

Languages in the News

First Day, First Grade, New Language? No Problem.

In Utah, 57 elementary schools are offering dual-immersion programs in Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, and French beginning in the first grade. Rather than scale back their language programs during tough economic times, state lawmakers recognized that enabling the next generation of students to become competent in a second language would have a positive impact on the state's economic future. Students spend half the day learning in English, and the second half learning in one of three languages. Students are expected to be fluent in the second language by the sixth grade. Lawmakers hope to have 30,000 students enrolled in 100 dual language programs by 2015.

Click here to read [*First Day, First Grade, New Language? No Problem.*](#)

Why it's Smart to be Bilingual

Casey Schwartz summarizes research-based studies on the benefits of bilingual learning on the brain. Rather than focus only on the advantages of gaining cultural knowledge, Schwartz highlights studies that show how young bilingual brains develop better "executive function," or the ability to maintain focus and disregard irrelevant information. As these brain skills are often compromised in young learners with ADHD or other attention disorders, researchers are now examining whether bilingual learning might have an impact on these conditions.

Click here to read [*Why it's Smart to be Bilingual.*](#)

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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Tips and Tools for Early Language Learning

CoSketch

This website allows users to quickly sketch charts and graphic organizers on a virtual whiteboard. Visitors to the site can upload backgrounds or maps and use the lines and circles provided to highlight important areas in a region. These images can be shared in real time with other visitors.

Click here to access [CoSketch](#).

Travels with the Secretary

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton travels all over the world to do her job. This website gives visitors the opportunity to learn more about her travels. Click a location marked on the map to watch videos, view photos or read remarks made by Secretary Clinton for each stop on her trips.

Click here to access [Travels with the Secretary](#).

Heritage Language Spotlights: Chinese

This website contains heritage briefs with information about the Chinese language and culture. Examples of traditional and simplified characters are provided in Mandarin and Cantonese as well as explanations about the differences between the two languages. Visitors can explore the resource corner or learn more about programs.

Click here to access [Heritage Language Spotlights: Chinese](#).

Materials para la enseñanza multicultural

This is the extensive Spanish Education Ministry's website for the U.S. and Canada. One can find information about scholarships for study and teaching in Spain, Spanish courses and activities in schools in the U.S., as well as online publications about the promotion of teaching and learning Spanish in the U.S.

Click on “estudiantes,” then “contenidos educativos” to find games in Spanish within the “educación infantil” and “educación primaria” sections.

Click here to access [Materials para la enseñanza multicultural](#).

French Culture

This is the official website of the cultural services provided by the French Embassy in the United States. There is information about the ten regional offices and special events hosted at those sites. Visitors can read articles about culture, the arts, books, film, media, music and the performing arts or sign up to subscribe to the newsletter.

Click here to access [French Culture](#).