

# California Community College Foreign Language Council **News**

September 13, 2012

## **Conference Presentations Announced**

Further details of the upcoming northern and southern CCCFLC meetings are now available.

**For the Oct. 12 meeting at Pasadena City College, we will have presentations on**

>>Textbook Selection, from the perspective of new faculty and more experienced faculty in these courses

>>Less Frequently Taught Languages in conjunction with federal support

>>The Poetry of Gloria Fuertes in the language classroom

>>The Importance of Foreign Language Education in the Community College

>>Taking Students Abroad Virtually

>>Creating a story-based first year Japanese textbook

**The northern meeting at Santa Rosa Junior College, on Friday, Oct. 19 will offer**

>>Presentations concerning French and Spanish

>>Teaching techniques

>>Potential support for Chinese programs

>>Meetings by language

**Please send in your registration form today.**

**Britain Takes a Different Approach to Languages—from the BBC**

# **New curriculum 'to make languages compulsory from seven'**

Labour's Stephen Twigg backed the government plan for languages Learning a foreign language will be compulsory from the age of seven in England's primary schools in an overhaul of the national curriculum, the education secretary is to announce.

Michael Gove will also say later this week that children as young as five will be expected to recite poetry.

There will also be a new focus on spelling and grammar.

The plans will be put out to public consultation later in the year, ahead of a scheduled introduction in 2014.

The proposals come amid concerns over a decline in pupils taking foreign languages at GCSE.

In 2010, 43% of GCSE pupils were entered for a language, down from a peak of 75% in 2002.

The last Labour government ended compulsory language study for children after the age of 14 in 2004.

### **Mandarin**

Shadow education secretary Stephen Twigg defended that decision, telling the BBC's Sunday Politics the "mistake had been not to focus on primary schools first".

He welcomed the government's ideas, saying: "I think it's absolutely right. Children will get a love of languages if they start them young."

Under Mr Gove's plans, primary schools could offer lessons in Mandarin, Latin and Greek, as well as French, German and Spanish. "Start Quote

### **There will be debate around what is appropriate at different ages"**

Department for Education

The Department for Education said that where English teaching was concerned, the aim was to ensure that pupils left primary school with high standards of literacy.

A systematic approach to the teaching of phonics - the sounds of letters and groups of letters - would be advocated to help pupils to become fluent readers and good spellers, it said.

Russell Hobby, general secretary of the school leaders' union, NAHT, said "reciting poetry and learning foreign languages are great for young children: both useful and enjoyable. That's why almost every primary school in the country teaches them both already."

However, he added that teachers should be given the "respect and trust for their experience and professionalism" to know how to teach these subjects.

"For example, we have to strike a balance between teaching phonics and reading for meaning and pleasure."

The plans are expected to emphasise the importance of grammar, setting out exactly what children should be expected to be taught in each year of their primary schooling, as well as giving lists of words they should be able to spell.

Pupils would be read poems by their teachers, learn simple poems by heart and practise recitals from the age of five.

### **'More rigorous'**

However, Michael Rosen, the children's writer and poet, expressed doubt about what he called "government diktat".

"I detect in the latest Gove plan - as implied and reported - is what I'll call the itch to instruct and dictate to teachers and children because it will do them good, that teachers and children themselves can't or shouldn't choose, investigate and discover what is suitable and worthwhile," **he wrote on his blog**.

The Department for Education said Mr Gove was determined to make English teaching at primary schools "more rigorous" and was publishing the draft programme of study now for informal consultation.

A spokesman said: "Some will think aspects are too demanding, others that they are not demanding enough, and there will be debate around what is appropriate at different ages."

He added that public opinion would be considered and the programme redrafted before being put out to formal consultation later this year.

In May, a study commissioned by the Scottish government said children in Scotland should begin learning a second language as soon as they started school at the age of five.

**Our next issue** will appear in November. Please send your articles to Tom Blair, 424 Dorado Ter., San Francisco 94112-1753. Membership is \$10 for part-time and \$15 for full-time. CLTA membership is \$50.

# Registration Form

## California Community College Foreign Language Council

### Annual Conferences

\_\_\_\_ Southern: Pasadena City College, Fri. Oct. 12

\_\_\_\_ Northern: Santa Rosa Junior College, Fri., Oct. 19

Name \_\_\_\_\_ -

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

College \_\_\_\_\_ Languages \_\_\_\_\_

Fees: \_\_\_\_ \$35 for full-time. \_\_\_\_ \$30 for part-timers

Lunch request: \_\_\_\_\_ regular lunch \_\_\_\_ vegetarian lunch

Morning coffee is also included.

Mail you registration to Tom Blair, CCCFLC, 424 Dorado Ter, San Francisco, CA 94112-1753. Make the check payable to CCCFLC.

Deadline to reach San Francisco by Oct. 5, 2012.