

Did you know the critical period for children to acquire native-like language skills in more than one language ends around age 7? While learning a new language is often difficult for our mature adult brains, it's actually a piece of cake for children. Recent studies have emphasized the importance of exposing small children to new languages, which has led many parents to search for resources which will help develop their children's linguistic abilities.

Bilingual Readers (<http://www.bilingualreaders.com>), a brand new publishing company which provides bilingual resources for families and communities, was created in response to this need. "Growing up with more than one language can be an enriching experience for children, parents and teachers alike, and the great news is it can also be a lot of fun!", explain cofounders, Deanna Lyles and Íñigo Gil. "Our catalogue of English/Spanish bilingual books, games, music and activities is a constantly growing source of materials, which will help parents to reinforce their children's language skills and instill a love of reading in them from day one," they add.

But why exactly is reading so important for learning new languages? Written language often differs greatly from oral expression, so by reading aloud to your children you are also exposing them to new ways of combining words. Bilingual children whose parents or other caregivers read to them in more than one language have the added benefit of reinforcing phonemes, vocabulary and sentence structure from each individual language. If you still aren't convinced, decades of research have shown that shared parent-child reading helps develop skills such as hearing and distinguishing language patterns, rhythm and rhyme, labeling objects and much more. The more your child hears each language, the better developed the corresponding language centers of his bilingual brain will be.

Bilingual Readers' catalogue of bilingual books and games was specifically designed to provide the necessary resources for families who want to expose their children to new languages from an early age. This new publishing company will launch with two titles, Easy Alphabet/¡Abecedario fácil! and Two Little Libros: Sea Animals/Animales del mar y Jungle Animals/Animales de la selva, which are a great example of how families can use our products to stimulate their children's language development through reading and playing together. Although these first two products will be available in bookstores all over Spain as of October 20, 2009, Bilingual Readers has already been working for months to provide parents with the resources they need to raise bilingual children. Both their blog and monthly e-newsletter are a constant source of information, and you can also keep in touch with Bilingual Readers on Facebook and Twitter.

Bilingual Readers got its start when American/Spanish couple Deanna and Íñigo began doing extensive research on bilingual language acquisition, early children's literacy and multilingual parenting techniques in order to be as prepared as possible for raising their own bilingual children someday. Both were fascinated by the important role reading plays even in monolingual language development and could only conclude that reading was even more important for reinforcing language skills in bilingual children. So they set off to develop a set of products which would help the parents of bilingual children to develop and reinforce their children's language skills through reading, and Bilingual Readers was born!