

Do the preparation task first. Then read the article and do the exercises to check your understanding.

Preparation

Match the vocabulary with the correct definition and write a–f next to the numbers 1–6.

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|-----------------------------|---|
| 1..... a compulsory subject | a. an investigation which asks lots of people what they think about something |
| 2..... a survey | b. on the subject of |
| 3..... equipped | c. to stop doing something |
| 4..... when it comes to | d. a subject that every student must take |
| 5..... to give up something | e. the teacher who directs a school; the principal |
| 6..... the headmaster | f. ready; prepared |

1. Check your understanding: true or false

Circle *True* or *False* for these sentences.

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|----|--|-------------|--------------|
| 1. | The British are good at learning languages. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 2. | A lot of British schoolchildren stop learning languages when they are 14. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 3. | The British government wants children to start learning a foreign language at the age of five. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 4. | British children only study French at school. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 5. | There are plans to offer more languages at school. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 6. | Many people are interested in learning Mandarin Chinese. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |

2. Check your grammar: matching – comparatives and superlatives

Match the two sentence halves and write a–h next to the numbers 1–8.

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|--------|---|--|
| 1..... | The results of the survey state that the British are officially | a. the most widely-spoken foreign language. |
| 2..... | The survey confirmed that English was | b. in languages than in other subjects. |
| 3..... | It is more difficult to get good grades | c. as I thought it would be. |
| 4..... | One idea is to start | d. more popular than Mandarin Chinese. |
| 5..... | Mandarin Chinese is predicted to become | e. the fastest-growing economy in the world. |
| 6..... | It's not as difficult | f. much younger. |
| 7..... | Only French and Spanish are | g. the second most popular foreign language learned in UK schools. |
| 8..... | China has | h. the worst language learners in Europe. |

3. Check your grammar: multiple choice – comparatives and superlatives

Circle the best option to complete these sentences.

- We need to start teaching languages **much younger** / **much more younger** .
- Most** / **More** people learn French than Japanese.
- Are Brits really **the worst** / **the bad** language learners in the world?
- What's **more difficult** / **the most difficult** thing about learning a language?
- Is Chinese **more popular** / **the more popular** than German at your school?
- My teacher says that Spanish is **easier than** / **more easy than** English.
- Arabic is **not as difficult as** / **not as difficult than** Chinese.
- German is **useful than** / **as useful as** French, isn't it?

Discussion

How many languages can you speak? Do you like learning English?

How important is it for you to speak foreign languages?

Do you many foreigners speak your language?

Do you think your language is easy to learn? Why or why not?