

**Walker Middle School**  
**Regular Spanish 1 and 2 (grades 7 and 8)**  
**Course Syllabus**

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- Plan Period: 4<sup>th</sup>
- Classroom: 237
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**Course Description:**

**Spanish 1 and 2** are the beginning levels of study of Spanish as a second language. Grammar basic concepts, survival vocabulary, and cultural aspects of the language are covered and practiced using a variety of methods, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This is basically a skill course, requiring much practice, note-taking, memorization and study outside of class. Our grading system is based on performance and you are expected to perform at a certain level of proficiency based on standards in order to be successful entering a second year of Spanish at the high school level.

**Instructional Philosophy:**

In short, the principles that guide my teaching philosophy are:

- Constantly searching for new and effective practices to guarantee learning and success among students;
- Promoting collaborative learning in the classroom in a student-centered atmosphere;
- Finding a balance between challenge and enjoyment where rigor and the pursuit of perfection become essential; and,
- Establishing cooperative relationships with my students by using humor as an essential tool for developing rapport and intercultural understanding.

**Goals and Content Standards:**

**Goal One, Communication: Communicate in Languages Other than English**

- Standard 1.1 Students engage in conversations, provide and obtain information, express feelings and emotions, and exchange opinions.
- Standard 1.2 Students understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics.
- Standard 1.3 Students convey information, concepts, and ideas to listeners and readers for a variety of purposes.

**Goal Two, Cultures: Gain Knowledge and Understanding of Other Cultures**

- Standard 2.1 Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the perspectives and practices of cultures studied and use this knowledge to interact effectively in cultural contexts.
- Standard 2.2 Students demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between the perspectives and products/contributions of the cultures studied.

**Goal Three, Connections: Connect with Other Disciplines and Acquire Information**

- Standard 3.1 Students reinforce and further knowledge of other disciplines through foreign languages.
- Standard 3.2 Students acquire information and perspectives through authentic materials in the foreign languages and within the cultures.

**Goal Four, Comparisons: Develop Insight into the Nature of Language and Culture**

- Standard 4.1 Students recognize that different languages use different patterns to communicate and can apply this knowledge to their own language.
- Standard 4.2 Students recognize that cultures use different patterns of interaction and can apply this knowledge to their own culture.

**Goal Five, Communities: Participate in Multilingual Communities at Home and Around the World**

- Standard 5.1 Students use the language both within and beyond the school setting for a variety of purposes.

## Course objectives:

Language acquisition at this level will be achieved through the development of receptive, productive and interactive skills which will allow the students to:

1. Understand simple, grade-appropriate recorded or spoken information on the topics studied.
2. Understand authentic written texts related to the topics studied.
3. Communicate orally brief and basic thoughts and ideas on a designated topic.
4. Describe experiences, events and concepts.
5. Produce short texts incorporating basic vocabulary and language structures.
6. Demonstrate intercultural engagement with the target language and culture(s).
7. Improve understanding of and ability to communicate in English by comparing and contrasting languages.

## Classroom rules and behavior expectations:

1. As a general rule, as a student you are expected to be **seated and ready to work** at all times once class starts. *If I see you out of your seat, I will understand that you want to volunteer to answer all my hard questions. **You are not allowed to leave your seat during class unless you have asked for permission first.***
2. It's a school rule to keep your **phone off and out of sight** while school is in session. *You don't need to know anything from the outside world as the good stuff happens here!!!*
3. **Respect** is earned by example. Appreciate the work I do every day and always talk to your teachers and peers politely.
4. **Raise your hand** if you need to talk with me, to another peer or in front of the class and always have a positive attitude towards your teacher, your peers, the subject and the school community. Be an example!!!
5. **Food and drinks** are not a part of the school's learning environment and you must not bring them to class. They mess up and stink everything and invite bugs!!!
6. **Leaving class.** You can leave the room as needed under the following conditions always: you have not been late to class, only after the first 30 minutes of class, one student at a time after signing your name in the sign-out sheet. In any case, I as your teacher can ask you to remain in class if you will miss important notes or as a consequence for poor behavior (tardiness).
7. **Enjoy your Spanish class, be inspired, always try your hardest and don't despair!!!**

## Differentiation:

Differentiation of standards-based instruction is expected to occur for all students. Differentiation is a targeted process that involves forward planning, programming and instruction. It involves the use of teaching, learning and assessment strategies that are fair and flexible, provide an appropriate level of challenge, and engage students in learning in meaningful ways.

## Textbooks and materials:

Due to the developing nature of the process of mastering a foreign language, a wide array of original materials and texts will be incorporated in the class whenever the topics permit. Therefore, it is a priority to train and develop the following skills:

1. Taking complete and accurate notes.
  2. Participating consciously during in-class assignments.
  3. Listening and asking responsibly before, during and after class.
  4. Studying and reviewing the materials regularly.
- **Needless to say, an independent notebook**, ring binder, pen/pencil/marker/highlighter are expected every day.
- **Also, in an effort to provide a more structured experience to our students, we will incorporate and use, as needed, the textbook Realidades 1.**

## Grading:

- Course grades will be determined by planned assessments such as in class assignments, projects, quizzes and tests after covering any and every meaningful piece of unit and/or course objective outlined above.
- All coursework and assessments are graded based on the level of understanding demonstrated by the student against the objectives. In the same way, students who request it will be provided multiple opportunities to achieve at the “proficient” to “advanced” levels. **Rubrics will be used, will be available and will be communicated to students as needed.**
- The role of independent practice and homework is to develop knowledge and skills effectively and efficiently during the unit of study. Independent practice helps guide the learning process by providing accurate, timely and helpful feedback to students without penalty.
- At the end of a grading period, students’ scores will be averaged using assigned weights. The following weights and categories will be used:
  1. Assignments: 25%
  2. Projects: 25%
  3. Quizzes: 20%
  4. Tests: 30%
- **“Retakes” and “Make-up” explained:** Mastering a foreign language is like climbing a summit-less mountain where your teacher is your Sherpa. As a general rule, student are allowed to redo every assignment, quiz or project to earn a higher grade, except any assessment added to the students’ gradebook under the category of TESTS (30%), these are summative checkpoints at the end of the Units. There will be a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5 TESTS per semester. But because we are always climbing our personal mountains, each subsequent Unit TEST is more important than the one before considering the *developing nature* of the subject. So, the one way to improve a low grade in a Unit test is to consciously prepare even better for the next one. A higher grade in the latest Unit test in the semester will reflect more prominently in the students’ final grade, because it shall demonstrate a growing trend in the students’ skill level.
- **Note on a grade of 0 (zero) in your grades.** Only missing assignments will result in a grade of 0 for the student who will have the responsibility and opportunity to make them up as needed in a timely manner. Also, as explained above, low grade tests, quizzes, projects and assignments can be redone after approval in order to earn a higher grade.
- **A 24 hour notice to visit before or after school is required.**

## Grading Scale:

Score points	Letter grade	Percentage	Proficiency Scale
4 3.5	A	83 to 100%	Advanced
3	B	66 to 82%	Proficient
2.5 2	C	50 to 65%	Basic
1	D	25 to 49%	Below basic
0	F	0 to 24%	Failing

**Keep calm,  
y, ¡habla español!**