Why Learn a Second Language?

Learning a second language is a part of almost everyone’s education in the United States. But producing unfamiliar sounds in another language can be difficult, and trying to have a conversation can seem downright impossible. Even simple introductions can be misunderstood if you don’t listen carefully to the other person. Considering the difficulties of mastering a new language, you may wonder if it’s even worth the effort. What will I ever use it for? you may ask.

The fact is that language learning is beneficial to us for many reasons.

For one thing, studies suggest that acquiring a second language helps in brain development. Particularly for children under the age of 12, learning a second language can help the brain make new connections and store information effectively. When the brain is used for complex thinking, it actually grows bigger. So, using your noggin to deduce the meaning of unknown words can potentially influence how smart you are.

Many people are happily surprised to find how useful a second language can be when they do business or travel. Some savvy people even use their fluency to advance their careers and open up opportunities internationally. The ability to conduct business in a widely spoken language such as Spanish, French, or Chinese is a very marketable skill when it comes time to find a job.

Finally, learning another language can help you understand our multi-cultural society. Throughout our country’s history, an influx of people from around the world has formed who we are as Americans. Learning a second language can help us discover more about our rich heritage and the people who are our neighbors and friends.