

The Benefits of Being Bilingual reading passage

The Benefits of Being Bilingual

- A. The majority of people on earth are now bilingual or multilingual, having grown up speaking two or more languages, according to the most recent statistics. When compared to their monolingual peers, such kids were once thought to be at a disadvantage. However, during the last few decades, technological advancements have made it possible for researchers to examine how bilingualism interacts with and alters the cognitive and neurological systems in greater detail, leading to the identification of several distinct advantages to being bilingual.
- B. According to research, a multilingual person employs both languages simultaneously when using one. When we hear a word, the sounds come in sequential order; we don't hear the complete word at once. The language system in the brain starts to make predictions about what the word might be even before it is finished. At least during the initial phases of word recognition, if you hear the word "can," you probably also activate words like "candy" and "candle." Auditory input activates corresponding words regardless of the language to which they belong in the case of bilingual people, who do not only activate words in one language. Studying eye movements provides some of the strongest support for this 'language co-activation phenomenon. A Russian-English bilingual person who was asked to "pick up a marker from a group of objects" would look more at a stamp than someone who doesn't know Russian since the Russian word for "stamp," a mark, sounds close to the English word he or she heard, "a marker." In circumstances like this, linguistic co-activation occurs because what the listener hears may map into words in either language.
- C. However, dealing with this ongoing linguistic competition can be challenging. For example, speaking in more than one language might slow down speech and increase "tip-of-the-tongue states," in which you can almost think of a word but can't quite. Because of the constant juggling of two languages, it becomes necessary to limit the amount of time a person spends using each language. As a result, bilingual people usually perform very well in jobs that need efficient conflict management. In the conventional Stroop task, participants are asked to name the colour of the word's font after seeing it. When the colour and the word match (for example, when the word "red" is printed in red), people correctly identify the colour more quickly than when they don't (i.e. when the word "red" is printed in blue). This happens because the colour of the word's font (blue) and the word's actual colour (red) clash. Bilingual people frequently perform well on tasks like this because they can ignore competing demands on perceptual information and concentrate on the pertinent elements of the input. Additionally, bilinguals perform two tasks more quickly than monolinguals, demonstrating better cognitive control when making quick changes in strategy. For instance, when bilinguals must switch from categorising objects by colour (red or green) to shape (circle or triangle), they do so more quickly than monolinguals.
- D. Additionally, it appears that the neurological underpinnings of the multilingual advantage include brain regions more commonly than linked to sensory processing. Teenagers who

are monolingual and bilingual have remarkably similar brain stem reactions when listening to simple speech sounds without any background noise in the way. However, when the same sound was played to both groups while background noise was present, bilingual listeners' neural responses were noticeably larger. This difference is due to their improved encoding of the sound's fundamental frequency, a component of sound that is closely related to pitch perception.

- E. Such enhancements in cognitive and sensory processing might facilitate a bilingual person's processing of environmental information and contribute to the explanation of why bilingual adults learn a third language more quickly than monolingual adults who master a second language. This benefit might be attributed to the ability to concentrate on language-specific information while minimising distraction from the languages they currently know.
- F. Additionally, research suggests that learning another language may assist maintain cognitive function by enlisting additional brain networks to make up for those that deteriorate with ageing. Older bilinguals have better memories than monolinguals, which can have a positive impact on their physical health. Bilingual patients reported experiencing the disease's first symptoms on average five years later than monolingual patients in a study of more than 200 people with Alzheimer's disease, a degenerative brain disease. Researchers analysed the brains of bilingual and monolingual patients who were matched for the severity of Alzheimer's symptoms in a subsequent study. Even while the bilinguals' outward behaviour and talents were the same as those of their monolingual counterparts, their brains surprisingly showed higher physical indicators of disease. Bilingualism may enable the brain to operate more efficiently with the same quantity of fuel if it were an engine.
- G. Furthermore, the advantages of bilingual experience appear to begin very early. In one study, researchers showed seven-month-old infants raised in bilingual or monolingual families that a puppet would emerge on one side of a screen when they heard a tinkling sound. The puppet started to appear on the other side of the screen about halfway through the research. Only the bilingual newborns were able to successfully acquire the new rule, which required them to modify the rule they had previously learned to receive a reward. This shows that negotiating a multilingual environment confers advantages that transcend far beyond language, both for very young children and elderly people.

The Benefits of Being Bilingual reading questions

Questions 27 - 31

Complete the table below.

Choose NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 27-31 on your answer sheet.

Test	Findings

Observing the 27 _____ of Russian-English bilingual people when asked to select certain objects	Bilingual people engage both languages simultaneously: a mechanism known as 28 _____
A test called the 29 _____, focusing on naming colours	Bilingual people are more able to handle tasks involving a skill called 30 _____
A test involving switching between tasks	When changing strategies, bilingual people have superior 31 _____

Questions 32 - 35

Reading Passage has seven paragraphs, A-G.

Which paragraph contains the following information?

Write the correct letter, A-G, in boxes 32-35 on your answer sheet.

- 32. an example of how bilingual and monolingual people's brains respond differently to a certain type of non-verbal auditory input
- 33. a demonstration of how a bilingual upbringing has benefits even before we learn to speak
- 34. a description of the process by which people identify words that they hear
- 35. references to some negative consequences of being bilingual

Questions 36 - 40

TRUE if the statement agrees with the information

FALSE if the statement contradicts the information

NOT GIVEN if there is no information on this

Write your answers in boxes 36-40 on your answer sheet.

- 36. Attitudes towards bilingualism have changed in recent years.
- 37. Bilingual people are better than monolingual people at guessing correctly what words are before they are finished.
- 38. Bilingual people consistently name images faster than monolingual people.
- 39. Bilingual people's brains process single sounds more efficiently than monolingual people in all situations.
- 40. Fewer bilingual people than monolingual people suffer from brain disease in old age.