

A gift of language is
an investment
education essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

“ Language and communication are the heart of the human experience.” I believe it is imperative that the teaching of a foreign language should be a requirement in our child’s curriculum and implemented starting in primary schools. The United States has a responsibility to provide all students with the skill set to expand and sustain proficiency in English and facilitate the teaching another language. Children who enroll in English-speaking schools from non-English-speaking backgrounds should also be given the opportunity to be further educated in their native language. I will discuss why it is vital to our children to have access to foreign language studies and why it should be integrated throughout their PK-12 academic experience.

We grant our children with the tools to succeed in the 21st Century with the edification of supplementary languages and the insight of other cultures. This is essential for “ American students as they prepare to live and work in a global society.”(According to the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) learning a second language will facilitate communication with those from other cultures. It will allow those to look beyond their customary borders and develop insight into their own language and culture. It will enable those to act with a greater awareness of one self, of other cultures, and their own relationship to those cultures. This will expand their knowledge, and will enable those to participate more fully in the global community and marketplace. Regardless of the career students choose to pursue, they will be amalgamated with others from around the globe on a regular basis and doing business locally with those whose native language is not English. Language education cultivates and enhances basic communication skills and higher order thinking skills. It has a positive effect

on intellectual growth. It leaves students with more flexibility in thinking, greater sensitivity to language, and a better ear for listening in turn increasing job opportunities and performances especially since diversity and teamwork is a growing focus of many organizations.

Establishing foreign language lessons in early childhood creates a foundation for students to achieve highly developed levels of proficiencies in one or more languages. Moreover, younger learners still hold the capability to develop near native-like pronunciation and tone in a new language.

According to Languagestars. com Exposing a young child to a second language, optimize his or her learning potential, helping to shape the brain at its most flexible stage. Young children are uniquely suited to learning a second language. A developing brain between birth and adolescence is fitted to obtain language naturally. Children have a curiosity about learning which is obvious when they participate in engaging in a new language. They also are more broadminded and accepting of people from other cultures and who speak other languages. The ease of learning a second language reduces with age. Studying a language enhances a child's mental development while improving a child understanding of his/her native language.

“ Children who learn a foreign language beginning in early childhood exhibit certain cognitive advantages over children who do not.” Studies consistently show that learning a second language improve critical thinking skills, creativity, and flexibility. “ Students who are learning a foreign language out-score their non-foreign language-learning peers in the verbal and math portion of standardized tests.” The belief of earlier is better seems to be

supported by the fact that a student who studies a foreign language tends to demonstrate better academic achievement, over all.

According to the Center for Applied Linguistics, knowing a second language ultimately provides a competitive advantage in the workforce by opening up additional job opportunities. Students of foreign languages score statistically higher on standardized tests conducted in English. In its 1992 report the Profile of SAT, Achievement Test Takers, and the College Entrance Examination Board reported that students who averaged 4 or more years of foreign language scored higher on the verbal section of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) than those who had studied 4 or more years in any other subject area. Evidence also suggests that children who study a secondary language excel at decipher intricate problems. Society benefits in many ways. “ Americans fluent in other languages improve our economic competitiveness abroad, improve global communication, and maintain our political and security interests.”

According to an article by Carla Snuggs “ Since 50% of the verbal portions of the SAT tests measure a child’s knowledge of root words, studying Latin based languages (such as Spanish, French, and Italian) gives a child a tremendous start building the inventory of words roots they will need to achieve high SAT scores.”

According to Brainconnection. com, older students often show an initial advantage over younger students in learning a new language; however, over time the younger student usually surpasses the older student in the end.

Mimicking the old wise tale tortoise-and-the-hare “ younger = better in the

long run.” For this reason, we should by no means discount the importance of learning a second language early.

I feel I have confirmed why it is vital to our children to have access to foreign language studies and why it should be integrated throughout their PK-12 academic experience. Many studies have demonstrated the benefits of second language learning not only on student’s linguistic abilities but on their cognitive and creative abilities as well. Several experts in the field about the advantages of foreign language learning for children. And until we have a well-articulated PK-12 second language “ buy-in” from legislators, school boards, administrators, and parents, the U. S. will continue to lag behind other nation, thus prolonging monolinguals

Foreign language programs are frequently scrutinized and cut when elementary, middle, and high schools in the U. S. face poor performance evaluations or budget cuts. A number of schools do not introduce a foreign language until Junior High or High school, which only allows those students that exhibit a designated passing grade to have the option to enroll in a foreign language. Most schools base the importance of a language class solely as a head start in language requirements for college-credited course. We also face the opinion of those who feel that an individual should reach an age to draw their own conclusion to study or when to study other languages.

Mister Roger said, “ We want to raise our children so they can take a sense of pleasure in both their own heritage and the diversity of others.”