

LEARNING A LANGUAGE

COMPREHENSION CHECKS

A creature which has some experience with a language, but is not fluent in the language, can make an Intelligence check to attempt to understand what is written or being said in a language that it only partially understands.

SPOKEN COMPREHENSION DIFFICULTY

DC Description

- 5 The conversation is deliberately careful and slow.
- 10 Normal conversation.
- 15 Fast, accented, or obscure conversation.
- 20 Ancient dialects or multiple simultaneous speakers.

WRITTEN COMPREHENSION DIFFICULTY

DC Description

- 5 Clear and common runes for short messages.
- 10 Normal writing.
- 15 Sloppy, error-prone, or obscure writing.
- 20 Ancient dialects, rare, or complex writing.

LANGUAGE FLUENCY

Instead of simply being fluent in a language or not being fluent, proficiency in language is split into 6 levels as shown on the graph below ([ref](#)).

LANGUAGE FLUENCY

Fluency Description	Comprehension Checks
0 Language not known.	Cannot make checks.
1 Novice speaker.	-15 Penalty
2 Limited speaker.	-10 Penalty
3 Familiar speaker.	-5 Penalty
4 Experienced speaker.	No Penalty.
5 Fluent speaker.	Automatically succeed.

TRAINING A LANGUAGE

Over the course of several weeks of focused lessons or continual exposure, such as living in a settlement where this is the dominant language, a character may begin to partially understand a language.

Gaining 1 fluency level in an unknown language takes a number of weeks equal to the level gained.

Having explicit language lessons from a tutor as well as common exposure allows you to reduce the time taken to gain a fluency level by half. To learn an exotic language takes twice the normal amount of time as a standard language.

OPTIONAL: ILLITERACY AND ILLINGUANCY

If you wish to allow characters to be able to read/write a language without being able to understand it or vice versa, then divide the total time required to gain a fluency level in half for only learning to read/write or speak it.

DENOTING FLUENCY:

An elf with limited understanding of draconic and gnomish could denote their language proficiencies with the following notation:

Common, Elvish, Draconic (3), Gnomish (2)