

- 1 In pairs, discuss what you know about the European Day of Languages. Do people celebrate it in your country? How? Then discuss the reasons you think it's celebrated.



## Celebrate the European Day of Languages on the 26<sup>th</sup> of September!

### What is the European Day of Languages (EDL)?

Eighty-one per cent of adults regret not having learnt another language and while it's never too late, of course, children do have the advantage in language learning. The European Day of Languages is a wonderful opportunity to inspire people of all ages and get them excited about learning languages. It is a time to celebrate the 6,000+ languages spoken around the world, promote language-learning, encourage language-learning across Europe and have some multilingual fun! The European Day of Languages has been celebrated every year since 2001 on the 26<sup>th</sup> of September, as an initiative of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

### Why do we celebrate EDL?

EDL is celebrated to alert people to the importance of learning another language in order to increase

multilingualism and multicultural understanding. Moreover, it promotes the rich linguistic diversity of Europe and encourages lifelong language-learning in and out of school.

### Who is it for?

Everyone who wants to celebrate linguistic diversity in Europe can take part in EDL, from schools and universities, students and teachers, to language and cultural institutes. People are encouraged to take up a language, or take special pride in their existing language skills. Also, the government and those responsible for providing access to language-learning are encouraged to make it easier for people to learn a range of languages and to promote language-learning. There is also emphasis on learning a language other than English.

### How can I get involved in the day?

There are many different ways people of the European Union can

### Did you know ... ?

- There are between 6,000 and 7,000 languages in the world, with about 225 indigenous languages in Europe – roughly 3% of the world's total.
- Most of the world's languages are spoken in Asia and Africa.
- At least half the world's population is bilingual or multilingual, i.e. they speak or understand two or more languages.
- Bilingualism makes the learning of additional languages easier and enhances the thinking process.

get involved. Some ideas include organizing an event such as a language café, a tournament or a dinner. Another fun way is to start a language blog to tell others about your learning. You could also write an article for a language magazine or organize a language competition at your school, with your students or even with your neighbours. From language speed dating to running a mini Eurovision song contest, there are many different ways to celebrate the day.

## 2 Read the text and match the words with the definitions.

- |                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1 multilingual _ | 4 pride _      |
| 2 initiative _   | 5 existing _   |
| 3 diversity _    | 6 indigenous _ |
- A a feeling of satisfaction that you get when you or people connected with you have done something well  
 B a new plan for dealing with a particular problem or for achieving a particular purpose  
 C something you already have now

- D speaking or using several different languages  
 E belonging to a particular place rather than coming to it from somewhere else  
 F a range of many people or things that are very different from each other

- 3 In pairs, organize a European Day of Languages event to celebrate your language. You have to choose the theme, what you will wear and the food, music and activities. Include any other ideas.