

## BENEFITS OF IMMERSING CHILDREN IN A SECOND LANGUAGE

Evidence supporting the encouragement of multilingualism in young children is compelling-Numerous studies have shown dramatic neurological, psychological and social advantages for kids who learn more than one language.

**Higher IQs:** Researchers in a landmark study comparing Canadian French-English bilingual fourth graders to their monolingual counterparts on IQ tests concluded that bilinguals outperform their monolingual peers because second language acquisition provides them with more mental flexibility and stronger concept formation skills.

**Increased Creativity:** In tests where subjects were asked to think of more uses for typical objects – a paperclip, brick or cardboard box, for example – bilinguals came up with significantly more possible solutions than monolinguals. When put through a science inquiry test, bilinguals generated three times more high-quality hypotheses for solving science problems.

**Better Thinking Ability:** Study after study shows enhanced thought processes in multilingual children.

**Heightened Language Awareness:** Bilingualism makes it easier for children to comprehend that there are different words in different languages for one object. This kinds of abstract thinking makes it easier to conceptualize new languages.

**Improve Math Ability:** Bilingual children are able to grasp rules and process information more easily, which gives them a head start in problem solving. It appears that these skills translate to mathematical ability. A study of children in secondary school in Brussels found that multi-linguals outperformed their monolingual peers in problem-solving and fraction exercises.

**Increased Focus:** Bilinguals consistently score better on tests that require them to focus on one or two aspects of a task while blocking out attention to another.

**Increased Cultural Sensitivity:** Languages provide insight into their cultures' way of thinking.

**Higher Earning Power:** Speaking a second language gives a business professional international reach, and an ability to communicate in that language expands her career opportunities.

**Prevention of Alzheimer's Disease:** A Canadian study that examined the effects of bilingualism on dementia found that speaking a second language throughout one's life can delay onset of dementia by four years, compared to people who spoke only one language.

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