



SUCCESS STORIES

DAVID & JILL JESSETT



We often talk about our young stars at the VICI Language Academy, however we truly do help people of all ages to learn a language and when it comes to VICI stalwarts Jill and David Jessett, they are learning three languages between them and are familiar and friendly faces at the Academy – here they explain how it all started and why they have stayed.



David Jessett revealed: "We have been with VICI for over five years now – it was five years in the March and I learn Spanish and French and Jill does German and French; we had both done German before and Jill wanted to touch it up and ensure it was up to standard. My German is passable, but I speak gutter German, as they say!

"We are both retired and we are partly doing this to keep our brains active we also find it great fun to be honest, the way it is taught there is amazing."

"I try to do three hours a week on the French and an hour and a half on the Spanish when I am around, but we do travel and we get to practice. We do get to France a lot, Spain too and to Germany quite a lot too; we have German friends who do not drive so I sometimes drive them to Germany and we will speak German on the journey."

Jill Jessett reveals how it all started: "We are very active in the Twin Town Association in Newbury, David was chairman for a number of years and our French twin town Bagnols-sur-Cèze is in the South and not many from there speak English, so we wanted to learn and it was just as Nathalie Danon-Kerr was setting up VICI and she had a stall in the Market Place with leaflets and an offer on.

"Nathalie came to see us and was so full of enthusiasm and we were signed up for three years from the very start and within a few months we had our three-year-old granddaughter signed up too.

"So it is five years now, starting on the basic course and by the end of the three years together with others we didn't want to stop so they created a course around the 'Bien Dire' French magazine, which is great and not sure what we'll do when we get to the end of that because we just want to keep going. It is a great social thing and we've made many good friends. I also feel that if we stopped speaking French we would just lose it!

"It sometimes feels like we live at VICI! We are either going to French or I am going to German and David to Spanish, or taking our granddaughter. When we started it was four days a week and now we are there three! We love it though and get so much from going along.

"Right from when we started it has been fun. It is not like being at school and I've tried evening classes at college to learn and that is just like school. At VICI you learn a lot through playing games, especially when you start, and that might sound childish, but it really is an easy way to learn the language by playing board games – it is almost as if you learn by osmosis and you certainly don't realise how much you are learning.

"Our class is great fun and we've all become friends and meet for coffee before the class and you never ever think: 'Oh no, I don't want to go to French today.' – That has never ever gone through our minds.

"I took up German as I felt the French was pushing the German out of my head and having lived in Germany I am quite proud of knowing the language and didn't want to end up speaking my own unique language of Frerman or Gench!

"I talk to a lot of people about VICI and I say 'do it', you can at least try it out and see if you like it and find out how much fun learning languages is.

"David and I both feel, as we are both in our late 60s, and both our mothers had Alzheimers and we want to stave it off by using our brain cells to learn languages.

"I have started to realise just how useless the French I learned at school was and quite a few of our friends and people in our class have children reaching GCSE age and with the parents learning they realise how much they are not taught at school.

"If you work out the cost hour for hour it is no more expensive than college and it is all year around instead of just term time. You get far more for your money when you go to VICI and it is fun!"



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