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Languages in the News

It is Not Greek to Us: Foreign Language Instruction Should be Required - Even at Young Ages. Local School Boards Should Think Creatively.

A recent editorial in the Milwaukee-Wisconsin Journal Sentinel advocated for foreign language instruction beginning in elementary school. The editorial cited recent statistics from a survey conducted by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) showing a decline in the offering of foreign language instruction at both the elementary and middle school levels. It makes a strong case for the importance of knowing foreign languages and cultures in the United States, referencing the continents of Europe and Asia where learning two or three foreign languages is mandatory.

Due to state education budget cuts across the United States, the editorial suggests that foreign language instruction in American schools could be contracted outside of schools, that parents could be charged a fee for their children's instruction in foreign languages, or that businesses could take financial responsibility for foreign language instruction.

Click here to read [*It is not Greek to Us.*](#)

A Second Language Gives Toddlers an Edge

A report from Montreal, Canada, claims that infants who learn a second language have an edge over their monolingual peers. The claim is from a research study conducted by Concordia University and York University in Canada and the Université de Provence in France. Data were collected from 63 infants who were 24 months of age; half were monolingual and half were bilingual. The infants were assessed using five language and cognitive tests. Data were also collected from parents through a language exposure survey.

The senior researcher reported that the bilingual children had acquired a vocabulary in both languages and were able to switch between English and French. The researcher encourages parents and educators to expose infants to a second language early on because of the benefits that this study revealed.

Click here to read [*A Second Language Gives Toddlers an Edge.*](#)

Tips and Tools for Early Language Learning

Modern Language Resource Center

The Modern Learning Resource Center (MLRC) offers a variety of resources, designed to develop intercultural understanding as well as an appreciation of the cultural diversity of the United States. Resources made available through the MLRC include a catalog of educational materials related to foreign language teaching, a list of web resources for people interested in the study of foreign languages and cultures, web based language translation tools, and links to language centers of all kinds throughout the country.

Click here to access the [International Language Resource Center](#).

Discovery Education

The teacher section of this instructional website resource is divided into K-5, 6-8, 9-12 lessons and resources. The materials can be accessed by topic or content area. The world language resources are limited to some scrambles and pages of matching words and definitions in both French and Spanish.

Rubrics are available to assess all types of student work. In addition, there were rubrics to assess teacher work. The site provides links to graphic organizers and research articles to support use of graphic organizers. There are tutorials on creating rubrics, graphic organizers, and portfolios.

Click here to access [Discovery Education](#).

Mi Mundo en Palabras

This website from *Centro Virtual Cervantes* offers interactive games and activities for students 7-9 years old. These activities could also be used with older students, but are geared toward younger students. They are colorful and offer spoken Spanish along with the written words and sentences. The different themes are school, park, family, games, and animals.

Some of the features include songs, games, and a “backpack.” The songs offer a chance to replay and record your own voice singing. The games include crosswords, opportunities to play and spell, and many quirky and colorful pass times to teach Spanish. The 'backpack' for each thematic area offers drawings and written/spoken Spanish to support vocabulary building.

Click here to access [Mi Mundo en Palabras](#).

This issue of *Newsworthy* was compiled by Tammy Dann. Send any comments, questions, or information for future issues of *Newsworthy* to Tammy Dann at trdann@q.com.

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