More tips for studying Spanish

Learning a second language can be both exciting and fun. Because the goal is to learn to communicate, you will interact with other students in your class and with your teacher as you learn to express yourself about things you like to do (and things you don't), your personality, the world around you, foods, celebrations, pastimes, technology, and much more.

Rather than primarily listening to the teacher, reading the text, and memorizing information as you might in a social studies class, you will share ideas; discuss similarities and differences between cultures; ask and answer questions; and work with others to practice new words, sounds, and sentence structures. You will be given a variety of tasks to do in preparation for such an interactive class. You will complete written activities, perform listening tasks, watch and listen to videos, and go on the Internet. In addition, to help solidify command of words and structures, time will need to be spent on learning vocabulary and practicing the language until it starts to become second nature. Many students will find that using flash cards and doing written practice will help them become confident using the building blocks of language.

Here are some suggestions that will help you become a successful language learner:

Routine:

Find a special, quiet place for study, equipped with a Spanish-English dictionary, pens or pencils, paper, computer, and any other items your teacher suggests.

* Try to study Spanish at a regular time every day. A study routine will greatly facilitate the learning process.

Strategy:

* Remember that class participation and memorization are very important in a foreign language course.
* In reading or listening activities, as well as in the classroom, it is not necessary to understand every word. Listen or look for key words to get the gist of what's being communicated.
* Ask questions in class if you are confused. Remember that other students may have the same question.

Real-life connection:

* Outside of the regular study time, review new words in their proper context as they relate to the chapter themes. For example, when studying the vocabulary for the household chapter, Capítulo 6B, you could label household objects with adhesive notes with the Spanish words. Similarly, while studying Chapter 4A vocabulary, you can bring flash cards for place names on a trip into town and review words for the buildings you pass along the way. If you can include multiple senses while studying (see the school and say escuela, or taste ice cream and say helado), it will help reinforce study and will aid in vocabulary retention.

Review:

* Review previously learned material frequently, and not just before a test. Remember, learning a language is a building process, and it is important to keep using what you've already learned.
* To aid vocabulary memorization, try several different methods, such as saying words aloud while looking at a picture of the items, writing the words, acting them out while saying them, and so on.
* Organize new material using charts, graphs, pictures with labels, or other visuals that can be posted in your study area or in your room. A daily review of those visuals will help keep the material fresh.
* Ask a parent or friend to help you practice new vocabulary and grammar by quizzing you on the charts and lists in the Manos a la obra and Repaso del capítulo sections.

Resources:

* Ask for help frequently! Your parent or guardian (or even a brother or sister!) may be willing to quiz you on vocabulary or listen to you practice reading aloud.
* Ask your teacher about how to best prepare for and what to expect on tests and quizzes.
* Ask your teacher about the availability of audio recordings and videos that support the text. The more you see and hear the language, the greater the retention. There are also online and CD-ROM based versions of the textbook that may be useful for you.
* Visit www.PHSchool.com for more practice opportunities, including downloadable audio files that you can play at home to practice Spanish. Enter the appropriate Web Code from the list below for the section of the chapter that the class is working on and you will see a menu that lists the available audio files. They can be listened to on a computer or downloaded onto a personal audio player.

Web Codes:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Capítulo** | **A primera vista** | **Manos a la obra** | **Repaso** |
| Para empezar |  |  | jcd-0099 |
| Capítulo 1A | jcd-0187 | jcd-0188 | jcd-0189 |
| Capítulo 1B | jcd-0197 | jcd-0198 | jcd-0199 |
| Capítulo 2A | jcd-0287 | jcd-0288 | jcd-0289 |
| Capítulo 2B | jcd-0297 | jcd-0298 | jcd-0299 |
| Capítulo 3A | jcd-0387 | jcd-0388 | jcd-0389 |
| Capítulo 3B | jcd-0397 | jcd-0398 | jcd-0399 |
| Capítulo 4A | jcd-0487 | jcd-0488 | jcd-0489 |
| Capítulo 4B | jcd-0497 | jcd-0498 | jcd-0499 |
| Capítulo 5A | jcd-0587 | jcd-0588 | jcd-0589 |
| Capítulo 5B | jcd-0597 | jcd-0598 | jcd-0599 |
| Capítulo 6A | jcd-0687 | jcd-0688 | jcd-0689 |
| Capítulo 6B | jcd-0697 | jcd-0698 | jcd-0699 |
| Capítulo 7A | jcd-0787 | jcd-0788 | jcd-0789 |
| Capítulo 7B | jcd-0797 | jcd-0798 | jcd-0799 |
| Capítulo 8A | jcd-0887 | jcd-0888 | jcd-0889 |
| Capítulo 8B | jcd-0897 | jcd-0898 | jcd-0899 |
| Capítulo 9A | jcd-0987 | jcd-0988 | jcd-0989 |
| Capítulo 9B | jcd-0997 | jcd-0998 | jcd-0999 |

Above all, remember that a language is not acquired overnight. Just as for a first language, there is a gradual process for learning a second one. It takes time and patience, and it is important to know that mistakes are a completely natural part of the process. Remember that it took years to learn to speak well in your first language, and that the second one will also take time.

Don't hesitate to ask your teacher for ideas. You will find the teacher eager to help you.

Learning to speak another language is one of the most gratifying experiences a person can have. We know that you will benefit from the effort, and will acquire a skill that will serve to enrich your life.