



***Enhanced Learning  
Educational Services***  
*"the study skills specialist"*

# FOREIGN LANGUAGE SKILLS



**Developing your Foreign Language skills will help you not just with learning a language for school but you will train the language learning circuits in your brain AND the language might be useful if you travel.**

- You should read each point and **highlight the key phrases** in that point.
- Discuss with a friend or parent as you read through the handout.
- You may like to work through this over a number of sessions.

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# 1. INTRO TO LANGUAGE LEARNING

## Things you need to know about languages:

- Languages have a sound system and a grammatical system.
- In some languages the tone system carries as much meaning as consonants and vowels.
- There are variations in language due to regional, status, and stylistic differences.

## Things you need to know about learning a language:

- Everyone is capable of learning languages but some people do find it easier than others because of the way their brain is wired.
- Some students take on a different 'persona' or style or way of speaking when speaking another language while other learners resist sounding and acting differently.
- Your attitude towards learning a language affects your motivation and your level of motivation will affect how long it takes to learn a language.
- If you expect to succeed, you will be more likely to succeed while fear or anxiousness can make it harder to learn the language.
- Repetition helps things stick but you cannot rely on memorization alone - you have to understand it as well.
- Body language, gestures, and your face communicate as much as words.
- Foreign language learning is cumulative. Each lesson will build on the one that came before it.



**And most importantly.....  
Learning a language requires DAILY study.  
You need to work on the language REGULARLY  
to ensure you retain the information.**



*a. Which of the points in this section did you know about and which do you agree with?*

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## 2. IN THE CLASSROOM

*Classtime is one of the most important times for students to develop their language skills. To ensure you make the most of classtime, you need to:*

- **PARTICIPATE FULLY:** The more you take the opportunities presented in class to interact and practise your language skills the more you will improve. It is also the perfect time to ask questions about anything you don't understand.
- **TAKE NOTES:** In classes where lots of discussion is taking place it may not occur to you to take notes at all but your teacher might write key words on the board or explain points during the discussion – write these down!
- **THINK EVEN IF YOU ARE NOT ASKED DIRECTLY:** If your teacher asks someone else a question or to do something in class, don't just think 'whew I'm glad it wasn't me', instead think about what you would have said if you'd been asked and try and answer the question yourself in your head then see if you would have been right. This will help you to focus more in class and improve your learning.
- **DON'T BE SCARED OR SHY:** Take risks in class! Everyone sounds a bit funny when they are first learning a language but to become a good speaker of your new language you need to be prepared to take chances. From the other side, be supportive of your classmates and don't make fun of them in any way or make them feel uncomfortable about having a go.
- **ASK QUESTIONS:** As with any type of learning, it is essential you ask questions if you can't understand something!



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