

Spanish A Level Transition Booklet



Why Spanish?

Congratulations on selecting Spanish A Level. You have opened the door of opportunity! Studying Spanish will enrich your life, giving you opportunities to travel abroad and to learn about different cultures and different ways of life. Studying a language will also enhance your life chances, as universities and employers increasingly prefer candidates who can speak more than one language.



Did you know that linguists are better communicators and writers and have a better understanding of their own language too? Learning a language will not only improve the functionality of your brain but will also improve your memory skills.

Spanish is the 2nd most spoken language in the world by native speakers and the 4th most spoken language worldwide. Countries all over the world have Spanish as a main language, from Spain to Colombia and beyond. Knowing Spanish means you will be able to communicate with over 500 million other speakers.

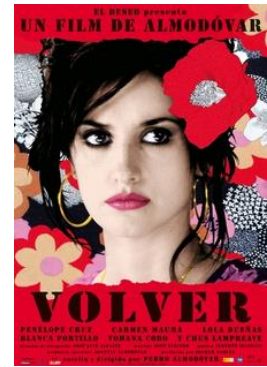
Course Overview

At A Level, we follow the Pearson Edexcel Syllabus. During the course, you will develop your linguistic skills alongside your understanding of the culture and society of the countries where Spanish is spoken. You will study a literary text and film, as well as having the opportunity to carry out an Independent Research Project on an area of your choice.

There are three assessed components to the A Level:

- Paper 1 – Listening, reading and translation (40%);
- Paper 2 – Writing [essays on a literary text and film] and translation (30%);
- Paper 3 – Speaking [including Independent Research Project] (30%).

There is a wide range of literary texts and films that can be studied for Paper 2. In the past, we have studied the novel *Como agua para chocolate* by Laura Esquivel and the film *Volver* by Pedro Almodóvar.



Course Content

During the course we will explore four themes, which are split into three sub-themes. These address a range of social issues and trends, as well as aspects of the political and artistic culture of Spain and Spanish-speaking countries.

Theme 1 - The Evolution of Spanish Society

- Changes in the family structure (*the change in attitudes towards marriage, relationships and family*).
- The world of work (*working life in Spain, opportunities for young people, gender equality*).
- The impact of tourism in Spain (*economic impact, opportunities offered by tourism, social-environmental impact*).

Theme 2 - Political and Artistic Culture in the Hispanic World

- Music (*changes and trends, the impact of music on modern culture*).
- Media (*television and telenovelas, written media and online media, social and political impact*).
- Festivals and traditions (*festivals, customs and traditions*).

Theme 3 - Immigration and Multicultural Spanish Society

- The positive impact of immigration in Spanish society (*the contributions of immigrants to the economy and culture*).
- Facing the challenges of immigration and integration in Spain (*actions taken by local communities, marginalisation and isolation from the perspective of immigrants*).
- The social and public reaction towards immigration in Spain (*political approach to immigration, public opinion*).

Theme 4 - The Franco Dictatorship and the Transition to Democracy

- The Spanish Civil War and the rise of Franco (1936-1939) (*the Civil War, the rise of Franco, the republicans vs. the nationalists, divisions in society*).

- The Franco dictatorship (*daily life under the Franco dictatorship, political oppression, censorship, divisions in society*).
- The transition from dictatorship to democracy (*the role of King Juan Carlos in the transition, the Suárez government, the coup of 1981*).

What Should I Know Already?

This is a common question asked by students about to start their A Level studies. You will continue to build on the vocabulary and grammar learnt at GCSE so you should continue to practise this over the summer. It is especially important that you are able to recognise and use a range of tenses with both regular and irregular verbs. The checklists below will help you to identify the strengths and areas for development in your grammatical knowledge.

Foundations:

	DON'T KNOW	NEED TO LEARN	QUITE CONFIDENT	FULLY CONFIDENT
Nouns - gender, singular and plural forms.				
Articles - definite (<i>el, la, los, las</i>) and indefinite (<i>un, una, unos, unas</i>).				
Interrogatives - (e.g. <i>¿qué?, ¿cuándo?, ¿cuál(es)?</i>).				
Quantifiers/Intensifiers - (<i>muy, bastante, poco, mucho</i>).				

Adjectives:

	DON'T KNOW	NEED TO LEARN	QUITE CONFIDENT	FULLY CONFIDENT
Agreement - gender (masculine/feminine), number (singular/plural).				
Position - word order (e.g. <i>una camisa blanca</i>).				
Comparatives/superlatives - (e.g. <i>más, menos, el más, mejor</i>).				
Indefinite - (e.g. <i>alguno, cualquiera, otro</i>).				
Possessives - (e.g. <i>mi(s), tu(s), nuestro/a/os/as</i>).				

Pronouns:

	DON'T KNOW	NEED TO LEARN	QUITE CONFIDENT	FULLY CONFIDENT
Subject - (e.g. <i>yo, tú, nosotros/as, usted</i>).				
Object - direct (e.g. <i>lo, la, los, las</i>) and indirect (e.g. <i>le, les</i>).				
	DON'T KNOW	NEED TO LEARN	QUITE CONFIDENT	FULLY CONFIDENT
Position and order (e.g. <i>te veo, voy a casarme</i>).				
Reflexive (e.g. <i>me llamo, te llamas, nos llamamos</i>).				
Relative (e.g. <i>que, quien, el que, el cual</i>).				
Indefinite (e.g. <i>algo, alguien</i>).				
Possessive (e.g. <i>el mío, la mía, los míos</i>).				

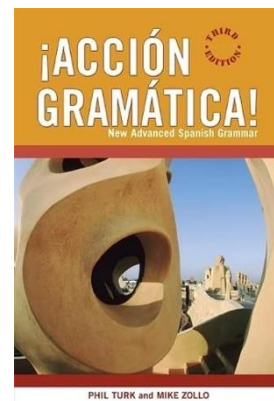
Verbs:

	DON'T KNOW	NEED TO LEARN	QUITE CONFIDENT	FULLY CONFIDENT
Present tense - (i.e. <i>I do</i>).				
Present continuous tense - (i.e. <i>I am doing</i>).				
Preterite tense - (i.e. <i>I did</i>).				
Imperfect tense - (i.e. <i>I used to do</i>).				
Perfect tense - (i.e. <i>I have done</i>).				
Immediate future tense - (i.e. <i>I am going to do</i>).				
Future tense - (i.e. <i>I will do</i>).				
Conditional tense - (i.e. <i>I would do</i>).				
Present participles (e.g. <i>hablando</i>) and past participles (e.g. <i>hablado</i>).				
Subjunctive triggers (e.g. commands, doubt, emotions).				

Present subjunctive - how to form it (e.g. <i>hable, comamos, tenga</i>).				
Prepositional verbs (e.g. <i>acabo de, pensar en, soñar con</i>).				
Difference between uses of <i>ser</i> and <i>estar</i> .				
Negatives (e.g. <i>no, nunca, jamás</i>)				

Grammar Resources

¡Acción Gramática! (Hodder) is a really useful reference book for Spanish grammar. It not only explains all the essential grammar that you need to know, it also offers practical ways to help you improve your grammatical knowledge.



The following websites are also helpful for practicing grammar:

www.languagesonline.org.uk

This site allows you to select what tense you want to revise, read the explanations and complete exercises. You can do these as often as you like and it gives you a percentage. Another useful tactic to help you improve your understanding is to translate the examples and exercises into English to ensure you understand the meaning of each tense.

<https://conjuguemos.com/activities/spanish/verb/1>

This website helps you to improve your understanding of verbs, vocabulary and grammar. It is particularly useful for practising different tenses through graded exercises and flashcards. You can then test your understanding through a range of games, including *Día de los verbos*!

How Can I Prepare for A Level?

It is really important that you keep up with your Spanish over the holidays so you don't waste all that hard work you put into your GCSE studies. As well as recapping key vocabulary and grammar, you should try to engage with as many Spanish resources as you can. Use the information below to access a huge range of media to help immerse yourself in the language. Doing little and often is the key to success!

Radio

- *Los 40*
<https://los40.com/>

- *Radio 3*
<http://www.rtve.es/radio/radio3/>
- *Cadena Digital*
<http://www.cadenadigital.com/>

You can also use Lyrics Training to look up specific songs and do gap fill tasks to practise your listening skills: <https://lyricstraining.com/>

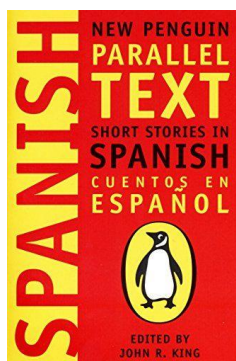
Vlogs and Podcasts

- *Easy Spanish*
<https://www.youtube.com/@EasySpanish/videos>
- *Coffee Break Spanish*
<https://coffeebreaklanguages.com/category/coffee-break-spanish/>
- *Hoy Hablamos*
https://www.ivoox.com/podcast-podcast-aprender-espanol-learn-spanish-podcast_sq_f1383122_1.html
- *Super Español*
<https://superespanol.com/podcasts-para-aprender-espanol/>
- *Lengalia*
<https://www.lengalia.com/es/aprender-espanol-gratis/podcasts.html>

News

- *BBC Mundo*
<https://www.bbc.com/mundo>
- *20 Minutos*
<https://www.20minutos.es/>
- *El País*
<https://elpais.com/>

Books



Try reading a short book in Spanish. You might want to start with something you've read in English before (e.g. *Harry Potter*) or try a bilingual book with parallel texts in both languages.

Don't be tempted to look up every word you are not sure of when reading an article or book. Instead, skim and scan the text to get the gist and use the context, cognates and common sense to figure out what the article is saying. Pick out a couple of words that you like the look of, and that you feel may be real hurdles to getting the idea of the text, and look these up. You should keep a record of any vocabulary that you look up.

Remember that at this stage you are not expected to be able to translate everything you read.

Social Media

Sign up to Twitter to access authentic texts that you can quickly flick through.

- **@Spain** - The official Twitter for tourism in Spain.
- **@LaFraseDelDia_** - A Spanish site which tweets inspirational sayings for each day.
- **@spanishlanguage** - Transparent Language Spanish - tweets containing expressions, phrases, words and articles in Spanish.
- **@spanishaddicts** - El español de la calle (typical spoken Spanish).
- **@spanishxxx2** - Tweets Spanish vocab, articles, and quizzes.
- **@muyinteresante** - A Spanish news organisation that tweets in Spanish about science, history, technology, health, psychology etc.

You could also join the *MFL Clips with Audio and Subtitles* group on Facebook to help you practise your listening skills.

Films*

- *Volver* (Pedro Almodóvar)
- *Todo sobre mi madre* (Pedro Almodóvar)
- *¡Ay Carmela!* (Carlos Saura)
- *Mar adentro* (Alejandro Amenábar)
- *Diarios de motocicleta* (Walter Salles)
- *Ocho Apellidos Vascos* (Emilio Martínez-Lázaro)
- *El Laberinto del Fauno* (Guillermo del Toro)
- *María llena eres de gracia* (Joshua Marston)
- *Abel* (Diego Luna)
- *Las 13 Rosas* (Emilio Martínez-Lázaro)

TV Shows (Netflix)*

- *Las chicas del cable*
- *Gran Hotel*
- *Siempre bruja*
- *Casa de papel*
- *Velvet*
- *La catedral del mar*
- *La víctima número ocho*
- *Mar de plástico*

*Please note that some of these suggestions contain bad language and adult themes.

Preparation Activities

Before returning in September, you should complete the following activities.

- Research a famous Hispanic person and prepare a short presentation on them in Spanish. This should be no longer than three minutes. You can create a PowerPoint, but try to use headings on your slides rather than long extracts of text.
- Translate this text about the film *Volver* into English.

Volver es la premiada película de 2006 sobre dos hermanas y su viaje para descubrir su pasado tras la muerte prematura de sus padres. La película era la obra cinematográfica número 16 del director español Pedro Almodóvar, y cuenta con un buen número de grandes actrices españolas como Penélope Cruz y Carmen Maura.

La película está ambientada en la región de La Mancha en España, donde nació Almodóvar, y habla de temas como la muerte, la soledad y la tradición. Aunque menos desmesurada que algunas de las obras anteriores de Almodóvar, *Volver* contiene varios de sus marcas de estilo cinematográficas: farsa, comedia, tragedia, melodrama y realismo mágico.

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- You will also need to evidence the activities that you have completed independently in order to practise your Spanish during the holidays. Here are some suggestions of the sorts of tasks that you could complete.
 - ⇒ Find an article in Spanish that relates to each of the topics that we will be studying during the A Level.
 - ⇒ Complete some gap fill tasks to Spanish songs using *Lyrics Training* and keep a record of your scores.
 - ⇒ Watch a film or TV series and write a review of it in Spanish.
 - ⇒ Choose an article and write a short summary (40-50 words) in either Spanish or English.
 - ⇒ Listen to a podcast or a vlog and write a summary in English about what was discussed.
 - ⇒ Compile vocab lists for each of the topics that we will be studying.
 - ⇒ Having completed the grammar checklists in this booklet, complete some grammar exercises to practise the areas that you feel less confident about.
 - ⇒ Conduct some research into a Hispanic country that you don't know as much about and present your findings either verbally or in writing.
 - ⇒ Research some Hispanic celebrities and create a profile on them in Spanish.
 - ⇒ Find a recipe for a dish in Spanish and have a go at making it by following the Spanish instructions.

- ⇒ Choose a short extract from a Spanish book or article and translate it into English. You could also do the reverse (translate from English into Spanish).
- ⇒ Record yourself talking about what you have been getting up to since completing your GCSEs. You can use Vocaroo (<https://vocaroo.com/>) to record yourself speaking and send a link to your teacher for feedback.

Use the table below to keep a record of the preparation work that you complete over the summer. You will need to go through this with your teacher in September, so make sure it is completed with as much detail as possible.

Week	What did you do?	Skill area(s) (listening, speaking, reading, writing, translation)	How did it help?
1			
2			
3			
4			

5			
6			