

WHICH LANGUAGE MATCHES YOUR STRENGTHS AS A LEARNER?

	Chinese	Spanish	French	Latin
A successful learner has or should be developing...	Strong verbal skills, good listening comprehension, strong reading skills, visual learning skills	Strong verbal skills, good listening comprehension, and understanding of grammar	Strong verbal skills, good listening comprehension, an understanding of grammar	Good reading comprehension skills (analysis of grammatical relationships and context.) Enjoyment of learning new words.
Challenges	Memorization and writing of characters.	Responding to speaking prompts in Spanish and getting used to a grammar that is different from English (verb tenses, etc.)	Responding to speaking prompts in French, getting used to a grammar that is different from English, and to a pronunciation that does not correspond to the spelling	Extracting meaning from a language w/grammar different from English: endings of words change according to grammatical function.
Writing Skills	Students learn to write “pinyin” (which is English letters but Chinese sounds) first, then more and more characters are required.	Attention to a different spelling and grammar is needed	Attention to a different spelling and grammar is needed	Writing assignments are usually translations based on material covered in class. A few original compositions.
Reading Skills	Recognition of characters using a computer program. Many characters share similar parts, which helps to remember them.	Relatively easy thanks to words similar to English and similar word order.	Relatively easy thanks to words similar to English and similar word order.	Students use grammar (cases) and context to understand reading. Students learn many English SAT-words based on Latin roots.
Listening Skills	Identification of the four tones requires practice.	Heavily emphasized, most of the instruction and activities are in Spanish. Many words similar to English.	Heavily emphasized, most of the instruction and activities are in French. Many words similar to English.	Hearing Latin read aloud is a helpful support to learning. Directions mostly given in English. Many English cognates introduced.
Speaking Skills	Grammar rules are relatively simple: no verb tenses or gender difference. Pronunciation and tones are practiced regularly.	Heavily emphasized, a willingness to talk is an asset. Spanish is generally easy to pronounce for English speakers.	Heavily emphasized, a willingness to talk is an asset. French has sounds that are not used in English, so the pronunciation presents a challenge.	Learning to read Latin aloud is easy because it is phonetic, and close to English pronunciation. Students learn some phrases and ask/answer simple questions in Latin.
Assessments	4 skills are assessed in situations that reflect “real life.”	4 skills are assessed in situations that reflect “real life.”	4 skills are assessed in situations that reflect “real life.”	Reading comprehension, vocabulary and grammatical relations are stressed.