



¡Bienvenidos a la Clase de Español!

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Exploring Spanish

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Exploratory Spanish Syllabus 2021 - 2022

Course Description:

Exploratory Spanish is a semester-long course designed for middle school students to explore the Spanish language and its culture. It allows students to perform the most basic functions of the language and to become familiar with some elements of its culture. The emphasis is placed on the development of the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), focusing primarily on listening and reading. The focus is designed to give students a positive Spanish language experience that will enhance their secondary school language learning and put them on the path to fluency.

Methodology

Exploratory Spanish uses Comprehensible Input (CI) as its organizing principle. CI looks very different from traditional World Language education: there are no textbooks or grammar drills, and vocabulary is limited in scope. Instead, the focus is on understanding and crafting meaning to the best of students' abilities. The scope and sequence of the year are aligned with North Carolina World Language Essential Standards, and will integrate with student interests as the class develops group narratives and explores topics organically. CI is based on decades of academic research, and is geared towards learning how to speak and understand a language in brain-friendly terms, instead of learning the mechanics of a language.

Because CI is centered on input, class time is vitally important. As such, students will be assessed weekly according to the Interpersonal Communication Skills Rubric, which outlines the behaviors and dispositions that allow students to acquire language in the classroom setting. Should students perform below expectations in this domain, parents should expect contact from the instructor.

Grading System:

C.C. Griffin Middle STEM uses a grading system known as "Standards-Based Grading" (SBG). This system is considered "the gold standard" in language teaching for several reasons:

- 1.) It clearly explains exactly what students are expected to know and be able to do at the very beginning of a unit.
- 2.) Students are graded solely on their ability to meet the standards for the unit. This prevents grades from being diluted by other assignments that might not accurately reflect language ability.
- 3.) Students are encouraged to track and reflect on their own learning towards meeting the targeted standards.
- 4.) Students may retake standards assessments to demonstrate mastery.

At the beginning of each unit, the instructor will clearly explain the standards for the upcoming unit. These are the abilities that you will need to master in order to pass the unit. For example, if the unit standard is, "Student can describe

their daily class schedule,” you will need to demonstrate (either by speaking or in writing) that you can effectively communicate your class routine in order to pass that standard for the unit. We will continue to have quizzes and other assignments as necessary to advance your progress towards meeting the standards, and those quizzes and assignments WILL go into the gradebook so that you and your parents can monitor your progress. However, they won’t affect your grade in the class. Only assignments evaluating your mastery of the standards will contribute towards your grade for the class.

To summarize:

- Standards Assessments: 70% of final grade
- Classroom Interpersonal Communication: 30% of final grade (see [Interpersonal Communication Skills Rubric](#))
- Formative Assessments: 0% (for progress tracking)
- Homework: 0% (for progress tracking)

***Absentee Make-up Work: Students have three school days to make up missed assignments. Please review the policy for make-up work in the student handbook.**

In addition, as part of SBG, we will be assigning grades on a 0-4 scale. Each number represents the following:

- 0: The student did not attempt to meet the standard. No product/performance submitted. (Equivalent to 40%)
- 1: The student demonstrates effort to meet the standard, but is unable to complete the task. Would not be understood by a sympathetic native speaker. Very few native-like sounds. Very little knowledge of vocabulary or structures demonstrated. (Equivalent to 50%)
- 2: The student demonstrates partial mastery of the standard. Can be partially understood (with some difficulty) by a native speaker, with few native-like sounds. Partially completes the task, and provides some required information. Narrow range of vocabulary and structures demonstrated. (Equivalent to 70%)
- 3: The student demonstrates mastery of the standard. Can be understood by a sympathetic native speaker, with some native-like sounds. Successfully completes the task and gives all required information. Adequate breadth of vocabulary and structures for communication. (Equivalent to 90%)
- 4: The student demonstrates clear mastery of the standard and exceeds expectations. Easily understood by a sympathetic native speaker with many native-like sounds. Gives more information than required. Wide breadth of vocabulary and structures demonstrated. (Equivalent to 100%)

In classrooms where SBG has been implemented, student averages are usually higher than in traditional classrooms, students are more engaged in the class, and students and teachers feel that grades more accurately reflect their progress in the course. Of course, if you have any questions at any time about our grading system, please don’t hesitate to contact your instructor.

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In-Person Suggested Materials:

3 ring binder, paper, writing utensils, earbuds

*If you are in need of school supplies, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Rules:

1. Listen with the intent to understand.
2. Take turns talking and listening.
3. Support the flow of language and make constructive contributions.
4. Store cell phones away, out of sight, unless instructed otherwise.

Consequences:

1. Warning (nonverbal or verbal)
2. Teacher-Student Conference
3. Parent Contact
4. Referral to Administration

Rewards:

1. Daily praise
2. Listen to music while working
3. Games

Electronic Devices

Electronic Devices should not be visible. Electronics will be permitted at times with teacher approval. Your teacher will let you know if you may use it for an activity. Any student who does not store their device may be subject to a discipline referral.

*Please review the Consequences for Electronic Devices section in the student handbook.

Canvas

Canvas will be used to access lessons and upload assignments.

Help

Students who may be struggling will receive individual or small-group intervention during class time.

