

# Why we should learn english



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Why We Should Learn English George Bernard Shaw's caustic remark in the preface to *Pygmalion* "The English have no respect for their language, and will not teach their children to speak it." (Shaw 1916) belies the fact that English is the most widely spoken language in the world today. There are over four hundred million native English speakers worldwide and over five hundred million, opt for English as a foreign or second language. Although the percentage of people using English the world over is just about 15% of the world's population, the importance of learning English stems from the fact that it has become the most useful lingua franca for people around the world. English is the main language of international business and diplomacy. It is considered the language of communication in international conferences, scientific and medical conclaves and the official language at world bodies like the United Nations. In today's world of electronic communication and Information Technology, the use of English has assumed even greater importance. Most data processing is done in English as are satellite transmissions and telex messages. News and information available at the click of a mouse or on television is mostly in English, and Face book and Twitter are other examples of how exchange of ideas especially among today's youth, is carried out in this universal language. Education is another field where the English language is very important. Top universities in the world use English as the medium of instruction. International students therefore need to learn the language in order to gain admissions to such world class learning centers. Tourism is an important industry worldwide where people need a common language to communicate and English fills this need admirably. For many former British colonies, the legacy of their English colonizers is a boon, as English became the common language of

communication despite the numerous native languages and dialects. Great strides have been made in Science and Medicine. New discoveries and the latest medical techniques so important for treating and curing disease throughout the world, are all available mostly in English, as are English speaking doctors in online communities. World literature is mostly available in English. Most non English literature is widely translated into English and hence knowledge of English opens up a wide spectrum of reading and exposure to every culture. Cinema and other forms of art are also available for viewing with English subtitles. In an era where the world has been transformed into a global village, a common means of communication is vital for a mutual give and take between the peoples of the world. English has become the preferred language for such communication. Works Cited Shaw Bernard (1916) Preface to Pygmalion. A Professor of Phonetics. Web June 7 2011 <http://www.bartleby.com/138/0.html>