**LANGUAGES**

**Task 1 – Reading comprehension**

**First read the text on languages and then answer these questions:**

1. What possibilities are opened up by being able to speak to people in their language?

2. Why is learning a foreign language good for your brainpower?

3. Why is learning a foreign language good when it comes to your career prospects?

4. What is learning a foreign language above all?

**Speaking languages will open up your future**

(Adapted from the article in »The Independent«, 29 September 2006.)

When you are packing travel essentials for a visit abroad, being able to speak the language of the country you're visiting isn't necessarily one among the most important issues. You might assume that you'll manage by speaking English, but in fact, 75 % of the world's population won't be able to understand you. Even if they do, you'll be missing out, because being able to speak to people in their own language opens up all sorts of possibilities. You will learn a lot more about a country's culture and, because you are making the effort, you will invariably have the goodwill of the people you talk to. They are more likely to want to help you and you'll understand what they're telling you when they do!

It is said that learning a language means finding out more about yourself by learning about others. Students who have been on a year abroad come back saying that they look at their lives in the UK through new eyes.

Studying a language isn't just about learning how to read, write and speak it; skills such as negotiating, analysing and presenting are transferable skills for many careers.

What's more, learning a language is good for your brainpower. Researchers at University College London found that learning a language alters grey matter – the part of your brain responsible for processing information – in the same way that physical exercise builds up your muscles. Scientists have already shown that the brain can change its structure as a result of stimulation and learning languages is a way of developing this.

Learning a language is a smart move when it comes to your career prospects too. UK graduates in modern languages have been to shown to have one of the lowest unemployment rates, and that's because over 60 % of UK trade is with non-English speaking countries but only 1 in 10 UK workers can speak a foreign language.

Above all, learning a language is fun, and if you shouldn't be daunted by the idea that you have to understand it inside out and back-to-front. We have something in our psyche that says if we're speaking a foreign language, we have to speak it perfectly. But you don't! You can get by with communication in a foreign country by just having a basic knowledge. Of course there are different levels of competence but it's about having the confidence to come out of your comfort zone.

**Task 2 – Word formation**

**Complete the sentences based on the facts about languages with the correct form of the word in brackets:**

(Adapted from <http://library.thinkquest.org/06aug/02037/fact.html/>.)

1. Number of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (live) languages in the world is 6912.

2. Mandarin Chinese is the language with the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (great) number of native \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (speak).

3. First \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (write) language was Sumerian or Egyptian (about 3200 BC).

4. The oldest written language that is still in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (exist) is Chinese or Greek (about 1500 BC).

5. English is the language with the most words, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (approximate) 250,000 words.

6. Language with the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (few) words in the world is Taki Taki, there are only 340 words in use.

7. Esperanto is a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (construct) international language, intended as a universal second language \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (create) to contribute to international \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (understand).

**Task 3 – Writing skills**

**Write an essay giving your opinion on the following statement:**

|  |
| --- |
| **In the future only English will be used.** |

How far do you agree or disagree with the statement? Give reasons for your opinion. Support your opinion in 120–160 words.

**IN THE FUTURE ONLY ENGLISH WILL BE USED**

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**Task 4 – Talking points**

**Answer the following question:**

Which are the best foreign language learning methods?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of each?

Compare them!

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| * *learning a foreign language at school*
* *attending a language course*
* *watching TV (programmes in a foreign language)*
* *chatting on the Internet*
* *reading books in a foreign language*
* *travelling to a country where your foreign language is spoken as a mother tongue*
 |

**Task 5 – Listening skills**

**Listen to the following videoclip and present the most powerful tips to learn a foreign language:**

7 Tips to Learn a New Language:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FYlzJc8aaC0>

**Task 6 – Comparing pictures**

**Compare and contrast the following two pictures:**

 

(<https://www.google.si/search?hl=sl&tbm=isch&source=hp&biw=1536&bih=779&ei=Vax_W8C1GY2MmwWA_JuQBA&q=učenje+tujih+jezikov>)