



FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR KIDS BY KIDS

5 TIPS FOR TEACHING SPANISH TO KIDS AT HOME

“I just put the second DVD into the DVD player. Right after the music from the video started playing, I heard my children rushing downstairs to join me...maybe I can use your DVD for our dinner bell too because I don’t have to call them to come down! :)” – Amazon customer, 2016



We learn more when it's fun!

1. CONSISTENT LESSONS ARE KEY

Just as you would with other subjects, determine which days and times will be for Spanish lessons. Too often, parents will make good progress teaching Spanish to their kids but start to skip Spanish or other language lessons when they get busy or students get behind in other subjects. The result: students forget the Spanish they learned and have to start over or spend too much time reviewing what they had already spent time learning. Your time counts, so make sure to stay consistent with your child's Spanish lessons.

2. BE REALISTIC PLANNING YOUR SPANISH LESSONS

When planning your schedule for Spanish lessons, be realistic in how much time you and your child will have. Life gets busy and subjects like Spanish, which are often thought of as “non-core,” are often pushed aside for other subjects considered to be a higher priority. Based on our experience with thousands of families, we suggest that you schedule Spanish lessons for an amount of time that, no matter how busy you or your children get with other responsibilities, you feel you can stick to. Is that once a week? Twice? Three times? What matters much more than how often you choose is that you stick to the schedule you decide on!

When learning a foreign language, slow and steady wins the race. Children have the benefit of time – use that time strategically and your children will succeed.

3. WORK AT A GRADUAL PACE

Repetition is critical for kids to learn Spanish successfully. Children learn at different speeds, so it's important to adjust the pace for your different students, but err on the side of moving slowly. When learning a foreign language, we believe wholeheartedly that “slow and steady wins the race.” Kids have the benefit of time. As long as you are consistent and make good use of the time, they *will* learn.



Use visual cues when possible.

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4. LEARN WITH YOUR CHILDREN

If you are like many parents we talk to, you took Spanish or another foreign language in high school without learning much. Maybe you remember how to read Spanish but you aren't comfortable speaking it. We hear from most parents that "I'm just not good at foreign language." Speaking to these parents would leave you with the impression that, virtually no one is good at foreign language. How can that be? It can't — and it isn't. It's not that these parents are bad at learning Spanish; it's the way they were taught that is the problem. So, parents, don't be afraid that you can't learn Spanish; you can if you are taught in a way similar to how you learned English! Plus, learning along with your children sends the extremely valuable message that you think learning a language is worthwhile. What's more, children love it when they learn faster than Mom and Dad!

5. REFRAME AND COMMIT

Consider reframing the way you view and value learning Spanish or any other foreign language. In many countries, learning a foreign language is as important as math or grammar. Consider the valuable life skills, personal enrichment, and cognitive benefits learning Spanish offers your child. Make a commitment to treat Spanish the same way you treat other subjects. If possible, it's important that you think about and conclude that knowing Spanish is a valuable skill that you want your child to have before they begin learning. If you approach foreign language as an enrichment activity rather than a core subject, your child will pick up on that and may not take it seriously, wanting to give up as soon as it becomes difficult or less interesting. Just as you would not allow your child to quit math or English because it got hard or your child complained about it, it's important your attitude is the same when it comes to learning Spanish. If the message is conveyed that learning Spanish is just as important as math and science, children are much more likely to value and put forth the effort to learn Spanish now and in the years to come.