Your Language is a Superpower

A Family Toolkit to Practice Home Language and Build English Success



What Language Built you?

“Think about something important you learned from your family.”

Examples:

- How to cook something
- A family tradition
- How to solve a problem
- A story from your childhood
- How to work hard
- How to care for others

“What language did you learn that in?”

Benefits of Multilingualism Infographic

Bilingual Myths vs. Facts

Common Myths

"I should only speak broken English at home so my child catches up quickly at school."

Scientific Fact

Children need rich, complex models of language. Speaking your strongest language provides richer vocabulary, complex grammar, and deeper conceptual thinking that powers English growth.

Common Myths

"Reading books in our native language will confuse my child during school reading time."

Scientific Fact

Reading comprehension is a universal brain function. Once a child masters story structure and critical questioning in their native language, those exact mental pathways transfer to English texts.

What Happens in the Home Language?

When your child talks, reads, explains, questions, and solves problems in your home language, they are building:

🗣️ Vocabulary
🧠 Critical thinking
📖 Comprehension
🔗 Making connections
💬 Explaining ideas
📊 Analyzing information
⚖️ Giving evidence
✍️ Organizing ideas

Four Ways to Build Your Child's Language

1: Talk

Oral Language & Observation

Focus on describing, asking "why," and noticing details in everyday environments



2: Think & Explain

Deep Storytelling & Logic

Build comprehension through predicting, story sequence, and character debates

3: Explore the Real World

Academic Vocabulary & Real World

Connect household activities, recipes, and visual charts to school subjects.



4: Read, Research & Wonder

Routines and Curiosity

Maintain progress through talk journals, research mini-projects, and daily talk rituals

1: Oral Language

Grade Level Home Practices:

GRADE	ACTIVITY
K-1st	While walking or grocery shopping, find 5 items of one color. Ask: “How are these similar? How are they different?”
2nd-3rd	Open a magazine or book. Ask your child to tell a story using only the visual clues before reading any text.
4th-5th	Watch a 2 minute video clip in your home language. Ask for a 3-sentence summary: Main idea + 2 key details.
6th-8th	Watch & Explain: Watch a short video/news clip in your home language. Ask: *“What is the main idea? What details support it? What questions do you still have?”*
9th-12	Real-World Discussion: Choose a current issue, career, or topic of interest. Discuss: *“What do you think about this issue? What evidence supports your opinion?”*

HOW THIS HELPS AT SCHOOL: Your child practices explaining ideas, using details, and building vocabulary—skills they will use in English reading, writing, and classroom discussions.

2: Think & Explain

GRADE	ACTIVITY
K-1st	Predict: Pause reading mid-way. Ask: “What clues tell you what will happen next?”
2nd-3rd	Sequence: Have them retell stories using transition terms: First, Next, Suddenly, Finally
4th-5th	Debate: Discuss character choices in movies: “Was that decision right or wrong? Why?
6th-8th	Predict & Defend: Pause a movie, short story, or video. Ask: *“What do you think will happen next? What evidence makes you think that?”*
9th-12	Debate a Decision: Discuss a character's or person's decision. *“Was this the best decision? What would you have done differently? Use evidence to defend your answer.”*

HOW THIS HELPS AT SCHOOL: Strengthen thinking, comprehension, vocabulary, sequency, and oral language skills that transfer across languages.

Let's Take a Closer Look!

Home Language → Build the Thinking → Transfer the skill → Strengthen English

STRATEGY	HOW IT BUILDS ENGLISH
Predict	Students practice using **evidence and complete thoughts**. The thinking skill transfers to English, and teachers can introduce the English language needed to express predictions
Sequence	Retelling a story builds **narrative structure, sequencing, and academic vocabulary**. Students can first organize their ideas in Spanish and then practice key transition words in English: *First, Next, Suddenly, Finally*
Debate	Discussing character choices develops **reasoning, explaining, and expressing opinions**. Students can develop the idea in Spanish and then practice English frames such as: *I think... because...* or *I agree/disagree because...*

3: Explore the Real-World

GRADE	ACTIVITY
K-1st	Name household items and state their purpose: *"This is a spoon; we use it to stir."*
2nd-3rd	Cook together! Have your child direct you through the steps in order as if reading a manual.
4th-5th	Examine a bus map, weather map, or recipe chart. Ask: *"What does this symbol represent?"*
6th-8th	Be a Data Detective: Look at a graph, weather forecast, sports statistics, or school schedule. Ask: *"What does the data tell you? What pattern do you notice? What conclusion can you make?"*
9th-12	Real-Life Problem Solving: Compare cell phone plans, grocery prices, college costs, salaries, or a household budget. Ask: *"Which option is the best value? What evidence supports your choice?"*

HOW THIS HELPS AT SCHOOL: Procedural thinking and data literacy built at home translate directly into English STEM and Social Studies performance .

4: Read, Research & Wonder

GRADE	ACTIVITY
K-1st	Draw a daily picture journal. Have your child dictate the "secret story" behind their artwork in your native language.
2nd-3rd	Keep a shared "Talk Journal." Write 1 family highlight per week in home language and draw the scene
4th-5th	Pick a favorite topic (animals, space). Research 2 new facts in home language to present at dinner.
6th-8th	Interest Journal: Choose a topic they care about—sports, music, gaming, animals, science, etc. Each week, research one new fact in the home language and explain it to someone in the family.
9th-12	Mini Research Project: Choose a real-world question connected to college, career, culture, or a personal interest. Research it in the home language, take notes, and present the findings to the family.

HOW THIS HELPS AT SCHOOL: Procedural thinking and data literacy built at home translate directly into English STEM and Social Studies performance .

Interactive Activity

Plan A: $40/month
Plan B: $55/month with additional features

Discussion in your home language:

> *Which would you choose and why?*

What did you just practice?

You just practiced academic skills — in your home language!

The thinking doesn't disappear when the language changes.

➡️ Home Language
Build the thinking

➡️ English
Learn the language to express the thinking

➡️ School
Use those skills to read, write, speak, analyze, and solve problems

Consistency matters far more than English fluency or long hours. Just 15 structured minutes in your native language builds lifelong learning pathways:

—Dr. Jim Cummins

The Power of 15 Minutes

- **5 Minutes of Talk:** Discuss the best and hardest parts of the day during dinner or driving.
- **5 Minutes of Reading/Story:** Read a book, tell a traditional family story, or look at photo albums
- **5 Minutes of Reflection:** Ask 1 deep question: *"What made you curious today?"*

Your Home Language Builds English

Level of Thinking	Ask in the Home Language	English Language Skill to Transfer
Observe	What do you notice happening in this picture or scene?	Describing, noticing details, vocabulary
Connect	Does this story remind you of something in our life?	Making connections, sharing experiences
Analyze	Why do you think the character chose to do that?	Explaining reasoning, cause/effect, character motivation
Evaluate	Do you agree or disagree with that choice? Why?	Stating opinions, giving reasons, using evidence
Create	If you wrote the ending, how would you change it?	Hypothesizing, sequencing, narrative language

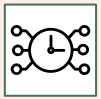
Parent Sentence Starters

Reading



"Show me your favorite part..."
"Why did the story end this way?"
"What word was new to you?"

Everyday Activities



"Tell me the recipe steps in order..."
"How can we solve this problem?"
"Describe what you see using 3 words..."

Homework



"Explain this problem to me in our language."
"What do you think the teacher expects?"
"What is your first step?"

RESEARCH SUPPORTS THIS APPROACH

Research Connection:

The California ELA/ELD Framework emphasizes collaborative conversations, meaning-making, academic language, and the use of students' primary language when it supports comprehension and expression. The framework notes that collaborative discussion is particularly beneficial for English Learners because peer interaction contributes to language development.

Research- Based Foundation:

Institute of Education Science (IES) organizes comprehension into *Locate & Recall, Integrate & Interpret,* and *Critique & Evaluate* and recommends higher-order questions that ask students to consider **why, how, and what if**.

Your Language Matters

Your Voice Matters

Your Child's Future Matters

Keep talking.
Keep reading.
Keep asking questions.
Keep your home language strong.

Because when you build language at home, you are also building the thinking your child needs for English and school.



Ready To Join CVUSD?

- October: Sent notification letters
  - All ML, IFEP and RFEP students: Grades 5 & 8
  - HLDRP Parent Letter.docx
- Bilingual staff to promote and find candidates
- Ask parents to fill Form by the end of April
  - https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1mKVyBO4h-hfsloJVNc8Ovbb1Sy5zwF0e6UpfZLZs3Ng/edit
- 5th & 8th Grade Home Language Development Recognition
- Principal: Identifies the recognition venue
  - Award ceremonies, Promotion/culmination, Assemblies, etc.

Collaboration Time

Let’s get the word out and show everyone why **“Home Language Is a Superpower!”**—because every language is a strength worth celebrating!

Questions?

THANKS!