

*What does an anti-racist,  
decolonised MFL curriculum  
look like?*

Melina Irvine & Lisa Panford

# Melina Irvine & Lisa Panford

- Melina has been teaching Spanish and French in a multicultural state school in Bristol for 4 years. She has an interest in Equalities, Mental Health and Wellbeing and is Deputy Head of Year 7, she is also union rep.
- Lisa has been teaching in London state secondary schools for 14 years. She works part time as a Lecturer on the PGCE MFL Secondary course at St Mary's University and as an MFL teacher and Lead Practitioner at Greenford High School where she is leading a whole school curriculum review around equality, diversity and inclusion.



## *In this session we aim to...*

- present the principles underpinning our approach
- explore the concepts of diversification vs decolonisation
- model how resources can be interrogated through a critical lens
- share a suggested framework for next steps
- share further reading/resource banks and links to connect with colleagues

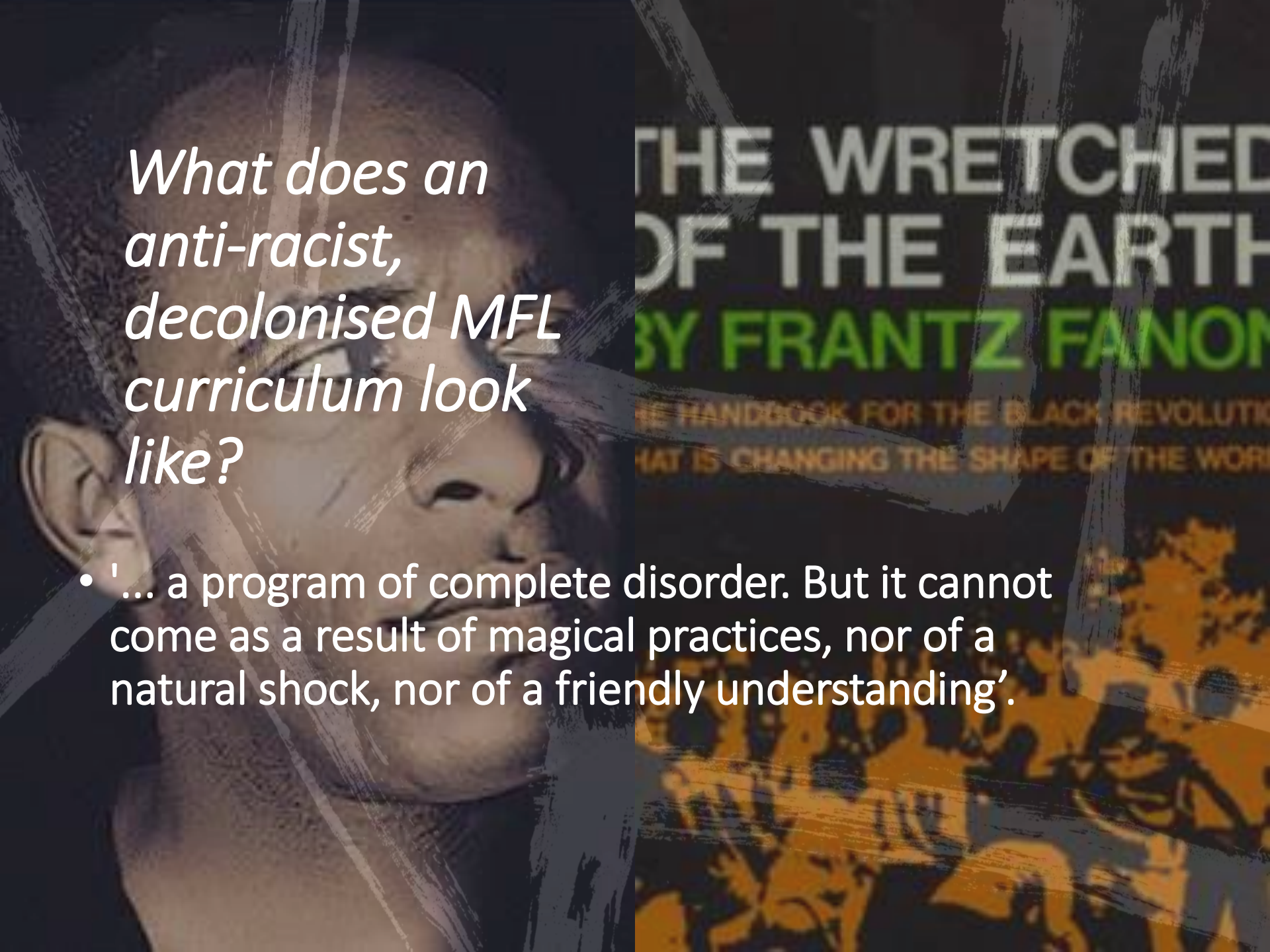
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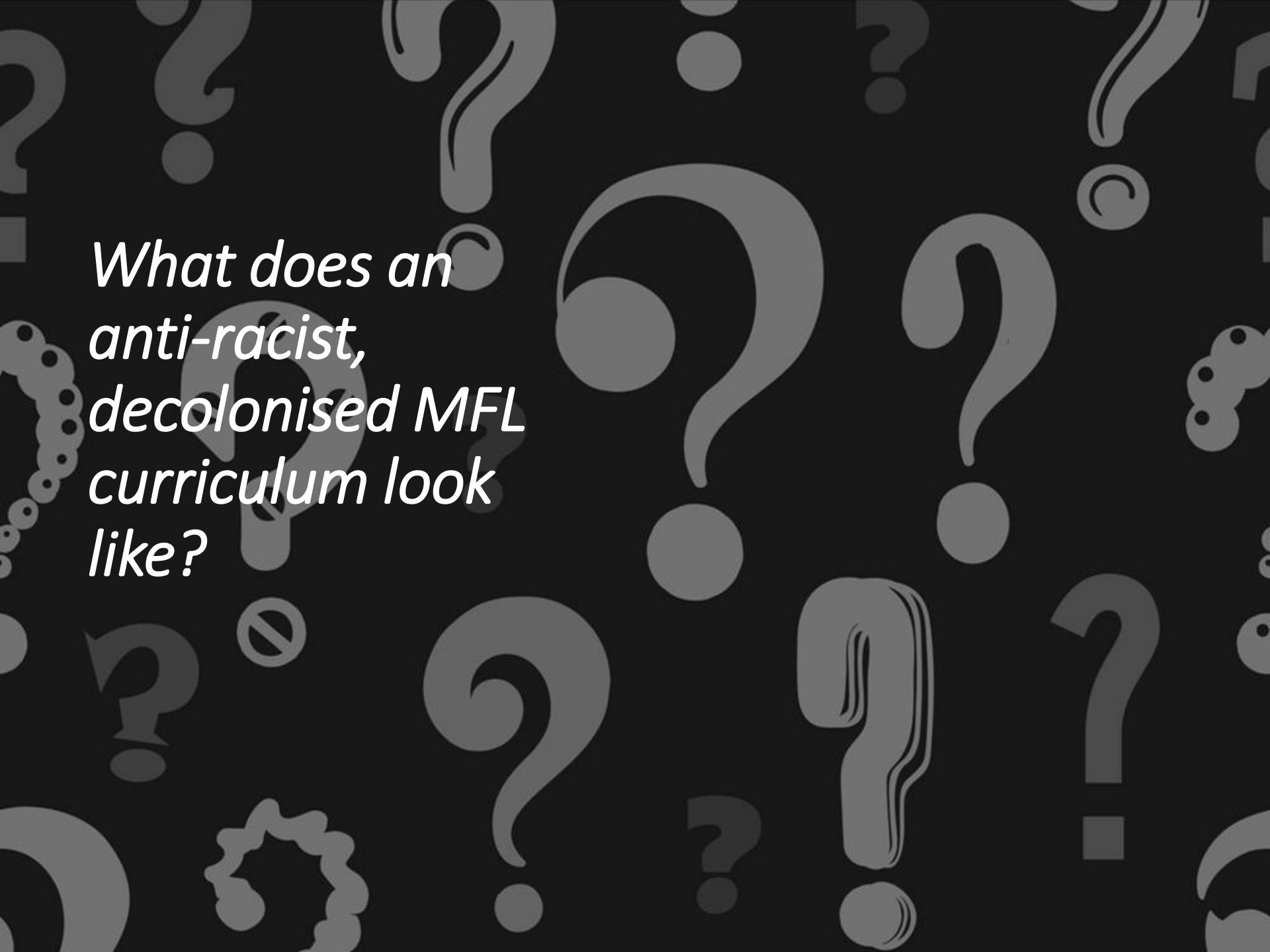




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- '... a program of complete disorder. But it cannot come as a result of magical practices, nor of a natural shock, nor of a friendly understanding'.



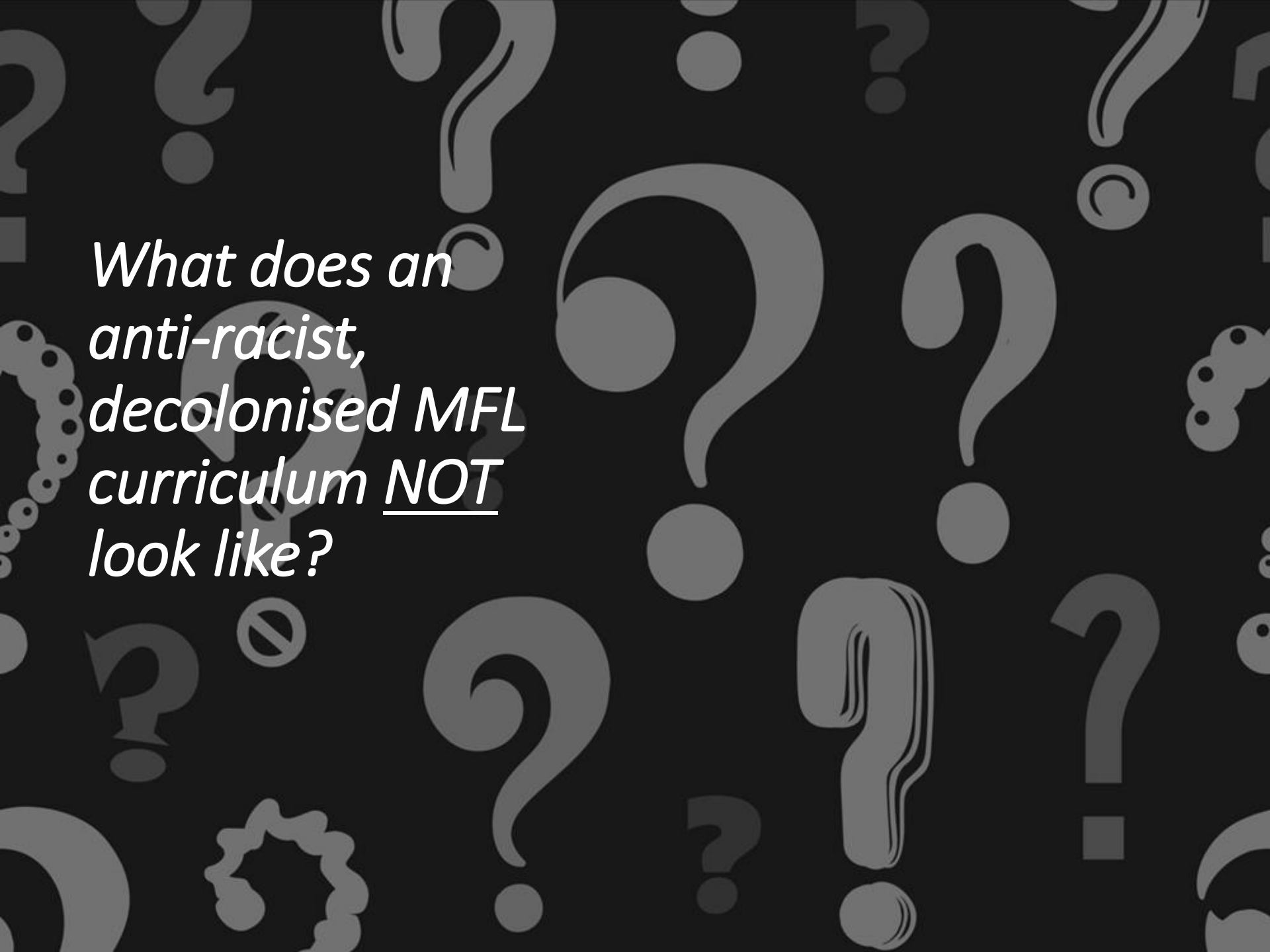


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## *Some questions for initiating discussions around curriculum in departments*

- 1. How far is critical thinking about race/ethnicity present in our curriculum?*
- 2. How far do our materials (e.g. textbooks) promote voices, perspectives, works and ideas that come from beyond a 'white'/'Eurocentric' core?*
- 3. How far do our classroom displays/visual aids include images that reflect role models who are people of colour?*





*What does an  
anti-racist,  
decolonised MFL  
curriculum NOT  
look like?*



*Djibouti*



*Didier Drogba*



*Day of the Dead*



**GUADELOUPE**

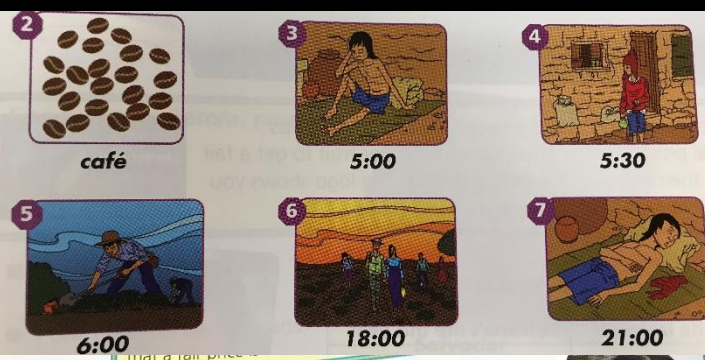
*La Francophonie*

*Diverse resources*



# Diversity? No more white saviours

Mira 3 – El mundo hispanohablante chapter



café

5:00

5:30

6:00

18:00

21:00

Escucha y lee. Copia y rellena la tabla en inglés.

Eufrasia's life last year



la ayuda = help  
la calidad = quality



Me llamo Eufrasia. Vivo en Bolivia. Soy agricultora.



El año pasado planté arroz y bananas pero me dieron muy poco dinero por ellos.



El año pasado sólo comí arroz.



Este año voy a plantar cacao. Con la ayuda de 'comercio justo', el precio es más justo y la calidad del cacao es mejor.



Además las condiciones de vida son mejores. Mis hijos pueden ir al colegio y de vez en cuando comen carne.



Y vamos a tener un hospital en el pueblo.

Escucha y lee. (a-g)

me levanto = I get up  
la madrugada = very early morning  
me acuesto = I go to bed



Me llamo Magali. Tengo catorce años. Soy de Colombia.



No voy al instituto. Trabajo en una plantación de flores.



Me levanto muy temprano, a las cuatro de la madrugada.



Salgo de casa a las cuatro y media. Camino una hora hasta la estación de autobuses.



Después cojo el autobús. El viaje dura cuarenta y cinco minutos.



Empiezo a trabajar a las seis y media de la mañana.

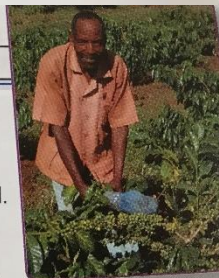


Cada día trabajo ocho horas. Termina a las dos y media de la tarde. Me acuesto a las ocho y media.

90 noventa

Lee el texto. Contesta a las preguntas en inglés.

Me llamo Jorge. Vivo en Buenos Aires en Argentina. La contaminación en nuestra ciudad no es un problema muy grande. Por lo general, la gente no tira mucha basura al suelo, pero hay muchos carros en el centro y el tráfico causa mucho ruido en la ciudad. Es muy importante proteger el medio ambiente. Se debe plantar más árboles en la ciudad. Se debe comprar productos verdes y se debe reciclar papel y vidrio. También se debe usar más el transporte público. ¡Y se debe apagar la luz!



Jorge

- 10 años
- Nicaragua

Carlos

- una plantación de cacao
- 6:00

- 5:00
- 17:00

- 5:30
- 21:00



ZONA CULTURA

Magali has a very hard life, but most children in Colombia do not live in such poverty.

87% go to primary school and 93% of children aged 15 can read. There is, however, a big gap between rich and poor in Colombia.

# *Representation in exam content*













Your teacher will ask you the following three questions and then **two more questions** which you have not prepared.

- ¿Qué hay en la foto?
- De vacaciones, ¿es mejor visitar monumentos o pasar tiempo en la playa? ... ¿Por qué?
- ¿Cuáles serían tus vacaciones ideales?



VOCAB INSTRUCTIONS MATCHUP

				
				
español	italiano	irlandés	inglés	belga
galés	suizo	escocés	francés	alemán

*Representation in Eurocentric resources*



*llevo el hiyab*



*tengo el pelo afro*




*una mezquita*





# What should we do?


**Escucha y lee. (a-g)**


me levanto = I get up  
la madrugada = very early morning  
me acuesto = I go to bed


**a**   
Me llamo Magali. Tengo catorce años. Soy de Colombia.


**b**   
No voy al instituto. Trabajo en una plantación de flores.

**c**   
Me levanto muy temprano, a las cuatro de la madrugada.

**d**   
Salgo de casa a las cuatro y media. Camino una hora hasta la estación de autobuses.

**e**   
Después cojo el autobús. El viaje dura cuarenta y cinco minutos.

**f**   
Empiezo a trabajar a las seis y media de la mañana.

**g**   
Cada día trabajo ocho horas. Terminó a las dos y media de la tarde. Me acuesto a las ocho y media.



Your teacher will ask you the following three questions and then **two more questions** which you have not prepared.

- ¿Qué hay en la foto?
- De vacaciones, ¿es mejor visitar monumentos o pasar tiempo en la playa? ... ¿Por qué?
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**VOCAB INSTRUCTIONS MATCHUP**

				
				
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*Las vidas negras importan – el movimiento antirracista en el mundo hispanohablante*







*Where do we go from here?*

# Collaboration

- St Mary's University MFL PGCE Trainees' Padlet

- Sophia Chahad's (Teach First) Google Doc (French, German, Spanish & Russian)

The Padlet board 'Decolonising MFL' features several resource cards:

- Introductory Lecture:** Rationale, key principles; a framework for approaches. Includes a PDF document '4 Nov FINAL Decolonising MFL' by Melina Irvine and Lisa Panford.
- Decolonising MFL resources - shared folder:** Explore, share what has worked well with others here (remember to acknowledge others' work) and contribute your own work to these shared resources. Link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1T7P-Flmg3MVE919vireDau9RKqGd4-K>
- Anti racist & Diverse Resources:** Follow the link for recommendations of books, poetry, music and film in Spanish, French, German and other languages too! Link: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Mxc4u2H56d4LZos7WEmduj6u8VW74cw8X3v60A/mobilebasic>
- BFI A Level French film resources: La Haine:** Here's a link to the British Film Institute's KS5 resources for the film La Haine. Includes lesson plans, associated clips and worksheets. Link: <https://www.bfi.org.uk/film-resources-events-teachers/classroom-resources-teachers/bfi-schools/french-la-haine-school-resources>
- La France DOM-TOM:** Making MFL less euro-centric. There's more to France than Hexagone...! Lots of news and current affairs stories, opportunity to see/hear enriching perspectives.
- Textbook troubles:** When teaching Y7 German 'Meine Familie' I was frustrated by the fact that all the characters in the school textbook are white. I decided to create my own resource using characters that reflected the ethnicity and religions of the students in my class. I wanted students to be able to relate to the characters, especially when speaking about their families. Includes a video '1A.1 Das ist meine Familie'.
- La Toussaint aux Antilles:** Year 8 students learnt how All Saints' Day is celebrated in the French Antilles in a cultural lesson. Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9wL620Z-Yw>
- Lluvia de peces Honduras resource:** Very short ppt and worksheet (with transcript for short newsclip) on a natural phenomenon that occurs every year in Honduras. Even though the video is a newsclip, year 7 or 8 could still access key vocab such as dates, months, weather.
- KS3 Spanish:** Includes a video '¿Qué te gusta comer y beber?' and a worksheet 'KS3 French: music/perfect tense'.

## Anti-Racist and Diverse Resources for MFL

Please add any resources that can be used in French, Spanish or other MFL lessons to educate pupils and teachers alike. Some resources can be accessed by clicking the name which will direct you to the correct link.

Be specific about who in particular has created the resources; blanket terms like "African" are not helpful and can erase people's identities and reinforce stereotypes by lumping everyone together.

Please do not delete other people's contributions, unless you are removing a second entry of something that is already on the list. If you think there is something that shouldn't be on this list, we can discuss it together and come to a mutual decision. You can contact me ([schahad49@gmail.com](mailto:schahad49@gmail.com)) if you want to raise something, and I will take it further with the group.

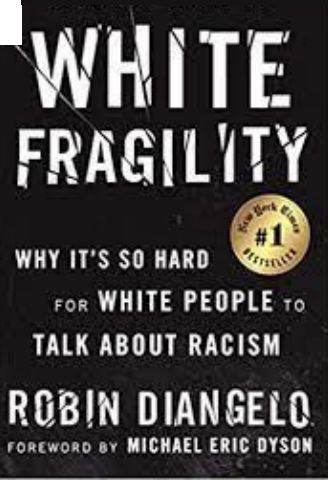
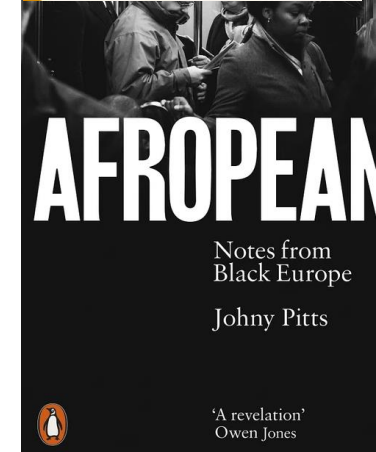
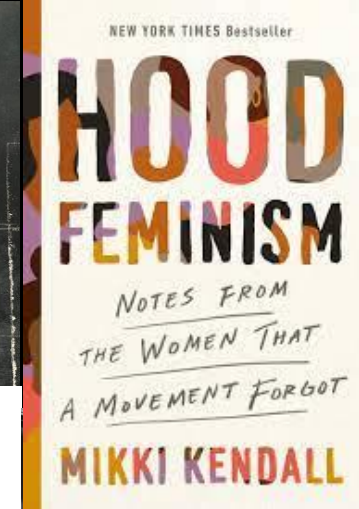
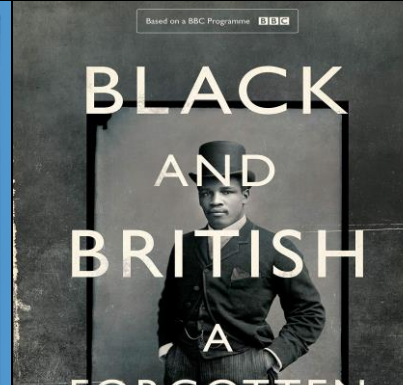
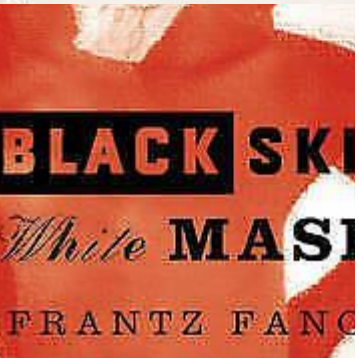
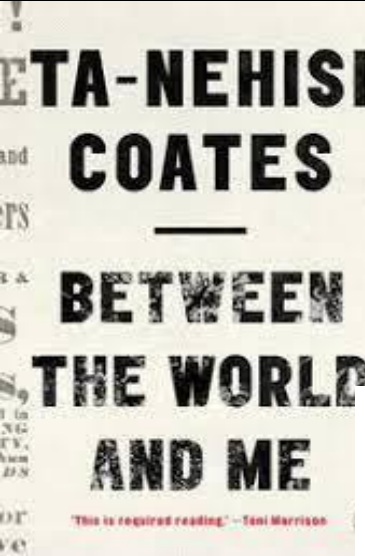
Please try to add some Russian, German and Spanish resources!

(Widening Participation in Languages links also shared at the end of the document.)

### French

#### Books

- Le Ventre de L'Atlantique** - Fatou Diome - a novel about a Senegalese woman who moves to France and reconciles the reality of racism with the mythology of finding a better life in Europe. Quite funny, but great commentary about the legacy of colonial relations and identity struggles
- L'Enfant Noir** - Camara Laye - an autobiographical novel about growing up in Guinea, and the conflict of abandoning tradition in search of a French education
- The Black Jacobins** - CLR James - a fascinating history of Haiti's slave revolt and subsequent independence (could be useful for facts, might be a bit dense to set as a text)
- L'Amour, La Fantasia** - Assia Djebar - an epistolary novel documenting the Maghreb experience of colonialism. The different chapters explore different characters' voices and time periods related to modern France and past/ongoing independence struggles.
- Kiffe Kiffe Tomorrow** - Faiza Guène - novel for young adults about a Muslim girl growing up in the suburbs of Paris. Accurate depiction of the life of Arabic / Franco-African immigrants in Paris
- Dernières nouvelles du colonialisme** - a collection of short stories by African authors concerning the realities of French colonialism in Africa and the effects of this on the present day.
- L'aventure ambiguë** - Cheikh Hamidou Kane - concerns the interaction of Western and African cultures. A boy from Senegal goes to study in France and loses touch with his Islamic faith and his Senegalese roots.



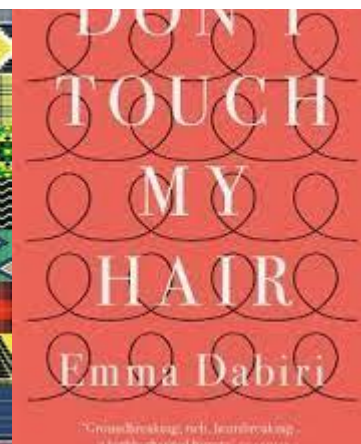
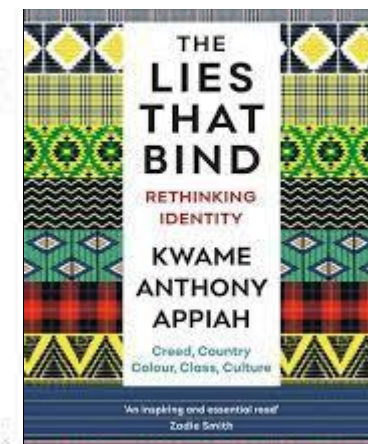
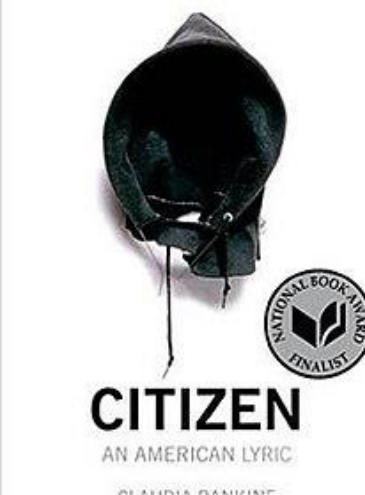
## REPORTS/ARTICLES/BLOGS

- <https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/Runnymede%20Secondary%20Schools%20report%20FINAL.pdf>
- <https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/The%20School%20Report.pdf>
- <https://blogs.kcl.ac.uk/diversity/2020/05/28/the-reality-of-diversification-without-beginning-the-process-of-decolonisation/>
- Bhanot, K (2015) Decolonise Not Diversify [PDF]. Media Diversified. Accessed at: [https://www.academia.edu/39008909/Decolonise Not Diversify](https://www.academia.edu/39008909/Decolonise_Not_Diversify)

## MFL RESOURCE BANKS

[Anti-Racist and Diverse Resources for MFL - Google Docs](#)

[Decolonising MFL \(padlet.com\)](#)







# Questions?

- *What are we missing?*
- *What questions does this session/do these issues raise for your learners and for you in your own contexts?*
- *How can we strengthen and enrich narratives around decolonising the MFL curriculum?*
- *What can be achieved?*

*Your feedback is welcomed!*  
[melina.irvine@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:melina.irvine@hotmail.co.uk) ;  
[lepanford@hotmail.com](mailto:lepanford@hotmail.com)

[@panford\\_lisa](#)

[@melinairv](#)