



Spanish Program

All Spanish classes are held in the homeroom teacher's classroom. Kindergarten through second grade have Spanish once a week. Third grade through the eighth grade have Spanish twice a week.

Spanish is the fourth most widely spoken language in the world, following English. Starting Spanish in Kindergarten while children are still acquiring language skills and are more easily able to acquire pronunciation skills is a very nice asset. Also, the Spanish Bible is used to support a Christ-centered learning experience.

The goal of the Foreign Language Department is to give students in the lower primary grades an introduction to the Spanish Language.

For third through eighth grade the goal is to complete the course content work for first year Spanish by the time they graduate from eighth grade.

Greetings are taught the first day of class as the foundation for very simple conversations and reading them in the textbooks, and patterning after the dialogue of the teacher. Repetition and physical enactment are key to learning. Repetition helps the children's ability to work independently and gain confidence in their schoolwork. Due to the fact that classes meet only once or twice a week and that many students haven't had prior Spanish classes, this pace helps all students in the class have an opportunity to succeed.

The students are introduced to conversation, culture, music and history that are age and grade level appropriate. Differences in culture are learned through shared knowledge from teachers, learning about holidays, and from information in textbooks, newspapers and magazine articles. Music from the Hispanic world is listened to on tapes and CDs as well as through the use of technology. Holidays that celebrate anniversaries of historical events lend themselves to the inclusion of history in the lessons.

Learning a language is a complex endeavor and a lifelong process that takes time. Vocabulary builds language and becomes the focus in the lower primary grades as they are introduced to the new language. The vocabulary is necessary to speak and write in sentences, with the addition of grammar, which increases in level of difficulty and quantity according to grade level. All content of the language lessons are age and grade appropriate.

In keeping with the Christ-centered vision of the school, children's stories from the Bible are shared as part of the Spanish program. We also share what is done to celebrate holidays in the Hispanic countries and what unique celebrations are found in other countries as a way to incorporate the study of other cultures in the study of a foreign language.

In addition to the more formal, book-based curriculum, there is the incorporation of using songs as a link between the familiar and unfamiliar. Christmas songs, familiar children's songs, and songs for chapel help the students make the connection of people being the same even if there are some cultural differences.

It is also important to reinforce Spanish outside of the classroom. For example, please greet children with "¡Hola!" in the hallway. This shows support to the children in their quest of learning a new language. Children can also be great teachers when it comes to new languages. Once the vocabulary is learned, ask them to name the colors of their clothing or some things in their lunches. These become invaluable reinforcements in as many situations as possible.

The Spanish curriculum for Kindergarten focuses on the pronunciation and meaning of vocabulary words, not on reading and writing. Although, I will read children's grade and content appropriate books in the target language to them.

First grade and beyond covers a curriculum that includes listening, speaking, reading, writing and vocabulary. Students with little or no previous knowledge of Spanish will benefit from the lessons. Emphasis is placed on the acquisition of a broad vocabulary (vocabulary builds language).

The emphasis in second grade and beyond is placed on the acquisition of using the previous grade level vocabulary to speak in sentences using questions/statements and possible responses. More vocabulary is added in second grade. Each grade level is preparing the children to get to the next level, so the difficulty of the material, vocabulary, grammar (appropriate to age and grade level) increases as well. The level of difficulty increases in all aspects of the language all the way through 8th grade.

Some field trips are included in the plan (8th grade). This takes place after students have mastered the target language lesson or history intended for that field trip experience.

The importance of learning and knowing another language is emphasized. Letting students know about that whether they are helping someone in their own city, or using the language for business and travel, knowing another language is very helpful.

If you have any questions regarding the Spanish curriculum, please contact me at 586-781-9296.

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Spanish Teacher

*** This document is subject to change at any time to meet the needs of the students and the community of St. Peter Lutheran School and Church of Macomb Elementary. It also helps to be flexible to accommodate schedules.**