***FOR THE TEACHER***

**European Day of Languages - La Journée européenne des langues[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**Type of task:** Project

**Proficiency level:** B2

**Educational level:** Secondary education - ISCED 2/3[[2]](#footnote-2)

**Short description and aim of the activity**:

Students in groups prepare one product: a short video, a poster, or a leaflet promoting multilingualism for the European Day of Languages (26th September) at the secondary school. Students prepare their video/poster/leaflet about the advantages of multilingualism, and then present their products to the class.

**Background information (if applicable):**

Students should be familiar with the European Day of Languages and its aims. The European Day of Languages is celebrated on 26th September every year, as proclaimed by the Council of Europe on the 6th of December 2001, at the end of the European Year of Languages (2001). The aim of this celebration is to support language learning across Europe. More information on the [European Day of Languages](https://edl.ecml.at/Games/Whichlanguageisit/tabid/3202/language/en-GB/Default.aspx?fbclid=IwAR3bJ69Vto1L01I9iXuHmQsUZOfuWaNhRat6G9ltIqtfnbyziOkFWJaDHgs)

**CEFR CV mediation scale and descriptor**:

PROCESSING TEXT IN SPEECH OR SIGN

* *Can summarise (in Language B) the important points made in longer, complex texts (in Language A) on subjects of current interest, including their fields of special interest.*

PROCESSING TEXT IN WRITING

* *Can summarise in writing (in Language B) the main content of complex texts (in Language A) on subjects related to their fields of interest and specialisation.*

**CEFR CV mediation strategies involved:**

Strategies to simplify a text:

* Streamlining a text:

*Can identify and mark (e.g., underline, highlight etc) the essential information in a straightforward informational text, in order to pass this information on to someone else.*

Strategies to explain a new concept:

* Adapting language

*Can paraphrase in a simpler fashion the main points made in short, straightforward spoken or written texts on familiar subjects (e.g., short magazine articles, interviews) to make the contents accessible to others.*

**Languages involved:**

Language A: French

Language B: English

Language C: home languages

**Linguistic objectives. Students will be able to**:

* explain and present arguments on the advantages of multilingualism
* express cause and effect

**Other competences involved**:

* interpersonal skills (communication)
* interpersonal skills (being of service to others; being socially responsible)
* making good use of a digital tools

**Time/lessons needed for the activity:** 2 lessons

**Resources required:**

* Links used for the lesson:

<https://www.workwide.fr/les-avantages-a-etre-multilingue/> (accessed on 11 August 2023)

<http://kodaheart.com/10-things-21/> (accessed on 11 August 2023)

* Mind map tool, word cloud (e.g., Mentimeter)
* Hard or electronic copy of activity worksheet for each student

**Procedure**:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Class organisation** | **Ideas for differentiation** |
| **Step 1** | Introduction to the topic:  Brainstorming about languages: preparing a language mind map of languages spoken by their family members.  **Student Activity Worksheet, Step 1:**  The teacher asks questions, for instance -   * How many languages do you speak? * What language(s) do you speak at home? * What language(s) do you understand? * What other foreign languages do you know? | plenary | Instead of a mind map, a word cloud (online, e.g., Mentimeter) could also be created |
| **Step 2** | **Activity Worksheet, Step 2:**  Students listen to a short video European Day of Languages, Memrise (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxRSzkRxy2U> – accessed on 23 August 2022) (*only sound*) about European Day of Languages. On the worksheet, students take notes on what languages they hear (2A).  Then they watch the video *with* sound again and see how many languages they recognised correctly this time (2B). | individual |  |
| **Step 3** | **Activity Worksheet Step 3:**  **Discussion:** What is the purpose of celebrating the European Day of Languages? Students discuss with their partner and present the results of their discussion to the class | pair work and plenary |  |
| **Step 4** | **Activity Worksheet Step 4A, B and C**:  A. Students, in pairs or small groups, are asked to fill in the gaps of a French text about the benefits of multilingualism and then check their answers: <https://www.workwide.fr/les-avantages-a-etre-multilingue/> (accessed on 23 August 2022)  The same text can be used in Step 5 as a support text.  B. Students then read a text *in English* about the benefits of multilingualism, and they are asked to match the headings with the appropriate paragraphs (<http://kodaheart.com/10-things-21/> - accessed on 11 August 2023)  C. Students select relevant information from the texts and a video. | pair work/ group work |  |
| **Step 5** | **Project:**   1. Teacher divides the class into groups of 3-5 students. Each group chooses which product they want to work on (a short video, a poster, or a leaflet). Note: Students could work in the same groups as for Step 4. 2. Then they read the texts in Steps 4A & B and watch a video in order to find the arguments 3. The teacher informs the students that groups will present their products at the end and that there will be peer assessment session and presents the evaluation form. | group work |  |
| **Step 6** | **Designing products:**  In groups they prepare their products on the topic: *Why should we learn foreign languages?* | group work |  |
| **Step 7** | **Presenting and evaluating products:**  Each group presents their product.  The groups who are not presenting assess the presentations, with the use of an evaluation sheet based on the categories such as creativity of the product, clarity, arguments. | group work |  |

**Extra resources for the teacher (if applicable):**

**Example of a poster**  
<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/1b/11/ec/1b11ec5e59ad3b9bfd3871f588d79c67.jpg> (accessed on 11 August 2023)

**Example of a leaflet**

<https://stopandlearnenglish.blogspot.com/2014/09/european-day-of-languages-2014.html> (accessed on 11 August 2023)

**Further tips and guidance: -**

**Suggestions and ideas for adapting/differentiating***:*

* For Step 1, learners can find their own tools in order to create mind maps or word clouds.
* If students are not very familiar with the content and layout or leaflets and posters, the teacher could devote an additional lesson to their characteristics using the materials provided in the section above ‘Extra resources for the teacher’.
* The text found here <https://www.workwide.fr/les-avantages-a-etre-multilingue/> (accessed on 11 August 2022), which is about the benefits of multilingualism, can be used in class for reading comprehension questions or vocabulary familiarisation.

***FOR THE STUDENT: ACTIVITY WORKSHEET***

**European Day of Languages - La Journée européenne des langues**

**Step 1: Discussion.**

How many languages do you speak? How many languages do you understand? Are there words in other languages that you understand, without actually speaking that language?

**Step 2: Check your knowledge.**

**A.** Listen to the following recording and write down the languages you recognise:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxRSzkRxy2U>

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**B.** Watch the video from the previous recording and check your answers for the previous activity. Complete the list with additional languages that you recognise in the video.

------------------- , ------------------, ------------------, ...

**Step 3: Discussion.**

What would the purpose of organising a European Language Day be? Why should we celebrate multilingualism? Why should we learn several foreign languages?

1. In pairs, discuss these questions with your partner in any language you wish, and then
2. Present the results of your discussion to the class in English.

**Step 4: Preparing for a project.**

**A. Read the French text about the benefits of multilingualism and fill in the gaps.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| langues | communicative | parlées | décrocher | contacts | globalisé | créativité |
| unilingues | apprécier | multilingues | différents | mondialisation | traduction | exercer |

# Les avantages à être multilingue

On estime qu’[il existe plus de 7,000 langues](https://fr.babbel.com/fr/magazine/combien-de-langues-y-a-t-il-dans-le-monde) qui sont (1)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ dans le monde entier aujourd’hui, et beaucoup de pays ont plusieurs langues officielles. C’est pourquoi le nombre de personnes (2) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ dans le monde est plus élevé que l’on pourrait penser. Être multilingue est un atout indéniable sur le plan personnel, social et professionnel. Non seulement les multilingues arrivent à (3) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_des emplois plus facilement, mais le fait de parler plusieurs (4) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ permet aux individus de vivre des expériences sociales plus vastes et peut même modifier le fonctionnement du cerveau de manière positive. D’un point de vue général, le multilinguisme offre donc de nombreux avantages sur plusieurs niveaux. Voici les avantages à être multilingue sur les plans personnel, social, académique et professionnel :

### Les avantages à être multilingue sur le plan personnel

Premièrement, l’avantage le plus évident du multilinguisme est la capacité (5) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ potentielle. Le fait de savoir communiquer en plusieurs langues offre aux individus la possibilité de vivre des expériences plus riches sur le plan culturel et traditionnel. Ils peuvent également (6) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ et profiter de plus d’œuvres artistiques dans le domaine de la littérature et de la musique, par exemple.

Autre atout : une plus grande flexibilité neurocognitive. En effet, de nombreuses études ont démontré que les individus multilingues ont davantage de chances d’obtenir de meilleurs résultats sur les plans de l’analyse, la (7) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ et la flexibilité mentale que les individus unilingues. Le fait de passer régulièrement d’une langue à une autre est une stimulation mentale intense qui contribue énormément au bon développement du cerveau.

### Les avantages sur le plan social

Socialement, cet atout ouvre la possibilité de nouer des (8) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_plus diversifiés et riches. Un point à retenir est que la personne multilingue aura plus de facilité à communiquer avec la **population** locale d’un autre pays, ce qui lui permettra de mieux comprendre les différentes cultures et traditions dans les pays où les habitants parlent la même langue.

Dans son propre pays, le multilingue pourra communiquer plus aisément avec (9) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_groupes ethniques pour les mêmes raisons. Le fait de parler plusieurs langues a également un impact sur la personnalité de l’individu qui approchera le monde et les différentes coutumes avec plus de tolérance et d’empathie.

Si l’on regarde la mondialisation d’un certain point de vue, les personnes multilingues font partie des acteurs d’un monde de plus en plus (10) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Les métiers de (11) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ou d’interprétation permettent aux différents groupes ethniques de communiquer entre eux, ce qui n’a jamais été plus important qu’aujourd’hui.

### Les avantages sur le plan professionnel et académique

Les candidats qui connaissent plusieurs langues sont très intéressants pour les entreprises qui souhaitent (12) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ une activité à un niveau international et viser une population spécifique ciblée. Le fait de pouvoir échanger en plusieurs langues est en effet un avantage compétitif très signifiant pour les entreprises. Avec le développement de la (13) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, les candidats multilingues sont de plus en plus sollicités pour effectuer de la veille, de la vente ou tout simplement apporter une diversification au sein d’une équipe. Le multilinguisme est donc une compétence additionnelle pouvant permettre à un candidat de se démarquer d’un autre.

Lorsqu’un enfant parle plusieurs langues dès un jeune âge, ce dernier profitera également d’un avantage académique. Selon des études sur le multilinguisme, un enfant multilingue aura tendance à apprendre à lire et à résoudre des problèmes plus rapidement que ses camarades (14) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, de même qu’obtenir en moyenne de meilleurs résultats aux tests et examens. On rapporte également des avantages académiques similaires dans les études secondaires.

Le multilinguisme n’a donc jamais été aussi utile qu’aujourd’hui, et selon les recherches, les avantages vont s’accroître de plus en plus au fil des ans. [Apprendre une langue](https://workwidefr.wpengine.com/apprendre-une-nouvelle-langue/) peut demander une charge significative de travail mais les avantages sur les plans professionnel, personnel et social ne sont pas à sous-estimer. L’individu multilingue a plus de chances de réussir sur le plan professionnel et apprécier le monde d’un œil différent, qu’une personne unilingue.

In order to check your answers, find the relevant text here:  
<https://www.workwide.fr/les-avantages-a-etre-multilingue/>

**B. Now read an English text on the same topic and try to match the headings (i-x) of the paragraphs with the relevant paragraphs (1-10).**

Headings:

1. *Skilled multitaskers*
2. *Enhanced communication skills*
3. *Increases ability to learn additional languages*
4. *Heightened linguistic recognition*
5. *Improves memory*
6. *Attuned to their surroundings*
7. *Increased career opportunities*
8. *Delay the onset of Alzheimer’s/Dementia*
9. *Multiple languages multiply perspectives*
10. *Superior executive functioning*

# ADVANTAGES OF BEING MULTILINGUAL

According to the [American Community Survey](https://www.census.gov/2010census/partners/materials/inlanguagemaps.php) (a part of the United States Census), roughly one in five American children over the age of five years old use English as well as an additional language at home. Hearing children of Deaf adults are among these bilingual/multilingual children! How does a multilingual environment influence their psychological, emotional, and social development? Here are 10 evidence-based reasons why being multilingual is awesome!

\_\_1.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Compared to monolingual children, multilingual children are exposed to more diverse social experiences. As a result, multilingual children often become adept at considering other people’s perspectives, making them more effective communicators. Kathy Kinzer, an Associate Professor at Cornell University, notes that, “children don’t have to become completely bilingual [in order to experience these benefits]. [E]ven children who are merely exposed … somewhat regularly to another language seem to be just as good at perspective-taking.” The ability to consider alternate perspectives is a key trait in communication and one that can serve in a variety of settings, from interpersonal relationships to workplace environments. Learn more about the relationship between language and communication in NPR’s article, [Studies Suggest Multilingual Exposure Boosts Children’s Communication Skills.](http://www.npr.org/2016/03/21/471316384/studies-suggest-multilingual-exposure-boosts-childrens-communication-skillshttp:/www.npr.org/2016/03/21/471316384/studies-suggest-multilingual-exposure-boosts-childrens-communication-skills)

\_\_2.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Babies are able to identify and distinguish linguistic sounds in the different languages used in the household before they actually are physically able to use the language. Research shows that monolingual babies only identify the single language to which they are exposed. This gives multilingual babies a head start on the language learning process. The more exposure the children receive in multiple languages the more linguistic recognition will occur. For more information check out Michelle D. Milliman’s article,[Bilingual Babies Have More Flexible Brains.](http://www.iflscience.com/brain/bilingual-babies-have-more-flexible-brains/)

\_\_3.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Executive functioning skills are cognitive capabilities that include reasoning, planning, and problem solving. Studies suggest that multilingual children often have better executive functioning skills than their monolingual counterparts, particularly related to areas of inhibition, monitoring. This is, perhaps, because of the constant switching of languages in a multilingual household. Strong executive functioning skills is a significant predictor of academic success. Check out the National Center for Biotechnology Information’s article, [Bilingualism and the Development of Executive Function: The Role of Attention](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4442091/) for more information[.](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4442091/)

\_\_\_4.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

One key advantage to being multilingual is the ability to continuously monitor the environment. Albert Costa, a researcher from at the University of Pompeu Fabra in Spain stated, “Bilinguals have to switch languages quite often – you may have to talk to your father in one language and your mother in another language. It requires keeping track of changes around you in the same way that we monitor our surroundings when driving.” This can apply to all aspects of life whether walking down the street or playing sports; the ability to keep track of everything that is going on around you is a very useful skill! If you are intrigued, read Yudhijit Bhattacharjee’s article [Why Bilinguals are Smarter](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/18/opinion/sunday/the-benefits-of-bilingualism.html).

\_\_\_5.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Communicating in various languages can give a multilingual applicant a clear advantage over a monolingual applicant in the job field. The international business community considers the ability to communicate in more than one language an “indispensable tool for relationship building and financial success.” This can make it easier to find a job and can also lead to pay increases. According to Ryan McMunn, language expert and CEO of [BRIC Language Systems](http://briclanguage.com/), “Those entering the workforce in 2014 with second language fluency can expect an additional 10 to 15 percent pay increase.” Want to learn more? Check out U.S. News and World Report’s article, [Why You Should Learn Another Language](http://www.usnews.com/opinion/blogs/economic-intelligence/2014/01/29/the-business-benefits-of-learning-a-foreign-language).

\_\_\_6.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Research discovered at the Institute of Medical sciences in Hyderbad, India showed that people who spoke a second language delayed the onset of Alzheimer’s for 4.5 years. This is due to the constant mental control of using multiple languages, which exercises the brain and helps to keep it from degenerating. Delaying these diseases can increase quality of life for yourself and those around you. Check out Alissa Sauer’s article, [Bilingualism May Delay Alzheimer’s by More Than Four Years](http://www.alzheimers.net/12-11-14-bilingualism-delays-alzheimers/) for more information.

\_\_\_7.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Multilinguals have been shown to be better multitaskers because of their ability to switch languages. According to researchers in a US News article, “When a bilingual speaks two languages regularly, speaking in just one of these languages requires use of the control network to limit interference from the other language and to ensure the continued dominance of the intended language.” This allows multilinguals the ability to multitask but also the ability to lock in on a singular task and block out distractions. These are great skills to have in any environment. For more information check out U.S. News and World Report’s article, [Bilingual Benefits Reach Beyond Communication.](http://www.usnews.com/science/articles/2010/11/12/bilingual-benefits-reach-beyond-communication)

\_\_8.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

As they learn new languages, people often adopt new preferences and perspectives. Researchers have even examined the way in which languages produce a “language mindset,” defined as feeling like a different person when using different languages. This may be a result of the varying grammar and structures of language. Psycholinguist Susan Ervin-Tripp conducted an experiment in which bilingual participants were given an incomplete sentence. They were instructed to finish the sentence in both of their languages. She found that the participants chose different endings and that these choices were driven by language. Continue to learn more about language mindset by reading BBC’s article, [The Amazing Benefits of Being Bilingual](http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20160811-the-amazing-benefits-of-being-bilingual).

\_\_\_9.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Memory plays a huge part in learning language, those who are multilingual often score higher in memory tests than people who use only one language. Having a great memory can have both cognitive and social benefits like recognising faces or remembering names. Check out Julia Morales, Alejandra Calvo, and Ellen Bialystok’s article from ScienceDirect, [Working Memory Development in Monolingual and Bilingual Children](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S002209651200166X) for more information.

A recent study found that compared to people who are fluent in only one language, multilingual individuals have an easier time picking up a new language. In fact, the acquisition of multiple languages can help with the process of learning a new language, as well as improve competency in the native language! “This is because languages reinforce one another, and provide tools to strengthen phonologic, morphologic and syntactic skills.”  To learn more read Science Daily’s article, [Bilinguals Find it Easier to Learn a Third Language.](https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/02/110201110915.htm)

\_\_10.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

There are numerous social and cognitive advantages to being multilingual and all of these benefits stem from early and continued language exposure. If you haven’t picked up a second language yet, don’t worry! According to Dr Ellen Bialystok, of York University in Toronto, Canada, it is [never too late to learn](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/health/news/9173552/Learning-another-language-could-protect-against-dementia.html)!  If you are already using two more languages in your home, consider introducing a new sign language and learning together as a family! Be sure to [reinforce language development](http://kodaheart.com/10-things-16/) through language play- check out our family activities for some games and suggestions!

You can check your answers here: <http://kodaheart.com/10-things-21/>

**Step 5: The project.**

You and your classmates will participate in an international competition. The subject is promoting language learning and diversity. You are asked to create a video, a poster, or a leaflet **in English** and **a second language of your preference** presenting the advantages of learning several languages.

For your project, select the most relevant information from the two texts (Steps 4A and B) above and from the video that can be found here:

***Video on the European Day of Languages***[*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxRSzkRxy2U*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxRSzkRxy2U)

**Step 6: Designing the project.**

Now, create your video, poster, or leaflet on the basis of the material presented in Steps 4-5.

**Step 7: Presentation of the project and evaluation.**

1. Present your projects in front of your classmates.
2. Assess the projects presented by the other teams, using the evaluation chart.

**EVALUATION CHART FOR THE OUTPUT**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Group: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | **I agree** | **I partially agree** | **I disagree** |
| 1. Presentation was clear |  |  |  |
| 1. Presentation was well-structured |  |  |  |
| 1. Arguments are relevant and persuasive |  |  |  |
| 1. Language was accurate and varied |  |  |  |
| 1. The product is appealing and original |  |  |  |
| 1. The information from the text was used in an appropriate way, paraphrased and personalised. |  |  |  |
| Other comments: | | | |

1. The METLA team deeply thanks: *Tjaša Dražnik, Ermelinda Laca, Vlad Raisa Elena, Sylwia Kossakowska-Pisarek* who created a first version of this activity within the framework of the METLA workshop organised on 19-20 May 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) - Statistics Explained (europa.eu)](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=International_Standard_Classification_of_Education_(ISCED)) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)