

Spanish 1-A (Grades 6, 7 and 8)
2011-2012

Instructor- Janice Moore
918-481-1111 ext 205
jmoore@hollandhall.org

Course Description

This is a beginning level course open to all 6th, 7th and 8th grade students who have had limited or no exposure to Spanish. It is the first in a series of seven Holland Hall Spanish courses in grades six through twelve. Students learn basic vocabulary regarding greetings, time, parts of the body, school, the calendar, weather, likes and dislikes, leisure activities, personality traits, location, food, places outside school, family, parties and celebrations, and restaurants. The core grammar concepts are infinitives, negatives, interrogatives, articles, adjective endings, subject pronouns, present tense verb conjugations and possessive adjectives. Facts regarding Hispanic traditions and customs, current events, history, art and geography are often integrated into lessons. A group of exchange students from Mexico attend Holland Hall (including Spanish classes) for two months in the fall semester. This first hand experience with the language and culture of Mexico greatly enhances the learning process both in and outside Spanish class.

Learning Objectives and Benchmarks

Spanish 1-A students develop strong language recognition skills without resorting to English translation. They actively listen to spoken Spanish and discover the meanings of new words by direct association with visual clues and gestures. They read short Spanish dialogues and letters focusing on familiar Spanish words and English cognates to discover main ideas. Students understand much more Spanish than they can produce in speech and writing at this stage. They develop language production skills gradually. They react to simple Spanish statements or questions in short phrases with near-native pronunciation. They write core vocabulary expressions following Spanish spelling rules. Students also apply core grammar concepts accurately in controlled oral and written exercises.

Preparation for Class / Course Materials

The *Realidades 1* textbook, Practice Workbook and Writing, Audio, & Video Workbook are the students' books. The *Realidades 1* textbook is used for communicative activities during class and as a reference for assignments and study. We use the Writing, Audio & Video Workbook mainly for video and audio exercises during class, so we store those books in the room. Students write very little during class. They get most of their writing practice with daily assignments in the Practice Workbook.

Methods of Instruction

At the start of each unit, the teacher focuses on language recognition. Students need to discover and internalize new language before later producing it in speech or writing. The teacher introduces new words and patterns using only Spanish in a logical context with gestures, pictures, role-play and props. Students discover the meanings of key new words and grammatical patterns by matching what they hear to what they see and experience. Research shows that students are more likely to retain the language when they are guided to make sense of what they hear and read as opposed to just memorizing lists and rules presented by a

teacher. Students do not see new vocabulary and grammar in written form until they have become comfortable with the spoken words (usually by the third day).

Each lesson is divided into various mini-lessons targeting different learning styles and the four language areas (listening, reading, speaking and writing). Students listen to native speakers on CD's or DVD's almost daily. They respond to teacher statements and questions in unison, and they engage in small group communicative tasks to practice vocabulary and grammar patterns. Although listening and speaking are highly emphasized at this level, some mini-lessons involve reading and writing.

Assessment

Students are evaluated in various ways involving the four language-learning skills; speaking, reading, listening and writing. They also earn a weekly grade based on attentiveness and daily preparation (homework completion). They take three or four major tests each trimester. Unit tests assess all four language areas. 8th grade students take an Upper School Spanish Proficiency Test in May to help with placement in 9th grade Spanish.

Projected Course Schedule

Spanish 1-A has six major units; Let's Begin, My Friends and I, School, Food, Free Time and Family. Each unit last between five and six weeks.