

5 MUST-DOs for Teaching Your Child Spanish – Even if You Don't Know It

Below are five simple, yet powerful steps to take to develop your child into a successful bilingual. The gift of language lasts a lifetime and is ALWAYS worth the effort! Best of all, these steps are proven to work, and are simple to do. -----

I know where you are coming from. I am not a native Spanish speaker; I did not start learning until I was 16. Even now, I have to “think” about what I want to say, and continue to make mistakes. Luckily, if children learn a language early enough, it becomes ingrained into their mind at a deeper level. Instead of “translating from English to Spanish”, your child will be able to just communicate; in the language at hand. This is a gift that children are given. So, even if you do not know Spanish (or are not fluent) – you should still give your child the gift of being bilingual! Let me make it easy for you:



1. Have a role model/family member learn the language with your child.

The truth is, you can't just buy our program, BookLingual; or Rosetta Stone, or some DVDs and put your child in the corner to learn on their own. It doesn't work that way. I HIGHLY RECOMMEND learning the language with your child. I know you are busy, you work, you have a family, you have kids – it seems like there is no

time. Well, anyone can make time for something if it is important enough to them. By learning with your child (even taking baby steps, learning the basics) you will show your child that you take the language seriously. That it is not just “their homework”; but something that you also believe in.

But, seriously, I just don't have time!!! Ok, I understand. Then someone else close to your child must learn the language with them (or if they already know it, even better). This could be an older sibling, an uncle, cousin, grandparent, etc. By having someone that they spend quite a bit of time with together; their learning will be reinforced.

2. Realize that learning Spanish is not a simple choice – but a lifestyle decision.

Don't want to lecture you too much more...but, you must understand that learning Spanish is not just about taking a few lessons a week or reading a couple of books. It is a lifestyle decision that your family makes together. You must have a firm bilingual action plan, such as: (for example, Jessica being the child)

- Jessica will take Spanish lessons three times a week
- I will read a bilingual book with Jessica every night along with her normal reading
- Jessica and I (and the entire family) will do our best to speak in Spanish on Saturday morning
- Jessica will watch Spanish language TV one day a week (instead of her English TV)
- We will bring Jessica to one Spanish language event a month (such as a Hispanic Market, or trading event, etc.)

3. Go to a playgroup or social meeting.

This is an excellent option; and very necessary. There is a great chance that these sort of Spanish language playgroups are already happening in your area. Definitely check out www.meetup.com – for simple events to attend; or make your own event. Being able to interact with children their same age, playing, having fun, and enjoying some snacks will make learning a language a whole lot more fun. WARNING: Make sure that you (or someone) is actually organizing activities or some sort of “language” oriented playing; if it is just a social meeting without language, some much is missed.

4. Surround your child with tools for success: books, music, movies.



Take this seriously; and you will get results! Instead of always listening to regular music, buy some Spanish language CDs for learning; or switch over to a Latin station. Buy DVDs which help to teach Spanish, or just watch movies with Spanish subtitles and/or audio. Buy a lot of bilingual books in English/Spanish (as this format will help you to teach the language, since you know how to read!) – of course you can see all of our English/Spanish bilingual books. Also, buy



some Spanish only books at a lower reading level than your child is at; to get more immersion.



5. Make learning the language fun and REWARDING for your child

Of course, your child may or may not be ecstatic about all of your bilingual steps. They will be more excited if they tie learning language = fun; or Spanish = rewards. When your child finishes reading 10 bilingual books or Spanish books; give them a prize of an ice cream cone, for example. When your child can say an entire sentence in Spanish; or converse with a native speaker in a restaurant – reward that. Tie learning and goals of the language to prizes such as: going to their favorite restaurant, going to the movies, a theme park, or a new toy.

Remember, take bilingualism seriously! But, keep a little bit of pressure on the brakes; make sure that your child still has time to express themselves in English and enjoy their lives. Over time, they will learn to appreciate and realize that they are different - and be very, very proud to be able to speak a language which many others around them do not understand. You can do it!!

Wishing your family great success! –Michael Hodge, Founder & Author, BookLingual

Want the perfect books to accelerate your child's language-learning?

Get them now at www.booklingual.com