

# AP Spanish Language and Culture

Kelly Robinson

[kelly.robinson@acsk-12.org](mailto:kelly.robinson@acsk-12.org)

[kellyrobinson.org](http://kellyrobinson.org)

In this AP Spanish Language & Culture class, the workload is not what I consider huge, but it is consistent and challenging. You will be asked to discuss and write about, **in Spanish**, high level ideas and your responses to mature topics such as: states' (or autonomous regions', as in Spain) rights; responsibilities of athletes, celebrities, and other public figures as examples or "heroes;" sexism in both the Spanish-speaking culture and also in our own; environmentalism, etc.

This class has 2 main focuses:

- 1) To prepare the students to be comfortable with and to perform well on this exam.
- 2) To be better speakers in real life situation and to be poised to be life-long enthusiasts of experiencing-- through travel and in other ways-- other cultures, languages, and people.

The following are some of our standing assignments in class & typical assignments:

**You will have a vocabulary list/ quiz each week of high-level** and useful words that you should try to learn and incorporate into your speaking and writing. **There will be a vocabulary quiz each week** to ensure that you are spending time expanding your vocabulary. **You will also be responsible for writing good, thoughtful, high-level sentences each week** with your vocabulary list, partly to practice those words for the quiz and partly so you can get used to using them in context.

Each week, you will have to **listen to a podcast in Spanish of authentic material-- newscasts, interviews, discussions, etc, of approximately 10 minutes** and make detailed notes on them. I ask the students to listen to their chosen podcast for the week **three** times throughout the week and make notes under the sections: "*First listening*," "*Second listening*," "*Third listening*." You will hear so much more during the 3rd listening than you did the 1st time. Building this listening comprehension skill is critical, because almost each section of the AP exam has a listening component. Your choices may expand throughout the year, but basically you will be choosing between the advanced level of Notes In Spanish (no transcripts) and a news segment of BBC World in Spanish (BBC Mundo).

There will also frequently be assignments through the Vista Higher Learning site ([vhlcentral.com](http://vhlcentral.com)), which is our AP prep materials. You will be required to go online and complete a listening, a reading, a speaking sample, or something of that nature, pretty much every week.

We will cover **grammar (of course), but mostly as a review**. If you need extra help with a particular grammatical structure, you should let me know & I'll give you extra work on that concept. **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND AND CAN USE THE GRAMMAR FUNCTIONS WE ADDRESS IF YOU ARE A LITTLE BEHIND ON THAT**. Remember that the grammar, while crucial to upper-level speaking and writing, is simply one of the tools that we use to express our ideas and opinions in the language, and to effectively understand the reading and listening sections we are given on the test and in the test prep material.

The AP class is fun!! It is entertaining and you get to express your feelings on lots of different topics and do fun things. Sometimes we even get to sample food/ drinks that are popular in different Spanish-speaking area, and sometimes we even watch movies that exemplify a particular thought, idea, or time period in Spanish or Latin American History.

**I expect full cooperation out of all my students; I do not plan to have to "encourage" anyone to participate in the class in any way--- everyone should participate as fully as**

**possible and with good humor and eagerness to learn. This is not a class one should take if they are just looking for something to fill their schedule.**

But I can promise that if you take this class and participate fully in it, no matter what your AP Exam grade turns out to be, you will benefit greatly in your communication skills and your understanding of another culture--- one that is fast becoming a very important minority population in this country. I hope to also instill a love of traveling and of exploring peoples, cultures, and traditions that are different than your own. I love teaching this class and hope that you will find it useful and entertaining as well.

The AP Spanish Language and Culture class is, of course, a test-prep class. The test for 2019 is Tuesday, May 7, at 8:00 am.

Here is a breakdown of the test you will take at the end of the year (cost is approximately \$90).

Section		Number of Questions	Percent of Final Score	Time
<b>Section I: Multiple Choice</b>				<b>Approx. 95 minutes</b>
Part A	Interpretive Communication: Print Texts	30 questions	<b>50%</b>	Approx. 40 minutes
Part B	Interpretive Communication: Print and Audio Texts (combined)	35 questions		Approx. 55 minutes
	Interpretive Communication: Audio Texts			
<b>Section II: Free Response</b>				<b>Approx. 85 minutes</b>
Interpersonal Writing: Email Reply		1 prompt	<b>12.5%</b>	15 minutes
Presentational Writing: Persuasive Essay		1 prompt	<b>12.5%</b>	Approx. 55 minutes
Interpersonal Speaking: Conversation		5 prompts	<b>12.5%</b>	20 seconds for each response
Presentational Speaking: Cultural Comparison		1 prompt	<b>12.5%</b>	2 minutes to respond

**Complete explanation/ breakdown of the AP exam:**

The “Reading comprehension”, “Combined Listening & Reading”, and “Listening” sections are done with a CD that is sent by College Board; students have a question/answer packet and a scan-tron answer sheet that they bubble in for the listening and the reading comprehension (Multiple Choice) part. Part 1 will be about one & 1/2 hours— there will be about 4 (maybe 5)

listening comprehension sections and 4 reading selections with questions. There will be a small bathroom/snack break before the “Free Response” part of the test.

The Free Response part of the test begins with the “interpersonal writing” section. This is an email of about 150 words that the students write in response to a received email, trying to incorporate as much high level vocabulary and grammar as possible. Students should respond to all parts of the email.

The “Presentational Writing” section immediately follows the interpersonal writing. This is a 200-ish word persuasive essay, based on a given prompt and 3 sources. The student must write his/her own thoughts about the prompt, using and citing information from all three prompts. One of the sources is a written article; one is a graph or chart; and one is an audio selection. The essay should have a good intro paragraph and a good conclusion as well as the body paragraphs.

After this section are the 2 speaking assignments. This is done with the student recording his/ her voice into a digital recorder. The first task is the “interpersonal speaking,” a simulated conversation with a voice on the CD. There is a basic outline of what the student should say when it’s his/her turn (“give a suggestion,” “express your feelings,” “reject his invitation and offer an alternative suggestion” type things), then the conversation begins (you get about 1 1/2 minutes to look at the outline). The “other person” talks (via the CD) and then after the beep, you have 20 seconds to respond. There will be about 5 or 6 interchanges. You should fill up the 20 seconds as well as possible, making sure to do what the instructions tell you to do (offer an alternate idea, express your feelings, etc).

The second speaking task is the “Formal Speaking.” This is an oral presentation based on a comparison of some cultural topic in our society and also within a Hispanic society that you have knowledge of. The student has 4 minutes to plan, then 2 minutes to present.

Two minutes is really not very long at all; the hardest thing here (other than the speaking, of course) is to manage time wisely and to make sure you focus on a comparison between the two cultures.

#### SUMMER WORK:

Chicos-

Throughout the summer I would like it if you would try to maintain your speaking, listening, and reading skills as much as you can. Vocabulary & use of idiomatic expressions is also going to be very important on the AP exam at the end of the year. Because of that, I am giving you a packet of vocab from one of our AP resource books. Please keep this (we will refer to it throughout the year) and familiarize yourself during this summer with **several phrases that you think you can use frequently**. Appendix A & B are thematic vocab lists and idiomatic expressions (which are good to know and use on the test). Appendix C is a list of deceptive words which can be confusing. Appendix D has a list of words that can be used to connect ideas-- helpful in the writing parts and in the formal presentational speaking. Appendix F is prepositions and verbs used with prepositions after them. Appendix G is simple syllables and pronunciation.

**Summer work:** purchase the **9th Edition 2017 Barrons AP Spanish Language and Culture Prep Book- make sure you get the 9th Edition** -- all others are outdated and will not do.

You can buy this on Amazon for about \$14-15). The ISBN # for this book is: 978143807829 . Read pages 4 (“Description of the Exam”) - 5- 7 (“Content of the Exam”) very carefully so that you have a working understanding of the format of the test.

The first part of each section describes what you will need to understand to be successful with that part of the exam, explains the breakdown of that task, and sometimes helpful vocabulary. **READ THE INSTRUCTIONS ON EACH PART SO THAT YOU KNOW WHAT THE TEST INVOLVES!**

The book contains the following sections:

**Reading Comprehension- pg. 25** (you have 24 practice selections, with explanations of the choices beginning on pages 107 & 108)

**Reading comprehension designed for Persuasive Essay section- pg. 135** (you have explanations and a few practices for these here)

**Listening Comprehension practice- begins pg. 145** -page 149-179 has explanation and 10 selections to practice the reading/ listening combined section, also with answers and explanations.

**Listening only section- pg. 191- 216** has 12 selections that practice the listening-only part of the exam. Answers and explanations are on pages 217-228.

**Writing Skills section** begins on pg. 231. Explanations/ suggestions/ useful vocabulary are given in general.

**Email Response Section- pg. 237** gives specific ideas for the interpersonal writing assignment (the email response). You then have a sample essay (pg. 243-44), then you have 10 example emails to practice with.

**Presentational Writing (Persuasive Essay)- pg. 255-** the first section gives useful vocabulary & phrases and tips for doing well on this essay. You then have a sample essay (pg. 263), and 10 practice topics for the essay.

**Speaking Skills- pg. 289-292-** here you have an introduction and explanation to both speaking parts of the exam. Read this carefully for suggestions and tips on how to do well.

**Interpersonal Speaking (simulated conversation)- pg. 293.** You have a sample outline (what you will see on the test) and a written-out sample response script (pg. 296). Then you have 10 sample conversation outlines. Remember that you have 20 seconds to respond each time it is your turn to speak.

**Presentational Speaking (Cultural Comparison) - pg. 307-310-** Read this! explanation on what to do for your presentational speaking. On pages 310-311, you have a script of a sample presentational speaking selection. Remember for this, you have 4 minutes to plan your response, then 2 minutes to speak into the recorder. You should use the entire 2 minutes. You then have 24 practice topics that might be reasonable choices on the AP exam.

**Assignments:** Do the following exercises in the Barrons book on another sheet of paper (to be turned in):

- I. **Read Selection #1 (Pg. 51) and Selection #4 (pg 60)** and jot down notes in English or Spanish, whichever you prefer, about what the selection is saying (be detailed enough that I know you read/ understood it). Make your choices (write them on your paper) and compare your answers with the explanation of answers in the back of that section.
- II. **Read/ Listening- Selección #1 (pg. 153-54) & Selección 4 (pg. 162-64)** and jot down notes in English or Spanish, whichever you prefer, about what the selection is saying-- make sure to make a distinction in this section between the written section and the listening section (be detailed enough that I know you read/ listened/ understood it). Make your choices (write them on your paper) and compare your answers with the explanation of answers in the back of that section.

**III. Listening- Selección #4 (pg. 201), Selección #8 (pg. 208-09), Selección #11 (pg. 214)** and jot down notes in English or Spanish, whichever you prefer, about what the selection is saying (be detailed enough that I know you listened/ understood it). Make your choices (write them on your paper) and compare your answers with the explanation of answers in the back of that section.

**IV. Conversation- Selección #6 (pg. 302) , Selección #8 (pg. 304)**--Read the outline of the conversations, then listen to the audio of the other person speaking. Make notes about what he/ she says, then make a script of what you could in each case. Remember you must speak for 20 seconds, so make sure you are thinking of enough to say that would take you about that long.

**V. Cultural Speaking- Número #12 (pg. 314) & Número 13 (pg. 315)**- Remember that in this section you are talking about both cultures, yours AND that of a Latino/ Spanish culture, and you are speaking for 2 minutes. Just write down some things that you could say about each culture regarding the topic, and write down about 4 comparing/ contrasting words that you could use (read the explanation at the beginning of the section).

**VI. Writing:**

As far as writing assignments, I would like for you to keep a journal about your summer activities-- you can write by the week or just specific days that you did something noteworthy or fun or had something you wanted to talk about. Make sure that you do these in Spanish! and make sure that they are at least 50 words in length; you should have no trouble getting this much information and I expect most of them to be longer than that.

**You should have at least 6 entries.** As far as the AP- styled writing assignments-- we will discuss those in-depth in class.

Have these for me the first day of school. My intention is that you do them spread out all summer, however you want to organize them-- **DO NOT wait until the last week of July to do them all!**

Find some time to practice speaking this summer if you can. Order in Spanish for your family at your favorite Mexican restaurant!

Listening to Spanish-language music is a great to learn phrases & vocabulary, as is watching movies in Spanish with English subtitles. Disney & Pixar movies usually have a good Spanish track, but there are several good Spanish-language movies or series on Netflix or Amazon Prime that you would enjoy (be warned- some of those may be a little racy; make sure your parents are okay with your watching them. I'll give you a list of some good ones if you like). Some ones I like are "Grand Hotel" (which sometimes we watch in STRIPES time); "El Internado;" "Instructions Not Included," and "The Time In Between." I think all these are on Netflix.

I'm looking forward to a great year next year. Have a great summer and see you in August.

~Sra. Robinson