



European Day of Languages: celebrating the Mother Tongue

At WA we are giving students the opportunity of exploring and enjoying their parents' language through Mother Tongue lessons in languages like Arabic, Italian, French, Spanish or Portuguese. To celebrate European Day of Languages, students share their experiences with us:

"My name is Hossam Kalada and I am in Year 10. I currently receive language lessons in both Italian and Arabic. In my opinion, I think that Mother Tongue is a great opportunity at Westminster Academy because not many schools have this opportunity and I am sure that other students would love it. It is good that my school offers GCSEs in languages that are not taught in normal lessons; otherwise I would not be able to get a qualification in Italian. Although I am fluent in Italian, I practise past papers so when it comes to the actual test I will find it very easy. Also my weaknesses are grammar and vocabulary which I am currently working on now in my Mother Tongue lessons."

Hossam, Year 10



"We enjoy French Mother Tongue because it is interesting! We have a lot of fun learning grammar, vocabulary and spelling and we are able to keep our French alive, which is essential for us, as it is our first language."

Heaven (Year 8), Esteban, Elliot and Matiss (Year 10)

"My name is Victor and I came to WA from Cañada Blanche School in order to improve my English. At WA, I also have the opportunity of taking Spanish as mother tongue, which is great as in lessons we improve vocabulary and apply good grammar to our writing and speaking. We also play games like Taboo, to make lessons fun and improve our fluency in several registers. I get to participate a lot in class and it is very useful not to lose my native language."

Victor, Year 10

"My name is Aliyah and I joined WA in September from a boarding school in Cumbria. I learnt Spanish there, as I was in the bilingual form."

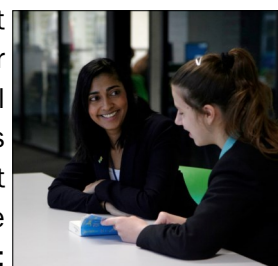
Doing Mother Tongue Spanish is not like other Spanish classes because you learn more and lessons are much harder the normal. In a normal Spanish class, I found the work too easy but since I've been in Mother Tongue Spanish I have found the work more challenging and that gives me a chance to push myself. Now that I am doing two language classes I am able to obtain two GCSEs."

Aliyah, Year 9



Message from the Principal, Ms Bora

Namaste! I thought I would greet you today in my own mother tongue, given the international nature of our newsletter this week. I'm also very excited about the range of opportunities we continue to offer our parents; please see overleaf for more information. As well as participating in one off events such as our Community Food Day, parents are able to air concerns to Parent Committees or attend sessions such as Parent Gym to help encourage their children to **read, revise and practise questions** every night. I look forward to seeing you participate in some of these activities if I don't see you at the Year 6 Open Evening tonight.



How does bilingualism benefit you?

"If we spoke a different language, we would perceive a somewhat different world."

(Ludwig Wittgenstein, Austrian philosopher)

Did you know that more than half of the world's population is bilingual? That means about 3.5 billion people use more than one language to communicate every day.



There are commonly held benefits attributed to the ability of using more than one language in our daily lives, such as **an increase in focus and the ability to multi-task**. Here are a few benefits we gathered that help explain the daily benefits of being able to speak multiple languages.

You can understand and appreciate cultural references and nuances. Most works of art and popular culture are more honestly represented in their native language. Listening to a song, reading a classic novel, watching a movie – these are expressions that bilinguals typically have the advantage of appreciating in their original form.

Bilingualism can create job opportunities and help you navigate the world. In addition, it's no secret that employers see language skills as a benefit for a prospective employee. There's one qualification that employers can't seem to get enough of, and that's fluency in a foreign language.

You feel a sense of connection with your heritage, history and family. For many, speaking another language keeps them connected to their families. Imagine not being able to communicate with your parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles simply because you don't share a common language. As the popular saying goes, "you can't know where you're going until you know where you've been!"

And also, your interactions with people of different cultures go deeper. When you speak someone's native language, you can talk about a lot more than the weather. Building deep and meaningful relationships with foreign communities usually involves speaking and understanding, partially at least, the same language. It's comforting when travelling to foreign countries and being able to speak their language – the locals appreciate it and make you feel more at home.

Adapted from Huffington Post (06/02/2014 on http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/06/02/multilingual-benefits_n_5399980.html)

Parents: What's On



Westminster Academy Community Food Day

Wednesday 15th October 12pm to 2pm



Venue: Westminster Academy main entrance

A celebration of food and culture; bring along a dish and share food with others!

Parents and members of the community are invited

Contact **Alan Gothard** on **0207 1210600** or email:

agothard@westminsteracademy.biz



Wellbeing

Dear parent/guardian,

Do you sometimes feel stressed? Are you finding difficulty managing under everyday pressures? Are you prone to feeling down or depressed?

Please come and join us for our first Mental Health session for parents at **WA on 8th October at 4.00 p.m.**

This will be led by a team of professionals from the NHS who will give us helpful hints on how to best manage our emotions and take care of our mental health.



FREE IT classes for parents

FREE Art classes for parents and community

FREE 'Parent Gym' for parents to support students to learn faster, do better and be happier

FREE Adult English classes - every Wednesday 1-3pm

To express interest in any of the above, please email Mr Gothard: AGothard@westminsteracademy.biz

Open Morning - Tues 7th, Thurs 9th October 9.30am

Year 12 Parents' Evening - Wednesday 8 October

Mental Wellbeing for parents - Wednesday 8 October

Community Food Day - Wednesday 15th October