

# EPISODE 69 • LAUREN STENGELE

## Morning Time and the Bilingual Homeschool

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**WRITTEN BY: JEANETTE PASCUA**

### *About Lauren*

Lauren Stengele is a non native Spanish speaker, language teacher, and bilingual homeschooling mom who believes a second language is one of the greatest gifts you can give your child. Her journey has included starting a bilingual preschool, hosting weekly Spanish playdates in her home and transitioning a Montessori homeschool co-op into a dual language program. Lauren has created wonderful seasonal Morning Time plans and flashcards in Spanish as a resource for other families who want a simple way to bring Spanish into their homes. Speakers of any language can find homeschooling resources for bilingual families on her website at [bilingualtogether.com](http://bilingualtogether.com).



### *Key Ideas*

Lauren discusses how language is often part of the connection people feel to their heritage and culture. For some, regaining the language lost reconnects them to that.

Finding the ideal place for language instruction can be challenging. Lauren shares how Morning Time was the best way to include learning a second language in her home. It made it easier to create a space for bilingual education that wasn't overwhelming for her or the kids and helped to establish expectations that everyone felt comfortable with.

Learning a second language is ideally done in the younger years however, anyone can learn a second language. But, the most important aspects of learning a second language are frequent exposure to the language and a need to use it.

## Actions For You

1. Choose a poem, passage of scripture or piece to memorize together in the language of your choice. Add it to your Morning Time and learn it together. If you'd like something already done for you, download the Basket Bonus for this episode and get started.
2. If learning a second language is something that you'd like to do in your homeschool, take some time to evaluate your current situation and motivation. This will serve as encouragement as you find ways to support your goals of raising bilingual children.
  - a. What language would you like your children to learn?
  - b. Is there a personal connection to that language that is motivating you?
  - c. Do you know others who speak that language who could support you by speaking to your children in that language?
  - d. What is the best way to incorporate it into your current homeschool day? Morning Time? An enrichment class?
  - e. Can you think of any cultural practices or celebrations you'd like to do with your children that would deepen their connection with the language?
3. Head over to Lauren's website, [www.bilingualtogether.com](http://www.bilingualtogether.com) and sign up for her free set of Morning Time Plans in Spanish. Use the plans as written or choose something from the plans to use in your current Morning Time. If you are interested in learning a language other than Spanish, look at Lauren's Morning Time Plans for ideas on how to create your own.

### Time Stamps

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# TRANSCRIPT EPISODE 69

**Pam:**

This is Your Morning Basket where we help you bring truth, goodness and beauty to your homeschool day. Hi everyone and welcome to Episode 69 of the Your Morning Basket podcast. I'm Pam Barnhill your host and I am so happy that you are joining me here today. Well today's podcast is all about how you can use your Morning Time if you are wanting to educate your kids bilingually. My guest today is Lauren Stengele, and Lauren and I met a few years ago at the Great Homeschool Convention. She was there with her husband who was also working at the convention. We'll talk a little bit about that in the podcast so you can hear all about it.

And Lauren was telling me she wanted to educate her kids bilingually in her home. And as she learned more about Morning Time, she thought that would be a great way to do it. And she ran with it. Within a year, we met at the convention again, and she was showing me her bilingual Morning Time plans that she had made. So it was really exciting to see Lauren kind of take the idea of Morning Time and run with it to do the things that she was wanting to do in her homeschool. And so she's here now, today, to tell us all about it.

It's just a fun and fascinating conversation all about language acquisition, living out your heritage and so many more things. I think you're really going to enjoy it. Now, I forgot to mention in the podcast when I was interviewing Lauren and I did want you to know, in case you're really interested in this topic. Lauren is going to be at the Great Homeschool Convention in Ontario, California, this June, talking about this very thing. So if you're in the California area, be sure to check out [greathomeschoolconventions.com](http://greathomeschoolconventions.com) and get information about how to register for that conference June 18 through 20th, because you'll be able to see Lauren speaking there and I'll be speaking there as well. So with no further ado, we'll get on with this

episode of the podcast right after this word from our sponsor.

This episode of The Your Morning Basket podcast is brought to you by Your Morning Basket Plus, get the tools you need to put the joy back into your homeschool. If you have been wanting to do Morning Time in your homeschool but you're a little overwhelmed at the idea of which resources to use or which books should you choose, we have done all the hard work for you. Your Morning Basket Plus is how you can get more out of your Morning Time with less work for mom.

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Lauren Stengele is a non native Spanish speaker, language teacher, and bilingual homeschooling mom who believes a second language is one of the greatest gifts you can give your child. Her journey has included starting a bilingual preschool, hosting weekly Spanish playdates in her home and transitioning a Montessori homeschool co-op into a dual language program. Lauren has created wonderful seasonal Morning Time plans and flashcards in Spanish as a resource for other families who want a simple way to

bring Spanish into their homes. Speakers of any language can find homeschooling resources for bilingual families on her website at [bilingualtogether.com](http://bilingualtogether.com). Lauren, welcome to the podcast.

**Lauren:**

Thank you for having me.

**Pam:**

Well, it's so exciting to have you. You and I have known each other for a couple of years now. We met while I was on the road and you would visit.

**Lauren:**

Yes, indeed.

**Pam:**

Lauren's husband Joe works with Operation Christmas Child or he did for a while there and he was going in between Operation Christmas Child and the Great Homeschool Conventions, and so that was where I met the Stengele family.

**Lauren:**

Yes.

**Pam:**

And I got to know Lauren as well. So it's a lot of fun to have you on here after-

**Lauren:**

It is super fun.

**Pam:**

Yeah, spending time with you guys for the past couple of years. So tell me a little bit about you personally and your homeschool?

**Lauren:**

Yes, so we have been homeschooling since the beginning. I was actually homeschooled as well.

**Pam:**

Oh, cool.

**Lauren:**

As a kid, starting in middle school, middle school and high school. And so I've always known what homeschooling was and in the back of my mind, I always thought it was something I might like to do. And I think an interesting thing about me that you wouldn't know by looking at me because I'm very white, is that I am fourth generation Mexican American. So my great grandparents came from Mexico to California during the time of the Mexican Revolution. Both my grandparents were born in California and my mom was born in California. So Spanish is my grandparents' first language. Spanish was also my mom's first language. But my grandparents decided, when my mom was around four years old, that she was going to start kindergarten and they didn't want her to be discriminated against. And so they intentionally switched the home language to English. And then my mom started public school and her Spanish was lost.

So an interesting thing about me is just this whole thing of being a little kid growing up in Mexican culture, I was very connected to my Mexican grandparents. But I always felt like something was missing. And language was a big deal for me, even as a kid, I always wished that I was bilingual. And so I thought, "Well, I'm going to learn Spanish and then I'm going to raise my kids bilingual because that's what I wish that had been done for me." And then of course you have kids and you realize it's not as easy as you think.

**Pam:**

Isn't everything so much easier before you have kids?

**Lauren:**

Yes. Theory is wonderful, and then you put it to practice and you're like, "Oh, how does this work?"

**Pam:**

Okay, I'm going to stop you for just a second. So did you tell me before that your abuela spoke Spanish with you when you were a child? And she actually did

do that time or did she not? And did your mother ever regain or ever have an interest in regaining any of her Spanish? I'm going to pry.

**Lauren:**

No, do. My mom took Spanish in high school, so she did learn Spanish and now today she can speak Spanish all right. She's more timid to speak it, whereas I am not. So I will speak Spanish to anyone and make mistakes as long as I'm getting my point across. But no, my grandparents spoke Spanish to each other. My great grandmother, my grandmother who came from Mexico lived to be 103, so I knew her very well. And I knew her as a child and she did not speak English. And so as a little, little girl, I remember spending time with her, playing checkers with her, but not being able to communicate. And so Spanish was all around me, but I didn't understand it and no one was speaking directly to me in Spanish.

**Pam:**

Okay, okay, interesting. I just love that and we're about to dive off into what all this means and what you've created because of this, but I love that this comes from this desire for your heritage. That's really, really neat. Okay, so fast forward, we're going to pick back up this story again. Now you have these children and these great desire for them to be bilingual but you have these children. So you're a little busy.

**Lauren:**

Yes. So I mean, I started when my oldest was born and he's eight and a half now. And well, first of all, I intended to marry a Latino and then I fell in love with Joe who is German American Scotch Irish something, and so I was like, "Oh man, my plans to supplement my Spanish through my husband have failed me. I have fallen in love with Joe." And just for the record, he is my biggest cheerleader in all of this, so he is amazing. But I just felt the weight of like, "Oh, man, this is up to me."

**Pam:**

It's all on you.

**Lauren:**

Yeah, we started young, and young I mean when my kids were young, soon as they were born, I started speaking to them in Spanish. And it's weird to be honest, it's not my first language. I don't know how to talk to babies in Spanish. So I had to figure this out. And at the time, we were living in the city and I just sought out a Spanish speaking community, there was a Spanish immersion preschool co-op that we joined. And that was really the first impetus to make me feel like, "Oh my gosh, I can do this." And so that was going really well. And then we had four years there. And my oldest was completely bilingual, and then work took us to the East Coast and my husband's job moved us there. We were in a small rural town in the Appalachian Mountains. And all of a sudden our Spanish community was gone.

And so very soon, they say, if you want to raise a bilingual kid, you need to give them lots of exposure to the minority language, but they also need to feel the need to use it. And so all of a sudden, when we moved from the community, the need to use it was gone.

And anyways, my kids don't speak as well as I wish they would now, but they still understand everything. So anyways, all of that to say when we started looking at school options, there was this sense of like, "Well, I've kind of maybe always wanted to homeschool." But then when it's actually on the horizon, it's freaking you out. You're now like, "Can I even do this." And so there's a lot of reasons why we homeschool but for me, actually, Spanish was kind of like the thing that kicked me over the edge. And I was like, "I have worked too hard. I have put in too many hours for my kids to understand Spanish and speak Spanish to just put them in public school and say goodbye to all of it." I'm the only one that's speaking Spanish to them regularly and I do it during the day when my husband is at work. And so if they're going to be in public school all day, they're going to come home and we're going to speak English as a family. So Spanish was really like the big impetus for me, that was like, "I at least have to give it a try."

**Pam:**

Okay, cool. Well, let's talk about what this looks like in your day. And you started giving us little glimpses of the fact that you're speaking Spanish with your kids during the day while dad's at work, and then when dad's home, you kind of switch the family language to English. How do you incorporate the two languages into your homeschool day?

**Lauren:**

It was trial and error, that's what you call it. So in the beginning, I just thought, "Well, I'm going to present all the material in both languages, and my kids are going to love it. And it's going to be somehow fun." And then realizing number one, that is literally twice the work for everyone. And number two, my kids are very well aware that I'm asking them to do everything over and they didn't like it. They were getting frustrated, they were starting to resent Spanish. And I was like, "Oh, my gosh, this is not working." And so we just we tried a lot of different things. And I think what it came down to, to me, was just really looking at what I was able to do, because I am not a native speaker.

And so for example, history is too difficult for me to teach my kids in Spanish. There's just too many rare vocabulary words that I don't know, and I don't have time to learn all of it. And so, I've decided we use good book lists for history. And I read all the books in English. Math, on the other hand, I discovered that we can do entirely in Spanish, because I use a Montessori based curriculum and it's scripted. So it's very easy for me, it's in English, but it's very easy for me to see what I am supposed to say, and if there's something I don't know, I work ahead a little bit and I look up words and I write them above the English, so that as I'm presenting lessons to my kids, the vocabulary is there for me to grab from.

So history is only English, math is only Spanish, and then everything else is both. And so we do a lot of nature study and nature journaling, and we read books in both languages. Let's see, so that would be our science and then we read a lot of Spanish

literature, we read a lot of English literature. So, I mean, I don't know if you have a more specific question, but yeah, it's kind of mix and match. But that's how we've made it work.

**Pam:**

Okay, that is absolutely fascinating. And I have so much respect for you, as... And, well, here's the difference, I'm sitting here going, "Look at Lauren and everything she is doing, that is just absolutely amazing. She's not a native speaker, to help her kids, to help them be bilingual. So Pam, what's wrong with you?"

**Lauren:**

No, no, no, not at all.

**Pam:**

But it comes down to that desire. It really, really does. And you said earlier, I actually wrote it down, that in order to have kids who are bilingual, they actually have to feel the need to use that other language. And I mean, that's what it comes down to right there is you are feeling that need to connect with your heritage, and that's what's making it so important for you to put in the extra work to do it.

**Lauren:**

And also, this sounds really beautiful when I'm talking to you, but if you were to come to my house on any given morning, I mean, you would see our homeschool is just like anyone else. Yeah, there's a lot of Spanish involved, there's also a lot of tantrums and there's also, whatever. So, yeah, I don't want anyone to think that it's easy.

**Pam:**

That's perfectly normal, no matter what language.

**Lauren:**

Yes.

**Pam:**

So, yeah. Okay, well, not too long after I met you, you came up and started telling me about how you were

doing this and you thought Morning Time was a wonderful way to incorporate more of this or much of this bilingual instruction into your homeschool. So tell me about how you use Morning Time as a primary place for bilingual instruction?

**Lauren:**

Yes, 100% and actually meeting you and learning about Morning Time and then after the first time I met you, I just started reading everything because I just felt like, this is the key, this is the magic. This is how I'm going to make it happen. Because, like I told you before, I was trying to do everything in both languages, or I was just switching back and forth from English to Spanish willy nilly. And I wasn't really thinking about what I was requiring of my kids. They're listening in English and then all sudden, mom's talking Spanish and then English, Spanish, and they're like whiplashed.

And then I just heard this concept of Morning Time, and I mean, it was like a light bulb went on. I was like, "This is it." I think Morning Time is so conducive to creating a sacred space and to creating these rituals in your homeschool rhythms. And you can make it whatever you want it to be. And so for us, when I implemented Morning Time in our house, in our homeschool, I started in Spanish, and I did it in Spanish. And I was just like, "Hey, kids, this is what we're going to do. This is going to be our Spanish time. The end." And honestly, there was zero pushback, even from day one. Because I think my kids were relieved. They were like, "Finally, at least I know what to expect. Mom's not going to go crazy out of the blue starting to speak in Spanish." We start our day in Spanish. And the one caveat is that we do most of our read alouds during Morning Time, and so if a book is in English, I read it in English, but other than that, I speak Spanish. So, it's really, I mean, it was actually the thing that allowed me to feel like, "Man, I'm actually doing this." I'm actually homeschooling my kids bilingually because more than half our homeschool day, I'm speaking Spanish.

**Pam:**

Yeah, well, okay, so couple of things here. First of all, just this idea that we often talk about Morning Time, as a time to put all of those things that are so important to you that you feel like you can't get to in the rest of your homeschool day. And boy, is this a great example of that. You're like, "How can I fit this in? It's not working the way I'm trying to do it. Oh, I'll put it in Morning Time." I mean just such a great example of that kind of guiding principle behind Morning Time, put the thing that you're trying to get done, that you can't do anywhere else. And then I think the other thing is the things we do in Morning Time, are things that lend themselves well typically, to doing in another language so much. I mean, I do know families who do history and do history reading in Morning Time, but so much of what Morning Time is about, is about language anyway.

**Lauren:**

Exactly.

**Pam:**

I mean, for my family, it's about the English language a lot of times.

**"And then I just heard this concept of Morning Time, and I mean, it was like a light bulb went on. I was like, "This is it." I think Morning Time is so conducive to creating a sacred space and to creating these rituals in your homeschool rhythms. And you can make it whatever you want it to be... And so for us, when I implemented Morning Time in our house, in our homeschool, I started in Spanish"**

**Lauren:**

And relationship.

**Pam:**

Yeah, relationship and opportunities to talk to each other because everybody's sitting there. And then so much of Morning Time is about culture. So do you sometimes work Spanish culture, Hispanic or Latina, Latino culture? I'm probably choosing the exact wrong word for that.

**Lauren:**

No, you're fine.

**Pam:**

But... go ahead.

**Lauren:**

Yeah. Oh, no, I definitely do. And so even the Morning Time plans that I wrote, really have come out of what we've been doing in our own family Morning Time and so, really, there's a lot of memory work, that's poetry and it's not translated poetry. It's not like Robert Frost translated into Spanish it's the well known Spanish poets, kind of the canon of Spanish literature I'm pulling from those authors too. And I think that in itself, lends to infusing the culture because they talk about things differently and the way they look at the world is different. And so through memory work, you're getting a lot of that and then we do a lot of things with like Día de los Muertos, which is around Halloween, Day of the Dead, stuff like that. Three Kings Day is a holiday after Christmas that we don't really celebrate in the US but it's a big deal in Spanish Latin America, so things like that, that we do pull in.

**Pam:**

Right. Now, did you guys do Posadas at Christmas? Los Posadas?

**Lauren:**

No, we didn't. My family didn't. My mom always makes menudo over Christmas, which is this Mexican soup made with I think, well, it's cow stomach.

**Pam:**

You didn't do that Lauren?

**Lauren:**

No, we didn't do Posadas, but I do eat menudo. So, there.

**Pam:**

But do you cook it?

**Lauren:**

I can and I have and it's not as good as my mom's and every Christmas, I watch her and I help her, and then it's one of those things where you just feel like, "You know what? This is for Christmas. Maybe when my mom is no longer here, I'll take up the mantle."

**Pam:**

Yeah, yeah, I feel the same way about dressing at the Thanksgiving. It's like my mom makes it really, really good. There's no sense for me to mess with it. Okay, so we learned Sol, Solecito. I can't do the whole thing, it's still a work in progress for us, but it is in our regular memory work rotation.

**Lauren:**

Oh, that's awesome.

**Pam:**

And we are still working on it. And actually, my co-op is doing... Okay, so for those of you who don't know, this was from Lauren's summer set of bilingual Morning Time plans that she had sent me and it's a little nursery rhyme in Spanish. It's a very popular Spanish nursery rhyme, we were able to find it on YouTube. And I took it to my co-op, because we're studying world cultures this year in co-op, and we kind of went around, for example, right now we're learning Waltzing Matilda from Australia. But for our South American, Spanish Central American memory work, we did "Sol, Solecito" and-

**Lauren:**

That is so cool.

**Pam:**

Yeah. But it's funny because you're talking about the culture and everything. My kids are like, "What is... " We translated it, and my kids are like, "What is this crazy stuff about? This is the weirdest thing ever." I'll link to the little...

**Lauren:**

Yeah, I mean, I can say it, but...

**Pam:**

It's like a cow. It's the little cow and Pinocchio did something.

**Lauren:**

In English, it's, "son, little son, warm me up, for today, for tomorrow, for the whole week long. Moon little moon, ringing a little bell, five little chicks and one baby calf, snail snail at one o'clock the sun comes out and then Pinocchio plays a drum with a fork and a spoon."

**Pam:**

Yeah. And so my kids were like-

**Lauren:**

That's the English translation.

**Pam:**

"This is so strange." And I'm like, "Hello. Hey, diddle, diddle."

**Lauren:**

Yes. Exactly.

**Pam:**

This is like the pot calling the kettle black to say this is strange, but it was funny to kind of see that the Spanish nursery rhyme, because basically that's what it is, it's a little nursery rhyme, the similarities between that once I pointed that out, they're like, "Oh, wow, that is so wild that it does have those similarities," and I-

**Lauren:**

"The dish ran away with the spoon."

**Pam:**

Exactly, exactly. So we've had fun with that one. We really enjoyed that. Well, let's talk a little bit more about the plans that you created. If we have some moms out there, maybe they have their own heritage that they would like to connect with. And so they would be interested in your Morning Time plans. And bringing some of these bilingual opportunities into their home school. Tell us a little bit about the plans and how you set them up.

**Lauren:**

Yeah, definitely. I think you could use them for learning Spanish if you were very motivated, but I did not write them for families who want to learn Spanish. I wrote them for families who speak Spanish or whose kids have at least a familiarity with the language, but they are wanting to promote more Spanish in their homeschool, and so each of my plans... I think another important thing to say is we're a Christian family, we incorporate Bible and prayer into our Morning Time, but I wanted the plans to be more accessible to more families, so they are faith neutral. I think Latin America is a Catholic. Most of the countries, Catholicism is a big deal.

And so I'm not saying there's no faith going on because that's part of the culture. But anyways, each plan has a book list. And I really tried to curate really, really good stories, I think that's important. But also stories that are translated from a different language, as well as authentic stories, stories that are written by Spanish speaking authors. So I think having a mix of those is important.

And then I incorporate music in all of my plans and memory work, the poetry that we talked about, and also vocabulary for the different seasons. And even then just kind of high frequency words that you're going to be hearing all summertime, or you're going to be hearing all fall and those, I created flashcards to go with those. So that's part of the plan for anybody

who would be interested in using that. And then there's always activities, like nature activities or craft activities, and with the intention that the more Spanish you can use throughout these activities, just the more exposure your kids are getting in that quality face to face time in the minority language, which is Spanish in this case.

**Pam:**

Right. Right. And so yeah, that's one of the things that I thought was really cool about the plans because you are making it for moms who either speak the language themselves, or like you, they're trying to recover that language, and they have that motivation to do so for themselves. And so as they're doing the nature study, and as they're doing the craft, the plan is not written for them to do it in English and just have a few of those Spanish words with the kids, it's written so you're actually doing that in the Spanish and getting more opportunities to use those words with your kids. So...

**Lauren:**

And really, this is the part that's hard about anything you're doing. Like homeschooling in two languages, I mean, I think my passion behind starting my website and starting all of this stuff was that it was difficult to find resources. And it was difficult to find anybody to help me out. And so even these plans, I thought, "Man, I put a lot of time into finding stuff for my own family, that worked for my kids, that was beautiful language and filled with vocabulary." And so I really want other people to be able to access the information without having to go spend hours looking for it.

**Pam:**

Yeah, yeah. So such a great resource and easy to use too. So...

**Lauren:**

That is the hope.

**Pam:**

Really good. Okay, so let's talk about is there an ideal age or grade level where kids more easily learn a second language?

**Lauren:**

Yes, there is. I'm kind of a nerd, and I like to read and read and read on all of this stuff. So I'm going to tell you the answer, but I don't want it to discourage anyone.

So the ideal age range is from the womb, can start

learning language in the womb, until about five years old. That is when a kid is going to learn any language that they are exposed to, and need to use. So again, that exposure plus need will produce proficiency in a language. That said, you can learn a language at any time in your life. And it's not like after five years old, there's this steep drop. It's like after five years old, there's a gentle curve until about 14, 15, 16 years old, there's another drop. And then it just kind of goes slowly downhill from there.

**Pam:**

Downhill from there, so everything about getting older.

**Lauren:**

Yes, but the first drop is after five years old. And then the next kind of steep drop is after puberty which, oddly enough, is when we usually start to teach language.

**Pam:**

Start. Yeah.

**Lauren:**

... in the US.

**Pam:**

Yeah. Well, whoever said the US education system was based on research.

**Lauren:**

Yes.

**"Exposure, plus need will produce proficiency in a language."**

**Pam:**

Yeah, don't write letters folks. Okay. But yeah, that is really interesting. And that's one of the wonderful things I love about homeschooling is that we have the time and the opportunity a lot of times to do more language instruction when our kids are in elementary school. So you guys, what about now? Do your kids get a chance to speak that Spanish with other people other than you? And then how do you help them if they're... You mentioned that your mom's a little hesitant because she's afraid of making mistakes, whereas you're not. And that's something you've told me before and I really admire about you, is that you just kind of jump in there and try to say what you want to say no matter what. So how do you-

**Lauren:**

I have no scruples.

**Pam:**

You do have scruples, you're just really brave about the speaking the other language thing. How do you help your kids past that?

**Lauren:**

So that's been the most difficult thing for me, is creating the need for my kids to speak Spanish and that's kind of why I have my hands in all these things, starting a preschool. The reason I started a bilingual preschool is because when we moved to our rural town, one didn't exist. And I was having a hard time finding people in this town that spoke Spanish, and that my son, especially my oldest, who was four at the time, would feel the need to use his Spanish with. And so we started this bilingual preschool and then he met buddies that spoke only Spanish and so his Spanish, he was using it again.

And then after they were too old for that we started having friends in our house once a week to have a Spanish only play time. And so a lot of this journey, for me, has been trying to create situations in which my kids need to use their Spanish. We just moved again, for work and now we're in Colorado. And so again,

I'm trying to find the community and the people and where can I go to find people that at least my kids don't know speak English, so that they feel like they have to use their Spanish. So actually, this week, I'm just going to start online tutoring with a lady in Colombia. And so we're going to try that and see how that goes, and see if that creates a need for my kids to use their Spanish because, yeah, I cannot create that need for them. I mean, I speak English. It's my first language and they know that so. Right. Yeah.

**Pam:**

They know that if they switch to English, you're going to understand.

**Lauren:**

Exactly. Yes.

**Pam:**

Yeah, yeah. So it sounds like you've spent a lot of your time, it probably almost as big of an obstacle to helping your kids learn a second language is not just looking at vocabulary and using it yourself, but creating that need for them. It certainly goes hand in hand, but it sounds like it's almost just as difficult to do that as it is to learn 20 or 30 vocabulary words and how to use them in your Morning Time.

**Lauren:**

Yeah, for me that has been more difficult, is finding people that they need to speak with. And we have moved a lot, so I think it would be different if you were in one place and you could really make one or two relationships is all it takes.

**Pam:**

Yeah. Well, but I'll tell you, Lauren, I mean, as somebody who has been in the same place since my kids were very little, people move in and move out, and relationships morph and change.

**Lauren:**

That's true.

**Pam:**

Things don't stay the same. So yeah, it's going to be a challenge for anybody. Well, what encouragement do you have for moms who are thinking about teaching a second language in their homeschool for whatever reason?

**Lauren:**

I mean, first of all, the thing that I would encourage moms, especially if you don't speak a second language and you're wanting to learn one with your kids, is just to do it. I mean do it, even the name bilingual together, [bilingualtogether.com](http://bilingualtogether.com) is this idea that my Spanish isn't perfect. I make mistakes all the time. I'm learning together with my kids. And so I think the important thing is to find a program that works for your family that you all enjoy, and to keep it fun and to keep it light hearted and to show your kids you're working hard too.

You're trying words and you're willing to say these funny sounding sentences until it becomes more normal and more fun. And so I think, I read recently a quote that says, the only way to fail at raising a bilingual child is to give up entirely. And it was really encouraging and it was just like,

"Man, any Spanish is better than no Spanish." And that goes for my kids. It goes for your kids, for anybody's kids. And so my encouragement would be, find a program that works and stick to it.

And language learning is chipped away slowly over time. And so if you keep at it, you're going to be surprised in a couple years, there's going to be 500 words that you and your kids know. Something like

**"Language learning is chipped away slowly over time. So, if you keep at it, you're going to be surprised in a couple years."**

that. So that would be my first encouragement would be, man just do it. And I think if there are people listening, who are native speakers of another language or have a high proficiency in the language and they're like, "Man, I think I could. I think I could teach my kids German." Or, "I think I could teach my kids Japanese because they have a high proficiency." My encouragement would be to start now. Start as soon as you can. If your kids are little, just read them books, read, read, read, and then start researching language development.

There's so much information out there. It's super fun and interesting to me. But it's also super helpful, and even just follow people online on social media that are doing it, that are raising bilingual kids, that are homeschooling bilingually, there is a community there and you'll get a lot of ideas and so yeah, that's even... My heart with my website is just a resource for people who are homeschooling in two languages and just to give people ideas, where do you find resources? Who else is doing this? There's stuff that I've learned that I would have never thought to ask like, embassies. The Mexican Embassy provides its entire elementary school curriculum for free online.

**Pam:**

Oh, wow.

**Lauren:**

So if your language is Dutch, or Polish, where you can't easily get resources in the US, have you thought to call your embassy and see if their elementary curriculum is available somehow to you? Stuff like that, that I've learned on this journey that I just want other people to know. So...

**Pam:**

Yeah. Oh, and that's such good advice, because I would have never even considered that there's... It is simply because there's not been anything that's in my wheelhouse, but there is a community of people homeschooling bilingual online. And so it's like, "Wow," it's like, "Yeah, there's probably Instagram

hashtags you could follow and groups on Facebook and all these resources."

**Lauren:**

Yes, there are.

**Pam:**

So if it's something you have even a small interest in, you're definitely going to be able to connect with other people like you. It's the beauty of the internet. And we're going to point you towards [bilingualtogether.com](http://bilingualtogether.com) as well. But you can go over and check out all of the resources that Lauren has over there, not just for people who would like to use Spanish in their home and have kids who are bilingual in English and Spanish, but also there are tips there for whatever language, so yeah. Well, Lauren, thank you so much. I know you have [bilingualtogether.com](http://bilingualtogether.com), is there anywhere else that people can find you online you'd like us to point them to.

**Lauren:**

Yeah, on Instagram, I am [@bilingualtogether](https://www.instagram.com/bilingualtogether), and also on Facebook [@bilingualtogether](https://www.facebook.com/bilingualtogether). So those are my two places online other than the website where I show up regularly.

**Pam:**

Awesome. Well, thank you so much for joining me.

**Lauren:**

Thank you for having me.

**Pam:**

And there you have it. Now if you would like links to any of the resources that Lauren and I chatted about today, you can find them on the show notes for this episode of the podcast. Those are at [pambarnhill.com/ymb69](http://pambarnhill.com/ymb69). And you're going to want to go check out those show notes because we have a brand new expanded bonus downloads for each episode of the podcast. Now we're going backwards. We're going all the way back to the very beginning of the podcast and we are working our way forwards with these bonus downloads, so you'll be able to go and

get the downloads for every episode. Eventually, this does take a little bit of time, but from all episodes going forward, we definitely have the bonus downloads for you and they are so much fun.

In there, we have full transcripts of the podcast, we have a bio of our guests. We also have timestamps for each episode of the podcast. So if you're looking to listen to just particular parts or you want to find your favorite part again, we've pulled out words of wisdom. And we also have some questions for thinking about and also some action items for you to get the most you can out of each episode of the podcast. These are so much fun to get together and we hope that you enjoy them.

Also, some of these bonus download packets include what we call a Basket Bonus. This is something that you can use in your own Morning Time. And so what Lauren has done for this particular episode is put together a piece of Spanish memory work that you can use in your Morning Time. So we have a cute little printable, you print it out as part of the downloads, and then you could stick it in your memory work binder and learn a little bit of Spanish in your Morning Time as well. So be sure to go check that out, [pambarnhill.com/ymb69](http://pambarnhill.com/ymb69). I will be back again in a couple of weeks with another great episode of the podcast, another great interview. Until then, keep seeking truth, goodness and beauty in your homeschool day.

# BASKET BONUS:



*Padre nuestro que estás en los cielos, santificado sea tu nombre.*

*Venga tu reino. Hágase tu voluntad, como en el cielo, así también en la tierra.*

*El pan nuestro de cada día, dánoslo hoy.*

*Y perdónanos nuestras deudas, como también nosotros perdonamos a nuestros deudores.*

*Y no nos metas en tentación, mas líbranos del mal;*

*porque tuyo es el reino, y el poder, y la gloria, por todos los siglos.*

*Amén.*

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*Just a few notes Lauren shared about the translation:*

*FYI this version is taken from the Reina Valera 1960 translation of the Bible which is the Spanish equivalent of the King James Version. I've chosen it over the Nueva Versión Internacional (New International equivalent), because it is more common in Latin America to have memorized this version as a kid. People can find the NVI (NIV) translation in Matt 6:9-13 if they want a more modern version. I included the KJV below, and each line in Spanish corresponds to the line in English just so you know what you're reading. :)*