

Spanish 1 Course Outline

REAL LIFE LANGUAGE

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Course Overview

Spanish 1 introduces students to foundational vocabulary, basic grammar structures, and essential communication skills in the target language. Emphasis is placed on developing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills through engaging thematic units rooted in real-world contexts and cultural exploration. This course supports novice-low to novice-mid learners and aligns with ACTFL Can-Do Statements.

Beginning Level Language Classroom

A beginning level language classroom should be completely immersive. In an immersive classroom some amazing things happen:

The language used is in context, and is communicative.

Students are exposed to lots of comprehensible input.

Visuals around the room and gestures from the teacher aid in understanding.

Students feel comfortable taking risks, and it's very fun.

These essentials are all non-negotiables for a proficiency oriented classroom, and this is what we would like to share with you today.

I'm so happy that we've made this shift. For me, this is how I saw what was expected in my classroom in the past when I first started teaching compared to what we do now. I think we've come a long way.

Stephen Krashen's research has made a great contribution to language teachers. There're many things that he discusses in his five theories. They have a lot to do with our personalities. For example, monitor hypothesis. A lot of that is how extroverted, and how willing we are to take risks, and we know people like that tend to be very successful language learners. We can, however, encourage that in our classroom with the environment that we make.

Natural order: we all acquire language regardless of the language in a similar order. We start with knowing nothing to developing into more polished and refined extended utterances. The two to focus on in the context of this course are Krashen's theories of Acquisition and Learning. Acquisition is all of those natural things that we do to learn languages. Think about listening to songs, watching movies, watching plays, listening to conversations, being read to. Those are all those natural immersive opportunities we have to acquire language.

Learning is the deliberate act that we assign and do to learn languages. For example, learning the different parts of speech, or learning spelling are experiences that many people have had. The activities in this course on these materials are very

much geared more towards acquisition. However, deliberate activities to learn, and an understanding that to master a language, and to do so quickly both of these things need to be at play, have immersive time in acquiring language as well as deliberate activities for intentional learning.

A few notes:

1. There are 8 units and a review unit. These can be used as a framework for a standalone course or adapted to your existing materials/text. Use what works and set the rest aside. You likely won't use all of the activities, especially if you have a textbook. Alternatively, you may find that these units are stretching well beyond 10 lessons if you are also following a textbook. These are designed to be student-friendly, communicative and immersive lessons that are flexible.

1. As a rule of thumb, you can do less content in a block schedule but with more depth. I might even say $\frac{2}{3}$ of the content can be done on the block than can be done in a traditional schedule. With that said, exploration of a topic can be much more thorough.

1. Your schedule will affect your routines, of course. Apart from your daily routines, do you have other routines? Read on Mondays (Lectura lunes)? Music on Tuesdays and Wednesdays (Música...)? Games on Thursdays (Juegos de jueves) or Videos on Fridays (Vídeos de viernes)?.

2. Beginners need more frequent changes in activities. They simply can't do much, or anything at all. They need input, activities to lower their affective filter and low-risk opportunities to get talking. The investment early on will help them become independent more quickly and you can provide more engaging student-centered lessons.

3. After the first couple of months of investing in them getting a lot of input, lowering their affect and getting them talking, you'll have space to give them longer, more independent activities. Students will be able to produce something in Spanish

4. How will you end your class? It will likely be different every day.

5. Do the calendar daily. Your investment will serve as great student-centered lessons and can even be sub plans later on.

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