



Colorado Science and Engineering Fair

2025 Individual Project Abstract Form

Please print 2 copies of the completed form. Sign both copies, keep 1 for your notebook and submit 1 copy to your Regional Fair Director with your other paperwork.

Title of Project: Breaking Barriers: Language Learning and Cultural Understanding

Finalist's Name: Samuel Maloney

School and City: Bayfield Middle School, Bayfield

Sponsor's Name: Kris McSweeney

Category: Behavioral & Social Sciences

Division: Junior (grades 6 - 8)

Abstract (250 words or less):

This experiment aimed to observe whether initial language proficiency dictated language progress. I used several resources to measure overall language progress in German, Spanish, and Greek. I used books, guided courses, and podcasts. I wrote essays, letters, and journal entries. I talked with ChatGPT and contacted native speakers to enhance my fluency. Each language got 25 days of active study; however, I also maintained the other 2 languages while actively studying the language of focus. Next, I assessed my skills according to language proficiency scales. When the data was ready, I used all of my scores, pre-, and post-experiment, to make graphs and accurately demonstrate data. The exact resources I have used for this experiment are as follows: Spanish: Language Transfer, Duolingo, Easy Spanish, The Easy Spanish Podcast. German: Tagesschau, Easy German, Unfassbar Podcast, Die Lösung - der Psychologie-Podcast, ChatGPT, Simplicissimus, Online News, Die Geheime-Benedict Gesellschaft. Greek: Language Transfer, Duolingo, Easy Greek, Super Easy Greek Podcast for Beginners. What has been discovered is that learners learning from scratch generally will progress slower; however, this is certainly not the case for the upper-beginner and intermediate levels. At this stage, a learner will typically be used to the language enough to learn words through context and progress at an insurmountable rate. At the upper-intermediate level, the learner will hit what is typically known as an "intermediate plateau": A feeling of not progressing when putting in a similar amount of effort.

I hereby certify that the above statements are correct and the information provided in the Abstract is the result of one year's research. I also attest that the above properly reflects my own work.

Finalist's Signature:

Date:

In addition, all students must complete the ISEF Student Checklist (1A), Research Plan, Approval Form (1B), and Checklist for Adult Sponsor (1), and any other ISEF forms required for this type of project. See the International Rules and Guidelines for form requirements. Return COPIES of all of these forms to your Regional Fair Director with you Finalist Verification/Permission Form. **A signed copy of this form must be included in your notebook.**