

# Essay summary of foreign language requirement

[Linguistics](#), [Language](#)



Foreign Language High School Requirement A survey done by the Center for Applied Linguistics in 2008 found that " The findings indicate a serious disconnect between the national call to educate world citizens with high-level language skills and the current state of foreign language instruction in schools across the country"(Cal: Research). This is concerning as all of the competition for the U. S. is gaining a step and we're doing nothing . If the U. S. expects to continue to be competitive in the global market we need to have bilingual citizens.

In order to ensure this, we must require a foreign language be learned in high school. To fully master a language by the end of high school, a student's education of it needs to begin in Kindergarten. Studies have shown that the best time frame to learn a foreign language is from Kindergarten to 3rd Grade. It would be better, though, to start in Kindergarten so there is a consistent education throughout elementary school. The brain learns better at a young age so the language will be learned faster and more easily in lower grades. Not only this, but extended exposure is need to become fluent in a language (Porter).

By the time the students reached high school they could speak the language outside of class to become even more fluent. By the end of high school these students would be bilingual. If the U. S. requires a foreign language be learned in high school, it's education should start in Kindergarten. Bilingual students receive additional benefits outside of simply knowing another language. Bilinguals, superior to their monolingual peers, are better at critical thinking, pattern recognition, divergent thinking, and creativity (" Foreign Language A Must... ").

These advanced cognitive abilities are shown on tests as after 3-4 years of taking a language students show improved standardized test scores (Porter). This means that students will have better math and English test scores without even taking the classes. Also, bilingual students are more sensitive to other cultures. They can compare and contrast languages and know how what certain words mean in different contexts (" Make Foreign Language a High School Requirement"). This is something that is sorely needed in the U. S. because the majority of our citizens are unknowledgeable of different cultures.

It would serve as a wake-up call. New bilingual citizens would bring new perspectives to problems that face our society today. Another benefit to learning a foreign language the brain " ages" slower and neurologists say learning a foreign language delays the onset of Dementia (Porter). In learning a foreign language, one enjoys many indirect benefits. Just knowing English isn't enough for exchanges in diplomatic, military, professional, or commercial contexts with other countries. When in a different country, monolinguals are at a disadvantage compared to bilinguals because they have to hire an interpreter.

Monolinguals have trouble picking up both verbal and non-verbal clues of a different language (Porter). They could violate social taboo and can't follow side conversations. This is a huge risk as one could be thrown out of a country and by violating the unwritten rules. This could set an unwanted reputation for Americans. Having been bilingual, students have cultural knowledge and understanding. This helps with the daily interactions required in living in another country (" Make Foreign Language A High School

Requirement"). Clearly having more bilingual citizens would help America in communication and interactions with other countries.

Having many bilingual citizens also helps in diplomatic and economic interactions with a foreign nation as it establishes a good relationship by knowing their culture. " Thomas L. Friedman cited a businessman, Todd Martin, who said that 'our education failure is the largest contributing factor to the decline of the American workers' global effectiveness' (Porter). By requiring a foreign language be learned in high school, the U. S. will increase its workers ability to compete in the global market and their ability to interact with foreign workers.

With society becoming more and more global, it will become a necessity to know a foreign language. Export business's are growing in double digits every year and foreign business's are expanding at a rapid rate (Porter). Obviously there is a growing need for bilinguals (Porter). At this point, there are more internet users in Asia than in North America (" Foreign Language a Must for High School Graduation"). The global economy is diversifying and if the U. S. expects to dominate the market we must follow the trend of our competition. In countries like Japan knowing two languages is the standard (" Make Foreign Language a High School Requirement").

How can we expect to compete with Japan if their workers have a big advantage over U. S. workers in knowing multiple languages. In terms of foreign language, the U. S. is lagging behind its competition and to keep up we need to follow the trend of requiring a foreign language. The opposition to requiring a foreign language in High School argue that it violates the right of students to choose some classes. They say it restricts the number of

<https://assignbuster.com/essay-summary-of-foreign-language-requirement/>

electives a student can take but a foreign language is far more important than some elective.

A foreign language class is something that will benefit the student for the rest of their life. Students already have required classes for math, science, English, history, and a fine art, but a language is a fine art. In a foreign language class a student learns about the art of a different culture. For example, on Day of the Dead in Spanish class I learned about Hipic culture. In creating art similar to what is used in Spain and Mexico on Day of the Dead, I expressed my creativity which is the purpose of an art class. Clearly, foreign language is a fine art, and therefore should be required.

The opponents to requiring a foreign language in High School say that everyone else is learning English so why should we learn foreign languages. This is ignorant because we can't expect everyone to learn English. By not knowing a different countries language, we have no insight into their culture and could never fully understand them. It makes sense to require a foreign language to understand foreign countries and to compete with them. Learning a foreign language needs to be a requirement in High School. The education of foreign language should begin in kindergarten because that is when a child learns best.

By learning another language that child benefits through better test scores and improved cognitive abilities. Americans going to other countries would benefit through better understanding that countries culture and not needing an interpreter everywhere they go. The U. S. needs bilingual citizens to interact with other nations (Porter). If we want to be more marketable and compete on a global-scale we must become bilingual. By requiring a foreign  
<https://assignbuster.com/essay-summary-of-foreign-language-requirement/>

language be learned in High School, we are creating a brighter and more prosperous future for the United States of America.