

alumni who can demonstrate the value of their language learning are very powerful. Get those personal stories out through the media; it is very immediate and very real.”

Language clubs not only promote camaraderie among students who are studying a language as part of a common goal but can also provide students with opportunities to demonstrate what they are learning by creating activities and events that can be shown to the community or to which the community can be invited. According to Sherf, “An ‘International Week’ can take place in which some kind of demonstration is presented to the community or inter-level within the district or you can request guest speakers from the community to talk about the use of foreign language in careers or travel. The bond

that is created back-and-forth between the language department and the community really helps to spread the news.”

Nelson also encourages language departments to reach out to local businesses since they can be powerful allies for advocacy when planning events for the community. The business may provide monetary support as a sponsor for the event and promote attendance to their customers and in turn the business gets exposure to the public by advertising at the event. Some businesses might also have a connection to the native country and they can provide cultural insight through the products and/or services they offer. Students could partner with the company for a field trip or invite a representative to class to explain their association with the country. These experiences,

## Marketing 101: Best Ideas in Brief

*See how many of these great suggestions you can incorporate into your own marketing efforts. It's not as hard as you think and can pay off with great dividends.*

### Kathleen Condray:

- If you can write good copy, newsletter editors are always looking for things to write about—just send them a paragraph and be sure to include photos.
- Try to get out a press release about once a month. Send it to your administration and counselors at your school, PTA newsletter, local newspapers, and other media.
- Get yourself in the newspaper as much as possible because that's what the school board, parents, and voters are reading.
- Be on the lookout for ways to create marketing materials such as flyers, posters, and banners using free or budget-friendly online resources.

### Jess Duran:

- Involve students. If they are excited about learning the language, they will enjoy sharing what they've learned. Your class must be interesting enough for them to be motivated to take it to the community.
- Make some noise on campus to generate excitement. Use competitions, games, props, etc. Other students will ask about them and what class the students are from.

### Alexander Ganz:

- Keep your website up-to-date, current, and interesting. Content is king. Think of your website as your hub for everything else.
- Give the power of marketing to students. If students produce and update the content (such as on Facebook), then they share parts of themselves, which really works.

### Carl-Martin Nelson:

- Don't talk strictly about language, but also about 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.
- Reach out to local businesses to create partnerships within the community that will promote events and help get the public invested in your program.
- Stress the potential benefits of how learning a language can have a dramatic impact on students' futures by having alumni tell of their real-world experiences with the language and how it has affected their lives.

### Lynn Sessler:

- Have a clear vision: What do you want your students to know and be able to do? Have a plan for getting the kids out and demonstrating their language skills and cultural knowledge to their families and community.

- To fight budget cuts, look for outside resources when you can. There is grant money available if you're willing to look for it.
- Do not compete with other languages but instead cooperate as a united front. Support their special events and programs.
- Pay attention to trends and use whatever language is most advantageous at that time or in the situation that is going to get you the most press.

### Nicole Sherf:

- Develop a solid mission statement and strategic plan in which you envision how you want to grow.
- Move away from teaching about the language and really begin teaching within the language and getting students excited about learning about the new culture and interdisciplinary connections that can be made.
- Make sure that you or a member of your language department is on every school-wide committee including the hiring committee, strategic plan committee, and accreditation committee.

## What is a Press Release?

A press release is a short, compelling news story written by a public relations professional and sent to targeted members of the media. The goal of a press release is to pique the interest of a journalist or publication. The press release should contain all the essential information (who? what? where? when? how? and most importantly why?) for the journalist to easily produce his own story.

The Small Business Encyclopedia defines press releases -- also known as news releases -- as "brief, printed statements that outline the major facts of a news story in journalistic style" [source: Answers.com]. A press release should read like a news story, written in third-person, citing quotes and sources and containing standard press release information.

The standard press release begins with contact information, mostly likely the name, phone number and e-mail address of the person who wrote the release. Then comes the headline, arguably the most important four or five words in the whole press release. The headline will be what the journalist reads first. If it's not intriguing, newsworthy and unique, he'll read no further.

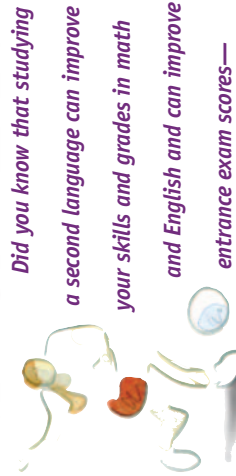
Below the headline often comes a brief, one-line summary of the press release [source: PR Leap Blog]. Like the headline, the summary should draw the reader in quickly and motivate them to learn more.

Since a press release is supposed to look and feel like a story in a newspaper, it's important to include a location and date stamp at the beginning of the first paragraph. Something like, "Palo Alto, CA - February 5, 2007." Like a standard news story, the first sentence, or **lede**, should summarize the main news of the press release in 25 words or less [source: Concept Marketing Group].

The rest of the body of the press release should answer all of the questions a journalist might have about the product, service or event that you're announcing. Although a press release is a public relations tool, it should not read as overly promotional [source: Concept Marketing Group]. If it sounds too much like a sales pitch, it will lose credibility in the eyes of the journalist.

Press releases typically end with a short description of the company or organization that's issuing the release, along with a **call to action**. The call to action could be to participate in the event being promoted, to take a test drive of the product, or simply to find out more by contacting the author of the press release [source: PR Leap Blog].

## Give Yourself a Competitive Edge



*Did you know that studying a second language can improve your skills and grades in math and English and can improve entrance exam scores—*

**SATs, ACTs, GREs, MCATs, and LSATs?**

Research has shown that math and verbal SAT scores climb higher with each additional year of foreign language study, which means that the longer you study a foreign language, the stronger your skills become to succeed in school. Studying a foreign language can improve your analytic and interpretive capacities. And three years of language study on your record will catch the eye of anyone reading your job or college application.

If you've already learned a language other than English at home, expanding your knowledge of its vocabulary, grammar, culture, and literature—at the same time you are learning English—will also improve your chances for success in school and in your career.



## Which Language Should You Learn?



There's no one answer. Here are the twelve most likely to be offered in your high school or college: Spanish, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Russian, Hebrew, Greek, Chinese, Arabic, and Portuguese.

Swahili, American Sign Language, and

Navajo—and 121 other languages—are also taught in American high schools, colleges, and universities. Whatever language you choose, learning it will make a difference in how you see the world and in how the world sees you.

Educators, advisers, and parents may obtain individual copies or packets of twenty of this brochure at no charge by writing the Office of Foreign Language Programs, Modern Language Association, 85 Broad Street, suite 500, New York, NY 10004-2434; [fibrochure@mila.org](mailto:fibrochure@mila.org). This brochure may be duplicated. Illustrations, by Elisha Cooper, may not be used for any other purpose.



## Why Learn Another Language?

# Knowing Other Languages Brings Opportunities



**Extend Your Reach!**

**Know Another Culture!**

**Get a Better Job!**

The world is full of languages.

How far do you have to go from your front door to know that this is true? Think about how many more people and places you could really get to know, newspapers and books you could read, movies and TV programs you could understand, Web sites you could visit with another language!

## The Job Advantage in a Global Economy

**More and more businesses work closely with companies in other countries.**



They need many different kinds of workers who can communicate in different languages and understand other cultures. No matter what career you choose, if you've learned a second language, you'll have a real advantage. A technician who knows Russian or German, the head of a company who knows Japanese or Spanish, or a salesperson who knows French or Chinese can work successfully with many more people and in many more places than someone who knows only one language.

**There are lots of Americans who speak languages other than English.** Nurses, doctors, or police officers may need to speak more than one language to do their jobs well. Hotel managers or journalists who know English and Spanish or English and Korean may look much better at promotion time than people who know only English.

Professionals who know other languages are called on to travel and exchange information with people in the United States and other countries throughout their careers. Knowing more than one language enhances opportunities in government, business, law, medicine and health care, teaching,

technology, the military, communications, industry, social service, and marketing. An employer will see you as a bridge to new clients or customers if you know a second language. You are also

more likely to win the trust and friendship of people whose languages you know — even if you know them just a little.



## Learning Other Cultures: Your World and Beyond

**Discover new worlds!** Get an insider's view of another culture and a new view of your own.

Studying a new language, reading other people's stories, and connecting with people in their own language can be a source of pleasure and surprise. **Connect with other cultures.** Learning about other cultures will help you expand your personal horizons and become a responsible citizen. Your ability to talk to others and gain knowledge beyond the world of English can contribute to your community and your country.



## Go for the Excitement: New Ways of Language Learning

**What can you expect?** You will learn a second language in exciting new ways, using technology and focusing on communication. Learning a language is not just learning grammar and vocabulary; it is learning new sounds, expressions, and ways of seeing; it is learning how to act in another culture, how to know a new community from the inside.

**When should you start and how much can you learn?** You are never too young and it is never too late to begin. Depending on how long you study, you can gain different levels of fluency. You will probably not sound like a native speaker who has spoken the language at home as a child. Don't worry: you're not expected to. To a greater or lesser degree you will, however, make yourself understood, read magazines or books for pleasure or information, and meet and talk with new groups of people. Of course, it doesn't happen overnight. Like learning math, history, or playing the piano, language learning takes time. And it adds to who you are.

**Should you continue language study after high school?** Yes! Don't waste your investment of time and effort; whatever you have learned is a foundation for further study. Stick with it.

Use your second language on the job; seek out opportunities to use it in your community: in college, take more courses, study abroad at intercession or for a summer, a semester, a year. Some programs teach languages in conjunction with engineering, business, nursing, or journalism. And you might decide to start yet another language. When you study a language, you learn about how to learn a language, so learning the next one is easier.



## Effective Local, National, and World Citizenship

In addition to providing you with knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are necessary in the workplace, the study of languages, literatures, and cultures, like the study of history, philosophy, or mathematics, helps you develop the analytic skills needed to be an effective participant in local and national discussions. Studying languages in the context of history, politics, and popular culture can help you follow international events with insight, opening up perspectives to make you an informed and responsible citizen of your country and of the world.

## Language and the Internet

Language study introduces you to new realms of ideas, customs, habits, and values. In both professional and personal ways, the twenty-first century places demands on people's global knowledge. As the Internet has changed the way we think about the transfer of information, so has it eliminated the sense of distance between us and the citizens of other countries. Materials from around the world, for both business and pleasure, are available to every person who has access to a computer. Diverse cultures in contact with one another can create unprecedented opportunities for exchange, cooperation, and mutual benefit. International contacts are an integral part of many careers, and people without the skill and sensitivity to deal with other cultures are at a disadvantage.

**KNOWING** another language enriches your personal life, expands the range of professional opportunities open to you, and increases your power to act as a citizen of the world. At the college level you can begin a new language or build on your knowledge of a language that you have already studied. College may also be the first chance you will have to study languages such as Russian, Chinese, Japanese, or Arabic. Forget the myth that you have to learn languages as a child: in the classroom young adults can be faster and more effective learners than small children.

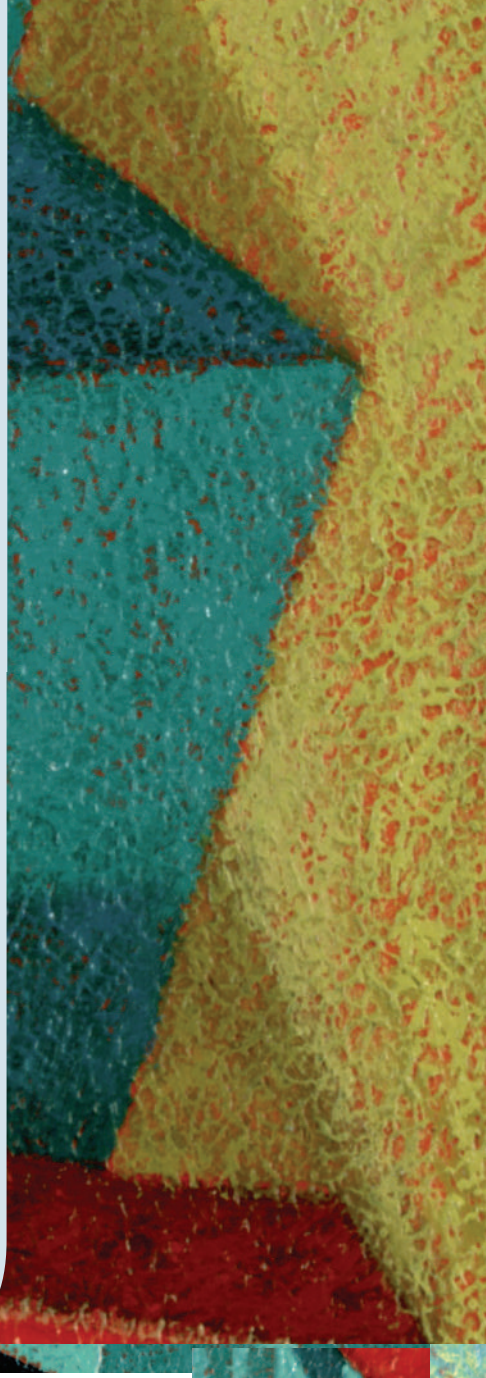
## Improved Career Prospects

Competition for the best jobs and for admission to top-rated graduate and professional schools is intense. Directly and indirectly the study of languages and their cultures and literatures will provide you with important job-related knowledge and skills that can give you a competitive edge. These include the ability to solve problems and to think analytically and creatively, to communicate effectively and confidently in writing and in person, and to act with versatility and flexibility. Leaders and decision makers must be able to access information, to understand it, and to interpret it critically; linguistic and cultural knowledge is essential to meeting these challenges. Because you can communicate and connect with people of other cultures and nationalities, you will be able to establish and maintain personal and professional contacts. In business, any cross-cultural effort for cooperation, sales, or negotiation will benefit from your experience of other languages and their communities. To be an effective professional, such as a doctor, lawyer, educator, artist, or scientist, communicating and investigating new knowledge in other languages as well as in English are essential in the increasingly international workplace. Exposure to another culture through its language will position you more favorably for success in your career, whatever career you may choose.

## Language Study in the Age of Globalization The College-Level Experience

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## A Life-Enriching Experience

Perhaps the greatest benefit of language study is an expanded understanding of diverse, culturally rooted attitudes and behaviors. We cannot begin to imagine how much ethnic and cultural values differ until we gain access from the inside, through language. Language preserves the history and traditions of a people, through speakers' common understanding of the meanings of words, expressions, and texts. Only on a foundation of such insider knowledge can cultural understanding be achieved.

Studying even one language will dramatically increase your sensitivity to linguistic and cultural difference; it will make you more aware of how you use your own language as well. Many people who study languages and cultures are surprised to find the experience transformative. Students of language discover ways of seeing the world that they did not suspect. For some, developing knowledge of a second language and culture is like expanding one's personality, acquiring options that are both enriching and liberating. Some students find particular satisfaction in reading texts and hearing stories in the original language, in experiencing authors in their own voices. Others gain a sense of achievement from being able to participate more fully in national and international politics and events.

Special pleasure can be found in greater access to foreign films, music, and the arts. Even if your knowledge of a language is not extensive, you will find that you enjoy more when you understand meaning in the original; knowing about cultural context will give you greater access to what is communicated by intonation, body language, or phrasing. This access will enrich your travel to other countries, as you are able to interpret meanings in words and behaviors similar to or unlike your own.

While you gain an appreciation for the world outside your own, contact with other cultures will give you new perspectives on your own language, culture, and society. The comparisons that you can make between your language and the one you learn will lead to a greater

understanding of the nature of language itself. If you already speak a language other than English at home, you can study it at an intermediate or advanced level in college. Knowing two languages will give you a real advantage in starting a third at the college level.

## What to Expect from College Language Studies

Although your progress may not always seem fast, each step is significant. Remember, languages are not learned all at once; your speaking, reading, listening, and writing will improve at different rates and will depend on what tasks you are learning to accomplish. Many college programs are adopting innovative ways of teaching language that involve the use of computers and the Internet and involve making connections with students in other countries. You might be interacting with a Web site, analyzing current events through the newspaper of another country, watching and discussing a film, performing in a play, listening to the radio, reading or writing about a literary text, or debating or charting by e-mail with a student in a school in another country. You may be able to use your language in courses such as history, economics, biology, or business. You may become involved in a research project with your professors in which you use materials in the language you are studying. The degree of your success will depend on your motivation and hard work. In addition, you will be learning how to learn a language; with that ability, your next one will be easier.

## Living the Language: Study Abroad, Internships Abroad and in the Local Community

Students who go abroad enlarge their opportunity to experience language and culture firsthand. You might have the chance to discuss French cinema with a French film student at La Cinémathèque Française in Paris, learn about the history of the Chinese empire on a visit to Beijing, observe the Day of the Dead with your peers in Mexico City, or just talk about everyday life in the language of your host country with the family where you live or with new friends.

There are hundreds of affordable study-abroad programs available to college students from many disciplines.

They range from intensive short-term travel and study programs to studying in connection with a foreign university for a semester or year. Internships or volunteer and service-learning work is often available in other countries and even locally. Study-abroad programs offer students the chance for a face-to-face encounter with another culture, often under the auspices of a United States academic institution or consortium.

Basic language competency is a prerequisite for study abroad in most non-English-speaking countries. Once in the country of your choice, you will find that what you learned in the classroom will be activated; you will be able to read, to understand and converse with people. As returning students put it, "You have to use the language every day; your language capacity will expand incredibly."

Students who have gone abroad frequently report that the experience changed their life. Many establish lifetime friendships or contacts that turn into important professional connections later on. Increasingly, employers look for this kind of international experience in job applicants. You can find out about programs available to you through your language department or in your institution's study-abroad office. And remember also that there are communities right here in the United States where languages other than English are frequently spoken. You may be able to find opportunities to immerse yourself in another language without international travel, in a neighborhood very close to your own.

## Fluency

Will you be fluent? Fluency has many meanings. After three or four years of study, depending on the language and the degree of intensity of study, you should be able to express your thoughts, follow your interests, and deal with topics of some intellectual complexity. The more you use the language, the more fluent you will become. Even a little fluency, such as facility with greetings and other social formulas, will go a long way toward making people feel that you are interested in meeting them on their own ground.

## What Language Should I Study?

The answer to this question depends on your personal goals, but whether you think of languages primarily for career enhancement or for personal, cultural, and intellectual enrichment, any language is a rewarding choice. If your objective is international business, you can find out which countries are now or may become trading partners of the United States and Canada. If you want adventure, you could pick a language from a part of the world where you would like to travel. Or if you want to go back to your roots, you could learn about your grandparents or their parents by acquiring or adding to your knowledge of their language, their culture, and their world. Every language has something to say to you, and you have something to say in every language.

