

What's the Secret of Successful Language Learning?

WE ASKED TWO EXPERIENCED TEACHERS OF ENGLISH FOR THEIR OPINIONS.

Alastair Banton is a teacher at a private language school in the UK. He has also taught English in Japan.

1 I think the most important thing is that you really have to want to learn the language – without that, you won't get very far. You also have to believe that you will do it ... imagine yourself using the language confidently and think, 'yes, I can do that'.

2 Then there are other things: of course you need to work hard, but at the same time you need to enjoy it and not get frustrated when you feel you're not making much progress. And you have to be realistic – learning a language takes time, and you can't expect to know and understand everything in a few weeks!

3 Also, you should try to 'develop an ear' for the language – not only to recognise the sounds of the language and to understand what people are saying, but also notice the exact words and phrases that people use... and then try to use them yourself. Some people can do this naturally, but others have to learn how to do it – that's where having a good teacher is important!

Teresa Pelc is a teacher of English in Poland. She has taught English in a secondary school for a number of years.

4 For me, motivation is the most important thing. You have to be ready to study grammar, read a lot, listen to English songs, radio and TV, and what's more you have to do these things systematically.

5 It is so easy to forget what you have just learnt... that's why I needed a teacher to force me to study. Even the most motivated students need that extra push sometimes. I believe that only a very few people can learn a language on their own.

6 Learning a language can be quite stressful, especially for adults... suddenly, we speak like children and make fools of ourselves! But if you're motivated you learn to overcome this. It all sounds like very hard work – and it is. It is also very enjoyable – I praise my students for everything they do well, however small it is. Many of them are very successful and speak English better than me and some of them have even become English teachers themselves!

COMPREHENSION/7

A. Read the text and answer the following questions:

3 PNTS

- Why does Alastair say that the learner of a language should be realistic?
- According to Teresa, why do we need a teacher to force the student to study and to give him extra push?
- What problems face adults when they want to learn a language?

B. Write the reasons for good language learning according to the teachers' opinions: (choose the reasons from the list)

1 PNT

<i>motivation - self-confidence</i>	
Alastair Banton	Teresa Pelc
.....

C. Find in the text words or expressions that mean the same as:

2 PNTS

- You won't make much progress: [parag 1]
- Alone without help: [parag 5]

D. What do the underlined words in the text refer to:

1 PNT

- Them [parag 3]
- They [parag 6]

LANGUAGE & VOCABULARY/8

E. Choose A, B or C to complete the sentences:

2 PNTS

- James is ----- blue jeans today. [A/ wear B/ wearing C/ wears]
- HELP! I can't----- . I'm sinking! [A/ swimming B/ to swim C/ swim]
- When I last met Ben, he ----- pay attention to my new scarf. [A/ didn't B/ doesn't C/ don't]
- The Interpol ----- catch the kidnapper because he was putting a mask. [A/ can't B/ could C/ couldn't]

