

Grades 1, 2, and 3 Spanish Curriculum

The purpose of the Spanish program for grades 1-3 is to introduce students to the basics of the Spanish language and to build a vocabulary base. Lessons are primarily thematic. Vocabulary is combined with gestures as much as possible to provide physical and visual cues as to the meaning of the words, and also as a segue into the Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS) method that is utilized in the upper grades. Songs, props and visual aids also are used as much as possible to reinforce vocabulary. Repetition and review are essential in the first three years to build a solid vocabulary base before beginning TPRS. Spanish classes for grades 1-3 meet once a week (30 minutes) for two terms of the academic year.

Thematic units cover:

- Greetings and Salutations
- Feelings
- Counting 1-100
- Days of the Week
- Months, Date and Seasons
- Alphabet
- Colors
- Body Parts
- Family Members
- Weather
- Shapes, Sizes
- Christmas, Mexican "Las Posadas"*
- Food
- Animals
- Classroom Objects
- School Materials
- Community Places
- Community Workers
- Rooms in House & Furniture
- Setting the Table
- Breakfast
- Lunch and Dinner
- Basic Math
- Time
- School Subjects

*Only if first half of year.

On a weekly basis, students will:

- Greet teacher in Spanish
- Gesture how they are feeling that day when asked in Spanish
- Gesture and answer the question, "What's the weather like today?"
- Count up to 100
- Sing the days of the week
- Recite the months of the year
- Say and read the date
- Recite the Spanish alphabet
- Be introduced to the new thematic unit for that week
- Receive a take-home vocabulary sheet with new words and English translations

Over the course of the first three years of Spanish, students will:

- Be exposed to the sound, syntax, and spelling of the Spanish language
 - Become familiar with and be able to reproduce basic Spanish vocabulary
 - Be introduced to basic principles of Spanish grammar through natural acquisition and simple explanations
 - Be encouraged to answer, gesture or recite vocabulary in unison
 - Be called on to answer questions individually only if they volunteer (i.e., no individual child required to reproduce the language if they choose not to; this lowers the effective filter)
 - Be challenged to use vocabulary at a higher level in each subsequent grade (e.g., incorporate simple math concepts when reviewing numbers with the older students; ask older students to write the Spanish words)
 - Recognize basic questions in Spanish without teacher having to translate into English
 - Be given a few simple homework projects to reinforce vocabulary
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- Learn some interesting facts and differences about the Spanish language and Spanish and Latin American culture
 - See that learning a foreign language can be easy and fun!

Grades 4 and 5 Spanish Curriculum:

The purpose of the Spanish program for grades 4 and 5 is to have students continue to build upon the vocabulary base they learned in grades 1-3 and to introduce them to Total Physical Response Storytelling (TPRS). We begin with ten TPR vocabulary lists, each one consisting of approximately 10-12 frequently used Spanish words on it. (TPR stands for Total Physical Response. These are high-frequency words that tend to be more easily “gesturable”). Students will be encouraged to gesture these in class in different sequence, and then to write funny combinations of the vocabulary that they will act out in class. Once the TPR phase is complete, we segue into TPRS. Again, new vocabulary is introduced with a gesture or mnemonic device but now we just focus on a few new words or phrases rather than a list of 10 -12. Again, these will be high-frequency structures that are most common in the Spanish language. Then the teacher either narrates a short story or encourages the students to create a skit that incorporates the new vocabulary. (Pre-written stories may be from the ¡Cuéntame! or Look, I Can Talk! series, written by developers of the TPRS method.) While the teacher narrates or students create the stories, student volunteers act them out, using props and gestures. Incorporating the vocabulary into stories provides context, which encourages natural acquisition of the language. The teacher asks students simple questions about the story in Spanish. (Students are taught Spanish interrogatives, and an interrogative “poster” is visible throughout the lesson). Students are encouraged to answer in unison. Otherwise the teacher will only call on individuals to answer questions or to act out stories if they raise their hands to volunteer. This lowers the effective filter (i.e., reduces shy students’ stress level thus encourages natural acquisition.) The teacher can assess students’ understanding of the story by their ability to correctly act out what she is narrating and by their answers to her questions. The questions also allow repetition of the vocabulary which will aid in long-term acquisition of the words. Printouts of the vocabulary and stories will be given to students to reinforce spelling and reading in Spanish. Storytelling makes the lessons fun and holds students’ interest longer than the traditional grammatical textbook approach. Spanish classes for grades 4 and 5 meet once a week (40 minutes) all year long.

In Grades 4 and 5, students will:

- Continue to expand their vocabulary base
- Continue to be exposed to the sound and syntax of the Spanish language
- Demonstrate comprehension by acting out or reacting to classmates acting out stories while the teacher narrates them in Spanish

- Learn Spanish interrogatives, “Who, What, Where, Why, When, How many, Which” and be able to answer simple questions about the stories we’ve acted out in class (referring to “Interrogatives” poster when necessary)
- Be introduced to written stories to reinforce pronunciation of Spanish consonants and vowels as well as spelling of vocabulary
- Begin learning third person singular conjugation of present tense Spanish verbs
- Continue to be exposed to basic principles of Spanish grammar through natural acquisition and simple explanations
- Be given a few simple homework projects to reinforce vocabulary
- Learn some interesting facts and differences about the Spanish language and Spanish and Latin American culture
- Continue to see that learning a foreign language can be easy and fun!