

DURATION	5 minutes — if it works well with your child, take as long as you want and repeat as often as you wish
AGE RECOMMENDATION	0–6; 6–10
KEY WORDS	speaking, playing, online
LANGUAGES OF THE ORIGINAL SOURCE	English. But this activity can be used in any language.
MATERIALS NEEDED	Skype or a similar VoIP programme, which allows online conversation (with video)
AIM OF THE ACTIVITY	<p>The main aim of this activity is to get in contact with speakers of the family language and to practise the use of the minority language. In some cases the parents or one parent are the only conversational partner for everyday conversations. It is motivating and instructive for the child to have other people to talk to – social media like e.g. Skype offers excellent opportunities for free to get in touch with other native speakers. Therefore this activity particular appeals to parents and children with no speakers of the minority language nearby.</p> <p>Tip To find native speakers outside of the family can be more interesting. A safe way to do this can be through epals.com. The parents register and then help the children find native speakers of the language they want.</p>
PREPARATION FOR THE ACTIVITY	All you need is a Skype connection and to make a “Skype appointment” with a date and time with speakers of the minority language (friends, family members – grownups and children). However, it is possible and makes fun to expand the conversation to include several common activities online. The activities might need some preparation. Here you can find two ideas (see “Procedure”), which can inspire you.
PROCEDURE	Invite playmates, cousins or friends speaking the minority language to a Skype-and-play-appointment. Once you make the appointment you can agree on the additional activity, ask your child what they are keen on, if they would like to show the Skype friend something - e.g. a toy or a drawing. Then you and the parent of the Skype friend can have the toy or craft supplies ready to hand. Drawing and other small artwork projects as well as playing with hand or finger puppets are very suitable activities for Skype-and-play-appointments. While drawing the children are chatting, showing each other their drawings, talking about colours and the drawn objects.
SIGNIFICANT BENEFIT OF THE ACTIVITY	A significant benefit of this activity is the opportunity to practice the minority language with people other than parents. Undertaking joint activities in addition to the Skype conversation brings a everyday life into the relationship, which in turn can cause a closer connection with people, whom the child meets only infrequently offline.
SOURCE OF THE ACTIVITY	<p>This activity was inspired by: Multilingualliving.com. Technology to Help Children Learn a New Language: 10 Minutes at a Time, Tip #5: Have breakfast with grandparents via Facetime or Skype, HTTP://WWW.MULTILINGUALLIVING.COM/2012/04/23/TECHNOLOGY-CHILDREN-LEARN-LANGUAGE-10-MINUTES-AT-TIME/</p> <p>Tip Find in the blog Multilingual living some more tips to support children learning another language via technology, 10 minutes at a time. ePals.com, Global Classroom, http://www.epals.com</p>