Immersing students in a new language and culture from a young age is an invaluable experience. Bilingual and biliteracy skills and also cultural awareness, empathy, and acceptance of others are very important in our global world.

With COVID-19 keeping many of us in our homes, students are having to adapt to learning in a new environment. However, schooling from home (or the Summer break) does not mean that language and cultural immersion is out of reach! Read on to discover five ways to continue to brush up your language skills and culturally immerse yourself from home.

1. **Go local!**
The Glen Ridge Public Library has free access to the Rosetta Stone program with your library card. To access, go to [https://www.glenridgelibrary.org/](https://www.glenridgelibrary.org/), click on “services”, click on “online resources” and Rosetta Stone will show up to enter your card number. You can learn and track your progress!

2. Try free Apps such as [https://www.duolingo.com/](https://www.duolingo.com/) to improve your Spanish skills and [https://www.memrise.com/](https://www.memrise.com/) to memorize words

3. **Take a virtual field trip in the target language!**
Some examples below but there are plenty of other ideas, museums, etc. online such as [https://artsandculture.google.com/](https://artsandculture.google.com/) that you can research and enjoy according to your interests.
Amazon Forest: [https://www.virtualfieldtrips.org/la-selva-amazonica-spanish/](https://www.virtualfieldtrips.org/la-selva-amazonica-spanish/)
Barcelona: [https://www.virtualfieldtrips.org/barcelona-spanish/](https://www.virtualfieldtrips.org/barcelona-spanish/)
Galapagos: [https://www.virtualfieldtrips.org/galapagos-islands-spanish/](https://www.virtualfieldtrips.org/galapagos-islands-spanish/)

4. **An array of activities, worksheets, crafts, poetry, games, songs, books, podcasts, etc. in Spanish!**
[https://www.aatsp.org/page/cr_sites_spanish/Classroom-Resources-Websites-of-Interest---Spanish.htm](https://www.aatsp.org/page/cr_sites_spanish/Classroom-Resources-Websites-of-Interest---Spanish.htm)
[https://spanishtown.ca/](https://spanishtown.ca/)
[https://www.onlinefreespanish.com/](https://www.onlinefreespanish.com/)
[https://www.spanishplayground.net/latin-american-crafts-for-spanish-class/](https://www.spanishplayground.net/latin-american-crafts-for-spanish-class/)
5. **Find a conversation partner.**

   One of the most important ways to maintain language skills is by continuing to use the target language as frequently as possible. Consider utilizing technology like FaceTime or Zoom, and talk with your classmates at least once a day/week in the target language. It is a fun way for students to keep in touch with one another and will prevent language loss. You may also have a neighbor or family member who is fluent in the language and can be a great partner to chat in Spanish. Another way you can communicate in the target language is through pen pals. Whether it is a classmate or a friend in another country, practice writing in the target language and mail letters or postcards. Both speaking and writing help you learn colloquial phrases and deepen your understanding of another culture.

6. **Stay up to date on news and current events.**

   For students learning about specific countries in school, find news articles you can review about the affairs and cultural current events in the country of focus. For more advanced students, consider finding news sources that are written in the target language. Current events can be used to learn useful lessons in many subjects including economics, medicine, and global affairs. Using real-world topics and applying them to what you are already learning keeps information relevant and interesting.

7. **Label your home.**

   With the majority of our time currently being spent inside the house, students are interacting with the same spaces on a daily basis. Using masking tape and a sharpie, go around and label objects in your bedroom or around the entire home using the target language. This helps language students associate words with the visual of the object and reinforces vocabulary. Once students become more familiar with the words, parents or siblings can consider quizzes them informally during the day or at mealtime and see how they are progressing. When they have mastered the first set of labels, try labeling other items to grow their exposure to more vocabulary words.

8. **Cook a meal.**

   Cooking with your family is a fun way to spend time together to break up the day. Research online to learn about different traditional meals in the Spanish-speaking country of interest. Choose a recipe to make as a family. Trying new cooking techniques and different flavors gives students insight into the daily life of people in the culture of focus. For more advanced students, try cooking a recipe that is in the target language. Students can practice their speaking and comprehension skills by reading the instructions aloud and following the recipe. This activity supports students in both language and cultural immersion.
9. **Listen to music and watch movies.**  
A great way to be immersed in a new culture and language is by listening to music and exploring popular artists in the target language and culture. Listening to music in a new language helps to develop listening skills, and it introduces students to what the style of music sounds like in the particular culture they are studying.

Watching movies is a fun way to experience cultural immersion as well because the costumes, food, location, and language all contribute to the mental picture of what the culture looks like. For movies in the target language, try watching it without subtitles the first time and then watch it another time with subtitles to see if you were able to understand the movie.

*Have fun! Have a great and safe Summer!*

*Hasta Septiembre! Nos vemos!*

*Sra. Dessipris*