

SPANISH INSTRUCTION IN THE MILTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Grade 5



OVERVIEW

The Elementary Spanish Programⁱ started in Milton more than 20 years ago as an increasing body of research was documenting the undeniable advantage of learning a second language at an early age. The American Council of the Teaching of Foreign Languagesⁱⁱ offers a clear summary of the latest research on foreign language acquisition. Such an education:

1. Has a powerful effect on children's mental development and cognitive skills
2. Supports academic achievement in other disciplinesⁱⁱⁱ
3. Develops near native pronunciation and intonation as well as communicative skills
4. Improves students' understanding of their own native language
5. Gives students an advantage in language requirements for college
6. Positively affects students' attitudes and beliefs about other cultures and other people
7. Increases job opportunities in numerous careers and fields

Why Spanish?

- Spanish is the third most spoken language in the world, after Mandarin Chinese and English
- There is a large population of native Spanish-speakers in the USA
- Spanish is an official language of the United Nations, the European Union and other international organizations
- Because of its Latin roots, Spanish is one of the easiest languages for English speakers to learn^{iv}

Spanish Instruction at the Middle School: beginning with a head start!

Students who have completed all five years at the elementary level are placed in Spanish 1-B in Middle School. Thanks to the Elementary Spanish Program, students are able to complete the equivalent of two years of High School Spanish at the Middle School.

Spanish students entering Middle School may also choose Latin as their language. The language that is chosen in grade six will remain the same through eighth grade.

Spanish at the High School

Students who complete three years of Spanish in Middle School will have completed the equivalent of two years of High School Spanish and will generally enter Spanish 3. All students may also elect to take a second foreign language during all four years at the High School. Students who began studying Spanish in the elementary schools may also be placed in year two of a second foreign language. Students who are motivated and who have studied one foreign language for a number of years are generally able to successfully transfer their linguistic skills to the study of another language^v

*Take the Parent Foreign Language True or False Test!**

1. **Developmentally, twelve and thirteen-year-olds are capable of learning a foreign language faster and more thoroughly than five and six year olds.**

Answer: **False.** While older children learn vocabulary and conjugation faster, this does not mean they make the leap to fluency. Students who begin foreign language study in elementary or pre-school eventually achieve a higher level of fluency.

2. **Children in foreign language classes in grades 1-3 don't learn grammar.**

Answer: **False.** When children learn songs chants and puppet dialogues they are internalizing grammar rules, the same way infants do when learning songs and phrases in their first language.

3. **My daughter can't say much in the foreign language she is studying so she probably hasn't learned much.**

Answer: **False.** As with infants learning their first language, children learning a second language often comprehend much more than they can actually say.

4. **The first time a child might be introduced to conversion of grams to ounces or Fahrenheit to centigrade measurements is in a third or fourth grade math lesson.**

Answer: **False.** Sometimes the foreign language teacher gets there first!

5. **Achieving proficiency in a foreign language costs more per pupil if you begin instruction in the elementary, instead of beginning in middle or high school.**

Answer: **False.** Elementary foreign language study prepares students to achieve fluency, and they often become fluent with further study or travel abroad. Students who begin a foreign language in high school have more difficulty becoming fluent and require a bigger investment in the long run to achieve the same level.

6. **Studies have shown that there is a positive connection between bilingualism and cognitive functions in aging.**

Answer: **True.** See American Psychological Association article at http://www.apa.org/releases/bilingual_aging.html.

7. **Children who are learning to read in English will be confused if they are also being taught to read in another language.**

Answer: **False.** See articles from Center of Applied Linguistics <http://www.cal.org/resources/digest/raisebilingchild.html>
See also from The Cornell Language Acquisition Lab: <http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/may09/bilingual.kids.sl.html>
and from The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages: <http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3651>
and <http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3653>



*From the Viva El Espanol website: <http://www.vivaelespanol.org/truefalse.php>

Spanish Grade Five Curriculum



The curriculum for the Elementary Spanish Program is based on the guidelines of the Milton Public School Curriculum, the Curriculum Frameworks of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the National Standards for Foreign Languages. The goal of the Grade Five curriculum is to prepare students for intensive Spanish language courses at the Middle and High School levels. This course includes rigorous study of oral and written Spanish, grammar, Hispanic cultures and dialects through interdisciplinary curriculum connections and performance tasks. The teaching of Spanish at the elementary level is content-based and interdisciplinary. Five Grade students will use increasingly complex Spanish vocabulary and grammar structures while developing communicative skills and acquiring knowledge in Math, Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Art, and Music.

The class meets on a weekly basis for 90 minutes. Typical activities include practice and exercises designed to build listening, speaking, reading and writing skills and to increase knowledge and systematic application of grammar and spelling rules, proficiency-based communicative oral and written activities, linguistic analysis and comparisons, cultural studies, weekly homework assignments, and grammar and vocabulary tests and quizzes. Grades are based upon class participation and benchmark assessments.

Expectations

In Fifth Grade, communicative competency in speaking, listening, reading, writing, and cultural awareness are developed systematically through a wide range of learning activities and advanced vocabulary units.

By the end of their fifth year in the Elementary Spanish Program, Students should be able to demonstrate mastery of communicative skills and knowledge of linguistic and cultural materials presented in the first three chapters of the *Ven Conmigo, Adelante*, Spanish 1A textbook:

Capítulo Preliminar ¡Adelante! (Preliminary Chapter)

- Geography of Spanish-speaking world
- Greetings and basic conversation
- Spanish accents and punctuation
- Alphabet, cognates and useful phrases
- General vocabulary review: colors, calendar, numbers, clothing, etc.
- Culture: Spain, Spanish language in the world

Capítulo 1 ¡Mucho Gusto!

- Greetings and introductions
- Basic conversation: name, age, origin, likes and dislikes
- Pronouns *tu*, *yo*, *el* and *ella*
- Conjugation of *Ser* (to be)
- Asking questions
- Nouns and definite articles
- Vocabulary: numbers, sports, classes and school, musical genres, and food
- Culture: Spain (cont.), first and last name in Spanish, Saint's days, greeting, handwriting in Hispanic countries, food in Spain, origin

Capítulo 2 ¡Organízate!

- Expressing what one needs or wants /what one needs or wants to do
- Describing one's room
- Gender and number of indefinite articles
- Noun Plurals
- Subject pronouns (cont.)
- Plural of *mucho* and *¿cuánto*
- Infinitives
- Vocabulary: numbers (cont.), school supplies, room description, activities
- Culture: Spain (cont.), extended family, school uniforms, apartments in Spain, sharing TV set, *los saludos*, exclamations, needs for college

Capítulo 3; Nuevas classes, nuevos amigos!

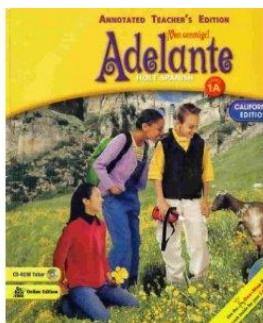
- Talking about classes and schedules
- Describing people and things
- Talking about what one's likes and explaining why
- Definite articles (cont.)
- Telling time with *Ser* – describing things and people with *Ser*
- Expressing being on time, late and in a hurry
- Preposition *de*
- Adjectives agreements
- Tag questions
- Vocabulary: school subjects, time expressions, adjectives to describe people and things, activities
- Culture: Mexico, classes schedules and grades in Spanish-speaking countries, the siesta, titles of respect, a typical school day

	Cross Curriculum Connections
Preliminary Chapter	Social Studies: analyzing maps, reading a legend, Mexican American War, colonialism, explorers, contributions by famous Latinos throughout history Mathematics: math facts Language Arts: nonfiction reading comprehension
Chapter 1	Social Studies: population, government, industries, languages, and map of Spain, map skills Mathematics: analyzing pie chart of Spanish speaking populations in the US Language Arts: identifying cognates and false cognates, reading comprehension strategies
Chapter 2	Social Studies: cultural greetings Mathematics: counting euros and bolívares venezolanos, problem solving using math computations Language Arts: writing a detailed composition, subject verb agreement, using scanning as a reading strategy
Chapter 3	Social Studies: using a time zone map Mathematics: calculating elapsed time, using a 24 hour clock Language Arts: using schema as a reading strategy, organizing writing using a cluster diagram, identifying and using sequencing words in writing

Materials

¡Ven Conmigo! Adelante (Spanish Level 1A)

The *¡Ven Conmigo!* Program (Holt Spanish) prepares students for more rigorous language studies and provides a seamless transition from the Elementary Spanish Program to the Pierce Middle School and Milton High School Spanish programs. It includes a textbook, a grammar and vocabulary workbook, a reading and writing workbook a communication workbook (listening and speaking Audio CDs and activities), an assessment program, an interactive video program, and online activities components (www.hrw.com, and go.hrw.com).



Frequently Asked Questions



How can I help my child at home?

- Talk about what your child is learning in Spanish class in order to review the vocabulary at home
- Look over work that your child has brought home
- Have your child teach the family what he or she has learned each week
- Encourage your child to read books that highlight Spanish speaking cultures
- Start your dinner table conversation with *¿Cómo estás?*
- Check out the Spanish section of your local library or bookstore
- See if an older sibling, neighbor, or babysitter has studied Spanish and wants to practice with your child
- Watch your child's favorite DVD and select the Spanish language track
- Listen to a Spanish radio station in the car and see if either of you can identify phrases or words that you recognize
- Make computer time about learning with links to Spanish learning activities (see list of sites below)



How much Spanish is spoken during class?

From first grade, classroom instruction is in Spanish unless safety concerns require the teacher to speak English. Students have several opportunities during each class to participate in Spanish, demonstrate understanding and develop communicative skills in a low stress and lively environment.



Is my child prepared for language study at the middle school?

The Spanish teachers communicate with the sixth grade Spanish teachers in order to determine language placements for incoming sixth graders and to ensure readiness. The fifth grade Spanish curriculum bridges into the middle school Spanish program. Fifth grade Spanish students learn essential study and organizational skills needed to succeed in a middle school level language course.

Useful Websites

www.hrw.com, and go.hrw.com (Text book related activities)

<http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3651> (Benefits of language learning)

<http://www.quia.com/shared/spanish> (a compilation of games and activities posted by language teachers ; encourage your child to click on links that lead to content learned in Elementary Spanish to provide review and practice)

<http://www.uni.edu/becker/Spanish3.html> (provides multiple links to varied Spanish practice websites)

<http://www.ielanguages.com/spanish1.html> (provides pronunciation and listening practice)

ⁱ Spanish FLES: Foreign Languages in the Elementary Schools

ⁱⁱ ACTFL : <http://www.actfl.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=3653#FLES>. See also: CAL Center for Applied Linguistic at <http://www.cal.org/topics/fl/>, Nanduti at http://www.cal.org/earlylang/benefits/benefits_of_being_bilingual.html and Viva El Espanol at <http://www.vivaelespanol.org/why-spanish.php> (Viva EL Espanol books are currently used in Grades 1-4).

ⁱⁱⁱ There is documented positive correlation between Math and Verbal SAT scores and the study of foreign languages.

^{iv} See more details at <http://www.vivaelespanol.org/why-spanish.php> (Viva El Espanol books are currently used in the Milton FLES program).

^v For specific questions or concerns, see Dr. Fisher, Director of World Languages at mfisher@miltonps.org – tel: 617 696-4077, ext. 5532.