

Why learn a Foreign Language?

9 Advantages of Learning a Foreign Language

1. Meet new people

One of the most phenomenal benefits of learning a new language? Doors are opened to you around the world. If you're learning in a group setting, you immediately have new friends to share your new language with. If not, then once you go somewhere and are actually able to employ what you've learned, you'll be surprised how open people are when you speak their mother tongue.

2. Employers love it (and they'll love you more)

If your C.V. accolades include fluency in a second language, your chances of employment in today's economy are much greater for you than for those who speak only one language.

Multilingual people can communicate and interact within multiple communities. Potential employers consider this a valuable asset in an employee's skill set, as they're able to connect with a broader range of people. In this new age of start-ups, companies are increasingly breaking into new markets. You up your personal and professional value if you're able to negotiate with manufacturers in another country or communicate with customers who don't speak your native language.

Not to mention, your ability to speak a second language conveys that you're motivated and driven to learn new skills, and this also gives you a competitive edge over those who haven't yet become bilingual.

3. It's becoming essential

Many would argue that bilingualism is becoming a progressively necessary and essential skill for anyone who wants to keep up with today's rapidly increasing global economy. As more and more people recognize the importance of learning an additional language, those who only speak one language will begin to get left behind in our shift towards a more integrated and connected global society.

4. It's great for traveling

Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein is credited with saying that "the limits of your language are the limits of your world," and he was right.

Knowing more than one language opens up your vacation destination possibilities. Traveling through a foreign country becomes much easier if you can speak the language of that country. Fluency isn't required. Locals anywhere appreciate that you've taken the time to at least attempt to learn and communicate in their tongue. It shows a greater level of respect and is an easy way to meet new people.

Also, getting to a comfortable speaking level in a foreign language is a great motivator to get you out there and practicing your new language in a new country.

5. After learning one, it's 1000x easier to learn another

As you begin to learn a second language, you'll find that the acquisition techniques you're using can be applied to learning additional languages as well.

The positive cognitive effects of learning to speak a second language can train the brain to analyse and process different linguistic structures. It's not specific to your first target language — it's a skill that can be applied to learning any language.

You're increasing your ability to replicate the process with multiple languages. This is called "metalinguistic awareness," where your brain learns to identify the techniques of learning a language and break them down into a series of steps. After learning one language, you retain the muscle memory. Your brain will intrinsically understand how to learn a language and how different languages are structured, through increased awareness of syntax, grammar and sentence structure.

6. You become smarter

Acquiring a second language improves your memory and increases your attention span. The process of becoming bilingual exercises your brain, challenges you to concentrate and boosts your problem-solving skills.

Bilingual students tend to score higher on standardized tests than monolingual students, especially in the areas of vocabulary, reading and math. As you learn to toggle from one language to another, you improve your multitasking abilities. Bilingual individuals have also been shown to be more logical and rational, have better decision-making skills and be more perceptive and aware of their surroundings.

Learning a second language also improves your native language, as it teaches you the mechanics and structure behind any language — not just new languages.

7. You'll stay smarter for longer

Recent research has shown that bilingualism can stave off the effects of Alzheimer's and dementia by years. Regardless of their education level, gender or occupation, bilingual subjects in the linked study experienced the onset of Alzheimer's, on average, 4 1/2 years later than monolingual subjects did.

Study results out of the American Academy of Neurology are showing that speaking more than one language increases the number of neural pathways in the brain, allowing information to be processed through a greater variety of channels. They've also begun to demonstrate that multilingualism improves development in the brain's areas of executive function and attention, no matter what age the language learner is.

8. It boosts your creativity

Researchers are also concluding that multilingual speakers are more creative than monolingual speakers. Learning a foreign language improves not only your ability to solve problems and to think more logically, it also makes you experiment with new words and phrases.

Levelling up your second language skills forces you to reach for alternate words when you can't quite remember the original one you wanted to use. It improves your skills in divergent thinking, which is the ability to identify multiple solutions to a single problem.

9. It builds up your self-confidence

You're about to teach yourself to believe, "yes, I can." It'll become your new personal mantra.

Confidence increases when a new skill is mastered, and learning a foreign language is no different. It increases your self-confidence. And let's face it: confident people are more interesting than those who are unsure of themselves. The techniques you use to develop a second tongue result in a greater sense of open-mindedness.

In order to master a new language, conversations with native and fluent speakers are essential. If you're shy but want to meet new people, using the excuse that you want to practice your speaking skills is a great opener and a doorway to making new friends, expanding your horizons and broadening your life experiences. Plus, who doesn't want to be more interesting?

Languages at SHS	<p>The Department of Modern Foreign Languages is a very successful department with pass rates at GCSE that are very pleasing.</p> <p>We have four full size designated classrooms all equipped with interactive whiteboards. We use commercially produced software for use with the interactive whiteboards and staff also produce their own customised materials. All pupils use textbooks which are supplemented with both commercially produced and in-house materials.</p>
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<p>Why is MFL exciting at SHS?</p>	<p>We aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure students are exposed to a wide variety of teaching and learning styles - ensure every student achieves his/her potential through differentiation and target setting - lay sound foundation for the skills required for further study, work or leisure - build on the progress already made at Key Stage 3 and work towards raising achievement at Key Stage 4 - cultivate and embed independent learning at all Key Stages.
<p>Course content</p>	<p>KS3 Course Outline for French/Spanish</p> <p>We currently deliver the KS3 French and Spanish curriculum using The Pearson Education/Edexcel interactive course books called Studio and Mira supplemented with a wealth of material designed and produced by our experienced language teachers to support and challenge students.</p> <p>Year 7 students will cover the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Myself and others • My school • My free time • My town • My holidays <p>Year 8 students will cover the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing likes + dislikes in terms of free time activities. • Visiting a city as a tourist • Who am I? • How to treat a guest in your home Cross-curricular work <p>Year 9 students will cover the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing interests • Future plans • Healthy lifestyle • Towns and Environment • World issues • The French speaking world <p>KS4 Course Outline for French/Spanish</p> <p>5 main Themes:</p> <p>Year 10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity and culture • Local area, holiday, travel • School • Year 11 • School (continued) • Future aspirations, study and work • International and global dimension

Exam Board	Our Exam Board is Edexcel
Trips & Learning Activities	<p>At Key Stage 3 pupils will be formally assessed at the end of each unit of work. These assessments will include a mix of Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening skills where the focus is on content that has been covered during that half term. Teachers will also however, use ongoing formative assessment throughout all lessons to consistently monitor the progress of the pupils within their class.</p> <p>At Key Stage 4 pupils will regularly complete exam practice questions using examples from French or Spanish exams of previous years. This regular assessment will give the teacher and the pupil an ongoing understanding of pupils' strengths and areas for development. At regular intervals pupils will also sit summative assessments of past exam papers based on the content that they have covered.</p> <p>We strongly encourage pupils to continue and build on their learning outside of the classroom. Pupils can use websites such as BBC bitesize and other language websites which can be accessed on a computer, smartphone or tablet. The login details for these specific websites are available from the class teacher of each language.</p> <p>Useful Websites: http://www.zut.org.uk http://www.linguascope.com http://www.conjuguemos.com http://www.memrise.com http://jeudeloie.free.fr/ http://www.studyspanish.com/freesite.htm http://www.frenchrevision.co.uk/ http://fog.ccsf.cc.ca.us/~creitan/grammar.htm</p> <p style="text-align: center;">How to help your child with French / Spanish</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Be positive about language learning. It can be challenging, but always try to be encouraging and supportive. 2) Talk to your son/daughter about what he or she is learning in French/Spanish. Show an interest in what your child is learning; encourage him or her to teach you a few words or phrases on a regular basis— have fun with it. 3) Encourage your him or her to be an active participant during class time. If he/she takes part in lessons, he/she will feel more motivated and make more progress. 4) Check that your child is fully equipped for language lessons. He or she should always remember his or her exercise book and pen and hand homework in on time. 5) Support your child with his Language homework. Even if you have never learnt it yourself, you can still help him / her with written and learning homework. 6) Check ShowMyHomework and your child's Contact Book for details of homework and encourage him or her not to leave work to the last minute. 7) Encourage your child to use 'LOOK, SAY, COVER, WRITE, CHECK' when learning vocabulary.

8) **Invest** in a French/English bilingual dictionary for home use. We would recommend the Collins Easy Learner dictionary which is clear and easy to use.

9) Rent or buy French language DVDs or watch a favourite DVD with the French subtitles turned on. You could also encourage your child to watch some YouTube videos in French or Spanish.

10) **Encourage** your child to make the most of any language learning opportunities you might have. You might have a French/Spanish-speaking neighbour, a family friend or a relative who speaks either language...

11) **Encourage** your child to come to the Language Club we are planning to setup, staffing permitting.