

# The New Senior Secondary Curriculum for Sierra Leone

**Subject syllabus for Mende Language**

Subject stream: Languages and Literature



This subject syllabus is based on the National Curriculum Framework for Senior Secondary Education. It was prepared by national curriculum specialists and subject experts.





## Curriculum Elements for Mende Language (a core subject)

### Subject description

Senior Secondary School (SSS) Mende will introduce pupils to the Mende language of Sierra Leone as a tool for communication just like any other language in the world. The Mende language Curriculum builds on the content offered at Junior Secondary School (JSS). The curriculum at this level will examine the sounds, words, phrases, and sentences of the language with the intention to make pupils proficient in the language in both writing and speaking. The aim is to develop the pupils' intellectual capacity and skills, so they are able to not just remember, understand and apply content of the Mende language, but also to enable them to analyze, evaluate and create their own content using the language beyond their academic activities.

### Rationale for the Inclusion of the Mende language in the Senior Secondary School Curriculum

1. To improve pupils' knowledge of the Mende.
2. To provide Sierra Leonean pupils the platform to relate real life experiences via the Mende language.
3. The teaching of Mende will enable pupils to develop a critical mindset to reassess their estimation of Sierra Leone via one of its own national languages.
4. Knowledge of Mende culture will come alive when pupils begin to explore Mende readers and grammar texts.
5. The teaching of Mende contributes to the achievement of some key objectives contained in the UNESCO Charter (as a continuation of the work begun at JSS).
6. The teaching of Mende in SSS will reinvigorate the intellectual atmosphere around Sierra Leonean languages which had dissipated long ago.

### General Learning Outcomes (Broad Goals)

At the end of the course, pupils will be able to:

1. strengthen their ability to understand, speak, read, and write in Mende
2. increase their knowledge of texts, stories, proverbs, and idioms in Mende
3. raise their awareness of Mende orthography.
4. increase their knowledge of Mende vowels, consonants, etc.
5. strengthen their ability to sample the creative thinking process using the Mende language alongside other languages.
6. enhance their competency to apply knowledge in practical and real-life situations with the help of the Mende language.
7. engage in the rebirth of Sierra Leonean cultural heritage as it is reflected in the Mende language.
8. raise their awareness of Sierra Leonean languages and more easily understand the grammar of other languages
9. challenge stereotypical views on language status in Sierra Leone and the relevance of language to its people.
10. develop their communicative skills using the Mende language.
11. see different worlds as they exist in the Mende language.
12. prepare for further study and careers in Mende.



## Structure of the Syllabus over the Three Year Senior Secondary School Cycle

	SSS 1	SSS 2	SSS 3
<b>Term 1</b>	<p><b>Introduction to Sierra Leonean Languages</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The language situation in Sierra Leone</li> <li>The four national languages</li> </ul> <p><b>The Mendes of Sierra Leone</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>History of the Mendes</li> <li>The distribution of the Mende</li> <li>The Mende language</li> <li>Mende language dialects</li> <li>Geographical locations of the Mende dialects</li> </ul> <p><b>Writing System of Mende</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The orthography</li> <li>Mende vowels</li> <li>Mende consonants</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mende Nouns</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Definitions</li> <li>Classification</li> <li>Functions</li> <li>Morphological features</li> <li>Plurals of nouns</li> <li>Possessives of nouns</li> <li>Determiners of nouns</li> <li>Identification of nouns in sentences</li> <li>Using nouns in phrases, clauses and sentences</li> </ul> <p><b>Mende Verbs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Definition of verbs</li> <li>Classification of verbs</li> <li>Action and stative verbs</li> <li>Regular and irregular verbs</li> <li>Transitive and intransitive verbs</li> <li>Main and auxiliary verbs</li> <li>Syntactic structure of verbs</li> <li>Morphological features of verbs</li> <li>Identification of verbs in a sentences</li> <li>Verb serialization</li> <li>Using verbs in phrases, clauses and sentences</li> </ul> <p><b>Mende Pronouns</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Definitions of pronouns</li> <li>Types of pronouns</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reading, Summary and Comprehension in Mende</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Definitions of reading, summary and comprehension</li> <li>Types of reading, summary and comprehension</li> <li>Features of reading, summary and comprehension</li> <li>Functions of reading, summary and comprehension</li> </ul> <p><b>Mende Conjunctions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Definitions of conjunctions</li> <li>Types of conjunctions</li> <li>Forms of conjunctions</li> <li>Functions of conjunctions</li> <li>Identifying conjunctions</li> <li>Using conjunctions in clauses and sentences</li> </ul> <p><b>Mende Adjectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Definition of adjectives</li> <li>Types of adjectives</li> <li>Classification of adjectives</li> <li>Syntactic structure of adjectives</li> <li>Forms of adjectives</li> <li>Comparing adjectives</li> <li>Identification of adjectives in sentences</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Features of pronouns</li> <li>• Identification of pronouns in sentences</li> <li>• Using pronouns in phrases, clauses and sentences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using adjectives in phrases, clauses and sentences</li> </ul>
<b>Term 2</b>	<p><b>Mende Phonology</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Similar vowels in sequence</li> <li>• Dissimilar vowels in sequence</li> <li>• Mende syllable structure</li> <li>• Monosyllabic words in Mende</li> <li>• Bisyllabic words in Mende.</li> </ul> <p><b>Connected Speech in Mende</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consonant clusters and digraphs</li> <li>• Identification of consonants and vowels</li> <li>• Rapid and slow speech</li> <li>• Consonant mutation</li> <li>• Tones and tonal variations</li> <li>• Counting system</li> <li>• Days of the week</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mende Ideophones</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definition of ideophones</li> <li>• Functions of ideophones</li> <li>• Nature of ideophones</li> <li>• Forms of ideophones</li> <li>• Types of ideophones</li> <li>• Functions of ideophones</li> <li>• Using ideophones in sentences</li> </ul> <p><b>Mende Prepositions / Postpositions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definitions of post/ prepositions</li> <li>• Nature of post/ prepositions</li> <li>• Types of post/ prepositions</li> <li>• Forms of post/ prepositions</li> <li>• Functions of post/ prepositions</li> <li>• Identification of post/ prepositions</li> <li>• Using prepositions in phrases, clauses and sentences</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mende Adverbs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definition of adverbs</li> <li>• Types of adverbs</li> <li>• Syntactic structures of adverbs</li> <li>• Forms of adverbs</li> <li>• Comparing adverbs</li> <li>• Functions of adverbs</li> <li>• Identification of adverbs</li> <li>• Using adverbs in phrases, clauses and sentences</li> </ul> <p><b>Mende Composition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining compositions</li> <li>• Elements of compositions</li> <li>• Types of compositions</li> <li>• Functions of composition types</li> </ul>
<b>Term 3</b>	<p><b>Mende Grammar</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to the Parts of Speech</li> <li>• Nouns</li> <li>• Pronouns</li> <li>• Verbs</li> <li>• Adjectives</li> <li>• Adverbs</li> </ul>	<p><b>The Mende Sentence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Definition of the sentence</li> <li>• Parts of the sentence</li> <li>• The subject and the predicate</li> <li>• Simple subjects and compound subjects</li> <li>• Simple predicates and compound predicates</li> <li>• Sentences by structure</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mende Vocabulary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Synonyms</li> <li>• Antonyms</li> <li>• Idioms</li> <li>• Proverbs</li> <li>• Cliches</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ideophones</li> <li>• Prepositions</li> <li>• Postpositions</li> <li>• Conjunctions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentences by purposes</li> <li>• Verb tenses</li> <li>• Clefting and types of clefting</li> <li>• Using Mende sentences</li> </ul>
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Topic/ Theme/ Unit	Expected learning outcomes	Recommended teaching methods	Suggested resources	Assessment of learning outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Sierra Leonean Languages</li> <li>• The Mendes of Sierra Leone</li> <li>• Writing System of Mende</li> <li>• Mende Phonology</li> <li>• Connected Speech in Mende</li> <li>• Mende Grammar</li> <li>• Mende Nouns</li> <li>• Mende Verbs</li> <li>• Mende Pronouns</li> <li>• Mende Ideophones</li> <li>• Mende Prepositions / Postpositions</li> <li>• The Mende Sentence</li> <li>• Reading, Summary and Comprehension in Mende</li> <li>• Mende Conjunctions</li> <li>• Mende Adjectives</li> <li>• Mende Adverbs</li> <li>• Mende Composition</li> <li>• Mende Vocabulary</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Raise pupils' awareness of Mende orthography.</li> <li>2. Increase pupils' knowledge of Mende vowels, consonants etc.</li> <li>3. Strengthen pupils' ability to sample the creative thinking process using the Mende language alongside other languages.</li> <li>4. Enhance the competencies of pupils to apply knowledge in practical and real-life situations with the help of the Mende language.</li> <li>5. Pupils and teachers will engage on the rebirth of Sierra Leonean cultural heritage as it is reflected in the Mende language.</li> <li>6. Pupils will be able to challenge stereotypical views on language status in Sierra Leone and the relevance of language to its people.</li> <li>7. Learners will be able to develop their communicative skills using the Mende language.</li> <li>8. Learners will be able to see different worlds as they exist in the Mende language.</li> <li>9. Pupils will be prepared to continue their academic career in tertiary institutions.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face-to-face teaching</li> <li>• Online teaching</li> <li>• Teach techniques on seminar writing</li> <li>• Teach practical criticisms</li> </ul>	<p>Books, Authors &amp; Publishers: Grammar/ Readers/ Literature to be advised by MBSSE</p>	<p>Pupils will be assessed using but not limited to the following assessment methods:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Homework</li> <li>2. Tests</li> <li>3. Subjective Tests</li> <li>4. Cloze Tests</li> <li>5. Register / Frames</li> <li>6. Presentations</li> <li>7. Interpretations</li> <li>8. Own Writing</li> <li>9. Field Work</li> <li>10. Examinations</li> </ol> <p>It is proposed that 30% of the overall score will be allocated to assessment methods 1-9, with 70% allocated to examination results (total of 100%).</p>