

# St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church and School

Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod



## Spanish Curriculum Guide

### Philosophy of Spanish

Spanish is included in the curriculum at St. Mark to begin students' formal instruction in a foreign language. Spanish instruction is guided by the following principles:

- A Christian's ultimate purpose in learning any foreign language is given in Christ's Great Commission. Proficiency in another language and culture enables students to communicate with people to whom they would otherwise not be able to proclaim the Gospel.
- The Spanish curriculum is designed to build students' proficiency (as opposed to mastery). Whereas a mastery-based curriculum would require perfect memorization of vocabulary concepts, with little to no emphasis on actually putting the concepts into use, a proficiency-based curriculum prioritizes the students' ability to *effectively* communicate using the concepts they have learned, even if they are not able to do it perfectly. The students build proficiency across four areas of communication: reading, writing, speaking, and listening.
- Almost all instruction is done in the target language (Spanish)--an evidence-based practice that maximizes the students' ability to learn as much Spanish as possible during lesson time. Both the teacher and the students exclusively use Spanish during class time, making each lesson a mini-immersion experience. To facilitate target language instruction:
  - The teacher speaks slowly and clearly, repeats words frequently, and uses pictures, gestures, and context to increase understanding.
  - The classroom is maintained as a safe place to take risks. Students are not afraid to make mistakes in front of their peers.
  - Lessons follow a predictable format. While specific activities within a lesson vary, a predictable lesson structure keeps students from getting lost and builds their confidence.
  - When speaking in Spanish, students are given prompts, visual aids, and sentence frames to guide their conversation.
  - New vocabulary logically builds on previously learned vocabulary..
  - Partner activities are used frequently, and students work with the same partner throughout an entire chapter in order to build familiarity and confidence.
- Students are held to a high standard of engaging in activities, taking notes, organizing homework, and asking for help on their own to prepare them for high school.

## Assessment

Students will be assessed in a variety of ways to prove they are meeting the required objectives. Each chapter contains vocabulary and grammar quizzes along with a final chapter test. The tests allow students to demonstrate their understanding of recently learned vocabulary and grammar concepts through listening, reading, and writing assessments. Each chapter also includes a speaking, writing, or visual presentation. Instruction is tailored around formative assessment, including classroom observation, communication with peers, and writing/listening activities throughout a unit.

## Exit Goals for Graduation

By the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students will complete the requirements for high school-level Spanish I, and will have a solid foundation for further language instruction.

- Students will be able to operate in a classroom using only Spanish. They will know how to follow simple classroom commands and ask questions when needed.
- Students will develop skills necessary for learning at the high school level, both in the context of learning a foreign language and across other disciplines, including:
  - Focusing and engaging during class time; not needing to be “cold called” to participate
  - Taking notes as instructed
  - Studying for tests independently or with a partner
  - Managing homework—organizing, completing, and turning it in on time without reminders from a teacher
  - Developing flexibility to work with a variety of peers
  - Making others feel comfortable taking risks
  - Taking initiative in asking for help outside class if a concept is difficult or unclear
- Students will deepen their understanding and appreciation for Latino culture, making them able to communicate more effectively with people of this background.
- Students will be proficient in a variety of Spanish vocabulary and will have the vocabulary base necessary to continue with Spanish II.
- Students will be able to have simple Spanish conversations, both with peers and in authentic circumstances with native speakers.
- Students will be comfortable and proficient using the simple present tense, and will develop proficiency with present perfect, command, and preterite tenses.

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