

As a student teacher at Romulus High School, I am responsible for the instruction of three Spanish II classes and work in collaboration with my mentor teacher, Mrs. Kathy Balcom. For this assignment, I have selected my second hour class of Spanish II students to discuss and share pertinent information. The students in this class are generally tenth graders, with a few eleventh and twelfth graders who decided to continue their study of the foreign language.

Since Spanish II is the second level of Spanish instruction at Romulus High School, my students have the prior knowledge acquired from last year's enrollment in Spanish I. As a result, they are familiar with the fundamental aspects of the language, such as letters, numbers, introductions, and the conjugation of verbs in the present verb tense. In addition, this particular class of Spanish II students contains a large number of high achievers, as demonstrated by the number of students that consistently receive an 'A' as their card marking grade. Furthermore, in comparison to my other Spanish II classes, the students in my second hour demonstrate a strong understanding of the content I instruct. As a result, I must increase my overall pacing to correspond to their accelerated learning style.

In relation to my general instructional philosophy as it relates to issues of lesson design and instructional strategies, I am an adamant believer that students of a foreign language must be challenged in the development of their skills in the target language. As a result, I design lessons and implement instructional strategies that force students to develop their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in Spanish in order to gain a richer understanding of the language. Moreover, my philosophy includes the notion that students of a foreign language must receive a well-rounded study (of Spanish) that

introspectively examines the area's history, culture, and language. Therefore, instead of only focusing on grammar and vocabulary of the Spanish language, I constantly design lessons and include activities where students learn about the history and culture of Spanish-speaking countries in an interactive manner.

Moreover, the target lesson that I created, incorporated in my class, and had the opportunity to adapt for the target student (whom I will discuss later) in advance of implementation is appropriately titled "The Spanish Conquistadors—their History and Influences in the New World" (see pages 10-16).

The lesson establishes meaning for the students by providing a historical context for Spanish exploration and colonization and demonstrating the cultural impact of the Spanish conquistadors on the native ethnic groups of the New World. Moreover, this particular lesson establishes connections to other lessons within the thematic unit of "Traveling and the Customs of the Hispanic Countries". It provides students with a solid historical foundation for Spanish influence on the Hispanic world and gives students the background knowledge to further examine cultural similarities among Hispanic countries later in the unit.

In addition, the goals for this lesson include that students will gain a greater understanding of the history of Spanish exploration and colonization in the New World and learn about the contributions of several famous Spanish conquistadors to our contemporary world. Moreover, I hope for students to connect the history learned during the target lesson with cultural aspects of the Hispanic world. Furthermore, students will learn about Spanish influences on the New World in the context of European conquest

and utilize their prior knowledge of colonization from history or other Spanish classes to understand the target lesson.

Furthermore, the activities for the target lesson include that students will briefly review the Spanish imperfect tense (a verb tense to describe actions that continuously occur in the past) in order to understand written texts and the historical contexts surrounding the Spanish conquistadors. To motivate and capture students' attention at the onset of the lesson, I will present a brief video clip on Spanish exploration from Youtube.com titled "The Conquistadors—The Beginning". This video clip will engage students since it is a virtual animation perspective on Spanish exploration from the eyes of both a conquistador and a native Indian.

After learning the history behind several famous Spanish explorers, students will read in-depth biographies about the individuals during class and later write a journal entry to assess their historical, cultural, and grammatical understanding of the content. Specifically, this journal entry titled *Diario de un conquistador* (Diary of a Conquistador) reinforces student understanding of the motivations for exploring the New World as a Spanish conquistador and the various new and exciting things he/she might see during the journeys (see journal guidelines, page 17).

In relation to the target student for whom I adapted a lesson to accommodate his/her special needs, I selected a new student that entered my second hour Spanish II class at the onset of the new semester. Keisha*¹, a tenth grader, moved to Romulus High School from the Wayne-Westland School District and enrolled in Spanish II to continue her study of the foreign language. Upon her arrival, the special education department at

¹ Student's name has been changed for the sake of anonymity.

Romulus High School contacted my mentor and I to discuss her IEP and accompanied learning needs. Keisha was tested by members of the special education staff and was officially identified as having a learning disability—dyslexia.

During her first weeks of Spanish II, I carefully took note of Keisha's academic performance, social relationships with her peers, general attitude toward the class, and if she struggled with any aspect of the foreign language. As to be expected from her identified learning disability, Keisha displayed problems reading and writing in the foreign language. Her dyslexia prevented her from writing the correct conjugation of verbs in any given tense and often misspelled words on homework assignments, quizzes, and tests. Moreover, when asked to read a passage from the textbook or her answer to a question, she frequently inverted the placement of words and took additional time to read the paragraph aloud to the class.

While these weaknesses affected her academic performance in the classroom, Keisha displayed strengths to compensate for her dyslexia. Her abilities to speak Spanish and listen in the target language were advanced and surpassed the average student's ability concerning these two language skills in my classroom. Keisha could verbally construct sentences that were grammatically correct and included a diverse vocabulary. Also, when I gave directions to her in Spanish—something that I do not usually incorporate, as my students tend to need multiple repetitions of the given phrase—Keisha understood what I asked of her the first time and completed the given task.

Furthermore, additional characteristics of dyslexia might have implications for the design and enactment of instructional activities that I will create for Keisha. According

to the website *LD Online*², dyslexics encounter greater problems when complex language skills are required, such as grammar, understanding textbook content, and the writing of essays. In addition, it is recommended for dyslexics to be taught by a systematic method that incorporates several senses—hearing, seeing, and touching—at the same time.

In terms of the generic lesson plan (pages 10-16), I modified its content and activities in various instances to accommodate the learning needs of Keisha. First of all, I adapted the task of reading several short biographies of Spanish conquistadors (page 14) to accommodate Keisha's dyslexia by asking for her to listen to audio recordings of myself narrating the historical accomplishments (in Spanish) of each conquistador. To supplement this audio activity, I will have Keisha view a PowerPoint presentation that includes pictures of the Spanish conquistadors and maps of places they discovered and later conquered as she listens to the cassette tapes. As I previously cited, *LD Online* believes that academic activities for dyslexics should involve more than one sense being utilized at the same time. As a result, I modified the original classroom activity of reading to now include a task that combines listening to the historical accomplishments of Spanish conquistadors with a visual connection that is established by pictures and maps on a PowerPoint presentation.

Another activity in the lesson plan that I modified to accommodate the learning needs of Keisha involves the *El Pretérito vs. El Imperfecto* worksheet (page 18). Originally assigned as homework for the previous night, my objective for the assignment was to ensure that students understood how to conjugate a verb in the imperfect tense and to determine which instances require the use of the *preterite* (past) tense or the imperfect

² <http://www.ldonline.org/article/16282>

tense. As students review their answers for this fill-in-the-blank exercise and reinforce their abilities to correctly conjugate verbs in the *preterite* or imperfect verb tenses, I will accommodate Keisha's learning needs by presenting her with an alternative activity to accomplish the same objective.

In order to conjugate verbs and add the correct verb ending according to the subject of a sentence, I will give her a bag of flashcards that contains subjects, verbs, and verb endings in the *preterite* and imperfect tenses from the worksheet. As answers are read aloud in class from the homework, Keisha will follow along and conjugate each verb by physically adding the correct verb with the corresponding verb ending. Moreover, this technique allows Keisha to practice aspects of grammar and vocabulary through tangibly creating words from the given flashcards after listening to a spoken sentence rather than requiring for her to mentally conjugate verbs. As recommended by the professionals from *LD Online*, a dyslexic student's automatic word recognition skills are utilized through this activity, as verbs are stated aloud and Keisha automatically uses her flashcards to construct the conjugated form of the verb in the proper tense.

Furthermore, the last activity of the lesson plan that I modified to accommodate Keisha's learning needs is the assigned journal entry titled "Diario de un conquistador" (Diary of a Conquistador). While the purpose of this activity was to reinforce student understanding of the motivations for exploring the New World as a Spanish conquistador and the various new and exciting things he/she might see during the journeys, the writing aspect of the assignment needed to be altered for Keisha. As a result, I created an alternative activity for her—she was to create an album of pictures and relevant images to represent the journey traveled by a Spanish conquistador to the New World and their

subsequent effects on the indigenous peoples. Specifically, Keisha would create this album from the perspective of any Spanish conquistador that we studied in class, such as Ponce de Leon or Ferdinand Magellan, and represent their explorations through a sequential collage of images. She would be able to utilize images from various sources—such as the Internet, magazines, books, etc—to represent her knowledge of Spanish exploration and conquest. As a result, this album would tell a visual story of her selected Spanish conquistador and his historical impact on the empires of the New World.

Moreover, this activity allows Keisha to express her historical and cultural knowledge of Spanish exploration learned in class through a visual display of events. The special education teachers from *LD Online* suggest that classroom activities for dyslexic students should incorporate skills from areas that do not require strong language skills, such as art and design. Furthermore, this activity gives Keisha the freedom to interpret Spanish exploration and colonization in a creative and interactive manner while reinforcing her knowledge of the content.

In relation to the success of the lesson, my Spanish II students were very receptive to its historical and cultural content, as the standard curriculum for Spanish at Romulus High School emphasizes the grammar and vocabulary of the language. The students provided me with positive verbal feedback concerning the journal entry assignment, as it was an opportunity for them to exercise their creativity and imagination from the perspective of a Spanish conquistador. In addition, the lesson presented students with a historical context for Spanish influence in the Western hemisphere and its contributions to the culture and language of contemporary nations.

Concerning the modifications of the original lesson plan for Keisha and its implementation in my classroom, I was pleased with Keisha's engagement in the content and activities. She enjoyed listening to my narration of the history of Spanish conquistadors and connecting the facts learned in an auditory manner with pictures and maps on the computer screen. In addition, she was excited to create an album containing pictures and images to represent her perspective of a conquistador's journey to the New World and her discoveries.

While these two aspects of the modified lesson were successful, the implementation of the flashcards activity during the class review of the worksheet was not as successful. It was difficult for Keisha to maintain a comfortable pace and keep up with the rest of the class as she created the correct forms of conjugated verbs in the past and imperfect verb tenses. Frequently, Keisha became frustrated when she could not find the correct verb endings in time before the class moved onto the next question. I believe that this activity would be more effective for Keisha to complete independently and in an empty classroom or a setting that would allow her to concentrate and work at her own pace.

Lastly, concerning the instructional adaptations for dyslexic students in a Spanish classroom, I suggest for teachers to create activities that establish visual and auditory connections to the content in order for dyslexic students to learn more effectively. Since Spanish is such a rich content area, teachers can easily modify lesson plans and corresponding activities by substituting a writing or reading assignment with a visual or listening activity. As a result, dyslexic students will be able to interpret the language and utilize several senses simultaneously to accomplish a given task. In addition, I suggest

for teachers to be flexible with the deadlines of assignments created for the dyslexic student, as many of the components require that he/she utilize outside resources such as the Internet and library.

Lesson Plan: Week 1 (Tuesday)

Title: *Los conquistadores españoles—la historia y las influencias en el Mundo Nuevo*
(*The Spanish conquistadors—their history and influences in the New World*)

Grade Level: 10th grade Spanish (foreign language instruction equivalent is Spanish II)

Lesson Overview: Students will briefly review the imperfect tense in order to understand written texts and the historical contexts surrounding the Spanish conquistadors. After learning the history behind several famous Spanish explorers, students will read in-depth biographies about the individuals during class and later write a journal entry to assess their historical, cultural, and grammatical understanding of the content.

Learning Outcomes: Students will gain a greater understanding of the history of Spanish exploration and colonization in the New World and learn about the contributions of several famous Spanish conquistadors to our contemporary world. Moreover, I hope for students to connect the history learned during today's lesson with cultural aspects of the Hispanic world learned later in this unit. Furthermore, students will learn about Spanish influences on the New World in the context of European conquest and utilize their prior knowledge of colonization from history or other Spanish classes to understand the lesson.

Learning Performances

- Students will learn to a greater extent how Spanish exploration affected the natives of the New World
- Students will associate specific Spanish conquistadors with their contributions to Spanish exploration
- Students will read and interpret authentic Spanish texts about the lives of several conquistadors and utilize their knowledge of the imperfect tense to refer to the past time period
- Students will apply their knowledge of Spanish conquistadors and of the imperfect verb tense to write a journal entry which describes themselves as a Spanish explorer in the New World
- Students will reference the impact of Spanish colonization in the New World on native ethnic groups to further examine the diverse cultures in the Hispanic world

Links to Michigan Curriculum Framework World Languages

Benchmarks:

- Identify and use a non-English language appropriately to perform a variety of tasks, in a variety of contexts, and utilizing a variety of content
- Use a variety of strategies to communicate in a non-English language
- Process and produce written discourse effectively in a non-English language
- Use a non-English language as a means of expression and inquiry
- Extract meaning and knowledge from authentic non-English language texts, [media presentations], and oral communication
- Connect a non-English language and culture through texts, writing, discussion, and projects
- Use a non-English language to acquire knowledge and connect to other disciplines
- Identify diverse languages and cultures throughout the world
- Recognize learning a new language is a lifelong process

Students' Prior Knowledge or Experience: Students will apply prior knowledge (from previous Spanish I/II classes and from history classes) to understand the impact of Spanish exploration and colonization on the New World. Moreover, students will use their prior knowledge of the Hispanic world and examine more thoroughly the historical, cultural, and linguistic similarities between Spain (the mother country) and its colonies (the New World/Hispanic world).

Establishing Purpose: The lesson establishes purpose and meaning for the students by providing a historical context for Spanish exploration and colonization and demonstrating the cultural impact of the Spanish conquistadors on the native ethnic groups of the New World. Moreover, this particular lesson establishes connections to other lessons within the thematic unit of "Traveling and the Customs of the Hispanic Countries". It provides students with a solid historical foundation for Spanish influence on the Hispanic world and gives students the background knowledge to further examine cultural similarities among Hispanic countries later in the unit. Furthermore, this lesson incorporates students' interests by encouraging creativity in the journal entry for homework, a task where students describe life as a Spanish conquistador and their adventures.

Instructional Strategies: In order to present the lesson on Spanish conquistadors, subject matter with a heavy historical and cultural focus, I will utilize the Presentation Lesson format as my instructional strategy. Moreover, I will incorporate the four basic phases of this strategy into my lesson plan: (1.) clarify aims and establish set; (2.) present

an advance organizer; (3.) present the new information; (4.) and monitor and check for understanding and strengthen student thinking

Materials Needed:

- Completed *El Pretérito vs. El Imperfecto* worksheet by the students
- Television screen to project Youtube.com video from computer
- Overhead projector/transparencies/markers
- Large map of Spanish-speaking countries
- Pictures of Spanish conquistadors and adhesive (to place on map)
- Pictures that represent Aztec, Mayan, and Incan empires (to place on map)
- Spanish biographies about famous conquistadors/explorers
- Books and other textual resources

Time Required: One class period (50 minutes)

Instructional Sequence:

- *Introducing the lesson* (Phase 1: Clarify aims and establish set): Upon the entry of students into my classroom, I will have an overhead transparency projected onto the screen titled the “Aims and Overview of Today’s Lesson on Spanish Exploration and the Impact of Conquistadors on the New World” in order for students to immediately understand what will be discussed in class today. Once the bell rings, I will draw the students’ attention to the overhead transparency and review its contents together:

“Today’s Objective: *The objective of today’s lesson is to help you understand the importance of Spanish exploration on the New World and the impact of the conquistadors on the native inhabitants.*

Agenda

5 minutes	<i>Introduction, brief video clip, and getting ready</i>
5 minutes	<i>Advance organizer for today’s lesson</i>
15 minutes	<i>Presentation on the importance of Spanish exploration on the New World and the impact of the Spanish conquistadors on native cultures.</i>
10 minutes	<i>In-class activity: read biographies of selected Spanish conquistadors and discuss information with seat partner</i>
10 minutes	<i>Review of previous night’s homework assignment, <i>El Pretérito vs. El Imperfecto</i>, as a class</i>

5 minutes *Journal entry assigned: “Diario de un conquistador”*

- After discussing the aims for the lesson, I will establish set by getting students to recall the theme of Spanish exploration from last night’s homework assignment (*El Pretérito vs. El Imperfecto*). Moreover, I will ask them such questions as “Who were some of the famous Spanish explorers that traveled to the New World?” and “Can you describe some customs or contributions they brought to the natives?”
- To motivate and capture students’ attention at the onset of the lesson, I will present a brief video clip on Spanish exploration from Youtube.com titled “The Conquistadors—The Beginning”. This video clip will engage students since it is a **virtual animation** perspective on Spanish exploration from the eyes of both a conquistador and a native Indian.
- *Representing the Content* (Phase 2: Present an Advance Organizer): I will transition from the introduction of Spanish exploration and conquistadors to the presentation of an advance organizer in a verbal manner. For example, I will clearly and precisely communicate to students the advance organizer by saying, “Yesterday, we were introduced to Spanish exploration in our homework assignment with reference to famous explorers and their contributions in the New World. Today, we will focus on the history of Spanish exploration and the impact of the Spanish conquistadors on the natives of the New World.”
- *Representing the Content* (Phase 3: Present the New Information): Referring to the large map of Spanish-speaking countries, I will present information about the history of Spanish exploration and colonization. To exhibit *clarity* in my presentation, I will tape pictures or symbols of the Aztec, Mayan, and Incan empires on the map to represent their geographic locations.
- In addition, as I proceed through my presentation with additional information, I will gradually add pictures of certain Spanish conquistadors to the specific regions of the New World they explored. I will present history about:
 - Hernán Cortés (conquered the Aztec empire)
 - Francisco Pizarro (conquered the Incan empire)
 - Ferdinand Magellan (traveled around the world)

-Hernando de Soto (discovered the Mississippi River)
 -and Juan Ponce de León (discovered Florida to find the Fountain of Youth)

- As a result, students will associate the names and faces of Spanish conquistadors with the geographic regions of the New World instead of relying on memorization.
- In addition, as I present information about the Spanish conquistadors, I will use *explaining links* to indicate the cause, result, means, or purpose of an event. For example, as I introduce information on Juan Ponce de Leon, I would use the explaining links of **in order to** in the description of his intention as a conquistador: “Juan Ponce de Leon, a Spanish explorer, set sail for the New World **in order to** find the supposed Fountain of Youth.” As a result, students can see the relationships in my presentation and increase the likelihood of understanding.
- Lastly, I will present information to the class on the contributions and consequences of Spanish exploration in the New World. For example, the Spanish introduced Catholicism to the inhabitants they encountered as an alternative to their pagan faiths. However, certain conquistadors also eradicated the populations of great empires and enslaved the natives of other groups.
- *Promote students thinking about concepts of the lesson* (Phase 4: Monitor and check for understanding and strengthen student thinking): In order to check to see if students understand the new information previously presented about Spanish exploration and the impact of conquistadors on the New World, I will ask for students to make direct responses to my questions. Various examples would be:
 - “The majority of the conquistadors came from which country?”
 - “Which ancient empires were affected by Spanish exploration and colonization?”
 - “Which conquistador discovered the Mississippi River?”
- Moreover, in order to promote student thinking about concepts of the lesson and strengthen their cognitive processes, I will ask students to read several short biographies of Spanish conquistadors (written summaries provided by me) and discuss the information with their seat partner. As a result, students will express their ideas and thoughts about Spanish exploration and conquistadors by establishing discourse with his/her seat partner.

- *Establish links to the purpose of the lesson and unit:* This activity is related to the unit *Viajar y las costumbres de los países hispanos* since it emphasizes the historical context of Spanish exploration, demonstrates the impact of colonization on the New World, and illustrates a common cultural thread through Spain's sharing of customs on its newfound territories. In addition, students learn that Spain is perceived to be the 'mother country' in the Hispanic world since the official language in many countries of Central America, South America, and the Caribbean is Spanish. In addition, Spain and the Hispanic world share similar cultural elements, such as religion and food, which were originally brought by Spanish conquistadors. Lastly, I will emphasize to students that the content of this lesson is related to the purpose of the unit because it provides a historical and cultural context for Spain's influence on the Hispanic world.
- *Concluding the lesson:* Before I introduce the assessment for this lesson—a journal entry to gauge student understanding of the content discussed in class—I will review the *El Pretérito vs. El Imperfecto* worksheet briefly with the class. Moreover, I want to ensure that students understand how to conjugate a verb in the imperfect tense and which circumstances require its usage.
- After this brief review, I will transition to the homework assignment—a journal entry. Specifically, this journal entry titled “Diario de un conquistador” (Diary of a Conquistador) reinforces student understanding of the motivations for exploring the New World as a Spanish conquistador and the various new and exciting things he/she might see during the journeys. I will distribute the guidelines for this journal entry (to be completed in their Spanish *cuaderno*) and briefly review its requirements with the class (see “Diario de un conquistador” guidelines sheet on page 19). Moreover, I will remind students that Spanish exploration has impacted the Hispanic world and we can see its impact through a shared language and culture.

Assessing Student Understanding: Students will be assessed according to the fulfillment of requirements listed on the guidelines sheet (see page 19).

Cautions: There are no dangerous or hazardous components to this lesson.

Sources: Holt Spanish: Level 2 (1996). *Ven conmigo!* Austin, Texas. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, chapters 1-4.

Student Resources: Students can refer to the handout containing Spanish biographies about famous conquistadors/explorers; can reference the online video from Youtube.com about Spanish exploration used during the introduction of the lesson (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=quJseW1Qnx0&feature=related>); and consult the guidelines sheet about their “Diario de un conquistador” journal entry.



Instrucciones por “Diario de un conquistador”

Para demostrar tu conocimiento de la exploración española en el Mundo Nuevo y los efectos de los conquistadores en los imperios, tienes que escribir una carta en tu cuaderno como si fueras un(a) conquistador(a) en una exploración a tierra desconocida.

Los requisitos incluyen:

- 1. Este diario tiene que ser en la forma de una carta*
- 2. Tienes que usar el imperfecto seis veces*
- 3. Necesitas describir **por que** estas en viaje al Mundo Nuevo y **por cuanto tiempo** has estado en el barco*
- 4. Nombra tres cosas distintas o nuevas que ves cuando llegas en el Mundo Nuevo*
- 5. Tu carta tiene que contener por lo menos diez (10) frases*



El Pretérito vs. El Imperfecto Actividad

Instrucciones: Lee el siguiente cuento en relación a los conquistadores españoles y sus influencias en los indios del Mundo Nuevo. Determina cual tenso del verbo vas a usar—entre el imperfecto o el pretérito— y conjuga el verbo en la forma correcta del sujeto.

Ejemplo: Los españoles _____ (descubrir) el Mundo Nuevo por una serie de exploraciones.

Respuesta: Los españoles descubrieron el Mundo Nuevo por una serie de exploraciones.

Cuando los españoles (1.) _____ (venir) al Mundo Nuevo, la tierra que ahora es México y Perú, (2.) _____ (traer) muchas costumbres nuevas a las personas que vivían allí.

Por ejemplo, un sistema de clases como en España (3.) _____ (ser) construido en las colonias. Las personas que (4.) _____ (nacer) en España tenían los puestos mas altos.

Además, los conquistadores (5.) _____ (cambiar) la manera en que (6.) _____ (vivir) los indios. La Iglesia (7.) _____ (ser) la institución social mas importante porque la vida española centraba en el Catolicismo.

Como resultado, los españoles y los miembros de la Iglesia Católica (8.) _____ (intentar) convertirse los indios a través de las misiones. También, los españoles (9.) _____ (usar) los indios como esclavos para construir monumentos, edificios, e iglesias.

La mayoría de los conquistadores (10.) _____ (ser) de España. Estos individuos incluyen Hernán Cortés, Francisco Pizarro, Ferdinand Magellan, Hernando de Soto, y Juan Ponce de León.