

7th Grade Expository: Second Language Learning

Task Prompt: Write an argumentative essay in which you establish an argumentative claim for or against the inclusion of second language instruction in local elementary schools. Make sure to address potential counterarguments in your essay and support your claim with information from the sources you have examined.

Global Citizen

I am a middle school student at Pinesville Middle School. I have heard that at your upcoming meeting, you are planning to discuss the matter of foreign language teaching. I think that you should include this course at the elementary school, because the benefits outweigh any negatives. Learning a new language can help kids in other subjects, get them a head start on getting a job, and it makes communicating with foreign friends a lot easier!

Adding another class takes up valuable time in the school day, but you should also consider the benefits. For example, learning a second language also improves students' learning in all areas. According to N. Abadir, guest star at the talk show "Civil Attitudes," "Analyzing the grammar of the second language makes you more aware of language structure and usage in general. That can improve your writing and communication in your native language. But students who learn a second language also tend to perform better and have higher test scores in subjects like math, science, and social studies." So learning another language can help kids get a head start on good grades, even if it does add more time to an already-crowded school day. If you keep foreign language learning in the school program, then kids will get in the habit of noticing grammar structures, writing with good grammar, and other useful skills that will be necessary later in life.

Another reason why I believe that foreign language is a must-have in the elementary school program is because of the future. With the economy down in the dumps, people nowadays are scrambling for jobs. But one job that is constantly open is foreign trading. With new technology, people all around the world can chat, do business, or trade things on the internet. But there is only one problem. Language. According to David Gray, former Labor Department Acting Assistant Secretary for Policy, "In a more competitive market where products are increasing in quality we need to be able to compete on relationships and service, and languages are an important factor." So with companies in need of people who can communicate with their overseas business partners, learning a new language could be the key to the children of our community's success. Foreign language teachers may be expensive, but not offering foreign languages could have an even higher cost for our students' future success.

Finally, I think that the Pinesville Elementary School should offer foreign language as a subject is because of communication. With easy to access, world wide social networks like Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, and even just texting on your cell phone, the world seems a lot smaller. Friends move away

to different countries, you have relatives that speak different languages, and it all muddles up in your head. Last year, my friend moved to Mexico. She had to learn Spanish, but she promised she would remember to talk to me in English. One day, I was texting her, and she was telling me all about her new friend Daniela and how she thought we would get along well. I asked for Daniela's number, but then I realized that she spoke Spanish, and I didn't. How I wished I had that foreign language class! Some say that there isn't enough time in the school day for one additional class, but in today's society it is vital for kids to know how to communicate with other people besides just those who speak their language. So please, take the time to keep foreign language class!

These are the reasons why I think that foreign language class should be part of the elementary school curriculum. Communication, getting jobs in the future, and even helping out in other classes are all great benefits of this wonderful class. I hope that you, the School Board, will take that hour a day to help improve these childrens' lives.