

EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES: 26th SEPTEMBER

This year's Languages Day competition was inspired by a faulty French translation on a Tesco product. It read:

HAND LOTION Pour main et clou

Our prize winners, Zoe, Sophie and Matthew correctly spotted that this product would have been more appropriately placed in a hardware store rather than a beauty parlour as the Tesco translator did not select the right word for “*nail*”. In France you will find a “*clou*” on sale in places where you can also buy hammers! The nail that you have on your finger is an “*ongle*”.

Our prize winners went on to explain why bargain produce sent to France marked “*sale*” would not be very popular with French shoppers. The word “*sale*” has nothing to do with sales. It means “*dirty*”!

We particularly liked Sophie's example of faulty translation. She pointed out that an advert in a French butcher's shop promoting “*sein de poulet*” would attract some strange comments. While in England we are happy to eat “*chicken breast*”, the French prefer to talk about the “*blanc de poulet*”, the white meat on a chicken. The French word “*sein*” is kept for the human body.

We have now received a letter from Tesco thanking Fakenham High School and College for alerting them to their translation error. The hand lotion label will be corrected in the next print run. Meanwhile, they have sent three money vouchers for our prize winners!

Bravo à vous tous!

Anne Prentis, Head of Languages