

Señora Gillin
AI DuPont High School
(302)651-2626 ext. 206

For fastest response: Mandy.Gillin@redclay.k12.de.us

AP Spanish Language Syllabus 2008-2009

Course Overview

The goal of the AP course is to thoroughly prepare students for the AP exam in May. As of 2007, the AP exam focuses intensely on the communicative skills of listening and speaking, and therefore this class heavily emphasizes practicing these skills through exposure to authentic texts. **The AP Spanish Language course is conducted completely in Spanish.** It is assumed that students have already learned the grammar and syntax of the language and have acquired strong skills in speaking, writing, reading, and understanding Spanish. The curriculum for this course is designed to reinforce and sharpen these skills with the goal of achieving mastery. We encourage all students throughout their Spanish studies to practice the target language consistently with their teachers and peers.

The first half of the year will be spent reviewing grammar concepts, learning and mastering some new grammatical elements and verb tenses, as well as becoming familiar with the format and expectations of the Spanish AP exam. A heavy emphasis will be placed on increasing the students' vocabulary. The second half of the course will focus more intensely on: the specific sections of the exam, tips for mastery, refining common grammatical pitfalls, practicing AP exams; to the end of a successful AP examination in May. Students will be speaking, listening, reading, and writing frequently throughout the course.

Student Expectations: In this course, students are expected to:

- Express themselves **in Spanish** throughout the course
- Read and write extensively **in Spanish**
- Read short stories, news articles, and other works **in Spanish**
- Become proficient in the four language skills tested on the AP: listening comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing (outlined below)
- Become familiar with the different Spanish and Latin American cultures through the language and experiences in the classroom
- Become proficient in using the language to deal with everyday situations

Materials: Students will need the following items for class:

1. Spanish/English dictionary or Spanish/Spanish dictionary
2. 3-hole binder (5 dividers: homework, essays, notes, projects, AP)
3. 2 journals
 - a. One composition book for daily journal entry
 - b. One notebook for vocabulary log (can use a separate section in notebook if preferred)
4. 8-AA batteries (for voice recordings)
5. 1 blank cassette tape (for voice recordings)
6. Pens, paper, texts

Textbooks:

NTC Publishing Group, 1997: Repaso: A Complete Review Workbook for Grammar, Communication, and Culture

Repaso provides students with a very thorough grammar review and practice. I offer brief explanations in class when needed, and students work regularly to complete activities at home. Students are assumed to enter the class with prior exposure to the grammar topics. While a strong command of grammar is essential for communicative functions, we use class time mainly for students to interact with each other and with authentic materials. The emphasis of the new AP exam on communication justifies this decision.

Listening comprehension: On the AP exam, students are expected to comprehend native speakers at a normal conversational speed using a wide array of vocabulary. Students will be exposed to native speakers using tapes, television programs, movies, music, and dialogues in class, to increase their ability and comfort level in understanding spoken Spanish. Students will be expected to demonstrate their comprehension in spoken discussions in class as well as in written assignments.

At the beginning of the year, students practice auditory skills by watching 10 minutes of *televised* world news in Spanish twice a week. While listening and watching, the students take notes on what is happening, as well as any words they did not recognize or understand. They then report back to the class on one event that was reported. Students are also exposed to authentic “texts” through songs and telenovelas.

During the second half of the year, students listen to 10 minutes of *radio* news, forcing them to enhance their listening skills without the aid of visuals. Students again take notes while listening and report on one story to the class. Students then aid each other in putting the pieces of the story together to increase comprehension. Once the class feels they have put the stories together, we listen to the tape again to verify it. During the second half of the year, students also regularly practice the listening comprehension section of the exam using the Holt workbook.

Sources for authentic listening activities: • Radio Naciones Unidas www.un.org/radio/es/ • Yabla (paid subscription) www.yabla.com • BBC www.bbcmundo.com • Nuevos Horizontes www.nuevoshorizontes.org/ • CNN en español www.cnn.com/espanol/

Speaking: Students will be asked to speak frequently in this course, both in small and large group discussions, as well as class presentations. Students will be required to participate in discussions of current events, opinions, experiences, etc. and will be expected to utilize advanced verb tenses and vocabulary when speaking. Students will also be practicing speaking with AP exam prompts using voice recorders to train them for the exam day setting.

Twice a week, students report back on what they heard during the listening comprehension activities. Also, once a week, a different student is required to research a different cultural item for classroom discussion. Students bring in a piece of art, food, literature, sports, etc., and give a brief description or history of the item to the class. Then the class breaks off into small groups to discuss a related topic of the speakers’ choosing. The groups then come back together and present their topics to the class. For example, one student brought in a copy of Picasso’s

“Guernica”. The speaker gave the groups different topics such as “What imagery do you see in the painting?”, “What emotions does this painting evoke for you? Why?”, etc.

Finally, one Friday a month we bring in “churros y chocolate” and we simulate a café setting in the classroom. The students chat in Spanish with each other for five minutes and then rotate to speak with another student. No English is allowed on these days. Students are encouraged to find ways to say what they want to say without relying on a dictionary or the use of English or their teacher.

Reading Comprehension: Reading is essential for vocabulary recognition, cultural awareness, and recognizing elements of good writing. Students will be reading poetry, short stories, news articles, etc. As with listening comprehension, students will be required to demonstrate reading comprehension in class discussions and written exercises. In preparation for the AP exam, students will keep a vocabulary journal of words they encounter while reading and their meanings.

Throughout the course, students are exposed to authentic texts through newspaper articles, magazine articles, poems, short stories, plays, and pieces of novels using the Graded Spanish Reader, Abriendo Puertas, and sites including: La Nación www.nacion.com/ • Thepaperboy.com www.thepaperboy.com • Prensaescrita.com www.prensaescrita.com/ • El Mundo elmundo.es/ • BBC www.bbcmundo.com

Writing: A very important section on the AP exam is a writing sample. Students must demonstrate the ability to compose a writing sample that incorporates advanced vocabulary, structural accuracy, and that answers the posed question accurately. Throughout the course, students will be required to submit essays based on topics we have discussed in class, texts we have read, and actual AP prompts. Some essays will be written in class and timed to prepare for the exam situation. However most writing samples are written at home. In class, students use peer review to help each other correct their essays and learn from their mistakes. Then the compositions are corrected and submitted to the teacher. I then highlight the errors that the student must correct prior to resubmission for a final grade. **The use of online translators is considered cheating and is strictly forbidden.**

In addition to essays, students begin each class with a writing prompt for their journal. Topics may ask students their opinion on a controversy in the news, their goals for the future, etc. or some days it is a free topic to encourage them to express themselves in Spanish as they would in an English diary. These diaries are never graded for correctness, but rather are used as a tool to make writing in Spanish less intimidating for the students. Students are, however, graded for effort and participation to ensure the writing is completed.

Special Projects: Throughout the year, the students complete four special assignments that they submit as a writing assignment and a presentation to the class. The students are required to take notes on each other’s presentations and encouraged to ask questions for clarification. The first project is “¿Quién soy yo?” The students introduce themselves, their backgrounds, their families, their goals for the class and their future. It is used as an icebreaker to help the students and the teacher get to know each other. The second project is a research project on a famous Hispanic who has inspired them in some way. The students must research the person and submit a research paper including bibliography. The third project is completed right after Thanksgiving. Each student selects a cause of their choice where we, as a class, can help Hispanics in our community. The students write persuasive essays on why we should choose their cause. Then the class votes

on which cause we should support and the week before Christmas we go as a class to take part in the cause. Finally, the students research a Spanish speaking country of their choice. The students then create a journal of a 10-day imaginary vacation they took in this country. The students then create a slide show or video of their vacation and narrate what they did each day of the trip. Students focus on preterit versus imperfect.

Testing: Students will have regular quizzes during the first semester to test vocabulary and grammatical concepts. The second semester quizzes incorporate the grammar topics into the AP exam format. The midterm and final exams will be based on AP exams from previous years to get the students used to the exam format and rate their progress. The students will also be evaluated based on writing samples, class exercises, homework, special projects and class participation.

Grades: Grades are based on the following scale:

- A 93%-100%
- B 85%-92%
- C 77%-84%
- D 70%-76%
- F 69% and below

Your grades will be based on assignments from the following categories using a total points system:

- Homework
- Quizzes
- Exams
- Essays
- Projects/presentations

****30% of your grade for the first marking period will be based on summer work completion. If you did not complete the summer work, you will not pass the first marking period.**

****Please note**** I will be out on maternity leave from approximately mid-December through the beginning of March. I will do my best to make the transition to a substitute be as seamless as possible. Students will be expected to complete all work and behave appropriately in my absence. I will expect the same AP caliber of work in my absence as in any other day of the year. Students who choose to “slack off” during my absence will NOT be given the opportunity to make that work up upon my return.

Attached is a brief outline of the topics to be covered this year. Topics may change as we assess the needs of the class in preparation for the AP exam.

Detach this portion of the syllabus and return it to Mrs. Gillin as your first homework grade.

Parent/Guardian Information Questionnaire

Your Student's Name _____

Your Name _____

Relationship to Student _____

Phone Number _____ Email (list one you check frequently) _____

Does your student have any medical problems that I should be aware of (allergies, learning disabilities, asthma, etc)? _____

Does your student have access to a computer? Internet? Printer? If not, I strongly suggest a local library card. _____

I give my student permission to watch foreign movies "PG13" or "R" with teacher supervision.

Yes No

Any other questions/concerns not addressed above?

Student Agreement:

I have read the syllabus understand all that is expected of me. I will work hard, be prepared, and be responsible for my own actions. Any questions I have about my grade I will address them towards Mrs. Gillin.

Signed _____ Date _____

Parent Agreement:

I have read the syllabus and understand all that is expected of my student. I will do my best to help my student be prepared for this class. Any questions that I have about my student's progress in my class, I will direct them towards Mrs. Gillin.

Signed _____ Date _____