT. Here is a recap of what we've accomplished together:



French Film festival – "The Good Teacher"

On Monday 24 March, we kicked off the semester with a cinema outing to see the film "The Good Teacher" at Palace Electric, during the French film festival organised by the Alliance Française. It was certainly a thought provoking movie and a film that resonates with our role as educators.

Rencontre Francophone



Selvie, our francophone presenter and some of the French teachers attending

As part of Francophonie Week celebrations, our first Rencontre Francophone for the year took place on Friday 4 April at the Alliance Française de Canberra. This much-anticipated event brought together French teachers from across the region for an evening of informal conversation, resource sharing, and collegial exchange.

We were delighted to welcome Selvie, our special guest from Mauritius, who gave a captivating presentation on her country. Her stories and personal insights showcased the richness of Mauritian culture and left many of us inspired to visit this beautiful island nation.

Le français est partout ! – French Photography Competition 2025

We were also thrilled to celebrate the creativity of our students through the first French Section Photography Competition. This year's theme, "Le français est partout!", invited students from Years 3 to 10 to capture images showing where French appears in everyday life – on packaging, signs, books, menus, or around the home and community.

Over 50 entries were received from across the ACT, showcasing clever, thoughtful, and often humorous interpretations of the theme. The winning photographs were displayed at the Alliance Française de Canberra, and prizes were awarded across all year level categories.

This initiative was proudly supported by FATFA, Intext Book Company, the Alliance Française de Canberra, and judge Gaelle Tregoning.

A huge thank you to the teachers who supported their students to participate – and congratulations to all our young photographers!



Year 3



Year 5



Year 10

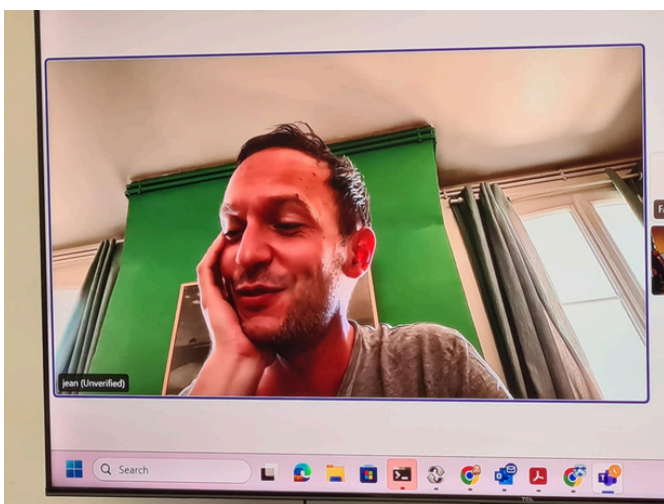


Year 6



Year 8

La Fête de la Musique with Chien Noir



Chien Noir was live with us and kindly answered all our questions despite the early hours of the morning for him!

To mark La Fête de la Musique, French teachers came together on Wednesday 19 June for a unique 2 hours TQI accredited professional learning opportunity with contemporary French singer Chien Noir.

During a live online Q&A, Jean Grillet (Chien Noir) shared his creative process, his relationship with language, and the deeply personal stories behind his poetic, emotionally resonant songs. Teachers were inspired by the authenticity and depth of his lyrics, and left the session with fresh ideas for integrating French music into their classrooms. Following the Q&A, teachers collaborated to reflect on strategies for using music with language students. It was a powerful reminder of the value of bringing real voices and contemporary culture to engage students into our French programs. Thank you to Fabienne Azzaro from Le Fair and the Alliance Française de Canberra for helping us organise this event.

Professional Development with Dr G. Conti at Alfred Deakin HS

By Nadege Maurin



On Tuesday 6th May some of us had the fantastic opportunity to meet and observe Dr Gianfranco Conti demonstrating his Extensive Processing Instruction approach with a lovely Year 9/10 French group belonging to Claire Thevenin-Smith at Alfred Deakin High School. Prior to that day, Claire and her group had worked on a sentence builder focusing on activities they had done in the area and Dr Conti focused on the EARS phase of the approach. If you are not familiar with this approach, EPI is evidence-based and aims at reducing the cognitive load that is a major obstacle when learning a language. Known as MARSEARS, the cycle unfolds as follows: Modelling, Awareness raising, Receptive processing (Listening As Modelling and Reading As Modelling), Structured production, Expansion (and Grammar), Autonomy, Routinisation and Spontaneity. Using chunks of language based on the sentence builder, Dr Conti took the students through a wide range of activities requiring them to translate, retrieve vocabulary under timed conditions, write in French and read out loud in French.

What was interesting to see was that firstly the students were definitely engaged in the activities and they were working together to improve their fluency, secondly the variety of simple activities enabled students to take ownership of their learning and enjoy their learning through games and competition, and thirdly, within this short space of time students had actually made progress in terms of fluency. During the second part of the session we were able to ask questions to Dr Conti about implementing the approach. My takeaways were:

- Fluency training can be done at anytime using a series of games
- Have 1 or 2 lessons with no specific focus in the term where you can do cultural activities such as songs etc...
- Decide which vocab you want students to be able to produce and the ones you want them to be able to recognise in reading and listening tasks



- Students need to see a word 30 times so that they can remember it, know what it means and remember its sound, so students need to be given spaced opportunities to regularly revise vocab they encountered in previous lessons
- Research shows that after 20 minutes students forget 48% of what they learnt from the beginning of the lesson, therefore the amount of vocab chunks we teach students in a lesson needs to be limited and they need to be constantly used in different activities within the lesson so that they stick.

- EPI enables students to retain language better and for longer, feel successful and change their perception about learning a language. It makes languages more accessible for all students even for those who are dropped in your class in the middle of the year with no prior knowledge.

Photos by Claire Thevenin-Smith



Canberra Sanskrit School Highlights

by Ravi Krishnamurthy, Principal & Founder

Celebrating Language, Culture, and Community Spirit

As the Principal and Founder of the Canberra Sanskrit School, I am thrilled to share our recent achievements, joyful moments, and exciting updates that showcase the heart and soul of our growing community.

A Season of Achievement

This term, our students have not only deepened their knowledge of Sanskrit through engaging lessons but also stepped into the broader cultural stage. From chanting sacred verses at local events to performing Sanskrit skits and songs at multicultural festivals, our children have shown how ancient language and modern confidence go hand in hand. Their presence across ACT events brings alive the essence of unity in diversity.

A Special Thanksgiving Celebration

We recently gathered for a Thanksgiving event to honour our students' vibrant contributions. The event was made extra special by the presence of ACT Community Language Schools Association (ACTCLSA) in celebrating our shared journey. Laughter, heartfelt speeches, and a warm evening tea brought smiles to every face.

Classroom Magic: Where Language Comes Alive

Our classes have buzzed with creative projects - from student-made Sanskrit comic strips and handmade flashcards to role-plays that made ancient tales come to life. A standout moment was when a young student, while narrating a story about Hanuman, unexpectedly improvised a Sanskrit poem - and the class broke into applause!

Classroom Magic: Where Language Comes Alive

Our educators continue to explore innovative methods like Total Physical Response (TPR) and gamified vocabulary learning, helping students absorb complex grammar with ease. We also recommend "Little Yogi Sanskrit" and "Samskrita Bharathi eBooks" as fun and effective resources for home learning.



Capturing the Joy: each smile, each verse, and each new word learned is a step toward preserving the rich heritage of Sanskrit - and we are grateful to every parent, child, and supporter who walks this path with us.

French at Macquarie Primary School

by Laurence Barthelemy

In term 1, at Macquarie Primary School, we participated in the Francophonie competition.

We were allocated the country of Belgium. To help us prepare our poster, we had the visit of M. Lecomte from the Embassy of the Kingdom of Belgium in Canberra.

He talked to the Years 5 and 6 students about his country and shared some historical and geographical facts, and Adolphe Sax, the inventor of the saxophone. Of course, he mentioned Tintin et les Schtroumpfs, some Belgian delicacies like the chocolates and the waffles. He brought us some speculoos ! MIAM ! We all loved them !

In class we also studied René Magritte and created a collage after his famous hatted man.



Indonesia Trip at Trinity College

By Mei Turnip

A journey of connection and discovery

During the Term 1 holidays, a group of Trinity Christian School students and staff embarked on an 11-day mission, educational, and cultural tour through Malang, Yogyakarta, and Bali. The experience offered rich opportunities to engage with local communities through partner school visits, classroom participation, and cultural exchange activities. From cooking and batik workshops to exploring markets and sharing in an Easter service, students gained a deeper understanding of Indonesian life and the values of respect, community, and hospitality.

The trip broadened students' worldviews, nurtured a strong sense of global citizenship, and enhanced their appreciation for the language and its role in building meaningful connections. As one student reflected, "To truly understand a language, you must also understand its culture."

It was a transformative journey that strengthened cross-cultural understanding, inspired personal growth, and created memories that will last a lifetime.





Emily, Year 9 Student:

"The highlight of the trip for me was the people I got to meet, such as the locals, but especially the group of people we were with.

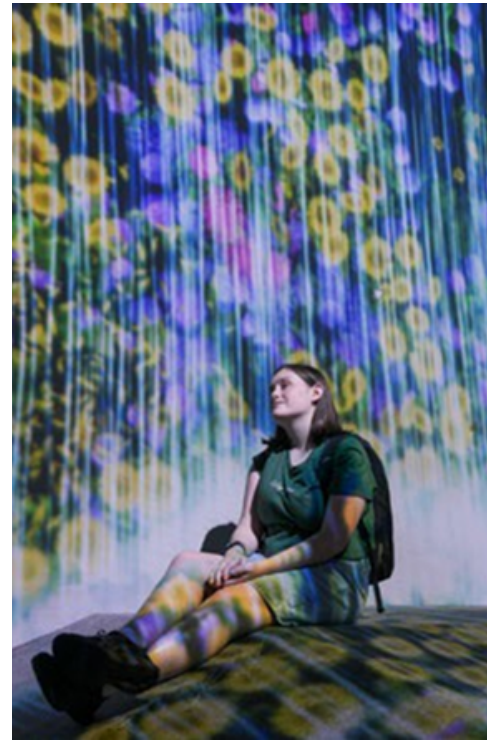
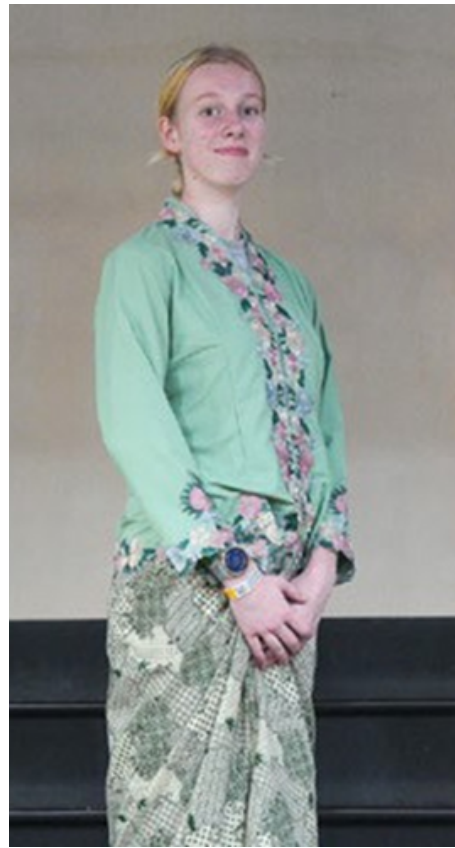
The reason this was the highlight for me was because I enjoyed making memories with each of these people and will remember it as a life-long experience.

The thing that surprised me the most about Indonesia was probably the friendliness of the people there, I was expecting it a little, but was positively overwhelmed by how welcoming and inviting people were. Everyone was just really comfortable with you. I enjoyed this aspect of Indonesian culture.

I learnt a lot about different things in Indonesia, through visiting temples and listening to tour guides. I got a brief glimpse of religious history in Indonesia which taught me more about tradition. Through wearing and buying traditional clothing, as well as doing a Batik workshop, I felt like I got a very hands-on experience of textile culture and fashion culture in Indonesia, and I still have these pieces of clothing to help remind me. When I learned all this, I realised I had a great appreciation for other cultures and that it's something I would really want to pursue further.

There are two moments that I will remember the most on the trip, the first one is when we began traveling in the bus to see Indonesia for the first time, I don't remember where we were going but it was a two hour trip. It was on a red bus in the earlier part of the week, and I got to sit there and sightsee for two whole hours and I really enjoyed it. I got to take a look at architecture, the environment, and deeply take in my surroundings.

The second moment was when I got to feed the fish at one of the hotels we stayed at, I don't know why, but I was really excited to feed them and ended up feeding the fish for around 20 minutes. The trip changed my perspective of culture and setting, by this I mean that I got to learn small parts of a whole new culture, which I think will always be perspective-changing."



"One of the highlights of the trip to Indonesia for me was when we went to the Glow Garden.

I enjoyed taking photos of the rooms and I especially enjoyed the rooms with interactive parts. I also enjoyed the rides after the glow rooms. I went on the drop tower there which was my first one I've ever went.

It was scary but also very fun."

Sophie, Year 11 Student

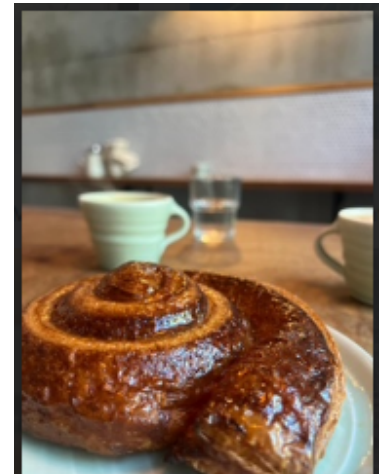


French at North Ainslie Primary School

By Chrystel Wille

2025 French Photography Competition

During this term 2, Y3 to Y10 students across Canberra took part in a French photography competition. We had two winners at North Ainslie: Maryrose in Year 4 and Finn in year 5. They were both invited to the prize ceremony last Friday at the Alliance Française de Canberra. Bravo to everyone who participated in the photo competition!



Bilingual Poems

At NAPS, this term, Y4 to Y6 have been writing bilingual Poems. Some are in French and English but others are in French and in another language. Have a go!

Try to guess which language it is!

Jaune comme matahari (Sun)

Orange comme jeruk (Orange)

Rouge comme bunga mawar (Rose)

Bleu comme langit (Sky)

Vert comme daun (Leaf)

Viola
Marron comme a cup of tē

Gris comme a chiesa

Beige comme a corredo

Brun comme some zucchero

Blanc comme some latte

Layla

Rose comme une flamingo

Bleu comme une river

Vert comme une grass

Jaune comme une sun

Orange comme une carrot

Bleu comme une talife

Vert comme un ogre

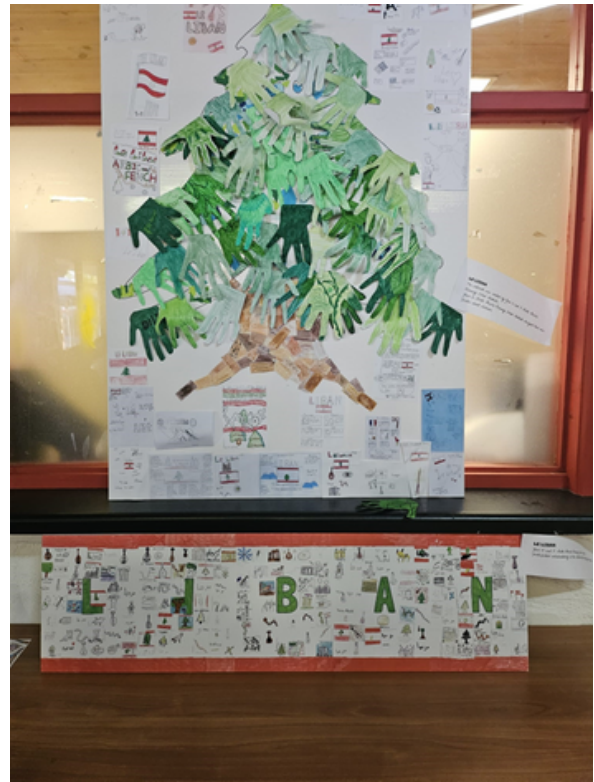
Rouge comme une rose

Orange comme une orange

Francophonie Competition

This semester, students from Year 2 to Year 6 learned about Lebanon as part of our Francophonie project .

Students from different classes created collaborative art works.



We were fortunate to have one representative from the Lebanese Embassy come to our school and give a fantastic presentation about Lebanon to the year 4 classes.

We all enjoyed learning about Lebanese culture with a focus on food, animals, sport and landmarks.

Bravo à tous!

Dear Members,

As you may have noticed, this edition has a strong focus on French & Indonesian. Unfortunately, we did not receive articles from the other languages taught in our schools. Similarly, the ED Language Networks did not provide any reports as they usually have in previous semesters.

We would love to showcase the fantastic work being done across all languages in our schools. We're hoping to feature a broader range of contributions from language teachers in our Semester 2 edition. Please consider sharing your stories, projects, or insights with us!

Myriam Davies, Contact Editor