

Tips to Become A Successful Language Learner

Taken from Tim Murphy's book:

Language Hungry! An Introduction to Language Learning Fun and Self-Esteem

1. **Make sure to get enough sleep before starting to learn.**

Sleep is very important when you are learning a new language. If you haven't gotten enough sleep, information often doesn't stay with you as well and you won't learn as much. If you are very tired or if it seems like you are not retaining what your tutor or teacher has told you, let them know and they can stop periodically to give you a short break before continuing.

2. **Stay motivated and interested even while you are in a slump.**

There are many reasons that a learner may be in a slump. Not understanding something, problems at home, and learning too much at once are common reasons why learners start to feel like they aren't succeeding. What is important is that you try to fight through these feelings. Remember that learning takes time and the harder you work and the more dedicated you are the easier it will be!

3. **Speak up if you don't understand something.**

Many learners fear that asking questions when they don't understand something will make it sound like they haven't been learning. But in fact, the best learners are the ones who ask questions. If you don't understand something, it will be much harder for you to learn it. It's better to let your tutor or teacher know so that they can help. You'll learn more this way!

4. **Don't be afraid of mistakes, they help you learn.**

Learners often dislike making mistakes because it makes them feel embarrassed when they say something incorrectly. But in fact, mistakes are actually a good thing because they can help you to realize what you did wrong and practice fixing that mistake in the future. Mistakes expand your understanding of the language by showing you why something is incorrect.

5. **Practice shadowing, echoing and summarizing.**

These two techniques are useful for learners to practice pronunciation and vocabulary. Shadowing is when the tutor or teacher says a short statement, and the learner repeats. This allows the learner to repeat the phrase and think about its meaning. Echoing is the same thing, but the tutor or teacher

will say a longer phrase and the learner will repeat just the last bit of it. Finally, summarizing is when the tutor or teacher says something longer, and the learner repeats back the main things that have been said.

6. Use what you've learned in many different contexts.

Practicing what you have learned is essential to speaking better English. Practice wherever you can: the grocery store, the bank, on the telephone. The more you use your English, the stronger it will become and the more you will get out your time with a tutor or teacher!

7. If you know someone else who is also learning English, practice with them.

Research has shown that practicing with someone who is also learning English helps you to learn even more. Learners often feel more comfortable speaking English to other learners rather than to someone who is fluent. Non-native English speakers are able to share information and language with each other, and are often less worried about making mistakes.

8. Have fun with learning, it will help you remember more.

The more you are enjoying yourself while at your class or tutoring session, the more information you will retain. If you are having fun, you will want to learn more and you will push yourself harder to get where you want to be. Some learners think that tutoring and classes need to be very serious and boring in order for learning to occur, but research has shown that having fun actually stimulates learning!

9. Regularly and frequently review the things you have learned.

Practicing what you have learned is essential to improving your English skills. If you don't practice what you have learned between tutoring sessions or classes, you will not remember the material as well and you may have to go over it again. If you want to improve your English skills more quickly, the key is to practice whenever you can!

10. Reflect on what you've accomplished so far and congratulate yourself.

Learning a new language is very difficult. You should be proud of yourself for everything you've done so far. Continue to work hard to achieve your goals!