


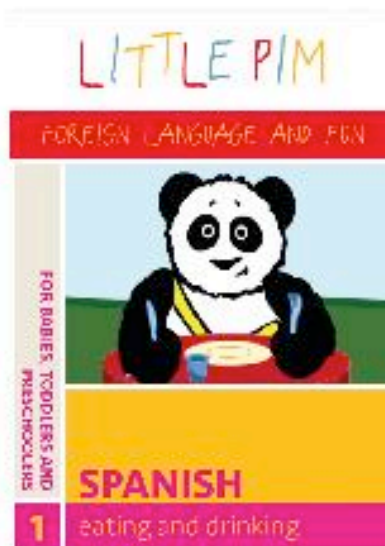
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## Little Pim Teaches Your Kids Foreign Languages!

- By [Jenny Williams](#) 
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The first DVD of the Spanish Little Pim set, from [LittlePim.com](http://LittlePim.com)

Ever since I started homeschooling my kids, I've been searching for a fun, age-appropriate Spanish program that doesn't cost a lot of money. I didn't start learning Spanish until the 5th grade, so I wasn't sure where to start with my primary aged kids. We've checked out books from the library, bought a couple of preschool Spanish workbooks and found a website or two that taught some things, but nothing really grabbed both of my kids. My daughter is naturally interested in everything, so she has been excited about learning another language from the start. My son, however, requires

more bells and whistles to inspire him, and nothing I had found so far had piqued his interest.

Thus, I was very excited to receive a review copy of [Little Pim: Fun With Languages](#), Spanish edition. My excitement was not short lived. My kids loved the videos. Little Pim is a foreign language program aimed at kids from birth through five years old and comes in many languages: Spanish, French, Chinese, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, English, Arabic, German and Russian. Despite being aimed at the preschool set, people of any age will gain something from watching the DVDs. It is great for anyone starting out with a language. While I'm not fluent in Spanish, I did take it for a few years in school, but I even learned quite a few new words from watching the videos, such as the Spanish words for pillow, crib and bunkbed.

On the main menu of each video, you have options for playing the video once, playing the video on repeat, turning English subtitles on/off and watching an interview with the founder, Julia Pimsleur Levine. If that name sounds familiar, it should. Levine is the daughter of Dr. Paul Pimsleur, creator of many popular [foreign language programs](#). The full set of Little Pim includes three DVDs, each dealing with a different subject: eating and drinking, waking up smiling and playtime. There is a small amount of overlap among the three, but not too much. You can also purchase the videos individually. Each DVD is about 35 minutes long, consisting of seven lessons of about five minutes each. Each DVD introduces 60 new words and phrases. There is also a parent's guide included with each video.

When watching the lessons themselves, they are all in the language you are studying, so it is a total immersion experience. There is a lot of word repetition and it also includes singular and plural forms for most words. Words are spoken and often written on the screen. Pronunciation is clear and done with a Latin American accent, not a Spanish one. This was helpful to me, as that was the version of Spanish I learned.

The videos are filled with babies and small children along with a parent interacting with each item or doing each action, and there is one special section on each DVD which includes dogs and cats. Each lesson ends with a review of many of the words you just learned. Your host throughout it all is Little Pim, a cute, funny and playful panda bear.

These videos include so many of the beginning words that I would have chosen to teach my kids first, including such words as spoon, knife and fork, as well as bread, butter and orange juice. It reminded me of my days back at [Spanish Camp](#), where you had to ask for everything at the dinner table in Spanish. Great fun! The words Little Pim teaches are very easy to work into your day, so it's easy to practice. For most of the words taught, it is pretty obvious what they mean, but we were unsure for a few of them. I hope to watch it once with the subtitles just to confirm my guesses.

Our own [Jonathan Liu](#) watched the Mandarin Chinese version of Little Pim. Here is his review:

I watched the Chinese (Mandarin) version of Little Pim with my kids (age three and six) and they both enjoyed it and laughed a lot at the cartoon panda. However, it's hard for me to tell how effective it is since I normally speak Chinese to them at home and the majority of the words in the video are ones they already know. For me, it works as a reinforcement and is something they can watch in Chinese instead of English, but I'd be interested to see how it would work for a child who has no experience with Chinese whatsoever.

The one thing that bothered me the most about the videos is something that I only [learned about recently from NurtureShock](#). They had a chapter about language acquisition, and mentioned a few factors that greatly enhance a child's ability to learn a new word, particularly for young kids who are in the verbal babbling stage. Among them are having the word spoken by multiple speakers, and being able to see the person saying the words. This, according to the authors, is why Baby Einstein videos don't seem to have a great effect on language acquisition. I know the little panda is cute, but its mouth movements certainly aren't accurate enough for these purposes, and Little Pim is the only one doing the verbalizing.

Still, it's better than not having anything at all. I think the reinforcement from the parents is very crucial to learning the language, though, and I'm not sure you can expect your kids to become fluent just from watching a few cartoons.

Little Pim has won ten awards including Creative Child, Mom's Best, iParenting Media award, Adding Wisdom and Mr. Dad. The 3 DVD set retails for \$49.95, but is [cheaper on Amazon](#). When you're done watching the videos, go to the [Little Pim website](#) to play games, read their blog or learn about their [special gift packs](#).

**Wired:** This series is cute, funny and my kids loved it. The teaching was sound, the meanings mostly clear. Small kids will want to watch it over and over.

**Tired:** You'll want to buy the next level of videos, but I don't think it exists yet!

<http://www.wired.com/geekdad/2010/01/little-pim-teaches-your-kids-foreign-languages/>