

ISS 2020 - How to improve your English language skills.

English language skills are crucial to academic success at International School Suva. Here are a number of activities students can do to improve their English language skills. Students should spend at least 1 hour per day learning English, using the following suggestions.

Read

Read English language texts for at least 20 minutes per day. Studies demonstrate that students who read are academically successful. The benefits of reading include;

- Improved vocabulary
- Improved general knowledge
- Improved grammar skills
- Improved writing skills (as students are exposed to different writing styles)
- Improved study habits (students learn to concentrate for longer periods)

Reading choices include;

- Books from a library
- Newspaper articles (eg [The Guardian](#), [BBC Learn English](#))
- Magazine articles (eg [National Geographic](#))
- [China News Network - English site](#)
- [Japan Today - English site](#)

Listen

- English music (listen more than once, and write down the lyrics)
- Podcasts (listen more than once, and write down new words in your journal)
- Radio programs
- [Tedx Talks](#) (informative and educational talks on a wide range of subjects) Use subtitles if you need.

Watch

English TV or movies (watch first with subtitles, then a second time with English subtitles, then a third time with no subtitles) Record new vocabulary in your journal.

Suggested TV series

- Friends (US TV series- comedy)
- The Simpsons (US cartoon series- comedy)
- Doctor Who (UK TV series- science fiction)

Write

Keep a journal in English of what you've done during the day. Record your opinion on the movies or TV you've watched, or the articles you read.

Vocabulary/ Spelling

- In the back of your journal, list 10 new words you learn every day. After one month, you'll have 300 new words
- Use [Quizlet](#) - a vocabulary learning program (also has a phone app)
- Download an app that introduces new vocabulary eg [Magoosh](#). Spend 20 minutes per day learning new vocab.
- In preparation for next year, learn subject specific vocabulary from text book glossaries (ask your teachers)

Grammar

- Use an online resources such as [Duolingo](#), and spend 10 minutes per day improving your English grammar skills.
- Use online programs such as [Brainpop.com](#) to practice your English skills.

Pronunciation

- Listen to and repeat songs, short videos (eg from Youtube) or quotes from TV or movies
- Repeat the pronunciation from online vocabulary apps
- Record yourself speaking
- Use online pronunciation sites, eg <http://www.manythings.org/e/pronunciation.html>
- Use online English language learning sites, eg [FluentU](#)
- Be aware of the pronunciation of syllables

Speaking

- Don't be afraid of making mistakes - this is the best way to learn
- Join in groups or activities where you'll need to speak

Health

In order to achieve academic success, it is important that students are both physically and mentally healthy. Ways to stay healthy include;

- Sleep at least 8 hours per night
- Limit device use and social media, especially at night
- Eat a healthy diet (limit sugar and processed foods)
- Do regular exercise
- Create a regular study habit (eg 1 - 2 hours per day)