

FAQ's

Why take a foreign language?

So many reasons – where to begin...

Any word game enhances brain activity, and learning a foreign language is a word game.

SAT scores are higher among children who learn a foreign language, so they should stand a better chance of getting into a good college.

Children are natural imitators. They will pick up the proper sounds that are unique to a foreign language far better and easier than as an adult.

The world is a global market. You will be more valuable to a company if you have foreign language skills.

Many of us travel to countries where English is not spoken. It is very helpful and rewarding for us to be able to communicate in the native language.

What exactly is total immersion?

The teacher speaks only in the language she is teaching.

Why is this the best way to learn a language?

The students have only one hour per week. If we speak English half of the time, we will only have 30 minutes a week of the foreign language. People are basically lazy. If they know the teacher will explain in English, they stop trying to understand and just wait for the explanation.

This way the student is forced to try to comprehend the gist of what is being said and eventually will understand all of the words.

How do the students understand?

We start the classes with a brief explanation in English. We say that no one in the class will understand everything that is said but she will give them clues by pointing at things and showing them pictures. It is amazing how after as few as 4 classes the children know what the teacher is asking of them and they respond to relatively complex commands. They think of it as a game and have fun with it.

How do the classes work?

The students are taught new vocabulary each week and review older vocabulary from past weeks for reinforcement. The vocabulary is introduced using pictures or gestures, a lot like charades. Then the class plays games to practice the vocabulary that was just introduced.

What if my child is not good with reading and board work?

We do not show the students the words. They will use English phonetics to pronounce the words and once they have the spelling in their heads, it is very difficult to get them to pronounce the words properly. This class is conversational not written so children who have trouble reading do very well.

What can I expect the student to have learned by the end of the first year?

The students learn tons of vocabulary words and their comprehension is fantastic. They will respond with simple one word answers or in very small sentences.

Do you mix ages in the classes for children?

Yes, and it works well. The older children may remember the word faster and need less repetition, but the younger children have the best pronunciation. They learn from each other and help each other.

How can I help my child get the most out of the classes?

Obviously the more practice your child has with the vocabulary, the better they will be. So if you use the CD to reinforce the vocabulary, your child will be that much more ahead. Use the CD for pronunciation. The book is used by parents who know the language.

What if there is no time to study?

There is no study requirement. There are no grades. But obviously you will get out of this what you put into it, just like with anything else.

What do you teach in the second year?

Second year students use the same book and CD as they did in the first year. We have never had a student who was bored. We need repetition. What we've found is that our second year students are more confident with the language. They also start to vocalize more.

Do you mix first and second year students?

Yes, as second years still need repetition, it does not bother them to go over the material. However, the teacher will know that the student took the class before and push them to their ability level. After all, the student's ability will never be beyond the teacher, many of whom are native speakers.

What happens after the second year?

Third year students do get into some written because by this time their pronunciation is set. They continue to get more verbal and can understand more of the "little" words being used by the teacher.

What if the student doesn't want to continue after the first class?

Some students need a few classes to get into the routine. Most of our students are high achievers and very academic. They may feel like they're "failing" when they can't understand every word the teacher is saying. After a few more classes they feel comfortable, realize everyone is in the same boat and end up staying with the class.

What is the refund policy?

You must call the office to let me know there is a problem immediately after the first class. A full refund is available only through the first class, unless I have spoken to you and you decide to try it for a month. It has been an extremely rare case that letting the student try it for a month hasn't worked.

What if we want to quit after a few months?

You are financially responsible for the tuition after the first class. The classes are small and once they are running, the teacher is contracted for the school year. Another child may have lost a place to your child and it would be too late for them to start. Our program wants to serve children and parents who are committed to the program. For these reasons you must commit to the whole school year.