

GRADE 5 SPANISH

First edition

5 units

10 lessons • one quarter

A video for every lesson

FIRST EDITION

COURSE GUIDE

This short course is a first real look inside the Spanish language for a fifth grader: not just word lists, but how the language actually works. Each lesson is built around a real person, place or object: the Roman aqueduct that still stands a hundred feet over the streets of Segovia, a waterseller painted by young Velázquez in Seville, the windmills Don Quixote mistook for giants, the bear-and-honey title page of the first whole Bible printed in Spanish, the mission bells of the Camino Real, and the Plaza Mayor of Madrid on a market morning.

Every lesson follows the same path. First comes **the story**. Then **how Spanish works**: the endings, the patterns and the rules the story opens up, explained for a fifth grader. Then **say it out loud**, because Spanish is learned by speaking, reciting and reading aloud. Last, **try it**: the student makes flashcards, sorts nouns into el and la, spins a homemade verb wheel, labels the house in Spanish, builds questions from cards on the table, and finishes the quarter by reading a whole Spanish story and hosting a family fiesta.

By the end of the quarter the student can pronounce any Spanish word from its spelling, put el or la in front of a noun and turn one into many, chant the present tense of hablar and the verb ser, make adjectives agree (el gato negro, la casa blanca), ask and answer polite questions, and translate simple sentences both ways. Spanish is the most spoken daughter of Latin, the mother tongue of about five hundred million people and the second language of the United States; and for a student who has met our [Latin courses](#), it is full of old friends: agua is aqua, estrella is stella, luna is still luna. This course is where a student stops looking at Spanish from the outside and walks in.

Most videos come from trusted teaching channels: Señor Jordan (a Spanish teacher's classic whiteboard lessons, the workhorse of this course), Butterfly Spanish (Ana, a friendly native speaker from Mexico), Why Not Spanish?, Easy Spanish (gentle street interviews

with subtitles), Spanish Playground (stories for children), The Language Tutor, Langfocus, Excelsior Classes (a Christian online class provider) and a few others. Every video was checked for the lesson and for content. A few are made for a slightly older audience; the lesson notes say so. You will hear small differences between speakers: in most of Spain, z and soft c sound like the th in think, while in Latin America they sound like s. Both are correct; this course teaches the Latin American sounds, which is what your student will hear most in North America. Some channels end with an invitation to subscribe; you can stop the video when the teaching ends.

Start with Lesson 1.1 →

WHO IT IS FOR

Written for students in grade 5 (about ages 10–11) who read independently. No earlier Spanish is needed: the course begins with the sounds of the letters and builds from there, though a student who knows some Spanish or Latin words from earlier grades will feel at home. A parent or teacher reads along, joins the speaking practice and checks the practice sentences. Nothing needs to be bought: every activity uses paper, index cards, sticky notes, pencil, crayons and household things.

HOW TO USE THIS COURSE

1. **The weekly rhythm.** The quarter has 10 lessons, one a week, each with three sessions of 30–40 minutes. Session 1 is the warm-up, the video, the teaching and the picture study. Session 2 is the activity and the Spanish notebook. Session 3 is the worked examples, the practice sentences and a recitation: the student says the week's Spanish out loud to the family. In the second week of each unit, use part of Session 3 for the unit review and the unit challenge.
2. **Say it every day.** Spanish endings are learned the way multiplication tables are: out loud, in rhythm, a few minutes a day. From Unit 3 on, open every session by chanting the verb columns learned so far (hablo, hablas, habla, hablamos, hablan; soy, eres, es, somos, son). Five minutes of cheerful chanting beats an hour of silent staring.
3. **Story, then grammar, then doing.** The core ideas are written to be read aloud or read by the student. The paragraph marked *The story* tells what happened; *How*

Spanish works explains the grammar; *Say it out loud* gives the sounds and chants; *Try it* explains the activity. After each paragraph, ask the student to tell it back in his or her own words.

4. **Flashcards and the word wall.** Every lesson adds new Spanish words. Make a flashcard for each one (Spanish on the front, English on the back) and keep the growing deck in a box or on a ring. From Unit 2 on, write every noun with its *el* or *la*: the little word is part of the word. Review the whole deck at the start of Session 2 and Session 3: a word the student gets right three times in a row can move to a weekly pile. By the end of the quarter the deck holds 67 words.
5. **The word list.** The whole course teaches 67 words, in this order. Unit 1, first words with Latin inside: *agua, tierra, estrella, luna, sol, familia, casa, amigo*. Unit 2, nouns with their hats: *el libro, la mesa, la puerta, el perro, el gato, el niño, la niña, el pan, la escuela, la iglesia*; then *la leche, la flor, el día, la noche, la madre, el padre*. Unit 3, verbs and adjectives: *hablar, cantar, caminar, trabajar, mirar, escuchar, estudiar, amar*; the whole chant of *ser*; and the adjectives *grande, pequeño, bueno, malo, blanco, negro, rojo, azul*. Unit 4, describing and asking: *nuevo, viejo, alto, bonito; hola, adiós, buenos días, gracias, por favor, sí, no, señor, señora*; and the question words *qué, quién, dónde, cómo*. Unit 5, market words: *el mercado, la plaza, la fruta, la naranja, la manzana, el dinero, la calle, la ciudad, el español*. This list is the flashcard deck; a student who owns these 67 cards has the course's vocabulary.
6. **The Spanish notebook.** Use any notebook for the whole quarter. It holds the vocabulary lists, the sound rules, the *el/la* charts, the verb columns, the translated sentences and the final story. Date every page. Neat charts matter: a student who can find his own *hablar* chart from week 5 in week 9 has learned how to study.
7. **Translation is a two-way street.** From Unit 3 on, the practice has both directions: Spanish into English and English into Spanish. Going into Spanish is harder and matters more; let the student use the notebook charts freely. The answer is right when the endings agree, not just the words.
8. **Write it the Spanish way.** From the first week, questions get both their marks (*¿Cómo estás?*), exclamations get both (*¡Hola!*), and accent marks are part of the spelling: *día, adiós, está*. Writing *ñ* is easy: write *n*, then give it its hat.
9. **Unit review and unit challenge.** Each unit ends with a short review (30 points), which may be done orally, and a unit challenge: a cognate tree poster, labeling the

whole house, an illuminated verse, a family question game, and at last a market morning run in Spanish. Keep the challenge work in a folder.

10. **The family fiesta.** In the last week, the student hosts a short family fiesta: he or she reads the plaza story aloud in Spanish and English, teaches the family three phrases, serves bread and fruit like a little mercado, and unveils a hand-lettered Bienvenidos sign for the front door.

SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

UNIT 1 • WEEKS 1–2

Latin's Living Daughter

How the Latin of Roman soldiers and farmers, spoken under the aqueduct of Segovia, slowly became Spanish, the mother tongue of about five hundred million people; the five pure vowels and the letters that surprise English speakers (ñ, ll, rr, the silent h); and the hundreds of Spanish words the student already half-knows through English, with a cognate tree grown from agua, estrella and familia.

- 1.1 The Language the Roads Kept Speaking
- 1.2 You Already Speak Spanish: Cognates

UNIT 2 • WEEKS 3–4

Nouns Wear Hats: El and La

Velázquez's waterseller opens the great secret of Spanish nouns: every one is el or la, and the -o and -a endings usually tell you which; then Murillo's grape-eating street boys turn one into many, with plurals in -s and -es, los and las, un and una, and a few famous rule-breakers like el día.

- 2.1 The Waterseller's Words: El and La
- 2.2 One Grape, Many Grapes: Plurals

UNIT 3 • WEEKS 5–6

Verbs Do the Work

Don Quixote charges the windmills and the present tense of -ar verbs charges with him: one verb, five endings, no pronouns needed; then the brave scholars of the Bear Bible open the verb to be (soy, eres, es, somos, son) and sentences like Dios es amor and la casa es grande.

3.1 Don Quixote Rides: Hablo, Hablas, Habla

3.2 The Bear Bible: Soy, Eres, Es

UNIT 4 • WEEKS 7–8

Building Real Sentences

The mission bells of the Camino Real ring in the rule that adjectives follow their nouns and agree with them, el gato negro, la casa blanca, and the student discovers how many American places are plain Spanish; then a stroll by the sea with the painter Sorolla opens questions and courtesy: the upside-down ¿, the question words, and the polite words every traveler needs.

4.1 La Casa Blanca: Adjectives That Agree

4.2 ¿Cómo Está Usted? Questions and Courtesy

UNIT 5 • WEEKS 9–10

Reading Spanish

Everything comes together: the student reads a whole Spanish story set in the Plaza Mayor on market morning, with real market words and real prices; then follows Spanish across the map of the Americas, from Florida and Colorado to Los Angeles and Santa Fe, and hosts a family fiesta with a hand-lettered Bienvenidos sign.

5.1 A Morning in the Plaza Mayor

5.2 Spanish All Around You

WEEKLY PACING CALENDAR

WEEK	PLAN
1	• Session 1: Lesson 1.1 The Language the Roads Kept Speaking: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 1.1 activity (sound cards) and Spanish notebook • Session 3: Worked examples, practice, and the first recitation out loud

WEEK	PLAN
	<i>Three short sessions a week is the usual rhythm: one to learn, one to make, one to practice and speak. Add a few minutes of flashcards on the other days if you like.</i>
2	• Session 1: Lesson 1.2 You Already Speak Spanish: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 1.2 activity (the cognate hunt) and Spanish notebook • Session 3: Worked examples, practice and recitation • Session 3 (end of unit): Unit 1 review and unit challenge (the cognate tree poster)
3	• Session 1: Lesson 2.1 The Waterseller's Words: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 2.1 activity (the el/la sort) and Spanish notebook • Session 3: Worked examples, practice and recitation
4	• Session 1: Lesson 2.2 One Grape, Many Grapes: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 2.2 activity (the plural machine) and Spanish notebook • Session 3: Worked examples, practice and recitation • Session 3 (end of unit): Unit 2 review and unit challenge (label the house)
5	• Session 1: Lesson 3.1 Don Quixote Rides: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 3.1 activity (the verb wheel) and Spanish notebook • Session 3: Worked examples, practice and recitation
6	• Session 1: Lesson 3.2 The Bear Bible: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 3.2 activity (es sentences) and Spanish notebook • Session 3: Worked examples, practice and recitation • Session 3 (end of unit): Unit 3 review and unit challenge (the illuminated verse)
7	• Session 1: Lesson 4.1 La Casa Blanca: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 4.1 activity (agreement dominoes) and Spanish notebook • Session 3: Worked examples, practice and recitation
8	• Session 1: Lesson 4.2 ¿Cómo Está Usted?: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 4.2 activity (question cards) and Spanish notebook • Session 3: Worked examples, practice and recitation • Session 3 (end of unit): Unit 4 review and unit challenge (the family question game)
9	• Session 1: Lesson 5.1 A Morning in the Plaza Mayor: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study

WEEK	PLAN
	• Session 2: Lesson 5.1 activity (reading the story) and Spanish notebook • Session 3: Read the story aloud again, worked examples, practice and recitation
10	• Session 1: Lesson 5.2 Spanish All Around You: warm-up, video, teaching and picture study • Session 2: Lesson 5.2 activity (the map hunt and the Bienvenidos sign) and Spanish notebook • Session 3: Worked examples, practice and recitation • Session 3 (end of unit): Unit 5 review and unit challenge (the family fiesta) <i>Last week. Host the family fiesta: the student reads the plaza story in Spanish and English, teaches the family three phrases, serves bread and fruit like a little mercado, and hangs the Bienvenidos sign on the door.</i>

MATERIALS

Spanish notebook (any notebook)

One for the quarter: vocabulary lists, sound rules, el/la charts, verb columns, translations, the final story and the Bienvenidos sign drafts.

Index cards or paper cut into card-sized pieces, and a box, bag or binder ring to keep them

For the flashcard deck that grows every lesson, and for the question-building cards in Unit 4.

Sticky notes or masking tape and a marker

For labeling the house in Spanish in Unit 2: la puerta on the door, la mesa on the table.

Pencil, colored pencils or crayons, and a fine-tip marker

For charts, the cognate tree poster, the illuminated verse and the Bienvenidos sign.

Scissors, glue and a sheet of poster board or printer paper taped together

For the cognate tree and the Bienvenidos sign.

Bread, fruit and a cloth

For the little mercado at the family fiesta in week 10. Any simple snack works.

GRADING

Grades come mostly from the daily work: the recitations, the flashcard reviews, the notebook and the practice sentences, because a language is learned by steady, honest

repetition. A student who speaks Spanish out loud faithfully, keeps a neat notebook and corrects his or her own practice earns full credit.

PART	%
Recitation and flashcards (daily speaking, vocabulary reviews, reading aloud)	30
Spanish notebook (dated pages, charts, translations, reflections)	25
Practice sentences (both directions, corrected with the answer key)	15
Unit reviews	15
Unit challenges	15

Scale: A 90–100, B 80–89, C 70–79, D 60–69. Below 60: repeat the chants and practice with help.

- An ending counts, a guess does not: a practice sentence is right when the *el* or *la* is right and the endings agree. Let the student use the notebook charts for every exercise; the charts come to live in the head by being used, not by being hidden.
- Unit reviews may be done orally for a student who writes slowly; the parent writes down the answers.
- Pronunciation is graded on courage and consistency, not perfection. The rolled *rr* arrives with practice; any student who says Spanish out loud every day is doing it right.

A NOTE TO PARENTS

You do not need to know Spanish to teach this course. Every chart has its sounds written out, every Spanish sentence has its translation in the answer, and every video does the explaining a specialist would. Learn alongside your child: chant together in the car, quiz each other with the flashcards at the table, and let your child catch your mistakes. A parent who is cheerfully learning teaches more than any speech about why Spanish matters.

Why Spanish? Because it is the most spoken daughter of Latin, the mother tongue of about five hundred million people and the language of many of your neighbors, so every hour spent here opens doors to real conversations, real friendships and real service; because its tidy endings teach grammar the same way Latin does, and the two courses help each other at every turn; and because God is worshiped in Spanish every Sunday by more people than in almost any other language on earth. When your child learns to say Dios es amor, he or she is learning words the church has sung for centuries.

This course teaches Latin American pronunciation, since that is what a North American student will hear most, and notes Spain's differences (the th sound of z, the vosotros form) where they matter, so nothing will surprise the student later.

The stories are all cheerful or noble. The Don Quixote lesson is told gently, as a funny and tender story about an old man who read too many knight stories; the Bear Bible lesson mentions that printing the Bible in Spanish was forbidden in those days and that the translators worked far from home, told simply, with the focus on courage and faithfulness. Any video made for a slightly older audience is flagged in its lesson notes, and all were previewed.

PRINTABLE WORD LIST

VOCABULARY FOR THE COURSE

Latin American Spanish. Latin American Spanish, which is what Grade 5 Spanish teaches: h is silent, ñ is ny, ll is y, j and ge/gi are a breathy h, and z and ce/ci are s rather than the th of Spain. Vowels are pure. There is no vosotros; tú is the familiar you and usted is the formal you. The capital letters are the stressed syllable.

Every week's list is printed again inside that lesson. Say the capital letters loudest.

1.1 THE LANGUAGE THE ROADS KEPT SPEAKING

hola

OH-lah

greeting

hello

adiós

ah-DYOHS

greeting

goodbye

día

DEE-ah

noun · masculine

a day

bueno

BWEH-noh

adjective

good

español

ehs-pah-NYOL

adjective

Spanish

castellano

kahs-teh-YAH-noh

noun · masculine

Castilian, the Spanish of Castile

mañana

mah-NYAH-nah

noun · feminine

morning; tomorrow

camino

kah-MEE-noh

noun · masculine

a road

puente

PWEHN-teh

noun · masculine

a bridge

arco

AHR-koh

noun · masculine

an arch

piedra

PYEH-drah

noun · feminine

a stone

1.2 YOU ALREADY SPEAK SPANISH: COGNATES

agua

AH-gwah

noun · feminine (el agua)

water

tierra

TYEH-rrah

noun · feminine

earth, land

estrella

ehs-TREH-yah

noun · feminine

a star

luna

LOO-nah

noun · feminine

the moon

sol

SOL

noun · masculine

the sun

familia

fah-MEE-lyah

noun · feminine

a family

casa

KAH-sah

noun · feminine

a house

amigo

ah-MEE-goh

noun · masculine (amiga if a girl)

a friend

mapa

MAH-pah

noun · masculine

a map

animal

ah-nee-MAHL

noun · masculine

an animal

planta

PLAHN-tah

noun · feminine

a plant

2.1 THE WATERSELLER'S WORDS: EL AND LA

libro

LEE-broh

noun · el libro

a book

mesa

MEH-sah

noun · la mesa

a table

puerta

PWEHR-tah

noun · la puerta

a door

perro

PEH-rroh

noun · el perro

a dog

gato

GAH-toh

noun · el gato

a cat

niño

NEE-nyoh

noun · el niño

a boy

niña

NEE-nyah

noun · la niña

a girl

pan

PAHN

noun · el pan

bread

escuela

ehs-KWEH-lah

noun · la escuela

a school

iglesia

ee-GLEH-syah

noun · la iglesia

a church

mano

MAH-noh

noun · la mano (feminine)

a hand

2.2 ONE GRAPE, MANY GRAPES: PLURALS

leche

LEH-cheh

noun · la leche

milk

flor

FLOR

noun · la flor, las flores

a flower

noche

NOH-cheh

noun · la noche, las noches

night

madre

MAH-dreh

noun · la madre, las madres

mother

padre

PAH-dreh

noun · el padre, los padres

father

uva

OO-bah

noun · la uva, las uvas

a grape

queso

KEH-soh

noun · el queso, los quesos

cheese

hermano

ehr-MAH-noh

noun · el hermano, los hermanos

a brother

hermana

ehr-MAH-nah

noun · la hermana, las hermanas

a sister

hijo

EE-hoh

noun · el hijo, los hijos

a son

hija

EE-hah

noun · la hija, las hijas
a daughter

3.1 DON QUIXOTE RIDES: HABLO, HABLAS, HABLA

hablar

ah-BLAHR

verb · hablo, hablas, habla, hablamos, hablan
I speak

cantar

kahn-TAHR

verb · canto, cantas, canta, cantamos, cantan
I sing

caminar

kah-mee-NAHR

verb · camino, caminas, camina, caminamos, caminan
I walk

trabajar

trah-bah-HAHR

verb · trabajo, trabajas, trabaja, trabajamos, trabajan
I work

mirar

mee-RAHR

verb · miro, miras, mira, miramos, miran
I look

escuchar

ehs-koo-CHAHR

verb · escucho, escuchas, escucha, escuchamos, escuchan
I listen

estudiar

ehs-too-DYahr

verb · estudio, estudias, estudia, estudiamos, estudian

I study

amar

ah-MAHR

verb · amo, amas, ama, amamos, aman

I love

entrar

ehn-TRAHR

verb · entro, entras, entra, entramos, entran

I enter

llegar

yeh-GAHR

verb · llego, llegas, llega, llegamos, llegan

I arrive

comprar

kohm-PRAHR

verb · compro, compras, compra, compramos, compran

I buy

3.2 THE BEAR BIBLE: SOY, ERES, ES

ser

SEHR

verb · soy, eres, es, somos, son

I am

grande

GRAHN-deh

adjective · grande, grandes

big

pequeño

pehq-WEH-nyoh

adjective · pequeño, pequeña
small

malo

MAH-loh

adjective · malo, mala
bad

blanco

BLAHN-koh

adjective · blanco, blanca
white

negro

NEH-groh

adjective · negro, negra
black

rojo

RROH-hoh

adjective · rojo, roja
red

azul

ah-SOOL

adjective · azul, azules
blue

Dios

DYOHS

noun · Dios (masculine)
God

amor

ah-MOR

noun · el amor

love

Biblia

BEE-blyah

noun · la Biblia

the Bible

4.1 LA CASA BLANCA: ADJECTIVES THAT AGREE

nuevo

NWEH-boh

adjective · nuevo, nueva; nuevos, nuevas

new

viejo

BYEH-hoh

adjective · viejo, vieja; viejos, viejas

old

alto

AHL-toh

adjective · alto, alta; altos, altas

tall, high

bonito

boh-NEE-toh

adjective · bonito, bonita; bonitos, bonitas

pretty

misión

mee-SYOHN

noun · la misión, las misiones

a mission

fraile

FRAHEE-leh

noun · el fraile, los frailes

a friar

real

rreh-AHL

adjective · real, reales

royal

bajo

BAH-hoh

adjective · bajo, baja; bajos, bajas

short, low

largo

LAHR-goh

adjective · largo, larga; largos, largas

long

corto

KOR-toh

adjective · corto, corta; cortos, cortas

short

limpio

LEEM-pyoh

adjective · limpio, limpia; limpios, limpias

clean

4.2 ¿CÓMO ESTÁ USTED? QUESTIONS AND COURTESY

gracias

GRAH-syahs

noun · las gracias

thank you

por favor

POR fah-BOR

phrase

please

sí

SEE

adverb

yes

no

NOH

adverb

no

señor

seh-NYOR

noun · el señor, los señores

sir, Mr.

señora

seh-NYOH-rrah

noun · la señora, las señoras

madam, Mrs.

qué

KEH

pronoun · question word

what?

quién

KYEHN

pronoun · question word

who?

dónde

DOHN-deh

adverb · question word
where?

cómo

KOH-moh

adverb · question word
how?

usted

oos-TEHD

pronoun · usted (formal), tú (familiar)
you (formal); tú is the familiar you

estar

ehs-TAHR

verb · estoy, estás, está, estamos, están
I am (place or condition)

5.1 A MORNING IN THE PLAZA MAYOR

mercado

mehr-KAH-doh

noun · el mercado, los mercados
a market

plaza

PLAH-sah

noun · la plaza, las plazas
a square

fruta

FROO-tah

noun · la fruta, las frutas
fruit

naranja

nah-RAHN-hah

noun · la naranja, las naranjas

an orange

manzana

mahn-SAH-nah

noun · la manzana, las manzanas

an apple

dinero

dee-NEH-rroh

noun · el dinero

money

calle

KAH-yeh

noun · la calle, las calles

a street

vendedor

behn-deh-DOR

noun · el vendedor, los vendedores

a seller

huevo

WEH-boh

noun · el huevo, los huevos

an egg

pescado

pehs-KAH-doh

noun · el pescado, los pescados

fish (as food)

gente

HEHN-teh

noun · la gente (feminine singular)

people

5.2 SPANISH ALL AROUND YOU

ciudad

syoo-DAHD

noun · la ciudad, las ciudades

a city

montaña

mohn-TAH-nyah

noun · la montaña, las montañas

a mountain

río

RREE-oh

noun · el río, los ríos

a river

mar

MAHR

noun · el mar, los mares

the sea

isla

EES-lah

noun · la isla, las islas

an island

estado

ehs-TAH-doh

noun · el estado, los estados

a state

norte

NOR-teh

noun · el norte

north

sur

SOOR

noun · el sur

south

este

EHS-teh

noun · el este

east

oeste

oh-EHS-teh

noun · el oeste

west

nombre

NOHM-breh

noun · el nombre, los nombres

a name

UNIT 1

LATIN'S LIVING DAUGHTER

More than two thousand years ago, Roman soldiers and farmers carried their everyday Latin into Hispania, the land we now call Spain, and built roads, bridges and an aqueduct at Segovia so sturdy it still stands a hundred feet over the city's streets. The empire fell, but the people on those roads never stopped talking. Generation by generation, their Latin softened and shifted until it had become a new language: Spanish, Latin's most spoken daughter, today the mother tongue of about five hundred million people in more than twenty countries. In this unit you will stand under the aqueduct of Segovia, hear how aqua became agua and stella became estrella, and

train your mouth to make the real Spanish sounds: five pure vowels, a silent h, the ñ with its hat, and the famous rolled rr.

Then you will discover how much Spanish you already speak. English and Spanish both drank deep from Latin, so they share thousands of look-alike words called cognates: familia and family, estrella and stellar, nación and nation. You will meet Antonio de Nebrija, the scholar who in 1492 wrote the first grammar book of the Spanish language, the first anyone had ever written for a modern European language, and you will start the flashcard deck and the Spanish notebook you will keep all quarter.

PREREQUISITES

- Reads independently and can copy a short chart neatly
- Can say the English alphabet and the five English vowels
- No earlier Spanish is needed; the course starts with the sounds of the letters

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can tell how Spanish grew out of the everyday Latin spoken in Hispania, and name three other daughters of Latin.
- ☐ I can say the five Spanish vowels purely (ah, eh, ee, oh, oo) and keep them from sliding the English way.
- ☐ I can pronounce the special letters: silent h, ñ like ny, ll like y, j like a strong h, and I am practicing the rolled rr.
- ☐ I can read ten Spanish words aloud so a Spanish speaker could understand me.
- ☐ I can say what a cognate is and give a Spanish cognate for family, lunar and nation.
- ☐ I have started my flashcard deck and my Spanish notebook, with a dated page for each lesson.

OPTIONAL BOOKS AND RESOURCES FOR THIS UNIT

- **SpanishDict**: Free online. The best Spanish–English dictionary on the web: type any word to hear it spoken aloud and see every form. The pronunciation button is the closest thing to having a native speaker at the table.
- ***First Thousand Words in Spanish*, by Heather Amery (Usborne)**: A picture-word book many libraries carry: busy scenes with everything labeled in Spanish. A good browse for Session 2, and a treasure chest for the cognate hunt.
- **School Launch Latin, grades 3–8**: Free, from our own shelf. Spanish is Latin's daughter, and the two courses wave to each other constantly: agua and aqua, estrella and stella. A student taking both will find each makes the other easier.

Not required. Every activity in this unit works with paper, pencil, scissors and the free links below. School Launch has no ties to these authors, publishers or companies.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

1.1 The Language the Roads Kept Speaking

3 sessions of 30–40 minutes

1.2 You Already Speak Spanish: Cognates

3 sessions of 30–40 minutes

UNIT 1 REVIEW

Answer each question in complete sentences. The review is worth 30 points. It may be done orally, with a parent writing down the answers.

1. **5 pts**

Tell how Spanish came to be: where did it grow, out of what language, and how did it end up spoken by five hundred million people?

2. **5 pts**

Name the five Romance languages, and explain what 'Romance' means in that name.

3. **5 pts**

Pronounce these the Spanish way and state the rule each one shows: hola, señor, llama.

4. 5 pts

Give the sounds of the five Spanish vowels, each with a Spanish example, and say what makes them different from English vowels.

5. 5 pts

What is a cognate? Give one Spanish–English cognate pair and one false friend.

6. 5 pts

Who was Antonio de Nebrija, and why does his book of 1492 still matter?

ANSWER KEY

1. Spanish grew out of the everyday Latin spoken in Roman Hispania. After the empire fell, people kept speaking it, and over the centuries it softened into a new language, Spanish, which crossed the ocean with Spain's ships five hundred years ago and spread through the Americas.
2. Spanish, Italian, French, Portuguese and Romanian. Romance means 'from the Romans': they all grew out of spoken Latin.
3. OH-lah (h is silent), seh-NYOR (ñ says ny), YAH-mah (ll sounds like y).
4. A ah (casa), E eh (mesa), I ee (sí), O oh (no), U oo (luna). They are pure: one steady sound every time, with none of the English sliding.
5. A pair of words that grew from the same root and still look alike. Cognate pair examples: familia/family, nación/nation, luna/lunar. False friend examples: sopa (soup, not soap), ropa (clothes, not rope), largo (long, not large).
6. A professor at Salamanca who wrote the Gramática castellana, the first grammar of Spanish and of any modern European language. Writing the rules down meant Spanish could be taught, kept steady and carried anywhere, and every Spanish course since, including this one, descends from that idea.

UNIT CHALLENGE: THE COGNATE TREE

Make a poster of a great tree with two main boughs. On the trunk, write LATINA, the mother. On one bough write ESPAÑOL and on the other ENGLISH. Choose at least six Latin roots you have met, aqua, terra, stella, luna, sol, familia, amicus, and from each root run a branch to each bough: agua on the Spanish side, aquarium on the English side; estrella and stellar; luna and lunar. Add your best -ción and -dad bridge words on their own branch. Decorate the borders with your favorite Spanish words in your best lettering. Then present the tree to your family: pick three roots and explain, out loud, how the same Latin word grew a Spanish child and an English one. Hang the poster where you will see it all quarter.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Complete tree	At least six roots appear, each with its Spanish word and its English cousin correctly paired and spelled, accents included.
True cognates	The pairs really share a root and a meaning; no false friends hiding in the branches.
Craftsmanship	Lettering is neat and large enough to read across a room; the tree is colored and finished.
Presentation	The student explained three roots aloud, pronouncing the Spanish with pure vowels.

UNIT 1 • LATIN'S LIVING DAUGHTER • LESSON 1.1 OF 10 • 3 SESSIONS OF 30-40 MINUTES

1.1 THE LANGUAGE THE ROADS KEPT SPEAKING

OBJECTIVES

- Tell how everyday Latin, carried into Hispania by Rome, slowly became Spanish, and name the other Romance languages.
- Say the five Spanish vowels purely, without the English glide.
- Pronounce the special letters: silent h, ñ, ll, j, and begin practicing the rolled rr.
- Read ten Spanish words aloud with confidence.

Warm-up. Say these words out loud: rodeo, patio, plaza, fiesta, tornado, mosquito, burro, chocolate. Now the surprise: every one of them is Spanish, letter for letter, borrowed whole by English. You have been speaking Spanish your whole life without knowing it. Today you find out where the language came from, and how to say it the way five hundred million people do.

WATCH

Learn how to say the vowels in Spanish - A E I O U

Butterfly Spanish · 6:15

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=orOW9eRQfpE>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story and the How Spanish works paragraphs, before Say it out loud.
Repeat each vowel sound after the teacher; nobody is listening but the family.

Note: Ana is a native speaker from Mexico who teaches at a whiteboard. Listen for how pure and steady each vowel stays, exactly the rule from the lesson.

BACKUP VIDEO

Learn the Alphabet in Spanish! (Revised)

Señor Jordan · 6:38

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4T7wiigjeg>

Watch this one too if you have time: it walks through the whole alphabet, including the ñ, ll, rr, h and j sounds from the lesson.

KEY TERMS

Spanish (español, castellano)

The language that grew out of everyday Latin in Spain and sailed to the Americas. Spanish speakers call it español or castellano, after Castile, the region where it grew up.

Hispania

Rome's name for the land that became Spain and Portugal. The soldiers and farmers who settled there spoke the everyday Latin that slowly turned into Spanish.

Romance languages

The daughter languages that grew out of spoken Latin: Spanish, Italian, French, Portuguese and Romanian. Romance here means from the Romans, not love stories.

pure vowels

Spanish vowels are single, steady sounds: a says ah, e says eh, i says ee, o says oh, u says oo, always and only. English vowels like to slide; Spanish vowels stand still.

ñ (eñe)

The letter n wearing a little hat called a tilde. It says ny, as in señor (seh-NYOR). It is a real letter of the Spanish alphabet, with its own place in the dictionary.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Latin American sounds: h is silent, ñ says ny, ll says y, j says a breathy h, and z and soft c say s, not the th of Spain. Capitals show the stress.

hola

OH-lah

greeting
hello

adiós

ah-DYOHs

greeting
goodbye

día

DEE-ah

noun · masculine
a day

bueno

BWEH-noh

adjective
good

español

ehs-pah-NYOL

adjective

Spanish

castellano

kahs-teh-YAH-noh

noun · masculine

Castilian, the Spanish of Castile

mañana

mah-NYAH-nah

noun · feminine

morning; tomorrow

camino

kah-MEE-noh

noun · masculine

a road

puente

PWEHN-teh

noun · masculine

a bridge

arco

AHR-koh

noun · masculine

an arch

piedra

PYEH-drah

noun · feminine

a stone

CORE IDEAS

The story. More than two hundred years before Christ, Roman soldiers landed in Hispania, and after them came roads, bridges, farms and towns. Around A.D. 100 the Romans raised an aqueduct at Segovia: a double row of stone arches almost a hundred feet tall, built without a drop of mortar, that carried mountain water into the town. The empire that built it crumbled, but the aqueduct kept standing, and it kept carrying water into Segovia for over eighteen hundred years. Something else the Romans left behind refused to fall down too: their language. The farmers, shepherds and merchants of Hispania went on speaking their everyday Latin long after the last legion marched away. Century by century it softened in their mouths, aqua became agua, terra became tierra, stella grew a little e and became estrella, until the people of Spain were speaking something new: Spanish. Then, five hundred years ago, Spanish boarded ships and crossed the ocean, and today it is the mother tongue of about five hundred million people in Spain, Mexico, most of Central and South America and the Caribbean, and millions of homes in the United States. Only Chinese has more native speakers.

How Spanish works: an honest alphabet. Here is the best news a beginner ever got: Spanish is written the way it sounds, almost perfectly. Once you learn what each letter says, you can read any Spanish word you meet, even one you have never seen. English makes you memorize that though, through and tough all sound different; Spanish plays fair. The heart of it is the five vowels, and they are **pure**: a says ah (casa), e says eh (mesa), i says ee (sí), o says oh (no), u says oo (luna). Each vowel makes its one sound every single time. The trap for English speakers is sliding: English o likes to slide into a little w sound (no-u), and English a slides into ee (day-ee). Spanish vowels stand perfectly still: no is noh, cut clean.

The special letters. A few letters play by their own rules, and they are easy to list. **H is always silent**: hola (hello) is OH-lah, as if the h were not there. **Ñ says ny**: señor (sir, mister) is seh-NYOR. **LL sounds like y**: llama is YAH-mah. **J says a strong, breathy h**, like fogging a window: José is ho-SAY. **RR is rolled**, a little drumroll of the tongue: perro (dog). If the roll will not come yet, say a plain r and keep going; the trill arrives with practice. One more for listeners: in most of Spain, z and soft c sound like the th in think, but in Mexico and the rest of Latin America they sound like s. Both are correct; this course uses the Latin American sound.

Say it out loud. Where is the stress? Spanish has a simple rule of thumb: most words lean on the next-to-last syllable, ca-SA? no: CA-sa, fa-MI-lia, es-TRE-lla. And when a

word breaks the rule, Spanish politely marks the spot with an accent: *adiós* (ah-DYOHHS), *está* (eh-STAH). Now greet someone: *hola* (OH-lah) is hello; *buenos días* (BWEH-nohs DEE-ahs) is good morning; *adiós* (ah-DYOHHS) is goodbye. Say all three to your family today and teach them to answer.

Try it. This week you will make sound cards for the five vowels and the five special letters, drill them until the sounds are yours, and read your first ten Spanish words aloud: *agua*, *luna*, *sol*, *casa*, *familia*, *amigo*, *estrella*, *tierra*, *plaza*, *fiesta*. A traveler from Madrid or Mexico City would understand every one.

PICTURE STUDY



The Aqueduct of Segovia, Roman builders (photograph by David Corral Gadea), c. A.D. 100 · Granite blocks, laid without mortar · Segovia, Spain

Image: David Corral Gadea, [Wikimedia Commons](#), CC BY-SA 3.0 es

The Romans raised this aqueduct around A.D. 100 to carry mountain water into Segovia, stacking great granite blocks into two stories of arches, nearly a hundred feet tall at the center, without mortar: the stones hold each other up by their own weight, and they have held for more than eighteen centuries. The empire that built it is gone, but the aqueduct still stands in the middle of the city, and the language the builders spoke is still being spoken under its arches, grown up now and called Spanish.

Look closely

- Count the rows of arches. Two stories of stone, and the top row once carried a channel of running water.
- Find the people or cars at the bottom of the picture. How many times taller than a person is the aqueduct at its highest point?
- Look closely at the stones. There is no cement between them; every block was cut to press perfectly against its neighbors.
- Follow the arches to the edge of the picture. The whole aqueduct runs more than nine miles from the mountains, most of it underground, before it makes this grand march across the city.

Talk about it

1. The aqueduct outlived the empire that built it. What else from Roman Hispania outlived the empire?
2. Why do you think the people of Segovia never tore it down, even when it stopped carrying water?
3. If stones can carry water across a valley, words can carry ideas across centuries. What ideas has the Spanish language been carrying for two thousand years?

ACTIVITY

Sound cards and your first ten words

Spanish is learned out loud. Today you build the ten sound cards you will use all quarter, and then prove they work by reading ten real Spanish words a traveler could understand.

You will need

- 10 index cards (or paper cut into card-sized pieces)
- Pencil and colored pencils or markers
- Your Spanish notebook

Steps

1. Make five vowel cards. On the front write the vowel big: A, E, I, O, U. On the back write its sound and a Spanish example: A says ah (casa), E says eh (mesa), I says ee (sí), O says oh (no), U says oo (luna).
2. Make five rule cards: H is silent (hola = OH-lah); Ñ says ny (señor = seh-NYOR); LL says y (llama = YAH-mah); J says a strong h (José = ho-SAY); RR is rolled (perro).
3. Drill the ten cards: a parent or sibling holds them up in any order, and you give the sound and the example. Go through the stack three times.
4. Now write these ten words where you can see them: agua, luna, sol, casa, familia, amigo, estrella, tierra, plaza, fiesta. Read each one aloud slowly, sound by sound, then again at normal speed. Keep every vowel pure and still.
5. Finish by greeting each person in the house with hola or buenos días, and leaving the room with adiós.

Tips

- Keep vowels short and clean. Say no like a door closing, noh, not no-u. The English slide is the one habit to break this week.
- For the rolled rr, try saying butter-butter-butter fast: the light d sound in the middle is your tongue learning the tap that grows into the roll.
- Big and loud beats small and mumbled. Say it like you mean it.

Check your work

- ☐ I can give the sound of all five vowels without peeking, purely, with no slide.

- ☐ I can say the h, ñ, ll, j and rr rules and give the example for each.
- ☐ I read all ten words aloud and someone checked me against the cards.
- ☐ I greeted my family with hola and said adiós when I left.

SPANISH NOTEBOOK

1. Start your Spanish notebook: write your name and the date, and the title La lengua española (the Spanish language).
2. Copy the vowel chart into your notebook: the five vowels, their sounds and one Spanish example each.
3. Copy the five special-letter rules (h, ñ, ll, j, rr) with their examples.
4. Write three sentences about how Latin became Spanish: one about the Roman roads and the aqueduct, one about how the sounds softened (aqua to agua), one about where Spanish is spoken today.

From history. English is full of Spanish words that rode in with the ranchers of the old Southwest: rodeo, ranch (rancho), lasso (lazo), corral, patio, plaza, canyon (cañón), mustang (mesteño). And some words Spanish itself carried over from the languages of the Americas: chocolate and tomato came from Nahuatl, the language of the Aztecs, through Spanish into English. Languages are great borrowers, and Spanish has been both lender and carrier for five hundred years.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. How do you pronounce *hola* (hello)?

▼ **Show solution**

1. Apply the h rule: Spanish h is always silent.
2. Apply the vowels: o says oh, a says ah.
3. Stress the next-to-last syllable: OH-lah.

Answer: OH-lah. The h makes no sound at all.

Example 2. How do you pronounce *señora* (madam, Mrs.)?

▼ **Show solution**

1. Apply the ñ rule: ñ says ny.
 2. Apply the vowels: e eh, o oh, a ah.
 3. Stress the next-to-last syllable: seh-NYOH-rah.
-

Answer: seh-NYOH-rah.

Example 3. How do you pronounce *estrella* (star)?

▼ **Show solution**

1. Apply the ll rule: ll sounds like y.
 2. Apply the vowels: e eh, e eh, a ah.
 3. Stress the next-to-last syllable: es-TREH-yah.
-

Answer: es-TREH-yah.

PRACTICE

1. **Easy** What sound does the h make in *hola*?

▼ **Show answer**

No sound at all: OH-lah. Spanish h is always silent.

2. **Easy** What sound does ñ make in *señor*?

▼ **Show answer**

The ny sound: seh-NYOR.

3. **Easy** Give the sounds of the five vowels, with one Spanish example each.

▼ **Show answer**

A says ah (casa), E says eh (mesa), I says ee (sí), O says oh (no), U says oo (luna).

4. **Medium** Pronounce *llama* and *José* the Spanish way, and name the rule each one shows.

▼ **Show answer**

YAH-mah (ll sounds like y) and ho-SAY (j says a strong h).

5. **Medium** Name the five Romance languages, Latin's daughters, and say which one has the most speakers.

▼ **Show answer**

Spanish, Italian, French, Portuguese and Romanian. Spanish has the most speakers, about five hundred million.

6. **Medium** The Latin word *aqua* became the Spanish word *agua*, and *terra* became *tierra*. What happened to Latin in Hispania after the empire fell?

▼ **Show answer**

People kept speaking it every day, and over the centuries the sounds slowly softened and shifted until the everyday Latin of Hispania had become a new language, Spanish.

7. **Hard** Spanish spelling is honest: words sound the way they are written. Read these three words you have never studied and say them aloud: *sopa*, *bandera*, *montaña*.

▼ **Show answer**

SOH-pah (soup), bahn-DEH-rah (flag), mohn-TAH-nyah (mountain). Pure vowels, ñ says ny, stress on the next-to-last syllable.

8. **Challenge** The accent mark in *adiós* is doing a job. What is it, and what is the usual rule it is overriding?

▼ **Show answer**

It marks which syllable to stress: ah-DYOHHS, on the last syllable. The usual rule is to stress the next-to-last syllable; when a word breaks the rule, Spanish marks the stressed syllable with an accent.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Letting vowels slide the English way: saying no like no-u or mesa like MAY-suh. Spanish vowels are pure and still: noh, MEH-sah.
- Pronouncing the h. Hola is OH-lah; the h is always silent.
- Saying ll as a plain l. Llama is YAH-mah.
- Giving up on the rolled rr. Nobody rolls it on day one; a light tap is a fine start, and the drumroll comes with weeks of cheerful practice.

Make it a game · Cinco Vocales Sprint. Set the five vowel cards in a row on the floor. The parent calls a sound, ah, eh, ee, oh or oo, and you leap to the right card. Then the parent shows a Spanish word like plaza or fiesta and you read it aloud with pure vowels. Count how many words you read correctly in 60 seconds, then beat that score. Bonus point for any honest attempt at a rolled rr.

Scripture. “And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?” (Acts 2:8, KJV)

At Pentecost, God did not make everyone speak one language; He sent the good news out in all of them. Spanish is now one of the languages in which more people hear the Scriptures read each Sunday than almost any other on earth, and this quarter you begin to understand it.

UNIT 1 · LATIN'S LIVING DAUGHTER · LESSON 1.2 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 30-40 MINUTES

1.2 YOU ALREADY SPEAK SPANISH: COGNATES

OBJECTIVES

- Say what a cognate is and trace an English word and a Spanish word back to their shared Latin root.
- Learn the first eight vocabulary words: agua, tierra, estrella, luna, sol, familia, casa, amigo.
- Use the -ción and -dad bridges to turn English words into Spanish ones.
- Tell who Antonio de Nebrija was and why his 1492 grammar book mattered.

Warm-up. Drill your ten sound cards from last week, then read your ten words aloud: agua, luna, sol, casa, familia, amigo, estrella, tierra, plaza, fiesta. Now think: what do we call the celebration of a nation? A celebración of a nación. You are about to find out that you already own hundreds of Spanish words, because English and Spanish went shopping in the same Latin store.

WATCH

The Spanish Language and What Makes it The Coolest

Langfocus · 8:24

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NSfCDdTtBn0>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the story paragraph. Listen for how Spanish grew out of Latin, where it is spoken today, and the words it picked up along the way.

Note: Made for a slightly older audience, and it moves quickly; watch it together and pause freely. It mentions that Spanish also absorbed many Arabic words during the centuries when much of Spain was under Muslim rule, a true and interesting chapter of the story.

BACKUP VIDEO

1001 Spanish Words You Already Know | Spanish Cognates

Real Fast Spanish · 9:25

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRBenl2FghA>

Watch after the How Spanish works paragraph for more cognate practice, including more bridges like the -ción one. Made for a slightly older audience.

KEY TERMS

cognate

A pair of words in two languages that grew from the same root and still look alike, like familia and family, or nación and nation. Cognate is Latin for born together.

false friend

A word that looks like an English word but means something else: ropa looks like rope but means clothes; sopa looks like soap but means soup. Check a false friend before you trust it.

root

The old word, usually Latin here, that a Spanish word and an English word both grew from. Agua and aquarium both grew from Latin aqua.

grammar

The written-down rules of a language: how its words change and how its sentences are built. Nebrija wrote the first grammar of Spanish in 1492.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Latin American sounds: h is silent, ñ says ny, ll says y, j says a breathy h, and z and soft c say s, not the th of Spain. Capitals show the stress.

agua

AH-gwah

noun · feminine (el agua)

water

tierra

TYEH-rrah

noun · feminine

earth, land

estrella

ehs-TREH-yah

noun · feminine

a star

luna

LOO-nah

noun · feminine

the moon

sol

SOL

noun · masculine

the sun

familia

fah-MEE-lyah

noun · feminine

a family

casa

KAH-sah

noun · feminine

a house

amigo

ah-MEE-goh

noun · masculine (amiga if a girl)

a friend

mapa

MAH-pah

noun · masculine

a map

animal

ah-nee-MAHL

noun · masculine

an animal

planta

PLAHN-tah

noun · feminine

a plant

CORE IDEAS

The story. In the year 1492, while Columbus was begging ships from Queen Isabella, a quiet professor at the University of Salamanca finished a different kind of voyage. His name was Antonio de Nebrija, and he had spent years doing something nobody had ever done: writing down the complete rules of Spanish, the *Gramática castellana*, the first grammar book of any modern European language. In those days scholars thought only Latin and Greek deserved grammar books; everyday languages like Spanish were thought too common to study. Nebrija disagreed. He had studied Latin deeply, and he could see that Spanish was not a careless pile of words but Latin's own daughter, with patterns and rules as orderly as her mother's. When he presented the book to Queen Isabella, she asked him what a grammar of a language everyone already spoke could possibly be for. His answer, in short: a language written down can be taught, kept steady, and carried anywhere. He was right. The rules you will learn this quarter are the great-grandchildren of the ones Nebrija wrote down over five hundred years ago.

How Spanish got its words, and how English got the same ones. Spanish inherited its words straight from Latin, the way a daughter inherits her mother's face. English is

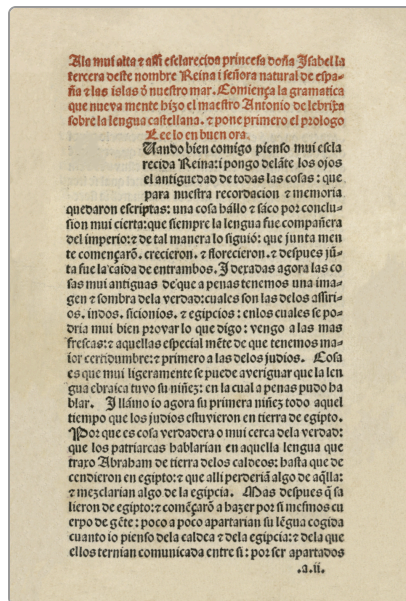
not Latin's daughter, it is a Germanic cousin, but it borrowed from Latin enormously: church words, school words, and after 1066 a flood of French words that were Latin wearing a French coat. So English and Spanish are packed with pairs of words that grew from the same Latin root: cognates, words born together. Familia and family both come from Latin familia. Estrella and stellar both come from stella. Luna and lunar, sol and solar, amigo and amicable (friendly), tierra and territory. When you learn a Spanish word, check it for English cousins: most of the time the new word is an old friend wearing a sombrero.

How Spanish works: the two great bridges. Here are two tricks that hand you hundreds of Spanish words at once. **Bridge one: -tion becomes -ción.** Nation is nación, station is estación, celebration is celebración, information is información. Nearly every English -tion word crosses this bridge (and the Spanish word is always la). **Bridge two: -ty becomes -dad.** Liberty is libertad, university is universidad, city is ciudad. One warning as you cross: watch for **false friends**, look-alikes that changed meaning along the way. Ropa is not rope; it means clothes. Sopa is not soap; it means soup. Largo does not mean large; it means long. A good detective checks the meaning, not just the face.

Say it out loud. Here are your first eight flashcard words, all of them cognate-rich: *agua* (water), *tierra* (earth, land), *estrella* (star), *luna* (moon), *sol* (sun), *familia* (family), *casa* (house, home), *amigo* (friend). Say each one the Spanish way, then its meaning, then one English cousin: agua, water, aquarium. Do the whole set twice. A student who has taken our Latin courses will be grinning by now: agua is aqua, tierra is terra, estrella is stella, luna is still luna. Spanish is Latin that never stopped being spoken.

Try it. This week you go cognate hunting. With your eight words and your two bridges in hand, you will search labels, books and the rooms of your house for English words with Spanish cousins, and record your catches in your notebook. At the end of the unit you will grow your best finds into a full cognate tree poster: Latin roots at the trunk, Spanish and English cousins side by side on the branches.

PICTURE STUDY



The First Page of the Gramática Castellana, Antonio de Nebrija, 1492 · Printed page, gothic type · From the first edition, printed at Salamanca

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

This is the opening page of the book itself: the *Gramática castellana*, printed at Salamanca in 1492, the first grammar of the Spanish language ever written. The heavy black letters are gothic type, the printing style of the day, and the very first lines are Nebrija's dedication to Queen Isabella, 'a la mui alta y assí esclarecida princesa doña Isabella... Reina y señora natural de España.' Printing itself was barely forty years old when this page was set; a book like this could suddenly carry the rules of Spanish to every school in the kingdom.

Look closely

- Look at the shapes of the letters. This gothic type copies the handwriting of medieval scribes; find a letter that looks strange to you and one you recognize at once.
- Hunt in the opening lines for words you can almost read: nombre, señora, España. Spanish spelling has changed surprisingly little in five hundred years.
- Find the phrase *la lengua castellana* a few lines down: the Castilian tongue, the language this whole book was written to defend.
- Notice there are no pictures, no color, no wide margins. Paper was precious; every inch of this page works for its living.

Talk about it

1. Scholars in Nebrija's day thought common languages were not worth studying. Why did Nebrija disagree?
2. What does writing a language's rules down let you do with the language that you could not do before?
3. You are using a descendant of Nebrija's book right now. What would you tell him his grammar made possible?

ACTIVITY

The cognate hunt

Armed with eight Spanish words and two bridges, you are going hunting through your own house and bookshelf for English words with Spanish cousins. Every catch goes in the notebook; the best ones will grow into your unit challenge poster.

You will need

- 8 index cards for the new vocabulary
- Your Spanish notebook and a pencil
- A few books, food labels or a newspaper to hunt in

Steps

1. Make a flashcard for each new word: agua, tierra, estrella, luna, sol, familia, casa, amigo. Spanish on the front, English meaning on the back. Add them to your deck and run the whole deck once.
2. In your notebook, give each word its own line with room beside it. Write what it means.
3. Hunt for 15 minutes: scan book pages, labels, maps and signs for English words that are cousins of your Spanish words (aquarium, terrace, stellar, lunar, solar, familiar...). A parent may call out candidate words for you to test.
4. Now work the bridges: take five English -tion words (nation, station, vacation, celebration, information) and walk them across to Spanish (-ción: nación, estación, vacación, celebración, información). Then take three -ty words (liberty, university, city) across the -dad bridge (libertad, universidad, ciudad). Say each Spanish word aloud with pure vowels.
5. Test three tricky ones together: Does sopa mean soap? (No, soup.) Does ropa mean rope? (No, clothes.) Does familia mean family? (Yes.) A real cognate keeps the root's meaning.
6. Finish by reading your full catch list aloud: Spanish word, then English cousin.

Tips

- Look for the meaning, not just the letters. Sopa looks like soap but has nothing to do with washing; agua and aquarium are truly both about water.
- Science and church words are nearly all from Latin; a nature book or a hymnal is a treasure chest.
- When you cross the -ción bridge, the accent mark comes with the word: nación, not nacion.

Check your work

- ☐ My eight new flashcards are made and in the deck.
- ☐ I found at least ten honest cognates and wrote them in my notebook.
- ☐ I walked five words across the -ción bridge and three across the -dad bridge.
- ☐ I can explain why one look-alike word (like sopa) is a false friend.

SPANISH NOTEBOOK

1. Write the eight new vocabulary words with their meanings, dated, in a neat two-column list.
2. Record your cognate hunt: each Spanish word with the English cousins you caught beside it.
3. Make a bridge chart: five -tion/-ción pairs and three -ty/-dad pairs.
4. Copy this sentence and finish it: 'English and Spanish share thousands of words because...'

From history. Even the Spanish week speaks Latin and Scripture. Lunes (Monday) is the moon's day, from luna; martes belonged to Mars; and domingo (Sunday) comes from Latin dies Dominica, the Lord's day. Sábado (Saturday) goes back even further, to the Hebrew Sabbath. A Spanish calendar is a little museum of the ancient world.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Turn these English words into Spanish using the -ción bridge: nation, celebration, information.

▼ **Show solution**

1. Replace -tion with -ción and keep the rest nearly the same.
2. Say each with pure vowels and stress on the -ción (the accent mark shows it).
3. Remember every -ción word is a la word.

Answer: Nación, celebración, información: nah-SYOHN, seh-leh-brah-SYOHN, een-for-mah-SYOHN.

Example 2. The Spanish word *estrella* means star. Find its English cousins and the Latin root behind both.

▼ **Show solution**

1. Strip the Spanish dressing: estrella grew from Latin stella, star.
2. Hunt English for stella-words: stellar, constellation.
3. Check the meanings: stellar means star-like; a constellation is a group of stars.
The root's meaning held.

Answer: Latin stella is the root; English stellar and constellation are estrella's cousins.

Example 3. True cognate or false friend? *ropa, familia, largo*.

▼ **Show solution**

1. Test each meaning against its English look-alike.
2. Ropa looks like rope but means clothes: false friend.
3. Familia looks like family and means family: true cognate.
4. Largo looks like large but means long: false friend.

Answer: Ropa and largo are false friends; familia is a true cognate.

PRACTICE

1. **Easy** Give the English meaning: agua, estrella, casa, amigo.

▼ **Show answer**

Water, star, house (home), friend.

2. **Easy** Which Spanish word hides behind *lunar*, and what does a lunar rover drive on?

▼ **Show answer**

Luna, the moon (Spanish kept the Latin word unchanged); a lunar rover drives on the moon.

3. **Easy** What is a cognate?

▼ **Show answer**

A pair of words in two languages that grew from the same root and still look alike, like familia and family.

4. **Medium** Walk these across the right bridge: station, liberty, vacation, university.

▼ **Show answer**

Estación (-ción), libertad (-dad), vacación (-ción), universidad (-dad).

5. **Medium** Give one English cousin each for tierra, sol and amigo.

▼ **Show answer**

Examples: tierra: territory, terrace, terrain; sol: solar, parasol; amigo: amicable, amiable.

6. **Medium** Who was Antonio de Nebrija, and what did he finish in 1492?

▼ **Show answer**

A professor at Salamanca who wrote the Gramática castellana, the first grammar book of Spanish and of any modern European language, proving an everyday language had rules worth writing down.

7. **Hard** True cognate or false friend? Explain: (a) sopa, (b) nación, (c) largo.

▼ **Show answer**

(a) False friend: sopa means soup, not soap. (b) True cognate: nación means nation, both from Latin natio. (c) False friend: largo means long, not large (Spanish for large is grande).

8. **Challenge** English is a Germanic language, yet it shares thousands of cognates with Spanish. Explain how both languages ended up with the same Latin words.

▼ **Show answer**

Spanish inherited its words directly, because it grew out of spoken Latin. English borrowed its Latin: through the church, through French after the Norman Conquest of 1066, and straight from Latin books by scholars. Same store, two different shopping trips.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Matching letters instead of meanings. Sopa is not soap and ropa is not rope; a real cognate keeps the root's meaning.
- Thinking English is a daughter of Latin like Spanish. English is Germanic; it borrowed Latin heavily but grew from a different trunk.
- Forgetting the accent on -ción words. The bridge delivers the accent mark with the word: estación, nación.
- Forgetting the flashcards after the lesson. The deck works because you run it every session; three right answers in a row moves a card to the weekly pile.

Make it a game • Cognate Detective. Write agua, tierra, estrella, luna, sol, familia, casa and amigo on cards. Draw one and, within 30 seconds, name its meaning and an English cousin, like aquarium or stellar. The parent can challenge with a false friend like sopa or ropa. Each right cousin earns a point; each false friend caught earns two. See if you can reach 12 points.

Scripture. “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.” (Psalm 19:1, KJV)

In Spanish this verse begins: Los cielos cuentan la gloria de Dios. You can already find old friends in it: cielos is the skies (Latin caelum), gloria is glory, and Dios is God, from Latin Deus. The heavens preach in every language at once.

UNIT 2

NOUNS WEAR HATS: EL AND LA

Every Spanish noun goes through life wearing a little hat: el or la. The hat is not decoration; it is information, and this unit teaches you to read it. In Lesson 2.1 you

will stand on a hot street in Seville with the young painter Diego Velázquez and his famous waterseller, and learn the great secret of Spanish nouns: every one belongs to the el family or the la family, and the -o and -a endings usually tell you which. From now on, every noun you learn comes with its hat on: el libro, la mesa, el perro, la puerta.

In Lesson 2.2 one grape becomes many grapes. Bartolomé Esteban Murillo's painting of two street boys feasting on grapes and melon opens the plural: add -s after a vowel, -es after a consonant, and change the hats too, el to los, la to las. You will also meet un and una (a, an), unos and unas (some), and a few famous rule-breakers like el día, an -a word wearing an el hat. By the end of the unit you will have labeled your whole house in Spanish, and the labels will stay up all quarter.

PREREQUISITES

- Unit 1: the five pure vowels and the special letters (silent h, ñ, ll, j, rr)
- The first eight vocabulary words: agua, tierra, estrella, luna, sol, familia, casa, amigo
- Can read a Spanish word aloud from its spelling

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can explain what el and la are, and why gender in grammar means word families, not boys and girls.
- ☐ I can put the right hat on an -o or -a noun without peeking, and I know the hats for the person-words (el niño, la niña, el señor, la señora).
- ☐ I can turn a singular noun into a plural, with -s after a vowel and -es after a consonant, and change el/la to los/las.
- ☐ I can use un, una, unos and unas correctly.
- ☐ I can name two rule-breakers (el día; agua, the la-word that borrows el) and use them correctly.
- ☐ Every noun flashcard in my deck now has its el or la written on it.

OPTIONAL BOOKS AND RESOURCES FOR THIS UNIT

- **Salsa, from Georgia Public Broadcasting**: Free online. A gentle video series that teaches Spanish to young children with puppets and fairy tales. Made for younger students, but a cheerful listening workout for any beginner, and the household words of this unit are everywhere in it.
- ***First Thousand Words in Spanish*, by Heather Amery (Usborne)**: The picture-word book from Unit 1 earns its keep this unit: every busy page is a house or street full of labeled nouns, each wearing its el or la.
- **SpanishDict**: Free online. Type any noun to check its hat: the dictionary shows el or la (marked m. or f.) with every entry, and the speaker button says it aloud.

Not required. Every activity in this unit works with paper, pencil, scissors and the free links below. School Launch has no ties to these authors, publishers or companies.

LESSONS IN THIS UNIT

2.1 The Waterseller's Words: El and La

3 sessions of 30–40 minutes

2.2 One Grape, Many Grapes: Plurals

3 sessions of 30–40 minutes

UNIT 2 REVIEW

Answer each question in complete sentences where asked. The review is worth 30 points. It may be done orally, with a parent writing down the answers.

1. **5 pts**

What are el and la, and what do the -o and -a endings usually tell you? What is the one thing gender does NOT mean for things like tables and books?

2. **5 pts**

Put the right hat on each: libro, puerta, pan, iglesia, sol.

3. **5 pts**

State the two plural rules with one example each, and show what happens to the hats.

4. **5 pts**

Translate: a dog, some stars, the days, the mothers.

5. **5 pts**

Explain the two famous oddities you met this unit: el día and el agua.

6. **5 pts**

Who painted the waterseller of Seville, and who painted the boys with the grapes?

Tell one thing both painters chose to do that most painters of their day did not.

ANSWER KEY

1. El and la are the two articles, the hats of the two noun families (masculine and feminine). Nouns in -o are almost always el, nouns in -a almost always la. For things, gender is a word-family system, not a claim that objects are boys or girls.
2. El libro, la puerta, el pan, la iglesia, el sol.
3. Vowel ending: add -s (la mesa, las mesas). Consonant ending: add -es (la flor, las flores). The hats change too: el becomes los, la becomes las.
4. Un perro, unas estrellas, los días, las madres.
5. El día ends in -a but wears el because its Latin parent dies was in the el family; its plural is los días. Agua is a la-word that borrows el in the singular (el agua) because la agua is awkward to say; the plural las aguas shows its true family.
6. Velázquez painted the waterseller; Murillo painted the boys eating grapes and melon. Both painted poor, ordinary people of Seville, a waterseller, street children, with the same dignity and care other painters saved for kings and nobles.

UNIT CHALLENGE: LABEL THE HOUSE

Turn your home into a Spanish classroom. On sticky notes or strips of masking tape, write the Spanish names, hats on, of at least fifteen things you can see every day: la puerta, la mesa, el libro, la casa (on the front door!), la escuela (on your school shelf), el agua (on the water pitcher), la leche (on the milk, ask first), la flor, la noche (on a window, for fun). Letter them large and neatly, and say each one aloud as you stick it up. Where you know the plural truly applies, label it plural: los libros on the bookshelf, las flores on the vase. Then give your family the grand tour: walk them around the house, point to each label, and have them repeat after you, pure vowels and all. Leave the labels up all quarter; by December nobody in the house will be able to look at a door without thinking la puerta.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
Fifteen true labels	At least fifteen things labeled with the correct Spanish noun, each wearing its correct el, la, los or las.
Plurals used honestly	At least three labels are correct plurals (los libros, las flores) placed where there really are many.
Craftsmanship	Lettering is large, neat and readable across the room; accents and the ñ are written where they belong.
The grand tour	The student led the family around, pronounced every label with pure vowels, and taught the family to say three of them.

UNIT 2 • NOUNS WEAR HATS: EL AND LA • LESSON 2.1 OF 10 • 3 SESSIONS OF 30-40 MINUTES

2.1 THE WATERSELLER'S WORDS: EL AND LA

OBJECTIVES

- Explain what it means that every Spanish noun is el or la.
- Use the -o and -a clue to choose el or la, and know the person-word pairs (el niño, la niña).
- Learn ten new nouns with their hats: el libro, la mesa, la puerta, el perro, el gato, el niño, la niña, el pan, la escuela, la iglesia.
- Go back and put the right hats on the Unit 1 words.

Warm-up. Drill your sound cards, then read these aloud with pure vowels: casa, perro, libro, escuela, iglesia. Now a puzzle: English says the house, the dog, the book, one word for all of them. Spanish has two little words where English has one, and it never mixes them up. Today you learn the sorting secret.

WATCH

How to know if a Noun is Masculine or Feminine Spanish (Revised 2022).

Señor Jordan · 12:09

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wvMY7wYYOU0>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the How Spanish works paragraph. It is the longest video of the quarter, so settle in; Señor Jordan is a Spanish teacher and this is his classic whiteboard lesson on the el and la families.

Note: He covers more ending-clues than this lesson needs (like -ción and -dad, which you met in Unit 1: both are la families). Enjoy the extras; the heart of it is -o and -a.

BACKUP VIDEO

EL? LA? How to choose the correct gender in Spanish - All You Need to Know About Spanish Articles

My Daily Spanish · 7:45

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2bJy0ehC0i8>

A shorter second pass at the same rules, if the first video felt like a lot.

KEY TERMS

noun

A word that names a person, place or thing: libro, mesa, perro, escuela.

article

The little word in front of a noun. Spanish has el and la for the (and, soon, los and las), and un and una for a or an.

gender

The two great families every Spanish noun belongs to: the el family (called masculine) and the la family (called feminine). For things like tables and books it is about word families, not about boys and girls.

feminine

The la family. Most nouns ending in -a are in it: la mesa, la puerta, la escuela.

masculine

The el family. Most nouns ending in -o are in it: el libro, el perro, el gato.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Latin American sounds: h is silent, ñ says ny, ll says y, j says a breathy h, and z and soft c say s, not the th of Spain. Capitals show the stress.

libro

LEE-broh

noun · el libro

a book

mesa

MEH-sah

noun · la mesa

a table

puerta

PWEHR-tah

noun · la puerta

a door

perro

PEH-rroh

noun · el perro

a dog

gato

GAH-toh

noun · el gato

a cat

niño

NEE-nyoh

noun · el niño

a boy

niña

NEE-nyah

noun · la niña

a girl

pan

PAHN

noun · el pan

bread

escuela

ehs-KWEH-lah

noun · la escuela

a school

iglesia

ee-GLEH-syah

noun · la iglesia

a church

mano

MAH-noh

noun · la mano (feminine)

a hand

CORE IDEAS

The story. Around 1620, in the hot southern city of Seville, a painter barely out of his teens set up his easel in front of an old man who sold water in the street. Water selling was the humblest work in the city: the aguador walked the streets all day with clay jugs, selling cool drinks by the glass. The young painter was Diego Velázquez, and instead of painting a king or a saint, he painted the waterseller with as much care and dignity as if he were an emperor: the worn brown cloak, the beads of water on the big clay jug, the fresh fig dropped in the glass to sweeten the water, the solemn face of a man doing honest work. The painting was so good that Velázquez carried it to Madrid as proof of what he could do, and it helped win him the post of painter to the king, where he became one of the greatest painters who ever lived. He never forgot the lesson of Seville: ordinary people and ordinary things, *el agua, el pan, la casa*, are worth looking at closely. That is what this lesson does with words.

How Spanish works: every noun wears a hat. In English, the word *the* fits every noun. In Spanish, every noun belongs to one of two families, and each family has its own word for *the*: the **el family** (grammarians call it masculine) and the **la family** (feminine). *El libro*, the book; *la mesa*, the table. Here is the key: for things, this has nothing to do with boys and girls. A table is not a girl and a book is not a boy; *el* and *la* are simply the two sorting bins every noun in the language goes into, a system Spanish inherited from its mother, Latin. You cannot say a Spanish noun properly without its hat, so from today, every noun flashcard gets its *el* or *la* written right on it: not *mesa* but *la mesa*.

The great clue: -o and -a. How do you know which family a noun is in? Spanish gives you a wonderfully reliable clue. Nouns ending in **-o are almost always el**: *el libro*, *el perro*, *el gato*. Nouns ending in **-a are almost always la**: *la mesa*, *la puerta*, *la escuela*, *la iglesia*. For words naming people, the family follows the person: *el niño* (the boy), *la niña* (the girl), *el señor*, *la señora*. And some nouns end in other letters (*el pan*, *la flor*, *el sol*); those you simply learn with their hats on, which is why the hat goes on the flashcard. One charming exception now, so it never surprises you: **agua** is a *la*-word, but Spanish borrows *el* right in front of it, *el agua*, because *la agua* is awkward to say, the same reason English says an apple instead of *a* apple. In the plural the truth comes out: *las aguas*.

Say it out loud. Here are your ten new words, hats on: *el libro* (book), *la mesa* (table), *la puerta* (door), *el perro* (dog), *el gato* (cat), *el niño* (boy), *la niña* (girl), *el pan* (bread), *la escuela* (school), *la iglesia* (church). Say each one twice, article and noun together, like

one word: el-LI-bro, la-ME-sa. Then put hats on your Unit 1 words: la tierra, la estrella, la luna, el sol, la familia, la casa, el amigo, and the famous el agua.

Try it. This week you will play the great el/la sort: all eighteen of your nouns on cards, sorted into two piles by their hats, shuffled and sorted again until your hands know the families. Next lesson, one of everything becomes many.

PICTURE STUDY



The Waterseller of Seville, Diego Velázquez, c. 1620 · Oil on canvas · Apsley House, London

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Velázquez was about twenty when he painted this, and it made his name. A waterseller was among the poorest workers of Seville, yet Velázquez gives him the gravity of a king: the light falls on the great clay jug, the water beads on its side, and the old man hands the boy a glass with a fresh fig in it, the waterseller's way of keeping the drink sweet. Look at how seriously the painter took *el agua, el pan de cada día*, the ordinary things of an ordinary day.

Look closely

- Find the water drops running down the big clay jug in front. Velázquez painted them so faithfully people say you can feel the coolness.
- Look at the glass passing between the old man and the boy. Can you spot the fig resting in the bottom of the water?
- Compare the three faces: the old man in the light, the boy, and the shadowy third man drinking in the background. Three ages of life in one little shop.
- Look at the waterseller's cloak. It is torn at the shoulder, yet he stands like a nobleman. What does the painter want you to feel about him?

Talk about it

1. Why do you think young Velázquez chose a poor waterseller, and not a rich lord, to prove what he could do?

2. The painting treats ordinary things, water, clay, bread-colored light, as worth the closest attention. How is that like what you are doing with ordinary words this week?
3. El agua, el vaso, la mano: which things in this painting can you already name in Spanish, hats on?

ACTIVITY

The great el/la sort

Eighteen nouns, two families, one pair of fast hands. Today you make your noun cards wear their hats, and you sort them until the sorting feels automatic.

You will need

- 10 index cards for the new vocabulary
- Your Unit 1 flashcards
- Two slips of paper labeled EL and LA, and your Spanish notebook

Steps

1. Make a flashcard for each new word with the article written on: el libro, la mesa, la puerta, el perro, el gato, el niño, la niña, el pan, la escuela, la iglesia. Spanish (with hat) on the front, English on the back.
2. Take your eight Unit 1 cards and add the hats: la tierra, la estrella, la luna, el sol, la familia, la casa, el amigo, and el agua (write on that card: la-word that borrows el!).
3. Lay the EL and LA labels on the table. Shuffle all eighteen cards and sort them into the two families, saying each one aloud, article first: el perro... la puerta...
4. Have a parent quiz you the other way: they say the English (door), you answer with the hat on (la puerta). Go through the whole deck.
5. In your notebook, draw a two-column chart, EL and LA, and write every noun you own in its column, neatly, dated.
6. Finish with a lightning round: the parent points at things around the room that you know (door, table, book, dog...), and you call out the Spanish with its hat.

Tips

- Always say the article and noun together, like one word. Nobody in the Spanish-speaking world learns mesa; they learn la mesa.
- The -o and -a clue covers most words; for the rest (el pan, el sol), the card is the teacher: picture the hat written on the card.
- If you miss one, say it right three times out loud and move on. Cheerful repetition is the whole game.

Check your work

- ☐ All eighteen of my noun cards have their el or la written on.
- ☐ I sorted the full deck into EL and LA piles with no mistakes.
- ☐ I answered English-to-Spanish with the right hat for at least fifteen of eighteen.
- ☐ My notebook has the two-column EL/LA chart, dated.

SPANISH NOTEBOOK

1. Write the ten new vocabulary words with their meanings, hats on, in a neat two-column list, dated.
2. Draw the EL/LA sorting chart with all eighteen nouns in their columns.
3. Copy and complete: 'For things, el and la are about word families, not about boys and girls, because...'
4. Write the agua rule in your own words: why do we say el agua but las aguas?

From history. The hats are an inheritance. Latin sorted its nouns into families too, and the daughters kept the system: Latin terra became la tierra, liber became el libro, luna stayed la luna. Latin even had a third family, the neuter, which melted away as Latin became Spanish; most of its words moved into the el family. A student of our Latin courses is watching the same nouns, two thousand years older, still wearing hats.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Which hat does each noun wear: libro, escuela, gato, puerta?

▼ Show solution

1. Check the ending of each word.
2. Libro and gato end in -o: el family.
3. Escuela and puerta end in -a: la family.

Answer: El libro, la escuela, el gato, la puerta.

Example 2. How do you say the boy and the girl, and why do the hats differ?

▼ **Show solution**

1. For people, the family follows the person.
2. Boy: el niño. Girl: la niña.
3. Notice the ending changes with the hat: -o with el, -a with la.

Answer: El niño, la niña. Person-words wear the hat that matches the person.

Example 3. Pan ends in -n and sol ends in -l. How do you know their hats?

▼ **Show solution**

1. The -o/-a clue is silent for these endings.
2. You learn such nouns with the hat on the flashcard: el pan, el sol.
3. Say them as one piece: el-PAN, el-SOL.

Answer: El pan, el sol, learned with their hats on. When the ending gives no clue, the flashcard does.

PRACTICE

1. **Easy** Put the right hat on: perro, mesa, libro, iglesia.

▼ **Show answer**

El perro, la mesa, el libro, la iglesia.

2. **Easy** Say the boy, the girl, the gentleman and the lady in Spanish.

▼ **Show answer**

El niño, la niña, el señor, la señora.

3. **Easy** What does the -o or -a ending usually tell you about a noun?

▼ **Show answer**

Which family it is in: -o nouns are almost always el (el libro), -a nouns are almost always la (la mesa).

4. **Medium** Translate with hats on: the school, the bread, the sun, the star.

▼ **Show answer**

La escuela, el pan, el sol, la estrella.

5. **Medium** True or false, and explain: 'La mesa is feminine, so Spanish speakers think a table is a girl.'

▼ **Show answer**

False. For things, gender is a word-family system Spanish inherited from Latin; la mesa simply belongs to the la family. Nobody thinks tables are girls.

6. **Medium** Why do we say el agua if agua is a la-word? What gives the secret away in the plural?

▼ **Show answer**

Spanish borrows el before agua because la agua is awkward to say, like a apple in English. The plural las aguas shows its true family.

7. **Hard** You meet three new nouns: la ventana (window), el suelo (floor), la pared (wall). Which could you have guessed from the ending, and which must the flashcard teach you?

▼ **Show answer**

Ventana (-a, la) and suelo (-o, el) follow the clue. Pared ends in -d, so its hat, la, must be learned with the word.

8. **Challenge** From Unit 1 you know that -ción words like nación and estación came across a bridge from English -tion. They are all la words. Say the station and the nation in Spanish, and state the bonus rule you have just discovered.

▼ **Show answer**

La estación, la nación. Bonus rule: every -ción noun is in the la family.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Learning nouns bare, without the hat. Mesa is half a word; la mesa is the whole word. Write the article on every card.
- Thinking gender means boys and girls for things. It is a sorting system for words; only person-words follow the person.
- Guessing la for every word that is not -o. El pan, el sol and el día wear el; when the ending gives no clue, the flashcard decides.
- Saying the article and noun as two separate words with a pause. Say them like one word: el-LI-bro.

Make it a game · El/La Relay. Put two baskets or paper plates across the room, labeled EL and LA. Shuffle all eighteen noun cards into a pile. On go, the student takes the top card, shouts the noun with its hat (¡la puerta!), and runs it to the right basket. Time the full deck, then try to beat the time with no wrong baskets. A wrong hat sends the card back to the pile.

Scripture. “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” (John 4:14, KJV)

Jesus said this beside a well, to a woman who had come for ordinary water, el agua. In Spanish Bibles this is el agua viva, the living water: the first Spanish phrase of this unit, and one of the oldest promises in the world.

UNIT 2 · NOUNS WEAR HATS: EL AND LA · LESSON 2.2 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 30–40 MINUTES

2.2 ONE GRAPE, MANY GRAPES: PLURALS

OBJECTIVES

- Form plurals: add -s after a vowel, -es after a consonant, and change el/la to los/las.
- Use un, una (a, an) and unos, unas (some) with the right family.
- Learn six new nouns: la leche, la flor, el día, la noche, la madre, el padre, and spot the rule-breaker el día.
- Translate noun phrases both ways: the dogs, some flowers, a book.

Warm-up. Sort five cards from your deck into EL and LA as fast as you can, saying each aloud. Now look around the room: how many doors? One, la puerta. How many books? Many. English adds -s: books. Guess what Spanish does. (You are going to like this lesson: Spanish agrees with you.)

WATCH

How to say "The" in Spanish

Señor Jordan · 11:16

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s6Jb03SMNQE>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the How Spanish works paragraph. Señor Jordan puts the whole hat family on one whiteboard: el, la, los, las, with singulars turning into plurals before your eyes.

Note: Another unhurried classic from the same teacher as last week. Pause it and answer along whenever he asks.

BACKUP VIDEO

Singular and Plural Nouns in Spanish: Rules and Examples

Spanish Learning Lab · 8:18

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=plBIRXLoQag>

A second pass focused just on the -s and -es rules, with many examples to say aloud.

KEY TERMS

singular

Naming one: el gato, the cat.

plural

Naming more than one: los gatos, the cats. Spanish adds -s after a vowel and -es after a consonant, and the hat changes too.

los and las

The plural hats: el becomes los, la becomes las. Los perros, las mesas.

un and una

A or an: un libro (a book), una mesa (a table). In the plural, unos and unas mean some: unos libros, unas flores.

rule-breaker

A noun whose hat ignores the ending clue, like el día: it ends in -a but wears el, because its Latin mother-word dies was in the el family.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Latin American sounds: h is silent, ñ says ny, ll says y, j says a breathy h, and z and soft c say s, not the th of Spain. Capitals show the stress.

leche

LEH-cheh

noun · la leche

milk

flor

FLOR

noun · la flor, las flores

a flower

noche

NOH-cheh

noun · la noche, las noches

night

madre

MAH-dreh

noun · la madre, las madres

mother

padre

PAH-dreh

noun · el padre, los padres

father

uva

OO-bah

noun · la uva, las uvas

a grape

queso

KEH-soh

noun · el queso, los quesos

cheese

hermano

ehr-MAH-noh

noun · el hermano, los hermanos

a brother

hermana

ehr-MAH-nah

noun · la hermana, las hermanas

a sister

hijo

EE-hoh

noun · el hijo, los hijos

a son

hija

EE-hah

noun · la hija, las hijas

a daughter

CORE IDEAS

The story. A generation after Velázquez left Seville for the king's palace, another painter stayed home and became the city's favorite: Bartolomé Esteban Murillo. He knew hardship from the inside: his parents died when he was a boy, and he was raised by his older sister. Seville in his day had been through plague and hunger, and its streets were full of poor children scraping by. Rich collectors wanted paintings of nobles; Murillo painted the street children, and he painted them the way a kind uncle

sees them: two boys sprawled in a doorway with stolen sunshine, a basket, and a feast of grapes and melon, juice on their chins, utterly happy. He painted hundreds of gentle religious pictures too, and gave much of what he earned to the poor of his city. When you look at his boys you are looking at *las uvas*, the grapes, by the bunch, which is exactly today's grammar: how Spanish turns one of something into many.

How Spanish works: making many. English adds -s to make a plural, and Spanish does nearly the same thing, with one refinement. **If the noun ends in a vowel, add -s:** *la mesa*, *las mesas*; *el libro*, *los libros*; *el gato*, *los gatos*. **If it ends in a consonant, add -es:** *la flor*, *las flores*; *el señor*, *los señores*; *el sol*, *los soles*. (One tidy footnote: a word ending in -z swaps it for -ces, so one *lápiz*, a pencil, becomes *dos lápices*. You will meet few of these this quarter.) And here is the part English forgot: **the hat goes plural too.** *El* becomes *los*, *la* becomes *las*. You never say *el gatos*; the article and the noun change together, like partners in a dance: *el gato*, *los gatos*; *la estrella*, *las estrellas*.

A, an and some. Spanish has a second pair of hats for *a* and *an*: **un** for the *el* family, **una** for the *la* family: *un libro*, a book; *una mesa*, a table. And these have plurals meaning some: **unos** and **unas**: *unos libros*, some books; *unas flores*, some flowers. So every noun you own can now wear four hats: *el gato*, *los gatos*, *un gato*, *unos gatos*.

Say it out loud, and meet the rule-breaker. Your six new words: *la leche* (milk), *la flor* (flower), *el día* (day), *la noche* (night), *la madre* (mother), *el padre* (father). Look hard at **el día**: it ends in -a but wears *el*. It is a rule-breaker, and it broke the rule honestly: its Latin mother-word, *dies*, was in the *el* family, and the daughter kept the hat even after the ending changed. You already know one other oddity, *el agua*, the *la*-word that borrows *el*. Rule-breakers are rare; greet them by name and they will never trip you. Now chant the dance pairs: *la flor*, *las flores*; *el día*, *los días*; *la noche*, *las noches*; *buenos días*, *buenas noches*, good morning, good night, two phrases you have been saying since week 1, and look, they are plural: Spanish wishes you many good days at once.

Try it. This week you will build the plural machine, a folding card that turns singulars into plurals, and run your whole deck through it. At the end of the unit comes the big one: you will label the house, so that every door, table and bed in your home wears its Spanish name all quarter.

PICTURE STUDY



Boys Eating Grapes and Melon, Bartolomé Esteban Murillo, c. 1645 · Oil on canvas · Alte Pinakothek, Munich

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Murillo painted the street children of Seville again and again, not to shame them but to see them: barefoot, sunburned, quick-fingered and alive. Here two boys have come into a feast, a melon and a basket of grapes, *las uvas*, and Murillo catches the pure concentration of children eating something delicious. He was an orphan himself, raised by his sister, and all his life he gave to the poor of his city. The painting now hangs in Munich, where it has been teaching people to look kindly for over three hundred years.

Look closely

- Count what you can: how many boys? How many melon slices? How many grapes in the lifted bunch? Singular and plural are everywhere in a picture like this.
- Look at the boys' feet and clothes. What do they tell you about the boys' life? Now look at their faces: what do those tell you?
- Find the basket. Murillo was famous for painting humble things, wicker, clay, fruit skins, so truly you can almost touch them.
- Where is the light coming from? Notice how it picks out the fruit and the boys' faces and lets the doorway fall into shadow.

Talk about it

1. Why do you think Murillo chose to paint poor children so often, when rich buyers wanted grand subjects?
2. The painter shows the boys' hardship and their happiness at the same time. How does he manage both?
3. Las uvas, el melón, los niños: say everything you can name in this painting in Spanish, hats on, singular or plural as the picture shows it.

ACTIVITY

The plural machine

Today you build a little paper machine that eats singulars and spits out plurals, and you feed your whole flashcard deck through it.

You will need

- 6 index cards for the new vocabulary
- 2 sheets of paper, scissors and a pencil
- Your flashcard deck and Spanish notebook

Steps

1. Make the six new flashcards, hats on: la leche, la flor, el día, la noche, la madre, el padre. On the el día card, write RULE-BREAKER proudly across the bottom.
2. Build the machine: fold a sheet of paper in half like a tent. On the left panel write the two rules big: VOWEL + S and CONSONANT + ES. On the right panel write the hat changes: EL → LOS, LA → LAS, UN → UNOS, UNA → UNAS.
3. Feed the machine: draw a card from your deck, say the singular aloud (la flor), then push it under the fold and say the plural as it comes out the other side (las flores). Run at least fifteen nouns through.
4. Switch hats: a parent calls a noun from the deck with a or some (a dog, some stars), and you answer: un perro, unas estrellas.
5. In your notebook, make a four-column chart, EL/LOS/UN/UNOS across the top for one noun, LA/LAS/UNA/UNAS for another, and fill in gato and mesa as your models.
6. Finish with the dance: chant five pairs out loud with a clap between: el gato (clap) los gatos; la noche (clap) las noches.

Tips

- The article and noun change together, always. If you said los, the noun must end in -s or -es.
- Flor and sol take -es because they end in consonants: las flores, los soles.
- Watch el día: los días is its plural, el hat all the way through.

Check your work

- ☐ My six new cards are made, and el día is marked as a rule-breaker.
- ☐ I ran fifteen nouns through the machine with the right -s or -es.
- ☐ I can give all four hats for gato and mesa without looking.
- ☐ My notebook has the four-column hat chart, dated.

SPANISH NOTEBOOK

1. Write the six new vocabulary words with meanings, hats on, dated.
2. Copy the two plural rules and the hat changes (el → los, la → las, un → unos, una → unas) as a boxed chart.
3. Write the dance pairs for five nouns: singular on the left, plural on the right.
4. Copy and complete: 'El día breaks the -a rule because...'

From history. Spanish got its -s plural from its mother: Latin made many of its plurals with -s (terras, amigos, stellas), and the daughter kept the habit. English -s is a family trait from a different family, the Germanic one, so the two languages arrived at the same -s by different roads, a handy coincidence for you. French, another daughter of Latin, kept the written -s but stopped pronouncing it; Spanish says every one, which is why Spanish spelling stays so honest.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Make them plural, hats and all: la estrella, el señor, un libro.

▼ **Show solution**

1. Estrella ends in a vowel: add -s, and la becomes las.
2. Señor ends in a consonant: add -es, and el becomes los.
3. Un becomes unos, and libro takes -s.

Answer: Las estrellas, los señores, unos libros.

Example 2. Translate into Spanish: the days, a flower, some girls.

▼ **Show solution**

1. Day is the rule-breaker el día; plural: los días.
2. A flower: flor is a la-family word, so una flor.
3. Some girls: la niña goes plural as las niñas, and some is unas: unas niñas.

Answer: Los días, una flor, unas niñas.

Example 3. A student wrote el gatos. Fix it and explain.

▼ **Show solution**

1. The noun went plural but the hat did not.
2. El must become los when gato becomes gatos.
3. Partners in a dance: both change or neither.

Answer: Los gatos. The article and the noun always agree in number.

PRACTICE

1. **Easy** Make them plural: el libro, la mesa, el gato.

▼ **Show answer**

Los libros, las mesas, los gatos.

2. **Easy** Say in Spanish: a book, a table, a dog.

▼ **Show answer**

Un libro, una mesa, un perro.

3. **Easy** Which plural ending do flor and señor take, and why?

▼ **Show answer**

-es, because they end in consonants: las flores, los señores.

4. **Medium** Translate: the nights, some stars, the fathers.

▼ **Show answer**

Las noches, unas estrellas, los padres.

5. **Medium** Buenos días means good morning but días is plural. What is Spanish literally wishing you, and what is the singular of días?

▼ **Show answer**

Literally good days, many at once. The singular is el día, the rule-breaker that ends in -a but wears el.

6. **Medium** Fix the errors: la días, los mesa, un escuela.

▼ **Show answer**

Los días (el-family, plural needs los), la mesa (singular) or las mesas (plural), una escuela (la-family takes una).

7. **Hard** Translate both ways: (a) las iglesias into English; (b) some friends into Spanish; (c) the suns of other worlds would start with which two Spanish words?

▼ **Show answer**

(a) The churches. (b) Unos amigos. (c) Los soles (sol takes -es and el becomes los).

8. **Challenge** One pencil is un lápiz. Using the -z footnote, write two pencils, and explain what happened to the z.

▼ **Show answer**

Dos lápices: a final -z swaps to -c before the -es ending. (And lápiz wears el: el lápiz, los lápices.)

COMMON MISTAKES

- Changing the noun but not the hat: el gatos. Both change together: los gatos.
- Adding bare -s to consonant words: los señors. Consonant endings take -es: los señores.
- Treating el día as a la word because of the -a. It is a rule-breaker: el día, los días, buenos días.
- Mixing un and una: un mesa. The a/an hat follows the family too: una mesa, un libro.

Make it a game · Uno y Muchos. The parent grabs small things from around the house, one pencil, three spoons, two books, five crayons, and holds them up one group at a time. The student must answer with the right form fast: un lápiz if there is one, unos lápices if there are several (any noun you know works: un libro, unos libros). One point per right answer, two if the hat and the ending are both perfect. Play to 10, then trade places: the student holds up the objects and judges the parent's Spanish.

Scripture. “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I bring forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.” (John 15:5, KJV)

Jesus talked about grapes too: the vine, the branches and the fruit, las uvas, by the clusterful. In Spanish Bibles He says Yo soy la vid, I am the vine. One vine, many branches, much fruit: singular and plural carrying the deepest things.

UNIT 3

VERBS DO THE WORK

Nouns name the world; verbs make it move. In Lesson 3.1 you ride out with Don Quixote, the most famous knight who never was, as he charges a field of windmills he has mistaken for giants, and you learn the engine of Spanish: the present tense of -ar verbs. One verb, five endings, and no pronouns needed: hablo means I speak all by itself, because the ending carries the person. It is the very trick Latin uses, and Spanish learned it at her mother's knee.

In Lesson 3.2 you meet the bravest book in Spanish: the Biblia del Oso, the Bear Bible of 1569, the first whole Bible printed in the Spanish language, made by a scholar who worked twelve years in exile to give his people the Scriptures. Its verb is the most important one in any language: ser, to be. Soy, eres, es, somos, son, and with it your first eight adjectives, so you can finally say real things: La casa es blanca. El perro es grande. Dios es amor.

PREREQUISITES

- Units 1–2: pure vowels, the special letters, and nouns with their hats (el/la, los/las, un/una)
- Can turn a singular noun into a plural
- The flashcard deck so far: 32 words, drilled at the start of every session

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can chant the present tense of hablar (hablo, hablas, habla, hablamos, hablan) and plug any -ar verb into the same endings.
- ☐ I can explain why Spanish usually needs no words for I, you or we: the verb ending carries the person.
- ☐ I can chant ser: soy, eres, es, somos, son.
- ☐ I can make sentences with es and an adjective, and match the adjective's -o or -a to the noun's family: el gato es negro, la casa es blanca.
- ☐ I can translate simple sentences both ways: La niña canta. We work. El libro es bueno.
- ☐ My verb wheel is made, and my notebook has the hablar and ser charts, dated.

OPTIONAL BOOKS AND RESOURCES FOR THIS UNIT

- ***Getting Started with Spanish*, by William E. Linney:** By the same author as *Getting Started with Latin* from our Latin shelf: one tiny new thing per lesson, made for homeschool families with no Spanish background. If you want a gentle daily supplement beyond this quarter, this is the one.
- **SpanishDict conjugation charts:** Free online. Type any verb and see its full chart; press the speaker to hear each form. Check your verb wheel against it.
- **The Reina-Valera Bible online:** Free online. The descendant of the Bear Bible, still the most read Spanish Bible. Look up a verse you know well in English and see how many words you can already recognize.

Not required. Every activity in this unit works with paper, pencil, scissors and the free links below. School Launch has no ties to these authors, publishers or companies.

3.1 Don Quixote Rides: Hablo, Hablas, Habla

3 sessions of 30–40 minutes

3.2 The Bear Bible: Soy, Eres, Es

3 sessions of 30–40 minutes

UNIT 3 REVIEW

Answer each question in complete sentences where asked. The review is worth 30 points. It may be done orally, with a parent writing down the answers.

1. **5 pts**

Conjugate hablar through all five forms with English, and explain why Spanish needs no separate word for I or we.

2. **5 pts**

Translate into Spanish: They sing. We study. The girl walks.

3. **5 pts**

Chant ser, and translate: Somos amigos. Es el padre.

4. **5 pts**

Fill the endings and translate: El perro es negr_. La casa es pequeñ_.

5. **5 pts**

Tell the story of the Biblia del Oso: who made it, what it cost him, and why it is called the Bear Bible.

6. **5 pts**

Cervantes gave Spanish its most famous book. Name the book, tell what happens in the windmill scene, and give one Spanish verb from this unit that describes something in that scene.

ANSWER KEY

1. Hablo (I speak), hablas (you speak), habla (he/she speaks), hablamos (we speak), hablan (they speak). The ending names the doer, so pronouns are saved for emphasis.
2. Cantan. Estudiamos. La niña camina.
3. Soy, eres, es, somos, son. We are friends. He is (it is) the father.
4. El perro es negro (the dog is black). La casa es pequeña (the house is small).
5. Casiodoro de Reina, a monk from Seville, fled Spain because translating the Bible into Spanish was forbidden, and worked about twelve years in exile to translate the whole Bible. It was printed in Basel in 1569 with the printer's emblem of a bear reaching for honey on the title page, so Spaniards called it the Bear Bible. Revised by Valera, it became the Reina-Valera, still read today.
6. Don Quixote (1605). The old knight sees thirty or forty windmills, takes them for giants, and charges them with his lance; a sail knocks him and his horse to the ground while Sancho Panza looks on. Verbs: camina (he walks/rides out), mira (he looks at the windmills), habla (he speaks to Sancho), canta (he sings to his lady), any fit.

UNIT CHALLENGE: THE ILLUMINATED VERSE

Medieval scribes honored great words by illuminating them: large, beautiful letters, gold where they could afford it, vines and stars in the margins. This week you illuminate the unit's great sentence: Dios es amor (1 Juan 4:8). On a full sheet, letter the three Spanish words large and perfectly spelled, with the reference small beneath. Around them, draw what belongs to the verse and to your quarter so far: a bear and a honey tree for the Bible that carried the words into Spanish, stars and the moon you can now name, your house, your family. Color it richly. On the back, write the verse in English and the chant of ser, and sign and date it like a scribe: your name, the date. Then present it: read the verse aloud in Spanish, pure vowels, and tell the family in one minute who Casiodoro de Reina was and why the words exist in Spanish at all.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
The verse	Dios es amor lettered large, spelled perfectly, with the reference 1 Juan 4:8 beneath.
Illumination	The decoration tells the story: bear and honey tree, and at least two things the student can name in Spanish, drawn with care and fully colored.
The back of the page	English verse, the full chant of ser, signature and date, all neat.
Presentation	The student read the verse aloud with pure vowels and told Reina's story in his or her own words.

UNIT 3 · VERBS DO THE WORK · LESSON 3.1 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 30–40 MINUTES

3.1 DON QUIXOTE RIDES: HABLO, HABLAS, HABLA

OBJECTIVES

- Find the stem of an -ar verb and attach the five present-tense endings: -o, -as, -a, -amos, -an.
- Explain why hablo needs no yo: the ending carries the person.
- Learn eight -ar verbs: hablar, cantar, caminar, trabajar, mirar, escuchar, estudiar, amar.
- Translate simple sentences both ways: El niño canta. We study.

Warm-up. Run the flashcard deck, then try this with your hands: clap once and say hablo, I speak. Clap twice: hablas, you speak. Three: habla, he speaks. English needed six words to say what Spanish just said in three. Today you find out how one little verb carries the whole crew.

WATCH

01024 Spanish Lesson - Present Tense - AR verbs: all forms

Señor Jordan · 6:50

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gmjWWphCx5k>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the How Spanish works paragraphs, before Say it out loud. Chant the endings along with him: this is the central chart of the whole quarter.

Note: Señor Jordan includes the vosotros form used in Spain (habláis); this course chants the five Latin American forms, and it is good to know the sixth exists.

BACKUP VIDEO

AR Verbs in Spanish | The Language Tutor *Lesson 13*

The Language Tutor - Spanish · 11:21

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TF71Ca3def8>

A slower, fuller second pass with many verbs plugged into the same endings. Made for a slightly older audience.

KEY TERMS

verb

A word for doing or being: hablar, to speak; cantar, to sing; caminar, to walk.

infinitive

The verb's name-form, the one the dictionary lists: hablar, to speak. Spanish infinitives end in -ar, -er or -ir; this quarter is the -ar family.

stem

The verb with its -ar taken off: habl- from hablar, cant- from cantar. The stem holds the meaning; the endings do the pointing.

ending

The tail that tells who is acting: -o is I, -as is you, -a is he, she or it (or usted), -amos is we, -an is they (or ustedes).

conjugation

Running a verb through all its persons in order: hablo, hablas, habla, hablamos, hablan. Said out loud, in rhythm, every day.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Latin American sounds: h is silent, ñ says ny, ll says y, j says a breathy h, and z and soft c say s, not the th of Spain. Capitals show the stress.

hablar

ah-BLAHR

verb · hablo, hablas, habla, hablamos, hablan

I speak

cantar

kahn-TAHR

verb · canto, cantas, canta, cantamos, cantan

I sing

caminar

kah-mee-NAHR

verb · camino, caminas, camina, caminamos, caminan

I walk

trabajar

trah-bah-HAHR

verb · trabajo, trabajas, trabaja, trabajamos, trabajan

I work

mirar

mee-RRahr

verb · miro, miras, mira, miramos, miran

I look

escuchar

ehs-koo-CHahr

verb · escucho, escuchas, escucha, escuchamos, escuchan

I listen

estudiar

ehs-too-DYahr

verb · estudio, estudias, estudia, estudiamos, estudian

I study

amar

ah-MAhr

verb · amo, amas, ama, amamos, aman

I love

entrar

ehn-TRahr

verb · entro, entras, entra, entramos, entran

I enter

llegar

yeh-GAhr

verb · llego, llegas, llega, llegamos, llegan

I arrive

comprar

kohm-PRAhr

verb · compro, compras, compra, compramos, compran

I buy

The story. Miguel de Cervantes had enough adventure for ten books before he wrote one. He fought as a young soldier in the great sea battle of Lepanto in 1571, where wounds crippled his left hand for life; sailing home, he was captured by pirates and spent five years a prisoner in Algiers before his family and friends scraped together the ransom. Home at last, he worked hard jobs and stayed poor. And then, as an old man, he wrote the book that made Spanish famous forever: *Don Quixote*, printed in 1605, the story of an elderly gentleman who reads so many books about knights that he decides to become one, puts on rusty armor, names his bony horse Rocinante, and rides out to do great deeds with his sensible neighbor Sancho Panza trailing behind. In the most famous scene of all, Don Quixote sees thirty or forty windmills on the plain and charges them with his lance, certain they are giants waving their arms. The book is funny and tender at once: you laugh at the old knight, and you love him, because under the nonsense he wants to be brave, loyal and good in a world that has stopped trying. After the Bible, it has been translated more than almost any book on earth. And listen to it move: the knight *habla*, speaks; *canta*, sings to his lady; *camina*, walks the roads of La Mancha. Verbs are where the story lives, and today you take command of them.

How Spanish works: the stem and the endings. Every -ar verb is built like a toy with swappable parts. Take **hablar**, to speak. Chop off the -ar and you have the stem, **habl-**, which carries the meaning. Now attach the ending that names the doer: **hablo**, I speak; **hablas**, you speak; **habla**, he or she speaks; **hablamos**, we speak; **hablan**, they speak. Five endings: -o, -as, -a, -amos, -an. That is the whole machine, and it fits every -ar verb in the language: canto, I sing; caminamos, we walk; trabajan, they work. (In Spain you would also hear a sixth form for you-all, *habláis*; this course chants the five forms used across Latin America, where you-all is simply *ustedes hablan*.)

No pronouns needed. Here is the trick that surprises English speakers: **hablo** means I speak all by itself. No word for I. The -o ending IS the I, the way a signature is the signer. Spanish has the pronouns, yo, tú, él, ella, nosotros, ellos, but it saves them for emphasis or clearing up confusion: Yo canto means I sing (as opposed to you). Students of our Latin courses are smiling again: Latin does exactly this (amo, I love), and the daughter kept the trick, and even most of the endings: Latin amo, amas, amat; Spanish amo, amas, ama. Two thousand years and the verb barely aged.

Say it out loud. One more gift before you chant: the Spanish present is three English tenses for the price of one. **Canto** means I sing, I am singing, and I do sing: pick

whichever English fits. Now the chant, clapping on each form: *hablo, hablas, habla, hablamos, hablan*. Again with *cantar*: *canto, cantas, canta, cantamos, cantan*. Your eight verbs: *hablar* (to speak), *cantar* (to sing), *caminar* (to walk), *trabajar* (to work), *mirar* (to look at), *escuchar* (to listen to), *estudiar* (to study), *amar* (to love). Now build real sentences with your nouns: *La niña canta. El perro camina. La familia trabaja.*

Try it. This week you build the verb wheel, a spinner that matches persons to endings, and use it to conjugate all eight verbs out loud. Then you start the two-way translation drills that run to the end of the quarter: Spanish into English, and the braver road back.

PICTURE STUDY



Don Quixote Charging the Windmills, Gustave Doré, 1863 · Engraving, from an illustrated edition of Don Quixote · From the 1863 Hachette edition of Cervantes' novel

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Two and a half centuries after Cervantes wrote the scene, the French artist Gustave Doré drew it for a grand illustrated edition, and his pictures have shaped how the world sees Don Quixote ever since. Here is the exact moment of the most famous charge in literature: the old knight has lowered his lance at a giant that is really a windmill, and the windmill, as windmills will, is winning.

Look closely

- Find Don Quixote and his lance. Where has the windmill's sail caught him? Horse and rider are both in trouble.
- Find Sancho Panza, the squire who told him they were windmills. What is his body saying?
- Count the windmills marching away in the background. Cervantes says there were thirty or forty; how many did Doré fit in?
- Look at the light and the clouds. Doré makes the plain of La Mancha feel enormous and the knight small. Why might he want that?

Talk about it

1. Don Quixote attacks the windmills because he wants so badly to be a hero. What is lovable about that, and what is foolish?

2. Sancho sees windmills; Don Quixote sees giants. How can two people look at the same thing and see so differently?
3. The story is full of verbs you now own: habla, canta, camina, mira. Tell the windmill scene in English using as many of those actions as you can, then say each verb in Spanish.

ACTIVITY

The verb wheel

Today you build a machine for conjugating: a spinning wheel that matches each person to its ending. Make it sturdy; it works for every -ar verb you will ever learn.

You will need

- 2 paper plates (or two circles of stiff paper, one smaller), and a brad fastener (or a pin through a cork)
- 8 index cards for the new vocabulary
- Markers and your Spanish notebook

Steps

1. Make the eight verb flashcards: hablar, cantar, caminar, trabajar, mirar, escuchar, estudiar, amar. Infinitive on the front, English on the back.
2. Divide the big plate into five wedges. In each wedge write a person big: YO, TÚ, ÉL/ELLA, NOSOTROS, ELLOS. Under each, smaller, its English: I, you, he/she, we, they.
3. Divide the small plate into five matching wedges and cut away one wedge-sized window. Around the window's edge write the endings in order: -O, -AS, -A, -AMOS, -AN. Fasten the plates at the center so the window turns.
4. Spin and chant: point the window at YO and say hablo; turn to TÚ, hablas; all the way around. Do the full circle for hablar, cantar and trabajar.
5. Now mix: a parent calls a verb and a person (caminar, we!) and you spin to it and answer: caminamos. Ten rounds.
6. In your notebook, write the full hablar chart as your model, with the English beside each form, dated.

Tips

- Chant in rhythm: hablo-hablas-habla, hablamos-hablan. The music is half the memory.
- The stem never changes this quarter; all the action is in the tail.
- Remember amar for people and God, and that mirar and escuchar already include the to: miro la luna, I look AT the moon.

Check your work

- ☐ My verb wheel turns and the endings line up with the right persons.
- ☐ I conjugated three verbs around the full wheel without notes.
- ☐ I answered ten mixed verb-and-person calls correctly.
- ☐ My notebook has the hablar model chart, dated.

SPANISH NOTEBOOK

1. Write the eight new verbs with their meanings, dated.
2. Write the full hablar chart with English beside each form: this is the master chart of the course.
3. Write five Spanish sentences using your nouns and verbs (La niña canta. El perro camina...) and their English meanings.
4. Copy and complete: 'Spanish does not usually need the word yo because...'

From history. The -ar family is Latin's first conjugation wearing travel clothes. Latin amo, amas, amat, amamus, amant became Spanish amo, amas, ama, amamos, aman: the endings softened but never lost their jobs. Cervantes and Caesar conjugate almost in unison across seventeen centuries, which is why students who take both our Latin and Spanish courses keep feeling they are learning one great language in two acts.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Conjugate *cantar* (to sing) through all five forms, with English.

▼ Show solution

1. Find the stem: cant-.
2. Attach the endings in order: -o, -as, -a, -amos, -an.
3. Say each with its person.

Answer: Canto (I sing), cantas (you sing), canta (he/she sings), cantamos (we sing), cantan (they sing).

Example 2. Translate into English: *La niña mira la luna.*

▼ **Show solution**

1. Find the verb and read its ending: mira, -a, he/she form; the doer is la niña.
 2. Mirar means to look at, and the at is built in.
 3. Assemble: the girl looks at the moon.
-

Answer: The girl looks at the moon (or: is looking at the moon; the Spanish present covers both).

Example 3. Translate into Spanish: We work.

▼ **Show solution**

1. The verb is trabajar; the doer is we, so the ending is -amos.
 2. Stem trabaj- plus -amos.
 3. No word for we is needed: the ending carries it.
-

Answer: Trabajamos.

PRACTICE

1. **Easy** What does the ending tell you in hablas, and what does the sentence mean?

▼ **Show answer**

-as is the you form: hablas means you speak.

2. **Easy** Conjugate caminar through all five forms.

▼ **Show answer**

Camino, caminas, camina, caminamos, caminan.

3. **Easy** Translate: El niño estudia.

▼ **Show answer**

The boy studies (or is studying).

4. **Medium** Translate into Spanish: I sing. They work. We walk.

▼ **Show answer**

Canto. Trabajan. Caminamos.

5. **Medium** Canto can be three English sentences. Give all three.

▼ **Show answer**

I sing, I am singing, I do sing.

6. **Medium** Translate: La familia escucha. Los niños caminan.

▼ **Show answer**

The family listens (is listening). The children walk (are walking).

7. **Hard** Translate into Spanish: The girl looks at the stars. (Watch the plural and remember mirar carries its own at.)

▼ **Show answer**

La niña mira las estrellas.

8. **Challenge** Latin says amo, amas, amat; Spanish says amo, amas, ama. What happened on the way from mother to daughter, and why does the Spanish ending still do the same job?

▼ **Show answer**

The final -t of amat wore away as Latin became Spanish, but the ending still names the doer: ama means he or she loves, no pronoun needed, exactly as amat did in Latin.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Using the infinitive for everything: yo hablar. The infinitive is the name of the verb, not a working form; I speak is hablo.
- Bolting yo onto every sentence out of English habit. Yo canto is for emphasis; plain I sing is canto.
- Forgetting -amos for we: nosotros canta. We sing is cantamos.
- Adding at after mirar or to after escuchar: miro a la luna. The preposition is built in: miro la luna, escucho la música.

Make it a game • Charadas en Español. Write the eight verbs on slips and put them in a bowl. One player draws and acts the verb out, no sounds allowed. The family guesses in Spanish: ¡canta! ¡trabaja! ¡camina! The actor confirms with the yo form: sí, canto. One point to the first right guess, one to the actor if the yo form is perfect. Play two rounds; in the second, the guesser must also give the English.

Scripture. “O sing unto the LORD a new song: sing unto the LORD, all the earth.” (Psalm 96:1, KJV)

In Spanish this command is Cantad al Señor, from your new verb cantar. All the earth means every language at once, and this week your singing voice gained one more.

UNIT 3 • VERBS DO THE WORK • LESSON 3.2 OF 10 • 3 SESSIONS OF 30–40 MINUTES

3.2 THE BEAR BIBLE: SOY, ERES, ES

OBJECTIVES

- Chant the present tense of ser: soy, eres, es, somos, son.
- Use ser to say who or what someone is: Somos amigos. Es la madre.
- Learn eight adjectives (grande, pequeño, bueno, malo, blanco, negro, rojo, azul) and match -o/-a adjectives to the noun's family after es.
- Translate sentences with ser both ways: La casa es blanca. The book is good.

Warm-up. Chant hablar around the wheel once, fast. Now try to say My house is big in Spanish with what you own... you have la casa, but is is missing. Every language leans on one little verb more than any other: to be. Today Spanish hands you its most important verb, and the story of its most important book.

WATCH

01061 Spanish Lesson - Present Tense - Ser + descriptions & characteristics

Señor Jordan · 7:00

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDNny95Zy2M>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the How Spanish works paragraphs. He chants ser and then builds description sentences with es, exactly this lesson's work.

Note: He includes Spain's sois form; this course chants the five Latin American forms (soy, eres, es, somos, son).

BACKUP VIDEO

Introducing Yourself in Spanish (Verb SER) - Preséntate en español || Lección 5

Why Not Spanish? · 6:11

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22S1LK8cV0>

Watch after the lesson to hear ser used for introducing yourself; it is mostly in Spanish with English support, a gentle first swim in real speech.

KEY TERMS

ser

The Spanish verb to be, used for who and what things are: soy, eres, es, somos, son.

adjective

A describing word: grande, big; blanco, white. Spanish adjectives change their endings to match their noun's family.

irregular verb

A verb that refuses the regular endings and must be learned by heart. Ser is the great one: soy does not come from any stem-plus-ending machine.

agreement

The matching of endings: an -o/-a adjective wears -o with an el-family noun and -a with a la-family noun. El gato es negro; la casa es blanca.

Reina-Valera

The Spanish Bible descended from the Bear Bible of 1569, revised by Cipriano de Valera in 1602, and still the most read Spanish Bible today.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Latin American sounds: h is silent, ñ says ny, ll says y, j says a breathy h, and z and soft c say s, not the th of Spain. Capitals show the stress.

ser

SEHR

verb · soy, eres, es, somos, son

I am

grande

GRAHN-deh

adjective · grande, grandes

big

pequeño

pehq-WEH-nyoh

adjective · pequeño, pequeña

small

malo

MAH-loh

adjective · malo, mala

bad

blanco

BLAHN-koh

adjective · blanco, blanca

white

negro

NEH-groh

adjective · negro, negra

black

rojo

RROH-hoh

adjective · rojo, roja

red

azul

ah-SOOL

adjective · azul, azules

blue

Dios

DYOHS

noun · Dios (masculine)

God

amor

ah-MOR

noun · el amor

love

Biblia

BEE-blyah

noun · la Biblia

the Bible

CORE IDEAS

The story. In the 1550s, in a monastery near Seville, a monk named Casiodoro de Reina began to believe that every person should be able to read the Bible in his own language. In the Spain of that day this conviction was forbidden: the Scriptures were read in Latin, and printing them in Spanish could cost a man his life. Reina had to flee his country, and he spent the rest of his life far from home, in Geneva, London, Frankfurt and Basel, often poor, often in danger, and always working on one great

task: translating the whole Bible from Hebrew and Greek into plain, beautiful Spanish. It took him twelve years. In 1569 the book was finally printed in Basel, and on its title page the printer set his emblem: a bear standing at a tree, reaching for honey, with bees in the air, an old picture that fit the psalmist's words about God's words, sweeter than honey to my mouth. Spaniards came to call it the **Biblia del Oso**, the Bear Bible. A generation later Reina's friend Cipriano de Valera revised it, and that revision, the Reina-Valera, is still the Bible read in most Spanish-speaking churches today, more than four hundred and fifty years later. When a Spanish speaker says *Dios es amor*, God is love, the words come down through that bear-marked page. And the little word in the middle, *es*, is today's verb.

How Spanish works: ser, the great irregular. The verb wheel from last week fits every regular -ar verb, but the most used verb in the language refuses the machine. To be in Spanish is **ser**, and its present tense must simply be learned by heart, like sum in Latin or am-is-are in English: **soy**, I am; **eres**, you are; **es**, he, she or it is; **somos**, we are; **son**, they are. (Spain adds *sois* for you-all.) Chant it until it is as automatic as your own name: soy, eres, es, somos, son. With ser you can finally say what things ARE: Es el padre. It is the father. Somos amigos. We are friends. Son estrellas. They are stars.

Adjectives, and the first taste of agreement. To say the house is big you need describing words, so here are your first eight: *grande* (big), *pequeño* (small), *bueno* (good), *malo* (bad), *blanco* (white), *negro* (black), *rojo* (red), *azul* (blue). Now the Spanish courtesy rule: an adjective **agrees** with its noun. If the adjective ends in -o/-a, it wears -o for the el family and -a for the la family: **el gato es negro**, but **la casa es blanca**. Adjectives like grande and azul, which do not end in -o, stay the same for both families: **el perro es grande**, **la mesa es grande**. (Next unit the adjectives move in with their nouns and learn plurals; today, just the matching after es.)

Say it out loud. Chant ser three times with claps. Then build truth sentences from the world around you: La leche es blanca. La noche es negra. El sol es grande. El libro es bueno. Then the greatest sentence in the unit, four words old as the apostle John and new as this morning: **Dios es amor**. God is love. Say it the Spanish way: DYOHs es ah-MOR.

Try it. This week you will build es sentences from strips, noun strips on the left, adjective strips on the right, matching endings as you go, and copy the unit's great verse for the illuminated-verse challenge at week's end.

PICTURE STUDY



Title Page of the Biblia del Oso, Printed by Thomas Guarin, Basel, 1569 · Printed title page with woodcut emblem · First edition of Casiodoro de Reina's Spanish Bible

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

This is the front door of the first whole Bible ever printed in Spanish: twelve years of one exile's work, printed in Basel in 1569 because it could not be printed in Spain. The woodcut bear reaching into the tree for honey gave the book its nickname, the Biblia del Oso, and readers have always heard in it the psalmist's line: How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth. Under the picture, in Spanish of 1569, stands the title: La Biblia, que es, los sacros libros del Viejo y Nuevo Testamento, The Bible, that is, the sacred books of the Old and New Testament.

Look closely

- Find the bear and the honey. Why would a printer of Bibles choose sweetness as his sign?
- Find the bees in the air and the mallet hanging on the tree. The picture is full of small, busy detail, like a page of Scripture itself.
- Look at the printed words. Can you spot Biblia? Can you find the little word es in the long title, the very verb you learned today?
- Notice what is missing: the translator's name is nowhere on the page. Printing it would have put Reina in still more danger.

Talk about it

1. Why did Casiodoro de Reina think twelve years of dangerous work was worth it so people could read the Bible in Spanish?
2. The bear reaches for honey it can smell but cannot yet taste. How is that like Reina's countrymen and the Scriptures in those years?
3. What book matters enough to you that you would copy it out by hand? What does that tell you about the people who did?

ACTIVITY

Es sentences from strips

Today you build true sentences with your hands: noun strips, the mighty es, and adjective strips whose endings must agree. The table becomes your sentence workshop.

You will need

- 9 index cards: one for ser (the whole chant) and eight for the adjectives
- Paper cut into strips, and a marker
- Your flashcard deck and Spanish notebook

Steps

1. Make the ser flashcard: SER, to be on the front; soy, eres, es, somos, son with English on the back. Make the eight adjective cards: grande, pequeño, bueno, malo, blanco, negro, rojo, azul.
2. Cut twelve strips. On six write nouns with hats: el gato, la casa, el libro, la leche, el sol, la noche. On one write ES big. On five write adjectives, leaving the last letter blank where it changes: negr_, blanc_, buen_, pequeñ_, and grande (no blank; it never changes).
3. Build sentences: lay el gato, es, negr_, and fill the blank aloud: el gato es negro. Swap the noun: la casa es blanca. Build at least ten true (or silly-but-grammatical) sentences, saying each aloud.
4. Agreement check: a parent builds a WRONG sentence (la leche es blanco) and you fix the ending out loud.
5. Chant ser between rounds: soy, eres, es, somos, son, three times, with claps.
6. In your notebook, write the ser chart and your five best sentences with translations, dated.

Tips

- The adjective looks at its noun's hat, not at the meaning: la noche es negra, because la noche is a la word.
- Grande and azul are restful: they never change their ending for family (la casa es grande, el libro es azul).

- Es is for one thing; son is for many: las estrellas son blancas. Try one or two if you feel bold (the adjective goes plural too!).

Check your work

- ☐ I chanted ser from memory, three clean times.
- ☐ I built ten es sentences with correct agreement.
- ☐ I caught and fixed at least two wrong endings.
- ☐ My notebook has the ser chart and five sentences, dated.

SPANISH NOTEBOOK

1. Write the ser chart (soy, eres, es, somos, son) with English, boxed: the second master chart of the course.
2. Write the eight adjectives with meanings, and mark which ones change their ending (-o/-a) and which do not (grande, azul).
3. Write five true es sentences about your own house and family, with translations.
4. Copy Dios es amor (1 Juan 4:8) in your best lettering as a draft for the unit challenge.

From history. Ser is Latin's to be, worn smooth by twenty centuries of daily use: sum became soy, est became es, sumus became somos, sunt became son. Students of our Latin Grade 5 chanted sum, es, est in Unit 3, and here is the same chant, two thousand years downstream, still holding every Spanish sentence together. The most used verbs wear down the most, and to be is the most used verb of all, which is why it is irregular in Latin, Spanish and English alike.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Chant ser, and translate: Somos amigos.

▼ **Show solution**

1. Soy, eres, es, somos, son.
2. Somos is the we form: we are.
3. Amigos: friends.

Answer: We are friends.

Example 2. Fill the ending and translate: La luna es blanc_.

▼ **Show solution**

1. Find the noun's family: la luna, la family.
 2. Blanco ends in -o/-a, so it wears -a here.
 3. Assemble and translate.
-

Answer: La luna es blanca: the moon is white.

Example 3. Translate into Spanish: The book is good.

▼ **Show solution**

1. The book: el libro, el family.
 2. Is: es.
 3. Good: bueno, wearing -o to agree with el libro.
-

Answer: El libro es bueno.

PRACTICE

1. **Easy** Chant the five forms of ser with their English.

▼ **Show answer**

Soy (I am), eres (you are), es (he/she/it is), somos (we are), son (they are).

2. **Easy** Translate: El sol es grande.

▼ **Show answer**

The sun is big.

3. **Easy** Fill the ending: el gato es negr_; la casa es blanc_.

▼ **Show answer**

El gato es negro; la casa es blanca.

4. **Medium** Translate into Spanish: We are friends. They are stars.

▼ **Show answer**

Somos amigos. Son estrellas.

5. **Medium** Why does the adjective end differently in *el libro es rojo* and *la flor es roja*?

▼ **Show answer**

Adjectives agree with their noun's family: *libro* is an *el* word, so *rojo* wears -o; *flor* is a *la* word, so it wears -a.

6. **Medium** Which of your adjectives never change for family? Use one in two sentences, one *el* noun and one *la* noun.

▼ **Show answer**

Grande and *azul*. Examples: *El perro es grande*. *La mesa es grande*. (Or: *El libro es azul*. *La puerta es azul*.)

7. **Hard** Translate both ways: (a) *La noche es negra y la leche es blanca*. (b) The days are good. (Hint for b: plural noun, plural verb form, plural adjective.)

▼ **Show answer**

(a) The night is black and the milk is white. (b) *Los días son buenos*.

8. **Challenge** Spanish *soy*, *eres*, *es*, *somos*, *son* grew out of Latin *sum*, *es*, *est*, *sumus*, *sunt*. Translate *Dios es amor*, and tell what the Latin mother of *es* was.

▼ **Show answer**

God is love. Spanish *es* comes from Latin *est*, the very word in the Latin Bible's *Deus caritas est*.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Running *ser* through the -ar machine: *yo so*, *tú sas*. *Ser* is irregular; its five forms are learned by heart.
- Using *es* for every person: *nosotros es*. We are is *somos*.
- Forgetting agreement after *es*: *la casa es blanco*. The adjective looks at the noun's hat: *blanca*.
- Translating I am as *yo soy es*, stacking English onto Spanish. *Soy* already IS I am, complete.

Make it a game · ¡Sí o No! The parent declares es sentences about the world, some true, some outrageous: La leche es blanca. El sol es pequeño. La noche es roja. The student shouts ¡sí! for true or ¡no! for false, and must correct every false one with a true sentence (¡No! El sol es grande.). One point per right verdict, two per correct correction. Ten sentences, then switch roles: the student declares, the parent judges, and the student catches the parent's agreement mistakes.

Scripture. “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.” (1 John 4:8, KJV)

In the Reina-Valera, the Bible descended from the Bear Bible, the last three words are Dios es amor. Your new verb es stands at the center of the shortest and largest sentence in Scripture, and now you can read it in Spanish.

UNIT 4

BUILDING REAL SENTENCES

You have nouns in their hats, verbs that carry their own crew, the great es, and a first fistful of adjectives. This unit snaps the pieces together into real Spanish sentences. In Lesson 4.1 the mission bells of old California ring in the full rule of agreement: adjectives follow their nouns and match them in family AND number, la casa blanca, los gatos negros, las flores azules. You will hear it in place names you thought were English: Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and in the most famous address in America, which Spanish calls la Casa Blanca, the house white, words in the Spanish order.

In Lesson 4.2 you learn to ask. Spanish rolls out a red carpet for every question, the upside-down ¿ that tells you a question is coming, and gives you the four golden question words: qué, quién, dónde, cómo. With them come the manners of the language: tú for friends and family, usted for elders and strangers, and the polite words, por favor, gracias, that open doors in twenty countries. By the end of the unit your family will be holding its first little conversations at the dinner table.

PREREQUISITES

- Units 1–3: nouns with hats and plurals, the -ar endings, the chant of ser
- The eight adjectives of Unit 3 and the agreement of -o/-a adjectives after es
- The flashcard deck so far: 49 words plus the two master charts (hablar, ser)

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can put an adjective after its noun and make it agree in family and number: el libro nuevo, las casas blancas.
- ☐ I know which adjectives change only for number (grande/grandes, azul/azules).
- ☐ I can write a Spanish question with both its marks and ask it out loud: ¿Dónde está el libro?
- ☐ I can use the four question words, qué, quién, dónde, cómo, with their accents.
- ☐ I know when to say tú and when to say usted, and I can greet, thank and say please politely.
- ☐ I can hold the little dialogue: ¿Cómo estás? Bien, gracias. ¿Y tú?

OPTIONAL BOOKS AND RESOURCES FOR THIS UNIT

- ***Spanish for Children, Primer A***, by Julia Kraut (Classical Academic Press): A full classical Spanish program with chants and grammar in the same spirit as this course, from the publisher many classical homeschoolers use for Latin. Worth a look if this quarter leaves your student hungry for a daily program.
- **Super Easy Spanish (Easy Languages)**: Free on YouTube. Gentle street interviews in slow, subtitled Spanish; the greetings and questions of this unit are exactly what you will hear. Parents should sit in, as with all video.
- **SpanishDict**: Free online. Type any adjective to see both its forms, and any question word to hear its sound. The example sentences show the adjective riding behind its noun, Spanish-style.

Not required. Every activity in this unit works with paper, pencil, scissors and the free links below. School Launch has no ties to these authors, publishers or companies.

4.1 La Casa Blanca: Adjectives That Agree

3 sessions of 30–40 minutes

4.2 ¿Cómo Está Usted? Questions and Courtesy

3 sessions of 30–40 minutes

UNIT 4 REVIEW

Answer each question in complete sentences where asked. The review is worth 30 points. It may be done orally, with a parent writing down the answers.

1. **5 pts**

State the two rules of Spanish adjectives (where they sit, and how they agree), with la casa blanca and los gatos negros as your examples.

2. **5 pts**

Translate into Spanish: the new books, the pretty flower, the tall boys.

3. **5 pts**

Fix the fouls and explain one of them: la blanca casa; los perros grande; la iglesia blanco.

4. **5 pts**

Write, with all marks and accents: Where is the book? Who is it? How are you (to a friend)?

5. **5 pts**

Explain tú and usted: who gets which, and which verb form does usted take? Greet an elderly neighbor properly.

6. **5 pts**

The map of America is full of this unit's Spanish. Explain what Los Angeles, Las Vegas and la Casa Blanca each mean, and what the missions' road was called.

ANSWER KEY

1. Adjectives normally sit after their noun (la casa blanca, the house white), and they agree with the noun in family and number: los gatos negros has a plural el-family noun, so the adjective wears -o and -s.
2. Los libros nuevos, la flor bonita, los niños altos.
3. La casa blanca (adjective sits behind); los perros grandes (two-form adjectives still pluralize); la iglesia blanca (agree with the la family). Any correct explanation earns the point.
4. ¿Dónde está el libro? ¿Quién es? ¿Cómo estás?
5. Tú is for friends, family and children; usted is for elders, strangers and anyone owed respect, and it takes the él/ella verb form. Example: Buenos días, señor. ¿Cómo está usted?
6. Los Angeles: the angels (from the pueblo named for Our Lady, Queen of the Angels); Las Vegas: the meadows; la Casa Blanca: the White House, adjective seated Spanish-style behind its noun. The missions stood along El Camino Real, the royal road.

UNIT CHALLENGE: LA NOCHE DE PREGUNTAS: THE FAMILY QUESTION GAME

Build the game, then host the night. Make a deck of at least twelve question cards: on each card, one Spanish question with perfect marks and accents, drawn from your four golden words and your golden phrases (¿Qué es?, ¿Quién es?, ¿Dónde está el libro?, ¿Cómo estás?, ¿Cómo está usted?, and any you invent from your own words, like ¿Dónde está el perro?). Decorate the backs like playing cards. Then host La Noche de Preguntas after dinner: deal the cards around the table, and each player in turn reads their question aloud, melody rising, and puts it to any other player, who must answer with whatever Spanish they can muster (the host coaches). Courtesy rules are in force: answers earn a gracias, requests take a por favor, and the host decides tú or usted for every exchange. Keep score loosely and end by teaching the family the daily dialogue until everyone can run it: ¿Cómo estás? Bien, gracias. ¿Y tú?

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
The deck	At least twelve question cards, every one with both marks, correct accents and correct word order.
The melody	The host reads every question with the rising Spanish question melody and pure vowels.
Courtesy in force	Tú and usted assigned sensibly, and por favor and gracias flowing all evening.
The family learns	By the end, every player can run the daily dialogue: ¿Cómo estás? Bien, gracias. ¿Y tú?

UNIT 4 • BUILDING REAL SENTENCES • LESSON 4.1 OF 10 • 3 SESSIONS OF 30–40 MINUTES

4.1 LA CASA BLANCA: ADJECTIVES THAT AGREE

OBJECTIVES

- Place adjectives after their nouns: la casa blanca, el libro nuevo.
- Make adjectives agree in family and number: el gato negro, los gatos negros, las flores azules.
- Learn four new adjectives: nuevo, viejo, alto, bonito.
- Translate noun-adjective phrases both ways, including place names built from them.

Warm-up. Chant ser once, then answer fast: how do you say the white house, just those three English words, in Spanish? You know all three words... but Spanish will hand them back to you in a different order. Hint: the most famous address in Washington is called la Casa Blanca in every Spanish newspaper on earth.

WATCH

Spanish Grammar Mastery | Lesson 7: Adjective Agreement and Placement (A1 Spanish)

Learn Spanish Through Stories · 8:41

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gazqdWhD3Qk>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the How Spanish works paragraphs. It walks through exactly this lesson: endings, plurals and the adjective's seat behind the noun.

Note: A calm, clearly narrated grammar lesson. It uses a few words beyond your deck; let them wash past and listen for the endings.

BACKUP VIDEO

Adjectives and Nouns Working Together in Spanish | The Language Tutor *Lesson 66*

The Language Tutor - Spanish · 17:17

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2B_TK_aun8E

A thorough second pass if the agreement rules need more examples. It runs long; feel free to stop when the idea clicks. Made for a slightly older audience.

KEY TERMS

agreement

The full matching of an adjective to its noun in family and number: el gato negro, la casa blanca, los gatos negros, las casas blancas.

placement

Where the adjective sits. Spanish normally seats it after the noun: la casa blanca, the house white. English seats it before.

number

Singular or plural. Spanish adjectives pluralize like nouns: -s after a vowel (negros), -es after a consonant (azules).

two-form adjectives

Adjectives not ending in -o, like grande and azul: they keep one form for both families and change only for number: el perro grande, la mesa grande, los perros grandes.

misión

A mission: a church settlement. The Spanish missions of California, a day's walk apart along the Camino Real, left their Spanish names across the American map.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Latin American sounds: h is silent, ñ says ny, ll says y, j says a breathy h, and z and soft c say s, not the th of Spain. Capitals show the stress.

nuevo

NWEH-boh

adjective · nuevo, nueva; nuevos, nuevas
new

viejo

BYEH-hoh

adjective · viejo, vieja; viejos, viejas
old

alto

AHL-toh

adjective · alto, alta; altos, altas
tall, high

bonito

boh-NEE-toh

adjective · bonito, bonita; bonitos, bonitas
pretty

misión

mee-SYOHN

noun · la misión, las misiones

a mission

fraile

FRAHEE-leh

noun · el fraile, los frailes

a friar

real

rreh-AHL

adjective · real, reales

royal

bajo

BAH-hoh

adjective · bajo, baja; bajos, bajas

short, low

largo

LAHR-goh

adjective · largo, larga; largos, largas

long

corto

KOR-toh

adjective · corto, corta; cortos, cortas

short

limpio

LEEM-pyoh

adjective · limpio, limpia; limpios, limpias

clean

CORE IDEAS

The story. In the late 1700s, Spanish friars and settlers walked north into California and built a chain of twenty-one missions along a dirt road they called El Camino Real, the royal road, each mission about one long day's walk from the next, from San Diego up to Sonoma. A traveler could walk for weeks and sleep every night under a mission roof. The missions were built of adobe, sun-dried earthen brick, washed white with lime, with red tile roofs and bell towers whose bells rang across the valleys: *las casas blancas*, the white houses of the road. The little pueblos that grew around them took Spanish names, and the names stayed even after the road became US Highway 101: San Diego, San Juan Capistrano, Santa Bárbara, San Francisco, and a pueblo by a river named for Our Lady, Queen of the Angels, which the world now calls Los Angeles. Notice something about those names, and about *la casa blanca* itself: the describing word rides BEHIND its noun. English says the white house; Spanish says *la casa blanca*, the house white. Today your adjectives take their proper Spanish seat.

How Spanish works: the adjective sits behind. In English the adjective walks in front of its noun: the new book. In Spanish it normally sits behind, like a rider behind the driver: *el libro nuevo*. The old dog: *el perro viejo*. The pretty flower: *la flor bonita*. It feels backwards for exactly one week, and then it feels like Spanish. Your four new adjectives: *nuevo* (new), *viejo* (old), *alto* (tall, high), *bonito* (pretty).

Full agreement: family AND number. In Unit 3 the adjective matched its noun's family after *es*. Now the whole rule: an adjective always agrees with its noun in **family** (-o with *el* words, -a with *la* words) and in **number** (add -s or -es when the noun is plural, by the same rules nouns use). One cat: *el gato negro*. Many cats: *los gatos negros*. One white house: *la casa blanca*. A whole mission road of them: *las casas blancas*. And the two-form adjectives, the ones not ending in -o, like *grande* and *azul*, ignore family but still count: *el perro grande*, *la mesa grande*, but *los perros grandes*, *las flores azules* (*azul* ends in a consonant, so -es). Hat, noun and adjective change together, three dancers in step: *la flor bonita*, *las flores bonitas*.

Say it out loud. Build chains and say them: *el libro nuevo*, *los libros nuevos*; *la iglesia blanca*, *las iglesias blancas*; *el niño alto*, *los niños altos*. Then full sentences with your verbs: *La niña mira la casa blanca*. *Los niños estudian el libro nuevo*. *El señor viejo trabaja*. And the sentence of the day, true in two capitals: *El presidente trabaja en la Casa Blanca*. (En means in, a little word you may borrow freely from now on.)

Try it. This week you play agreement dominoes: noun cards and adjective cards that may only be joined when hat, ending and number all agree. By the end your hands will check endings faster than your eyes.

PICTURE STUDY



Mission San Antonio de Padua, Edwin Deakin, c. 1900 · Oil on canvas · From Deakin's series of paintings of the twenty-one California missions

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Around 1900 the English-born painter Edwin Deakin set out to paint all twenty-one California missions before time and weather finished crumbling them. This one is San Antonio de Padua, the third mission founded on the Camino Real, deep in a quiet valley: adobe church, bell wall, and a long arcade of arches holding a century of sun. Walk the length of the old royal road today and you can still stand in front of these buildings, and the road signs along the way, Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Los Angeles, still read like a page of Spanish.

Look closely

- Find the whitewashed adobe walls. Adobe is sun-dried earthen brick: the mission is literally built of la tierra, washed white with lime.
- Count the arches of the colonnade. Builders repeated one strong shape, the arch the Romans taught Spain, over and over.
- Find the bell or bell tower. Mission bells rang across a day's-walk of empty country; sound was the mission's clock and its welcome.
- Look at the roof tiles and their color. Red clay tile over white wall, the colors of the whole Camino Real.

Talk about it

1. The missions were spaced a day's walk apart. What does that tell you about who the road was built for?
2. Deakin hurried to paint the missions before they crumbled away. Why do people work to keep old buildings and old words alike?
3. La misión blanca, las campanas (the bells), el camino: say everything you can name in this painting in Spanish, adjectives seated properly behind their nouns.

ACTIVITY

Agreement dominoes

A domino may only touch its neighbor when the numbers match. Your Spanish dominoes may only touch when hat, family and number all agree. Build chains, catch fouls, and let your hands learn the rule.

You will need

- 4 index cards for the new adjectives, plus 16 cards or paper slips for the game
- A marker and your Spanish notebook
- Your flashcard deck

Steps

1. Make the four new adjective flashcards: nuevo, viejo, alto, bonito.
2. Make the game pieces: on 8 slips write nouns with hats, four singular, four plural: el libro, la casa, el gato, la flor, los niños, las mesas, los perros, las iglesias.
3. On 8 more slips write adjectives with blank last letters where they change: nuev_, viej_, alt_, bonit_, blanc_, negr_, grande(s), azul(es).
4. Play: draw one noun and one adjective. If you can legally join them, say the pair aloud with the right ending (las mesas nuevas) and keep the pair. If you join them wrongly, the pair goes back. Play until the slips run out.
5. Foul hunt: the parent lays out three pairs, one of them wrong (los gatos negra). You find the foul and fix it aloud.
6. In your notebook, write your six best chains, singular and plural versions of three pairs, with translations, dated.

Tips

- Work the checklist in order: family first (-o or -a?), then number (-s or -es?).
- Grande and azul skip the family question but never skip the number question.
- Say every pair out loud. The ear catches a wrong ending before the eye does.

Check your work

- ☐ My four new adjective cards are in the deck.

- ☐ I built at least eight legal pairs, saying each aloud correctly.
- ☐ I caught and fixed at least two fouls.
- ☐ My notebook has six pairs in singular and plural with translations.

SPANISH NOTEBOOK

1. Write the four new adjectives with meanings, dated.
2. Write the full agreement rule in your own words, with *el gato negro* / *los gatos negros* / *la casa blanca* / *las casas blancas* as your examples.
3. Write three sentences about your own home using noun + adjective (*Mi casa es...* may wait; use *La casa es bonita* style or *La niña mira la casa blanca*).
4. Copy the map line: San Diego, Santa Bárbara, Los Ángeles, San Francisco, and under it write what the road between them was called.

From history. America's map is a Spanish lesson in disguise, and this unit's grammar is all over it: Los Angeles wears a plural hat, Las Vegas means the meadows, Amarillo is the adjective yellow, Colorado is reddish, and Florida is flowery, named by explorers who sighted it at Easter, Pascua Florida. You will chase these names across the whole map in Lesson 5.2.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Translate into Spanish: the new book, the new books.

▼ **Show solution**

1. Seat the adjective behind the noun: *libro nuevo*.
2. Singular: *el libro nuevo*.
3. Plural: hat, noun and adjective all pluralize: *los libros nuevos*.

Answer: *El libro nuevo; los libros nuevos*.

Example 2. Translate into English, and explain the ending of the adjective: las flores azules.

▼ **Show solution**

1. Las flores: the flowers, plural, la family.
 2. Azul is a two-form adjective: no family change, but plural adds -es (consonant ending).
 3. Assemble.
-

Answer: The blue flowers. Azules is plural to agree with flores; azul never changes for family.

Example 3. Fix the foul and explain: la iglesia blanco.

▼ **Show solution**

1. Find the noun's family: la iglesia, la family.
 2. Blanco must wear -a to agree.
 3. Check number: both singular, so no -s.
-

Answer: La iglesia blanca. The adjective agrees with its noun's family.

PRACTICE

1. **Easy** Seat the adjective properly and translate: the old dog.

▼ **Show answer**

El perro viejo.

2. **Easy** Translate: la casa blanca, el niño alto.

▼ **Show answer**

The white house; the tall boy.

3. **Easy** Make it plural, all three dancers: el gato negro.

▼ **Show answer**

Los gatos negros.

4. **Medium** Translate into Spanish: the pretty flowers, the big tables.

▼ **Show answer**

Las flores bonitas, las mesas grandes.

5. **Medium** Why is it las flores azules and not las flores azulas?

▼ **Show answer**

Azul is a two-form adjective: it does not change for family, only for number, and since it ends in a consonant its plural takes -es: azules.

6. **Medium** Fix the founs: los libros nuevo; la escuela blanco; el niñas bonitas.

▼ **Show answer**

Los libros nuevos; la escuela blanca; las niñas bonitas.

7. **Hard** Translate the sentence both directions: (a) Los niños estudian el libro nuevo. (b) The old man looks at the white churches.

▼ **Show answer**

(a) The children study the new book. (b) El señor viejo mira las iglesias blancas.

8. **Challenge** Students of Latin learned puella bona, the adjective behind its noun. What did Spanish inherit here, and how do la niña buena and the English translation differ in word order?

▼ **Show answer**

Spanish inherited Latin's habit of seating the adjective after the noun: la niña buena, like puella bona. English reverses it: the good girl. Daughter kept her mother's seating chart; English never had it.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Seating the adjective in front, English-style: la blanca casa. Normal Spanish seats it behind: la casa blanca.
- Matching family but forgetting number: los gatos negro. All three change together: los gatos negros.
- Giving grande a family ending: la casa granda. Two-form adjectives change only for number: grande, grandes.
- Agreeing with the nearest word instead of the right noun. In la casa de el señor es blanca, blanca looks past everything to its own noun, la casa.

Make it a game · Dominó de Acuerdo. Shuffle the noun slips and adjective slips from the activity into two face-down piles. Players take turns flipping one of each: if the pair can be legally joined, say it aloud with perfect endings (¡las iglesias blancas!) and keep it; stumble or misagree, and the slips go back under the piles. First to five pairs wins. House rule for experts: you must also translate your pair to keep it.

Scripture. “Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.” (Matthew 7:24, KJV)

In Spanish the wise man built su casa sobre la roca, his house upon the rock. The mission builders set their white houses on good foundations and they stand yet; the Lord's parable is about a better foundation still.

UNIT 4 · BUILDING REAL SENTENCES · LESSON 4.2 OF 10 · 3 SESSIONS OF 30–40 MINUTES

4.2 ¿CÓMO ESTÁ USTED? QUESTIONS AND COURTESY

OBJECTIVES

- Write and ask questions with both marks: ¿...?
- Use the four question words with their accents: qué, quién, dónde, cómo.
- Choose tú for friends and family, usted for elders and strangers, and use the polite words: por favor, gracias, señor, señora.
- Hold the little dialogue: ¿Cómo estás? Bien, gracias. ¿Y tú?

Warm-up. Greet everyone in the room: ¡Hola! ¡Buenos días! Now look at this strange and wonderful thing on the page: ¿ an upside-down question mark. Spanish is the only major language that warns you a question is coming before it starts. Today you learn to ask, and to ask politely, which in the Spanish-speaking world is nearly the same thing.

WATCH

Spanish Lesson: 4 ways to ask "How are you?" in Spanish

Butterfly Spanish · 6:24

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=weK0s0NOO5k>

WHEN TO WATCH

After the How Spanish works paragraphs. Ana teaches the greeting questions, including the tú and usted versions from this lesson.

Note: A friendly whiteboard lesson from a native speaker. Repeat every question after her, melody and all: Spanish questions rise like English ones.

BACKUP VIDEO

HOW TO GREET IN FORMAL AND INFORMAL SPANISH | Super Easy Spanish 25

Easy Spanish · 5:05

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YHiV0rUyg0U>

Watch after the lesson: real people on real streets greeting each other formally and informally, with subtitles. Listen for usted with strangers and tú with friends.

KEY TERMS

¿ and ¡

The opening marks. Spanish brackets every question ¿...? and every exclamation ¡...!, so the reader knows the melody before the first word.

tú

You, for a friend, a sibling, a child, someone you are close to. Tú hablas, tú eres.

question words

The four golden openers, each wearing its accent: qué (what), quién (who), dónde (where), cómo (how).

usted

You, polite, for elders, strangers, and anyone owed extra respect. Usted takes the same verb form as él and ella: ¿Cómo está usted?

courtesy words

The small coins of Spanish politeness,
spent constantly: por favor (please),
gracias (thank you), señor, señora.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Latin American sounds: h is silent, ñ says ny, ll says y, j says a breathy h, and z and soft c say s, not the th of Spain. Capitals show the stress.

gracias

GRAH-syahs

noun · las gracias

thank you

por favor

POR fah-BOR

phrase

please

sí

SEE

adverb

yes

no

NOH

adverb

no

señor

seh-NYOR

noun · el señor, los señores

sir, Mr.

señora

seh-NYOH-rrah

noun · la señora, las señoras

madam, Mrs.

qué

KEH

pronoun · question word

what?

quién

KYEHN

pronoun · question word

who?

dónde

DOHN-deh

adverb · question word

where?

cómo

KOH-moh

adverb · question word

how?

usted

oos-TEHD

pronoun · usted (formal), tú (familiar)

you (formal); tú is the familiar you

estar

ehs-TAHR

verb · estoy, estás, está, estamos, están

I am (place or condition)

The story. Joaquín Sorolla, the great painter of Spanish sunlight, was born poor in Valencia in 1863 and orphaned at two years old, raised by his aunt and uncle, a locksmith who hoped the boy would take up the trade. The boy could not stop drawing. He grew up to become the most famous painter in Spain, celebrated from Madrid to New York, and what he painted, more than kings or battles, was the daily courtesy of Spanish life in blazing seaside light: families on the beach, oxen pulling boats from the surf, and the paseo, the unhurried evening stroll, dressed in your best, in which the whole town walks, meets, and greets. In Sorolla's Spain, and in the Spanish-speaking world today, those greetings are not small talk; they are the oil in every hinge of the day. You do not buy bread without buenos días; you do not pass a neighbor without a word. A traveler who knows only hola, por favor, gracias and one good question, ¿cómo está usted?, carries a key to twenty countries. Today you cut that key.

How Spanish works: the red carpet question. Spanish announces its questions. Every written question begins with an upside-down mark and ends with the usual one: ¿Hablas español? Do you speak Spanish? The wonderful part: no extra words like do or does are needed. Take the statement, let your voice rise, and it becomes the question: Hablas español. ¿Hablas español? The same trick works for exclamations: ¡Hola! ¡La casa es bonita! When you write, draw both marks every time; they are not optional decorations, they are the law of the page.

The four golden question words. Each wears an accent mark like a little crown, always: ¿Qué? What? ¿Qué es? What is it? ¿Quién? Who? ¿Quién es? Who is it? ¿Dónde? Where? ¿Dónde está el libro? Where is the book? ¿Cómo? How? ¿Cómo estás? How are you? (You met está and estás just now: they come from estar, Spanish's second verb to be, the one it uses for where things are and how people are doing. You will conquer estar properly in Grade 6; this year, learn ¿Dónde está...? and ¿Cómo estás? by heart as golden phrases.)

Tú, usted, and the coins of courtesy. Spanish has two words for you, and choosing well is good manners. Tú is for friends, family and children: ¿Cómo estás, Ana? Usted is for elders, strangers, and anyone owed respect, and it takes the same verb form as él and ella: ¿Cómo está usted, señora? When in doubt, usted; no one was ever scolded for too much respect. (Usted even began life as a bow: it is vuestra merced, your mercy, worn down by centuries of polite repetition.) Now the coins, spent constantly and never wasted: *por favor* (please), *gracias* (thank you), *señor*, *señora*, *sí*, *no*, *hola*,

adiós, buenos días. And the little dialogue every Spanish speaker on earth says daily: ¿Cómo estás? **Bien, gracias.** ¿Y tú? How are you? Well, thank you. And you?

Try it. This week you make question cards and run the interview game, and at the end of the unit you host La Noche de Preguntas, question night, where the whole family plays. Courtesy counts double all week: every request at your own dinner table in Spanish, *por favor*.

PICTURE STUDY



Strolling along the Seashore, Joaquín Sorolla, 1909 · Oil on canvas · Museo Sorolla, Madrid

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Sorolla painted his wife Clotilde and their eldest daughter María taking the paseo along the beach at Valencia, dressed in summer white, parasol up, veils lifting in the wind. He was called the painter of light, and this canvas shows why: the sun seems to come off the paint. The paseo itself, the unhurried evening walk where everyone greets everyone, is one of the oldest courtesies of Spanish life, and it is still walked every evening in plazas and on seafronts across Spain and Latin America.

Look closely

- Look at the white dresses. How many colors did Sorolla actually use to paint white cloth in sunlight? Hunt for blues, violets and golds hiding in the white.
- Find the wind. Nothing is still: veil, sash, skirt hems. Sorolla painted fast, outdoors, to catch exactly this.
- Look at the faces, shaded by hat and parasol. Sorolla often let the light be the subject and kept the faces quiet.
- Find the sea. How much of the canvas does it get, and how does so small a strip still make the whole picture feel like the shore?

Talk about it

1. The paseo is a daily walk whose whole purpose is unhurried company and greeting. What do you think a town gains from a custom like that?

2. Sorolla was orphaned at two and worked his way up from nothing. What might the calm and sunlight of his paintings tell you about what he valued?
3. You are on this beach and meet the two ladies. Greet them with proper respect, in Spanish, and ask one polite question. (Tú or usted?)

ACTIVITY

Question cards and the interview

Four golden question words, two kinds of you, and a pocketful of courtesy coins: today you mint them all as cards and spend them in your first real interview.

You will need

- 13 index cards for the new vocabulary
- 4 larger cards or folded papers for the question-word posters
- Your Spanish notebook

Steps

1. Make the vocabulary cards: hola, adiós, buenos días, gracias, por favor, sí, no, señor, señora, and the four question words qué, quién, dónde, cómo, accents and all.
2. Make the four question-word posters: the word huge on the front with both marks (¿QUÉ?), the meaning and one model question on the back (What? ¿Qué es?).
3. Drill the melody: say each model question with the rise at the end: ¿Qué es? ¿Quién es? ¿Dónde está el libro? ¿Cómo estás?
4. Play pointing questions: the parent points at anything you can name and asks ¿Qué es? You answer: Es un libro. Es la mesa. Then swap: you ask, they answer, and you judge their endings.
5. The interview: sit a family member down and ask five questions, at least one with each golden word, choosing tú or usted properly. Write their answers (in English is fine) in your notebook.
6. All week: every request at the table in Spanish with por favor, every thank-you gracias. Keep a tally on the fridge.

Tips

- Always write both marks: start with ¿ and end with ?. Drawing the upside-down one is the fun part.
- The accents on qué, quién, dónde and cómo are part of their spelling, little crowns they never take off.
- When in doubt between tú and usted, choose usted and a smile.

Check your work

- ☐ My thirteen new cards are made, accents in place.
- ☐ I can ask the four model questions from memory with a rising melody.
- ☐ I interviewed a family member with five questions and recorded the answers.
- ☐ The fridge tally shows por favor and gracias working all week.

SPANISH NOTEBOOK

1. Write the thirteen new words with meanings, dated: the courtesy coins and the four golden question words.
2. Write the little dialogue and memorize it: ¿Cómo estás? Bien, gracias. ¿Y tú?
3. Write the tú/usted rule in your own words, with one example question for each.
4. Write three questions about your own house (¿Dónde está el libro? style) and answer them in Spanish.

From history. The upside-down marks are young, as language rules go: the Spanish Royal Academy recommended ¿ and ; in 1754, reasoning that since Spanish questions do not change their word order, readers deserved a warning at the start. Printers grumbled, readers loved it, and Spanish became the language that announces its questions, a courtesy on paper to match the courtesy in speech.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Turn the statement into a written question: Hablas español.

▼ Show solution

1. No new words are needed; the melody and the marks do the work.
2. Open with ¿ and close with ?.
3. Say it with the rise at the end.

Answer: ¿Hablas español? Do you speak Spanish?

Example 2. Ask where the book is, and answer that it is the new book, on the table... as far as your Spanish reaches.

▼ **Show solution**

1. Where is...? is the golden phrase ¿Dónde está...?
2. ¿Dónde está el libro?
3. Answer with what you own: Es el libro nuevo, and point at la mesa.

Answer: ¿Dónde está el libro? Es el libro nuevo. (Grade 6 will give you está en la mesa; today, pointing is honest grammar.)

Example 3. Greet your grandmother and ask how she is, with proper respect.

▼ **Show solution**

1. An elder is owed usted.
2. Usted takes the él/ella verb form: está.
3. Add the courtesy title.

Answer: Buenos días, señora. ¿Cómo está usted?

PRACTICE

1. **Easy** What do the four golden question words mean: qué, quién, dónde, cómo?

▼ **Show answer**

What, who, where, how.

2. **Easy** Write the question marks around: Cómo estás

▼ **Show answer**

¿Cómo estás?

3. **Easy** Answer the daily dialogue: ¿Cómo estás?

▼ **Show answer**

Bien, gracias. ¿Y tú?

4. **Medium** Tú or usted? (a) your little brother; (b) the pastor; (c) a shopkeeper you have never met; (d) your best friend.

▼ **Show answer**

(a) tú, (b) usted, (c) usted, (d) tú.

5. **Medium** Translate: ¿Quién es? Es la madre.

▼ **Show answer**

Who is it? It is the mother.

6. **Medium** Ask politely for the bread at the table, Spanish courtesy and all.

▼ **Show answer**

El pan, por favor. (And gracias when it arrives.)

7. **Hard** Translate into Spanish, marks and accents included: Where is the white church?

▼ **Show answer**

¿Dónde está la iglesia blanca?

8. **Challenge** Usted began as vuestra merced, your mercy. Explain how that history makes sense of two facts: why usted is the polite you, and why it takes the same verb form as él and ella.

▼ **Show answer**

It started as an honorific address, like speaking to your mercy or your honor, so it stayed the respectful form; and because your mercy is grammatically a third person (like she or it), usted still takes the él/ella verb form: ¿Cómo está usted?

COMMON MISTAKES

- Writing the closing ? but forgetting the opening ¿. Spanish questions wear both marks, every time.
- Dropping the accents from qué, quién, dónde, cómo. The accent is part of the spelling.
- Using tú with strangers and elders. When in doubt, usted.
- Adding English do into questions: ¿Do hablas español? The rising melody and the marks are the whole machine: ¿Hablas español?

Make it a game • La Entrevista Relámpago. Lightning interview: set a one-minute timer. The student fires questions at a family member, any mix of ¿Qué es? (pointing at things), ¿Quién es? (pointing at people in photos), ¿Dónde está...? and ¿Cómo estás?, and the family member answers as best they can. Count the questions asked with perfect marks-melody-and-accent form. Then switch chairs: can the parent beat the student's count under the student's judging?

Scripture. “Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” (Colossians 4:6, KJV)

Courtesy in speech is older than any phrasebook. A student who learns *por favor* and *gracias* before anything else has the Spanish-speaking world's own order of priorities, and the apostle's.

UNIT 5

READING SPANISH

Everything you have built this quarter, the honest alphabet, the nouns in their hats, the plurals, the -ar engine, the chant of *ser*, the agreeable adjectives, the golden questions and the courtesy coins, comes together now for the payoff: you are going to read a whole story in Spanish. It is set on a market morning in the Plaza Mayor of Madrid, the great square that has been the city's living room for four hundred years, and every sentence in it is built from things you know.

Then you will discover that you have been surrounded by Spanish your whole life. In Lesson 5.2 you follow the language onto the map of your own country, Florida, Colorado, Nevada, Los Angeles, Santa Fe, with the first map ever to show America at all, drawn in the year 1500 by Columbus's own pilot. The quarter ends with the family fiesta: you read your story aloud, teach the family three phrases, serve a little mercado of bread and fruit, and hang a hand-lettered *Bienvenidos* sign on your door.

PREREQUISITES

- Units 1–4: the sounds, the noun hats and plurals, the -ar endings, ser, agreement, and the question words
- The two master charts (hablar, ser) chanted at the start of every session
- The flashcard deck so far: 66 words, with the last 9 arriving this unit

MASTERY CHECKLIST

- ☐ I read the plaza story aloud with pure vowels, and once more in English, without help on more than a few words.
- ☐ I can answer simple Spanish questions about a Spanish story: ¿Quién canta? ¿Qué mira la madre?
- ☐ I can explain what fifteen Spanish place names on the US map mean, including my best five from memory.
- ☐ I own the golden phrase ¿Cómo se dice...? and can use it to ask for any word I am missing.
- ☐ My flashcard deck is complete: 67 words, reviewed from the beginning.
- ☐ I hosted the family fiesta and taught the family three phrases.

OPTIONAL BOOKS AND RESOURCES FOR THIS UNIT

- **A United States map or road atlas:** Any map of the whole country, paper or pulled up on a screen, for the place-name hunt in Lesson 5.2. A western-states road map is the richest hunting ground in the world for Spanish.
- **Your public library's free language programs:** Many libraries give cardholders free access to language-learning programs and Spanish picture books. Ask the librarian; summer is a good time to keep the quarter's Spanish warm.
- **SpanishDict:** Free online. When the fiesta guests ask how to say something you have not learned, look it up together and hear it spoken: ¿Cómo se dice...? answered in one click.

Not required. Every activity in this unit works with paper, pencil, scissors and the free links below. School Launch has no ties to these authors, publishers or companies.

5.1 A Morning in the Plaza Mayor

3 sessions of 30–40 minutes

5.2 Spanish All Around You

3 sessions of 30–40 minutes

UNIT 5 REVIEW

Answer each question in complete sentences where asked. The review is worth 30 points. It may be done orally, with a parent writing down the answers. Questions 1 and 2 use the story UNA MAÑANA EN LA PLAZA.

1. **5 pts**

Read this from the story and translate it: La madre mira la fruta. Las naranjas son bonitas y las manzanas son rojas.

2. **5 pts**

Answer in Spanish: ¿Quién habla con un amigo viejo? ¿Qué miran los niños?

3. **5 pts**

Who was Juan de la Cosa, and what is special about his map of 1500?

4. **5 pts**

Give the Spanish meaning of five American place names, at least one singular with its hat, one plural with its hat, and one adjective.

5. **5 pts**

What is the golden phrase, what does it mean, and how would you use it to learn the word for window?

6. **5 pts**

The quarter in one breath: chant hablar, chant ser, and say the sentence that is now true of you.

ANSWER KEY

1. The mother looks at the fruit. The oranges are pretty and the apples are red.
2. El padre habla con un amigo viejo. Los niños miran las flores (blancas y rojas).
3. Columbus's pilot and the owner of the Santa María; his 1500 ox-hide map is the first map in the world to show the Americas, drawn as a green, mostly unknown coast.
4. Examples: El Paso, the pass (singular with hat); Las Vegas, the meadows, or Los Angeles, the angels (plural with hat); Colorado, reddish, Nevada, snowy, or Amarillo, yellow (adjectives); plus Florida, flowery; Santa Fe, holy faith; Montana, mountain.
5. ¿Cómo se dice...?, how do you say...? Point at a window and ask ¿Cómo se dice window, por favor?; the answer, ventana, is yours; say gracias.
6. Hablo, hablas, habla, hablamos, hablan; soy, eres, es, somos, son; Hablo español.

UNIT CHALLENGE: LA FIESTA: THE FAMILY SPANISH NIGHT

You end the quarter the way the plaza would: with food, family and Spanish out loud. Hang the Bienvenidos sign on the door and greet each arriving family member in Spanish: ¡Hola! ¡Buenos días! (or buenas noches, and teach them that too). Serve the little mercado you planned, bread and fruit on a cloth, el pan, las manzanas, las naranjas, and let guests buy with courtesy coins: everything at the table is por favor and gracias tonight. Then the reading: UNA MAÑANA EN LA PLAZA, aloud, with voices, first in Spanish, then your English translation. Teach the family your three phrases until everyone has them, run one round of the daily dialogue around the table (¿Cómo estás? Bien, gracias. ¿Y tú?), and close with your five map names and what they secretly mean. Take a bow: hablas español.

LOOK FOR	WHAT IT MEANS
The reading	The story read aloud in Spanish with pure vowels, rising questions and voices for the speakers, then translated clearly.
The teaching	Three phrases taught until every family member can say them, plus one full round of the daily dialogue.
The mercado and the sign	The Bienvenidos sign hung and handsome; the mercado served with Spanish courtesy from start to finish.
The map finale	Five place names delivered from memory with their meanings and at least one story (Florida, California...) told well.

UNIT 5 • READING SPANISH • LESSON 5.1 OF 10 • 3 SESSIONS OF 30–40 MINUTES

5.1 A MORNING IN THE PLAZA MAYOR

OBJECTIVES

- Read a connected Spanish story aloud with pure vowels and the right melodies.
- Understand the story directly in Spanish, then translate it line by line.
- Answer simple Spanish questions about the story.
- Learn seven market words: el mercado, la plaza, la fruta, la naranja, la manzana, el dinero, la calle.

Warm-up. Chant hablar and ser once each. Now count up what you own: ten sound rules, sixty words, two verb machines, agreement, questions and manners. That is not a pile of parts anymore; that is enough machine to drive. Today you read Spanish, real connected Spanish, a whole story of it.

WATCH

Spanish Story | Present Tense | ¿Qué te pasó?

Spanish Playground · 3:36

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OCMzi8yhREQ>

WHEN TO WATCH

Before you read your own story: a short illustrated story told in slow present-tense Spanish. Let it wash over you once, then watch again and count how many words you catch.

Note: You will not catch everything, and you are not supposed to. Catching some of it, in a story you were never taught, is the whole demonstration: you read and hear real Spanish now.

BACKUP VIDEO

If You Are A Beginner Watch This NOW! Easy Spanish!

Spanish After Hours · 5:03

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rw-DW_YlfoI

A second gentle listen: very slow Spanish for absolute beginners. Made for a slightly older audience; despite the channel's name, the content is wholesome.

KEY TERMS

plaza mayor

The main square of a Spanish town: market, meeting place, festival ground and front porch for the whole city. Madrid's, finished in 1619, is the most famous of all.

mercado

Market: the stalls of fruit, bread and flowers that have filled plazas on market mornings for centuries.

reading for meaning

Reading a Spanish sentence for what it says, not word-by-word into English first. The goal of the whole quarter: La niña canta should make you see a singing girl, not a vocabulary list.

helper words

The tiny connecting words a story needs: y (and), con (with), a (to), en (in, at), de (of, from). You borrow them freely today; they are glossed beside the story.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Latin American sounds: h is silent, ñ says ny, ll says y, j says a breathy h, and z and soft c say s, not the th of Spain. Capitals show the stress.

mercado

mehr-KAH-doh

noun · el mercado, los mercados
a market

plaza

PLAH-sah

noun · la plaza, las plazas
a square

fruta

FROO-tah

noun · la fruta, las frutas
fruit

naranja

nah-RRAHN-hah

noun · la naranja, las naranjas
an orange

manzana

mahn-SAH-nah

noun · la manzana, las manzanas
an apple

dinero

dee-NEH-rroh

noun · el dinero

money

calle

KAH-yeh

noun · la calle, las calles

a street

vendedor

behn-deh-DOR

noun · el vendedor, los vendedores

a seller

huevo

WEH-boh

noun · el huevo, los huevos

an egg

pescado

pehs-KAH-doh

noun · el pescado, los pescados

fish (as food)

gente

HEHN-teh

noun · la gente (feminine singular)

people

CORE IDEAS

The story. Madrid's Plaza Mayor was finished in 1619, a great rectangle of red buildings with hundreds of balconies, nine arched gateways, and one open floor of golden sand that has held almost everything a city can do: market stalls and royal festivals, horse games and proclamations, and four centuries of neighbors meeting, greeting and bargaining. On an ordinary market morning it filled with the smells of bread and oranges and the sounds you have been learning all quarter: ¡Buenos días,

señora! ¿Cómo está usted? La fruta es buena. El pan, por favor. Gracias. Spanish towns from Madrid to Mexico City to Santa Fe are built around such a square, because Spanish life believes the best room in town is the one everybody shares. Today you walk into that square on paper: your first connected Spanish story, built entirely of words and grammar you own.

Read it three ways. Here is how to read your story (it is printed in the activity below). First, **aloud in Spanish**, slowly, pure vowels, melody rising on the questions; do not translate yet, just see how much arrives on its own. Second, **for meaning**, line by line: say each sentence in good English, using the helper-word gloss when you need it. Third, **aloud again at full speed**, now that you know what you are saying, with feeling: you are the narrator, the señora, the niño. By the third pass something wonderful happens: it stops being a puzzle and becomes a morning.

How Spanish works: nothing new today. That is the point. Every sentence in the story runs on machinery from Units 1 through 4: nouns in hats (*el mercado*, *las naranjas*), plurals, -ar verbs doing the work (*camina*, *mira*, *habla*, *canta*), *es* and *son* telling what things are, adjectives agreeing from behind (*las flores blancas*), questions in their marks, and courtesy everywhere. When you hit a sentence that resists, do not guess wildly: find the verb, read its ending for the doer, then let the nouns fall into place. That calm little drill is called parsing, and it is how readers of every language open stubborn sentences.

Say it out loud. Your seven market words, hats on: *el mercado* (market), *la plaza* (square; an old friend since week 1, now officially in the deck), *la fruta* (fruit), *la naranja* (orange), *la manzana* (apple), *el dinero* (money), *la calle* (street). Chant them, card them, and notice the cognates and cousins: *naranja* is where English orange ultimately came from, through Arabic and Spanish into French and then English, trading its *n* for an *o* along the way.

Try it. The activity is the story itself: three readings, the comprehension questions, and your own copy written into the notebook. At week's end, you will read it to the family at the fiesta, and it will be the first whole Spanish anyone in the house has heard read by someone who understands it.

PICTURE STUDY



A Royal Festival in the Plaza Mayor, Anonymous, 17th century, c. 1623 · Oil on canvas · Museo de Historia de Madrid

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

Here is the Plaza Mayor only a few years after it was finished, dressed up for one of its grandest days: a royal festival of about 1623, with teams of horsemen in plumes and sashes riding the juego de cañas, an old Spanish game of charges and thrown cane lances, more pageant than battle. Every balcony is full; the whole city has come to its shared room. On ordinary mornings this same sand held the market stalls of your story, and today, four hundred years later, Madrileños still drink hot chocolate and buy Christmas gifts under these very arcades.

Look closely

- Count the teams of horsemen by the colors of their costumes. The juego de cañas was ridden in squadrons, like a dance with horses.
- Look at the buildings: hundreds of balconies, all full. The plaza was built as a theater where the city itself was the show.
- Find the towers and spires above the rooftops, and the gateways into the square. A plaza is a room: find its doors.
- Find the ordinary people around the edges, on foot among the grandees. Markets, games and festivals all shared the same floor.

Talk about it

1. What does a city gain by keeping one great square where everything, markets, festivals, meetings, happens in front of everyone?
2. The painter shows grandees on horseback and ordinary folk on foot in the same picture. Who do you think the plaza really belonged to?
3. La plaza es grande. Los señores caminan. ¿Qué más can you say about this painting in Spanish? Try three sentences.

ACTIVITY

Una mañana en la plaza: the story

Here is your story. The helper words beside it are free; everything else is yours already. Read it three ways: aloud in Spanish, line by line for meaning, then aloud again with feeling.

UNA MAÑANA EN LA PLAZA · Es un día nuevo y el sol es grande. La familia camina a la plaza. La plaza es grande y bonita. ¡Es el día del mercado! La madre mira la fruta. Las naranjas son bonitas y las manzanas son rojas. «¿Qué es, mamá?» «Es una naranja, por favor y gracias.» El padre habla con un amigo viejo. «¡Hola, señor! ¿Cómo está usted?» «Bien, gracias.» Los niños miran las flores blancas y rojas. Una niña canta y un perro camina en la calle. El niño mira el pan. «El pan, por favor.» «Sí, señor. Gracias.» La familia camina a la casa. El día es bueno. ¡Gracias, Señor, por el pan y por la familia!

Helper words (free): y = and · a = to · en = in, on · con = with · del = of the · por = for · mamá = mom · «...» = Spanish quotation marks.

You will need

- 7 index cards for the market words
- Your Spanish notebook and a pencil
- A parent or sibling to be your audience for the third reading

Steps

1. Make the seven market-word cards: el mercado, la plaza, la fruta, la naranja, la manzana, el dinero, la calle. Run the whole deck, now 65 strong.
2. First reading, Spanish aloud: slow and brave, pure vowels, questions rising. Put a light pencil dot under any word that made you stumble.
3. Second reading, for meaning: say each sentence in good English. Use the helper gloss freely; use your notebook charts for any stubborn ending.
4. Answer the comprehension questions in the practice section, in Spanish where asked.
5. Third reading, performance: stand up and read it to someone, with voices for the señora and the niño. This is your dress rehearsal for the fiesta.

6. Copy the story into your notebook in your best handwriting, title and date at the top: the final page of a quarter of pages.

Tips

- When a sentence resists, find the verb first and read its ending for the doer. The nouns then fall into place.
- The « » marks are Spain's quotation marks; read them exactly like our quotation marks.
- Dot-words are not failures; they are your personal review list for fiesta week.

Check your work

- ☐ I read the story aloud three times, the last one with feeling, to a real audience.
- ☐ I translated every sentence, using only the gloss and my own charts.
- ☐ I answered the comprehension questions, the Spanish ones in Spanish.
- ☐ The story is copied into my notebook, titled and dated.

SPANISH NOTEBOOK

1. Write the seven market words with meanings, hats on, dated.
2. Copy the whole story, UNA MAÑANA EN LA PLAZA, in your best handwriting.
3. Write your English translation beneath it, sentence by sentence.
4. Write one sentence of your own in Spanish about your town or street, built only from words you own.

From history. Why does every Spanish town have a plaza? In 1573 the Spanish crown published town-planning laws for the New World ordering every new settlement to begin with a central plaza and grow outward from it. That is why, from Madrid to Mexico City to the oldest towns in the United States, St. Augustine, Florida (1565) and Santa Fe, New Mexico (1610), the heart of town is an open square with the church on it. The oldest city plan in your country speaks Spanish.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Open the stubborn sentence: La madre mira la fruta.

▼ **Show solution**

1. Find the verb: mira, ending -a, the he/she form; mirar means to look at, with the at built in.
 2. Find the doer: la madre, the mother.
 3. Let the rest fall into place: la fruta, the fruit.
-

Answer: The mother looks at the fruit.

Example 2. Translate the exchange: «¡Hola, señor! ¿Cómo está usted?»
«Bien, gracias.»

▼ **Show solution**

1. The greeting and title: Hello, sir!
 2. The polite question, usted form: How are you?
 3. The daily answer: Well, thank you.
-

Answer: Hello, sir! How are you? — Well, thank you.

Example 3. Answer in Spanish: ¿Qué miran los niños?

▼ **Show solution**

1. The question asks what the children look at.
 2. Find the story line: Los niños miran las flores blancas y rojas.
 3. Answer with the same machinery, verb ending -an for they.
-

Answer: Los niños miran las flores (blancas y rojas).

PRACTICE

1. **Easy** From the story: what day is it in the plaza, and what is the weather sentence at the start?

▼ **Show answer**

It is market day (el día del mercado), and the story opens: Es un día nuevo y el sol es grande, it is a new day and the sun is big.

2. **Easy** Translate: Las manzanas son rojas.

▼ **Show answer**

The apples are red.

3. **Easy** Answer in Spanish: ¿Quién canta?

▼ **Show answer**

Una niña canta. (A girl sings.)

4. **Medium** Answer in Spanish: ¿Con quién habla el padre?

▼ **Show answer**

El padre habla con un amigo viejo. (With an old friend.)

5. **Medium** The niño wants bread. Write his two polite lines from the story, marks and all.

▼ **Show answer**

«El pan, por favor.» and «Gracias.» (The baker answers: «Sí, señor.»)

6. **Medium** Translate into Spanish: The family walks to the house.

▼ **Show answer**

La familia camina a la casa.

7. **Hard** Find every -ar verb in the story and give its doer: there are at least five different forms.

▼ **Show answer**

Camina (la familia; also un perro, la familia again), mira (la madre; el niño), habla (el padre), miran (los niños), canta (una niña). Endings -a for one doer, -an for many.

8. **Challenge** Write tomorrow morning's first paragraph of your own: three Spanish sentences about your family's morning, using at least one es, one -ar verb and one agreeing adjective.

▼ **Show answer**

Answers vary. Example: Es un día bonito. La familia camina a la iglesia blanca. Mamá canta y los niños escuchan.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Translating word-by-word in order instead of finding the verb first. Spanish sentences unlock from the verb outward.
- Reading the « » marks as something exotic. They are just quotation marks; give the people their voices.
- Rushing the first reading. The first pass is for sound and courage; meaning is the second pass's job.
- Stopping dead at a stumble. Dot the word, keep the sentence moving, and come back; readers finish the line.

Make it a game • El Mercado. Set up a market stall on the kitchen table: bread, fruit, a flower, a book, anything you can name, each with a paper price (uno, dos, tres... count in Spanish as far as you know; fingers are legal tender). Family members come to buy, but the stall only understands Spanish: ¡Buenos días! ¿Qué es? La naranja, por favor. Gracias. ¡Adiós! The shopkeeper-student corrects gently and keeps score of every completed polite purchase. Trade roles for round two.

Scripture. “Give us this day our daily bread.” (Matthew 6:11, KJV)

In Spanish the family in your story would pray: El pan nuestro de cada día, dánoslo hoy. El pan, el día, words from your own deck, in the prayer the whole world prays. The story ends with thanks for bread and family because that is where every good market morning ends.

UNIT 5 • READING SPANISH • LESSON 5.2 OF 10 • 3 SESSIONS OF 30–40 MINUTES

5.2 SPANISH ALL AROUND YOU

OBJECTIVES

- Tell who Juan de la Cosa was and why his map of 1500 matters.
- Explain the Spanish inside at least fifteen American place names.
- Learn the last two words of the deck, la ciudad and el español, and the golden phrase ¿Cómo se dice...?
- Prepare and host the family fiesta: story, three phrases, mercado and the Bienvenidos sign.

Warm-up. Read these aloud with your best Spanish vowels: Florida. Colorado. Nevada. Montana. Los Angeles. San Francisco. Santa Fe. Amarillo. El Paso. Las Vegas. Feel anything? You just read a tenth of the American map, and every word of it was Spanish. Today you find out what your own country's names have been saying all along.

WATCH

Names Of American States, Cities, and Streets You DIDN'T KNOW were SPANISH!

Excelsior Classes · 4:39

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_Dx3ow6_Lk

WHEN TO WATCH

After the How Spanish works paragraph, before the map hunt: a quick tour of the Spanish hiding on the American map.

Note: From a teacher at a Christian online classical school. Keep a pencil handy: every name she mentions is a catch for your hunt list.

BACKUP VIDEO

Why So Many U.S. States Have Spanish Names

5W Explore · 10:00

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-72KCWeb2HA>

A fuller second tour through the Spanish-named states and how they got that way. A narrated explainer made for a general audience; watch together.

KEY TERMS

Juan de la Cosa

Columbus's pilot and the owner of the Santa María, who in the year 1500 drew the first map in the world to show the Americas.

place name

The name of a city, state, river or mountain. Thousands of American place names are plain Spanish: Los Angeles, the angels; Florida, flowery.

la ciudad

The city, cousin of English city through Latin civitas. Its -dad ending is your old friend from the -ty bridge.

el español

The Spanish language itself, the last flashcard of the deck: Hablo español, I speak Spanish, now honestly true.

¿Cómo se dice...?

How do you say...? The golden phrase that turns every Spanish speaker you ever meet into your teacher: ¿Cómo se dice tree? Say it, and the language keeps opening forever.

VOCABULARY FOR THE WEEK

Latin American sounds: h is silent, ñ says ny, ll says y, j says a breathy h, and z and soft c say s, not the th of Spain. Capitals show the stress.

ciudad

syoo-DAHD

noun · la ciudad, las ciudades

a city

montaña

mohn-TAH-nyah

noun · la montaña, las montañas

a mountain

río

RREE-oh

noun · el río, los ríos

a river

mar

MAHR

noun · el mar, los mares

the sea

isla

EES-lah

noun · la isla, las islas

an island

estado

ehs-TAH-doh

noun · el estado, los estados

a state

norte

NOR-teh

noun · el norte

north

sur

SOOR

noun · el sur

south

este

EHS-teh

noun · el este

east

oeste

oh-EHS-teh

noun · el oeste

west

nombre

NOHM-breh

noun · el nombre, los nombres

a name

The story. In the year 1500, in the port town of El Puerto de Santa María in Spain, a sea captain spread out a great sheet of ox-hide and began to paint a map of the world. His name was Juan de la Cosa, and he had earned the right to draw what no mapmaker had ever drawn: he had owned the Santa María, Columbus's flagship, and sailed on the first voyages himself. On the old maps, the ocean west of Spain simply ended. On Juan de la Cosa's map, for the first time in the history of the world, there is land on the far side: a great green coast, mysterious and mostly empty, with a picture of Saint Christopher, the legendary carrier of travelers, painted where the new continent's heart would be. He could not know he had drawn the edge of two continents. Within a lifetime, Spanish sailors, missionaries and settlers were naming everything they found, rivers, bays, mountains, towns, and they named them in Spanish, after saints and feast days, after what they saw and hoped: Florida, flowery, sighted at Easter, Pascua Florida; Santa Fe, holy faith; Los Angeles, the angels. The names stuck. Today about one American state in five, and streets beyond counting, carry Spanish names, and after this quarter you can finally hear what they say.

How Spanish works: reading the map. Your grammar is the decoder ring. **Colors and adjectives:** Colorado means reddish-colored (the river ran red with canyon mud); Amarillo is yellow; Nevada is snowy (the Sierra Nevada, the snowy mountain range). **Nouns in hats, singular and plural:** El Paso is the pass; Las Vegas is the meadows; Los Angeles, the angels, wears the plural el-family hat you learned in Unit 2. **Montana** is montaña with its hat straightened by English spelling. **The saints and the faith:** San Francisco, Santa Bárbara, San Antonio, Santa Fe, mission names from the Camino Real you met in Unit 4, and Sacramento, the sacrament. Even **California** has a story: the conquistadors borrowed it from a popular storybook of 1510 about a fabulous island, proof that explorers read adventure novels too.

The last two cards, and the golden phrase. Two words complete your 67: *la ciudad* (the city, with the -dad ending you met on the bridge from city/civitas) and *el español* (the Spanish language). With that second card you may now say, truthfully: **Hablo español.** Not all of it, not yet, but honestly: you speak Spanish. And here is the phrase that keeps it growing for the rest of your life: **¿Cómo se dice...?** How do you say...? Point at anything, ask **¿Cómo se dice tree?**, and every Spanish speaker you ever meet becomes your teacher. A student with pure vowels, good manners and **¿Cómo se dice...?** can learn the rest of the language from the world itself.

Say it out loud. Read the map names once more, Spanish-style, and translate as you go: Florida, flowery. Colorado, reddish. Nevada, snowy. Los Angeles, the angels. Las Vegas, the meadows. El Paso, the pass. Santa Fe, holy faith. Then the last chant of the quarter, all your machinery in one breath: hablo, hablas, habla, hablamos, hablan; soy, eres, es, somos, son; and finally, slowly: Hablo español.

Try it. This week: the map hunt, the Bienvenidos sign, and the fiesta itself, the unit challenge that ends the quarter. You read, you teach, you host, in Spanish. Fabricando fit faber, says our crest in the mother tongue; hablando se aprende a hablar, says the daughter: by speaking, one learns to speak.

PICTURE STUDY



The Map of Juan de la Cosa, Juan de la Cosa, 1500 · Ink and pigment on ox-hide parchment · Naval Museum, Madrid

Image: [Wikimedia Commons](#), public domain

This is the first map in the world to show America, painted on ox-hide in 1500 by Juan de la Cosa, who owned Columbus's flagship and sailed with him. It is shown here the way the parchment is kept, with west at the top: the great green land along the top is the brand-new world, so new that the mapmaker left it green and mysterious, with a little painting of Saint Christopher, the carrier of travelers, where its unknown heart lay. The reds and golds below are the old, familiar world: Spain, Africa, and the Mediterranean crowded with place names. Five hundred years of Spanish place-naming in the Americas begin on this sheet.

Look closely

- Find the green coastline at the top: the Americas, one year old to European eyes. Why do you think the mapmaker filled the unknown interior with green instead of guessing?
- Find the compass roses and the web of straight lines crossing the sea. Sailors steered by these lines, called rhumbs, from rose to rose.
- Find the little framed picture in the green land: Saint Christopher carrying a traveler across water, where the unexplored continent lies.
- Look at the crowded coasts of the old world below, every harbor named, and compare them with the nearly empty new coast. The empty spaces are where the Spanish names of your map hunt were about to be written.

Talk about it

1. Juan de la Cosa had stood on the deck when the new coast came into view.
What would it feel like to be the first person to draw your discovery onto the map of the world?
2. Why did explorers name so many places after saints and feast days? What does a name tell you about the namer?
3. Five hundred years later, you read Los Angeles and Santa Fe off the map without blinking. What might the map of five hundred years from now carry from our own day?

ACTIVITY

The map hunt and the Bienvenidos sign

Two jobs this week: hunt the Spanish names on the map of your own country, and letter the sign that will hang on your door at the fiesta.

You will need

- A map of the United States (paper or on a screen)
- 2 index cards for la ciudad and el español
- Poster board or a half sheet, markers or paint, and your Spanish notebook

Steps

1. Make the last two flashcards: la ciudad, el español. Run the complete deck, all 67, start to finish, and sort out any card you miss for fiesta-week review.
2. The map hunt: scan the map, west first, and list every Spanish name you can find in your notebook. Push past the famous ones: rivers (Rio Grande, Sacramento), mountains (Sierra Nevada), small towns, even streets in your own town.
3. Beside at least fifteen catches, write what the Spanish says: Las Vegas, the meadows; El Paso, the pass; Amarillo, yellow. Use SpanishDict (¿Cómo se dice...?) for any you cannot crack.
4. Pick your five favorites and learn them by heart for the fiesta: name, meaning, and one sentence of the story (Florida was sighted at Easter, Pascua Florida...).
5. The sign: letter BIENVENIDOS (welcome) big and beautiful on your board, decorate it with things you can name in Spanish, el sol, las estrellas, las flores, and add the family name: Familia García style, your own surname.
6. Rehearse the fiesta: story read-through, your three teaching phrases chosen (good picks: hola, por favor, gracias, or the daily dialogue), and the mercado menu planned: el pan, la fruta, las manzanas, las naranjas.

Tips

- The American Southwest is the richest hunting ground: California, Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Nevada, Arizona.
- San and Santa before a name mean Saint: San Antonio, Santa Bárbara. Count each as a catch.

- Letter the sign in pencil first. A sign on the front door gets read every day; make it your best lettering of the quarter.

Check your work

- ☐ My deck is complete, 67 cards, and I ran it start to finish.
- ☐ My notebook lists fifteen or more place names with their Spanish meanings.
- ☐ I know my five favorites by heart, with their stories.
- ☐ The Bienvenidos sign is finished and ready to hang.

SPANISH NOTEBOOK

1. Write the last two vocabulary words, dated, and the sentence *Hablo español* beneath them, your signature line of the quarter.
2. Record the map hunt: fifteen or more place names with meanings, your five favorites starred.
3. Write the golden phrase *¿Cómo se dice...?* and three real questions you asked with it this week, with the answers.
4. Last page of the quarter: write three sentences in Spanish about your own family, and date it proudly.

From history. California is named after a storybook. In a popular Spanish romance of 1510, *Las sergas de Esplandián*, there is a fabulous island called California ruled by Queen Calafia. When Cortés's men reached what they took for a great island off Mexico's west coast, they borrowed the novel's name, and it stuck to the real coast forever. Soldiers and sailors carried adventure stories in their sea chests, and one of them ended up on your map.

WORKED EXAMPLES

Example 1. Decode the place names with your own grammar: Las Vegas, El Paso, Los Angeles.

▼ Show solution

1. Read the hats: las (la family, plural), el (singular), los (el family, plural).
2. Las Vegas: the meadows. El Paso: the pass. Los Angeles: the angels.
3. Notice you used Unit 2 (hats and plurals) on a road map.

Answer: The meadows; the pass; the angels.

Example 2. Colorado, Amarillo and Nevada are all one part of speech in Spanish. Which, and what do they mean?

▼ **Show solution**

1. All three are adjectives, Unit 3 and 4 material.
2. Colorado: reddish-colored. Amarillo: yellow. Nevada: snowy.
3. Each described the land it named: a red river, yellow soil, snowy mountains.

Answer: They are adjectives: reddish, yellow, snowy, descriptions that became names.

Example 3. You are at a taquería and do not know the word for napkin. Deploy the golden phrase.

▼ **Show solution**

1. The phrase is ¿Cómo se dice...?, how do you say...?
2. Point politely and ask: ¿Cómo se dice napkin, por favor?
3. Receive servilleta, say gracias, and it is yours forever.

Answer: ¿Cómo se dice napkin, por favor? ... ¡Gracias! (Servilleta.)

PRACTICE

1. **Easy** What does Florida mean, and how did it get the name?

▼ **Show answer**

Flowery: Spanish explorers sighted it at Easter, which Spanish calls Pascua Florida, the flowery feast.

2. **Easy** Who drew the first map showing America, when, and what had he sailed on?

▼ **Show answer**

Juan de la Cosa, in 1500; he was Columbus's pilot and owned the Santa María.

3. **Easy** Translate the place names: El Paso, Las Vegas.

▼ **Show answer**

The pass; the meadows.

4. **Medium** San and Santa begin dozens of American names. What do they mean? Give two examples each.

▼ **Show answer**

Saint. San: San Francisco, San Antonio, San Diego. Santa: Santa Fe (holy faith), Santa Bárbara, Santa Clara.

5. **Medium** Which Spanish adjectives hide in Colorado, Nevada and Amarillo, and what did each describe?

▼ **Show answer**

Colorado, reddish (the silt-red river); Nevada, snowy (the snowy sierra); Amarillo, yellow (the yellow soil and flowers).

6. **Medium** What does the golden phrase ¿Cómo se dice...? mean, and why is it worth more than any single vocabulary word?

▼ **Show answer**

How do you say...? It turns every Spanish speaker into your teacher, so it can fetch you any word you are ever missing.

7. **Hard** Los Angeles wears los but angeles does not end in -o. Using your Unit 2 grammar, explain what the hat tells you anyway.

▼ **Show answer**

The hat does the talking: los marks an el-family plural noun regardless of its ending (ángel is an el word, los ángeles its plural), just like el día taught you that hats outrank endings.

8. **Challenge** Your deck holds 67 words, two verb machines and the golden phrase. A visitor asks what you can actually DO with one quarter of Spanish. Answer in three Spanish sentences, true ones.

▼ **Show answer**

Answers vary. Example: Hablo español. La familia camina a la iglesia y los niños cantan. ¿Cómo se dice more?, porque estudio más. Any honest, grammatical three sentences earn full credit.

COMMON MISTAKES

- Pronouncing the map names the Anglo way during the hunt. In the hunt they are Spanish again: Los Angeles with pure vowels, lohs AHN-heh-lehs, j-rule and all.

- Thinking the quarter ends with the course. The deck, the labels on the house, the sign on the door and ¿Cómo se dice...? are designed to keep running.
- Mumbling the fiesta. You are the host and the teacher: big voice, pure vowels, courtesy coins for every guest.
- Forgetting that Hablo español is now true. Say it without apology; every speaker of every language started exactly where you are.

Make it a game · La Caza Relámpago. Lightning round on the map: open the US map and set a two-minute timer. Team up, student and parent against siblings if you have them. Call out Spanish place names and their meanings as fast as you can find them, one point per name, two if you can translate it cold. The student is the judge of pronunciation: pure vowels or no point. Then the grand final: the student covers the map and recites five names with meanings from memory.

Scripture. “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb.” (Revelation 7:9, KJV)

Every language, Spanish and English among them, ends up in the same choir. A quarter of Spanish is a small thing, but it points at a big one: the multitude is of all tongues, and learning a neighbor's language is one way of loving the neighbor now.