

BENEFITS OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN PRESCHOOL

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Abstract: this article is devoted to investigate benefits of learning language before going to school. The fact that the English language is a vital skill is beyond doubt. Most parents realize that starting learning English early is important. But very few actually do something about it. First of all, pre-school education is not free, and second, it means that you will have to take your child to classes. Of course, you don't want to sacrifice your and their free time. It's much easier to start extra classes when they go to school – this might be what you are thinking.

Key words: benefit, language learning, interest, education, school, preschool

It's much better to start learning English at the age of 6 or even 4-5! Bilingual children are raised with intellectual and cognitive development focused on two languages from the day they are born. Exposing a child to more than one language in early childhood is super beneficial to young minds!

Usually, at the age of 4, kids can speak their native language pretty well, and their brain is actively developing and open to new things. Kids are interested in anything and everything and are ready to absorb new information like a sponge. Dancing, music, sports, chess... the sky is the limit! English or another foreign language could be a part of this list. There are psychological and physiological prerequisites of productive learning of a second language.

Psychological perspective

- The increased need for socialisation, kids want to meet new friends.
- The psychological barrier is minimal, because at this age kids become more sociable and talkative.
- Increased interest in learning: kids find out that there are a lot of new interesting things around them and attempt to expand the limits of what's allowed in order to satisfy their growing curiosity.

Playing by the rules: at this age kids start to realise that all games have their own rules that need to be followed in order to keep playing.

Physiological perspective

- The language system of their mother tongue is more or less clear to them. So they shouldn't be mixing two languages.
- Their speech organs are still flexible, so they will be able to achieve the right pronunciation by mimicking the teacher.

➤ They still remember how they learned their mother tongue, so they will use the same principle when learning a new language. As a result, they will have an easier time remembering phrases and other language constructs, as long as they have regular practice.

➤ The cognitive processes (imagination, attention, guessing and memory) are actively developing. If you create the right conditions, kids can memorise large volumes of information.

The aforementioned points work in favour when learning a new language at an early age, and if you organise the lessons correctly, you will definitely achieve good results such as proficiency in speaking, learning new words and adapting to a multilingual society.

Kids that begin learning a foreign language before actually going to school, don't have a language or a psychological barrier. It means that you don't have to make an extra effort and create special conditions in order to get them to talk. They aren't afraid of making mistakes because they start learning a language in an environment that does not evaluate their progress, and failure has no consequences. Communication skills benefit from this, because they first think about what they want to say, and not about what is the correct way of saying it.

Learning a language at an early age also develops abstract thinking, memory and imagination. What are the other benefits of kids learning English at a young age?

1. Learning English faster: When children are young, they have an exceptional ability to retain information, and their brains are designed to assimilate new knowledge automatically. Additionally, their thought processes are simpler and less abstract, making it easier for them to learn English.

2. Improved learning capabilities: Learning English at a young age reduces peer pressure and stress, allowing children to learn more quickly. Engaging in activities that strengthen their learning capacity and memory improves their cognitive abilities, and a higher level of consciousness formed early in the learning process helps them learn more quickly as they mature.

3. Expanded vocabulary: Early English learning expands a child's vocabulary, allowing them to learn new concepts and build on their knowledge. Learning how to speak, pronounce, and write English words from the beginning is crucial to this process.

4. Academic excellence: Children who learn English become more adept at expressiveness, which is advantageous to their academic success. Early English learning provides them with the language skills they need to perform better on academic tests and excel in their studies.

5. Future opportunities: English is a universal language used in many industries, and learning it at a young age opens up opportunities for children to explore the world and experience other cultures.

6. Easy learning: Learning spoken English at a young age accelerates academic progress and makes it easier for children to learn difficult concepts.

7. Improved self-confidence: Early English learning improves a child's self-confidence and self-esteem, encouraging them to ask questions and overcome their fear of speaking and writing in English.

8. Improved verbal fluency: Early exposure to English and regular practice speaking and listening to the language enhances verbal fluency and makes it easier to communicate in everyday life.

9. Boosted brain activity: Learning English at a young age keeps the brain active and healthy, improving memory, creativity, and cognitive abilities. Children actively exercise their brains and memory while learning new words and grammar rules, which strengthens their mental capacity.

10. Nurtures child's curiosity and motivation: Mastery of English opens up a world of information, both online and offline, increasing children's motivation and interest in research. They can explore new topics for hours, expanding their horizons and curiosity.

Early English learning means speaking with kids only in English. Sometimes it might seem difficult for kids and that it's better to switch to English gradually. But it's a mistake to think that way. It is much easier for a child's brain to get used to the fact that the teacher only speaks English. It's taken for granted and their brain quickly starts learning. But it's much more difficult to get rid of the habit of speaking in your mother tongue during lessons.

Contextuality and repetition are provided by playing out everyday situations with kids. The emphasis is on the "playing" part because games are a vital part of learning at this age. No extra explanations needed! This format is natural and easy to understand for preschoolers since it's the only activity that they have fully mastered at this age. Games and gamified learning are used when introducing new language material, both vocabulary and grammar. The same approach is used when repeating and consolidating what they have learned, and trying to activate their speech. Switching between games (board games, role playing games, active games) helps retain children's attention.

Various visual tools are used in order to help kids to better remember what they learned: toys, colourful pictures, everyday items, gestures and body language. Everything that helps influence the visual and emotional memory of the child and create a full picture.

Another important point is including elements of creativity into the lessons. Kids love to model, draw and craft things. Creative skills in preschoolers are much better

than those of older kids, because arts and crafts are the main methods of learning at preschool. If creative tasks are included in each lesson and followed by comments in English, the three main conditions of learning will be met: immersion, contextuality and repetition.

The list of used literature

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