



# SKILLS IMPROVEMENT PROCESS: IT ALL BEGINS WITH YOU!

## Review

- ❖ As your teachers, it is our deepest desire to help you improve your English skills. Collectively as a department we have the experience of teaching over ten thousand students.
- ❖ Language acquisition is a process that takes many years; it will take much more of a personal commitment than attendance in an English classroom for 75 minutes a day.
- ❖ Furthermore, because you are enrolled in an academic program, we know you are serious about achieving success.
- ❖ If your verbal and /or written communication skills are below this grade level, we provide support as you:
  - Attend tutorials weekly to seek clarification on all homework and assignments.
  - Stay after school.
  - Ask lots of questions in class so we can help.
  - Actively use all feedback and improvement suggestions provided.
  - Look over provided student samples of success and excellence.
- ❖ Additionally, there are several processes ***you must*** commit to doing.

## Process

- ❖ Be clear about **why** you want to improve your English skills.
  - Do you want it for a job?
  - To help you study?
  - To be more successful in your other classes?
  - To help with post-secondary success?
- ❖ Once you have clear goals and reasons, to further help you, we want you to understand that research supports that proficient English skills can be strengthened and improved by following an active process of five steps.
- ❖ If you commit to following the five strategies listed below, your skills will improve much more rapidly than any other way.
- ❖ Strategy 1: Make a 30 minute commitment each day.
- ❖ Strategy 2: Look for opportunities to use English in your regular day.
- ❖ Strategy 3: Focus on learning new words and phrases
- ❖ Strategy 4: Practice, practice, practice:
- ❖ Strategy 5: Relax and enjoy yourself!

over



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- Strategy 1: Make a 30 minute commitment each day:** It requires an active effort, but *success can be achieved with an initial commitment of 30 minutes a day.* (This is much better than learning for longer once a week.)
  
- Strategy 2: Look for opportunities to use English in your regular day.**
  - Speak English in casual conversation in the hall
  - Listen to music with English lyrics
  - Watch a movie or TV show in English
  - Read an English magazine, newspaper, graphic novel, etc.
  - Use the English websites for your reading, searching, and interactions.
  
- Strategy 3: Focus on learning new words and phrases**
  - Use a “word a day” podcast or blog that helps you learn each day
  - Keep a list of new words and phrases on your cell phone or iPod that you can use in your interactions.
  - Keep an ongoing notebook with new words that you can use in your writing.
  
- Strategy 4: Practice, practice, practice:** There's an expression in English: Use it or you lose it! This is very true when it comes to improving proficiency. You need to take responsibility for your own learning. If you do not want to learn the language, you won't. If you do want to learn the language, take control. Choose content of interest to you that you want to listen to and read. Seek out the words and phrases that you need in order to understand your listening and reading. Do not wait for someone else to show you the language, nor tell you what to do. Discover the language by yourself, like a child growing up. Talk when you feel like it. Write when you feel like it. A teacher cannot teach you to become fluent, but you can learn to become fluent if you want to.
  
- Strategy 5: Relax and enjoy yourself!** Do not worry about what you cannot remember, or cannot yet understand, or cannot yet say. It does not matter. You are learning and improving. The language will gradually become clearer in your brain, but this will happen on a schedule that you cannot control. So sit back and enjoy. Just make sure you spend enough time with the language. That is the greatest guarantee of success.

Sources: <http://www.wikihow.com/Teach-Yourself-a-New-Language>, [http://www.world-english.org/how\\_to\\_learn\\_english.htm](http://www.world-english.org/how_to_learn_english.htm), <http://www.learnenglish.de/improvepage.htm>, [http://www.geocities.com/efi\\_beginner/resources/ImproveEnglishSkills.htm](http://www.geocities.com/efi_beginner/resources/ImproveEnglishSkills.htm)

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed \_\_\_\_\_