

AP SPANISH LANGUAGE

Course Overview

AP Spanish Language is an intensive and rigorous course conducted entirely in Spanish. Students are expected to use the target language consistently with teachers and peers in class. Students should be able to use the AP Spanish Language course to demonstrate a high level of proficiency in the following:

- Understand formal and informal conversations, lectures of different degrees of sophistication, oral presentations, newspapers, letters, informal e-mails, instructions, Internet articles, and short stories.
- Express themselves orally by convincing, arguing, inquiring, and describing.
- Express themselves well in a variety of styles, using different strategies for different audiences.

Course Outline

To teach the AP Spanish Language Course, our school uses the textbooks *Abriendo Paso: Gramática* (Pearson Prentice Hall ©2007) and *Abriendo Paso: Lectura* (Pearson Prentice Hall ©2007) as the core materials. I also use as a supplementary resource *AP Spanish: Preparing for the Language Examination* (Pearson Prentice Hall ©2007).

Abriendo Paso: Gramática provides students with a very thorough grammar review and practice. I offer brief clarifications and explanations in class when discussing homework, and students complete most activities at home. The tests that accompany each chapter of the textbook are given as in-class assessments. While a strong command of grammar is essential for communicative functions, we use class time for students to interact with each other and with authentic materials.

Abriendo Paso: Lectura provides a variety of literary works with integrated activities for improving all four area skills. The text encourages students to relate the readings to personal experiences and to elaborate on their interpretations of the readings through oral and written activities, both formal and informal. The text also provides comprehensive listening activities, free response activities and multiple-choice activities to enhance the four skills areas and build vocabulary.

AP Spanish: Preparing for the Language Examination provides students with extensive vocabulary building and grammatical reinforcements, along with a wide selection of materials taken from authentic resources, presented in the same format as the AP Spanish Language Exam. I use the essay topics provided in *AP Spanish: Preparing for the Language Examination* in order to allow students constant interaction in the classroom, providing language building and oral and written usage opportunities. Students practice formal and informal language both in speaking and writing.

First Semester

3 week units consist of:	<i>Abriendo Paso Gramática</i>	<i>Abriendo Paso Lectura</i>
Unidad 1	La narración y la descripción	Chapters 1-3
Unidad 2	La descripción de nuestros alrededores: diferencias y semejanzas	Chapters 4-6
Unidad 3	La narración y la descripción en el presente	Chapters 7-9
Unidad 4	Como expresar deseos y obligaciones	Chapters 10-12
Unidad 5	La narración y la descripción en el futuro: Como expresar emoción, duda, negación, probabilidad o conjetura	Chapters 13-15
SEMESTER EXAM	Mock AP Spanish Language Exam	Mock AP Spanish Language Exam

Second Semester

3 week units consists of:	<i>Abriendo Paso Gramática</i>	<i>Abriendo Paso Lectura</i>
Unidad 6	La narración y la descripción en el pasado	Chapters 16-18
Pasos 1-4	Los sustantivos, los artículos y los pronombres	Chapters 19-21
Pasos 5-7	Los interrogativos, los números y palabras negativas	Chapters 22-24
Pasos 8-10	Los verbos como gustar , los adverbios y por/para	Chapters 25-27
May 2011	AP SPANISH LANGUAGE EXAM	AP SPANISH LANGUAGE EXAM
May through June 2011	Service Learning Project	Service Learning Project

Sample Classroom Activities

Listening Skills

- I select an authentic audio source and give students the theme. (e.g., important holidays, Copa Mundial, telecommunications).
- At the beginning of the year, I allow the students to listen more than once to an auditory stimulus, and may even provide a written script for longer pieces in order

- to enhance students' comprehension. Later in the year, the audio prompt is not replayed, nor are students provided with printed text.
- The goal is always to listen for information and details. Students are asked to take notes, and can be asked to outline that information, complete grids, or use graphic organizers, learning to extract details and main ideas.
 - After listening, students work in pairs to share what they believe is the overarching theme, and they are required to provide two or three specific details from the audio source that support their answer.
 - Later, students apply this strategy individually when using audio sources as input for both the integrated Formal Writing and Formal Oral Presentation sections of the AP Exam.

Sources for authentic listening activities:

- Radio Naciones Unidas www.un.org/radio/es/
- BBC www.bbcmundo.com
- Nuevos Horizontes www.nuevoshorizontes.org/
- CNN en español www.cnn.com/espanol/

Reading Skills

Reading selections from *Abriendo Paso Lectura* provide a wide range of genres, themes, styles, and difficulty levels. The extensive activities develop language proficiency in all four skills. Students begin to develop a familiarity with literary analysis vocabulary, to compare and contrast overarching themes, and to write critically about literature—beyond a plot summary.

This preview of AP Spanish Literature serves several purposes: Students will gain confidence in their ability to engage in the next level of study, they learn vocabulary and other linguistic features through reading and class discussions, and they continue to improve their writing skills by writing essays comparing the works of each author after reading.

Additionally, students use authentic reading sources and engage in synthesis activities such as reading, summarizing, sharing aloud with the group, etc.

Sources for authentic reading texts:

- La Nación www.nacion.com/
- Thepaperboy.com www.thepaperboy.com
- Prensaescrita.com www.prensaescrita.com/
- El Mundo www.elmundo.es/
- BBC www.bbcmundo.com

Writing Skills

Before students enter the class in the fall, they are given summer writing assignments which are due the first day of school in September. Students are given a PRETEST to assess their ability before textbooks are issued. During the first semester we practice using written sources (see the list of authentic reading texts); students are asked to identify and paraphrase the details in writing in their own words. In groups students talk and compare summaries to assess their comprehension of the text. As students work toward preparing an essay after each unit, their ability to synthesize the audio and written input sources improves.

Students practice with one Informal Writing prompt on a frequent basis to improve accent usage, spelling, and proof-reading skills.

Speaking Skills

In order to provide an opportunity for students to integrate their skills and to practice leading formal presentations, students will present projects to the rest of the class. At the beginning of the year, I provide a sample list of topics to do research on such as current social topics, Hispanic authors, cultural topics from a target country, etc. Students will schedule dates during the academic year to make their presentations. Students are required to provide one printed text (Internet, newspaper, magazine, etc) and one visual or audio stimulus related to the topic (photo, graph, PowerPoint, etc.) Students are expected to use good formal spoken Spanish to complete the project. The culmination of the formal presentation is a structured small group activity to synthesize the information presented and to ensure full participation and comprehension by all students.

Teaching Strategies

All formal and informal class communications take place completely in Spanish, in order to build students' speaking and listening abilities.

I take advantage of technology. We use the Internet as a source of current topics, research, and presentation (both teacher and student) through PowerPoint, publishing software, and multimedia. Our school does not have a language lab, but we will make use of the computer lab for research, preparing for project presentations, or occasional in-class writing assessments.

Student Evaluation

Exams generally contain a variety of components and formats, mostly focusing on grammar and writing. Practice AP assessments contain both free response and multiple choice questions about readings, presentations, and language use. Multiple choice sections usually are analytical-type questions, and integrated free-response questions require making comparisons, or synthesizing information for writing and speaking tasks.

Speaking is usually done as a separate evaluation with a rubric. Formal writing is scored using both content and language rubrics. There is ongoing assessment through spontaneous interviews, interactive reading, in-class informal writing, formal writing, and oral presentations.

Grading Policies

Semester 1

- 60% Exams, projects and compositions
 - Exams generally include matching or multiple choice sections, fill-in-the-blank sections and short answer or essay sections.
 - Projects may include group presentations, research, class discussions and more.
 - Most compositions are modeled on the format used in the AP exam. However, some creative writing compositions are assigned as well.
- 20% Journal writing and class participation
 - Students are asked to write each semester for their journal in both traditional and on-line (message forum) formats. This includes AP style essays and free choice pages.
 - Students grade their own participation using a rubric.
- 20% Semester final
 - The semester 1 final is modeled on the AP Spanish Language exam format.

Semester 2

Everybody gets an A. At the start of semester 2, students will write me a letter, post-dated to the last day of school, explaining what they did to earn an A in Spanish. This will include completing all coursework. A comprehensive portfolio provides evidence of their achievement of the goals and becomes the basis for the grade although exams, compositions and projects still form the basis for the course. Those students failing to meet the requirements for this program will consult with the teacher to determine a reasonable grading procedure, likely the same as semester 1.

Resources

Díaz, José M., María F., and Collins, Stephen J. *Abriendo Paso: Gramática* (and ancillaries). Boston, Massachusetts: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007.

Díaz, José M., Leicher-Prieto, Margarita, and Nissenberg, Gilda. *AP Spanish: Preparing for the Language Examination*, Third Edition (and ancillaries). Boston, Massachusetts: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007.

Díaz, José M., María F., and Collins, Stephen J. *Abriendo Paso: Lectura* (and ancillaries). Boston, Massachusetts: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007.