

Year 9

MODERN LANGUAGES: SPANISH

Curriculum Content

Key Stage 3 students are introduced to Spanish through the Michel Thomas method for schools, “Es posible”. Year 9 girls continue to progress through the method in their second year of studying Spanish. The method has a firm focus on structures and truly understanding how the language works. There is a lot of spoken and written translation, which the pupils find satisfying. They also learn how to manipulate sentences independently and show promising levels of spoken fluency. Spelling is frequently reinforced.

The method was originally developed by Michel Thomas who taught the likes of Raquel Welch, Emma Thompson, Woody Allen and Grace Kelly. It became well known in the UK following a BBC series called The Language Master broadcast in the late nineties.

The structure of the lessons can be compared to the logical principles of Direct Instruction, whereby skills are taught explicitly rather than the students learning by discovering or experiment. This might seem old-fashioned and dictatorial but we also build in thinking skills and experimentation after the initial teacher input. In the early lessons the teacher introduces cognates in the target language to show students how they can easily transform their existing vocabulary into Spanish. Hence, *c'est possible/ es posible/ é possível*. This means they start off with the idea that this is a subject they can access. The teacher then introduces short phrases which will serve as the building blocks for more advanced sentences. The new language is gradually built up through repetition, translation, recycling, and then adding more new structures.

Grammatical structures covered:

- Revision of the present tense
- Lo que
- Two tracks of verbs AR and not AR
- Irregular present tense
- Imperative

- The Subjunctive mood
- Demonstrative adjectives and pronouns
- Position of pronoun with commands
- GO GO verbs
- Radical stem changing verbs
- Reflexive verbs
- Future tenses
- The conditional tense
- The Preterite tense

Alongside the method we teach vocabulary topics as follows

Topics covered:

- Describing homes
- Furniture
- Expressing opinions about home
- Weather
- Free time and sport
- Social media
- Tapas
- Food, drink and mealtimes
- Describing routine
- School and future plans

Knowledge, skills and understanding

Skills

- Development of listening, reading, speaking and writing skills
- Using ICT, including the Internet, using Microsoft Office software to prepare consolidation or extension work, and accessing MFL tools in the language laboratory
- Group or pair work
- Individual oral presentations

- Listening to recorded native speakers and the teacher in the language laboratory and the classroom
- Emphasis on correct pronunciation and spelling
- Expressing explained opinions
- Development of independent learning
- Introduction of skills needed to perform well in the GCSE success criteria
- Research

Assessment opportunities

Assessment

Homework is an appropriate follow-up task, which could be written, learning of vocabulary or grammar or oral presentation. Written work is assessed for accuracy and range and complexity. Oral work is assessed for fluency and accuracy. There are regular end-of-unit tests. At the end of the year there is a final examination in the four skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing. In Y9 we introduce GCSE style assessment to familiarise girls with the skills needed in Key Stage 4.