

June 2011

ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE

Español – Grades K-4

Wow! I can't believe how fast this year has gone by. I enjoyed teaching your children Spanish this past year and watching their language skills grow. I stressed the listening and speaking skills of Spanish along with some reading and writing. Throughout the year, each class began with prayer in Spanish and a culture trivia question for us to briefly discuss. In the third and fourth grade classes, the students continued to recite the pledge in Spanish as part of their daily routine.

In this newsletter, I would like to highlight the material that was taught in the K-4 Spanish classes during the second semester. I am very proud of all their progress. It was very rewarding to build upon their skills in the Spanish language and watch them become more developed as the year progressed.

In Kindergarten, the students continued to learn Spanish through repetition, songs, actions, children's books and games. During the past months they have learned: the four seasons, weather expressions, the months of the year (stressing their birthday month with a birthday dance), clothing vocabulary, the zoo and farm animals and some culture. While studying clothing, some of the children even had a chance to try on some authentic clothes from Spanish countries. During Cinco de Mayo week, the students learned how to do "The Mexican Hat Dance." This was great fun for them.

The first grade students continued their study of body parts with a book that shows how we are the same but yet different in some ways. We used this book to study the differences among the students. They learned how to use common phrases to ask and answer what their name is, how they are feeling, and how old they are. The students also studied family and house vocabulary. These two topics allowed us to look at the individual families and houses within the class. The verb "estar," which means to be located somewhere, was taught as a means to incorporate the family and the different rooms of the house. As a culture lesson, the class read a book about houses from around the world. I even shared my stories and pictures from my house when I lived in Mexico. They loved hearing about the information and enjoyed seeing the pictures. During the past few weeks, they learned how to say the different rooms of the school in Spanish along with the names of the subjects they study daily. The students also learned how to properly address the different people that they encounter at school in Spanish. Over Cinco de Mayo week, the first graders made mini sombreros to celebrate the fiesta day.

The second grade students continued with their study of food. They sang songs to stress the food vocabulary and listened to a song on CD where a speed contest in recognizing the vocabulary and phrases was played. The students reviewed their numbers as they went shopping for food items and had to ask for and say the prices of the various foods. They learned about items being expensive or cheap. The favorite activity amongst all the second graders was the role-playing we did as they played restaurant and had to order foods for their meals. All three meals along with snacks, desserts, and beverages were learned and used. Some listening activity sheets were implemented into a few lessons where the students had to listen to me say various sentences in Spanish and they had to find the picture that I was talking about. A variety of food expressions were taught and an Around The World game was played to remember them with speed. We looked at an authentic cookbook and discussed foods from Spanish countries. This was very interesting to the students. During March, Dr. Seuss's birthday month, the students heard the story of "Green Eggs and Ham" in Spanish. After studying food for some time, the second graders moved on to learn body part vocabulary and sports. They learned how to express an injury by using the expressions "me duele" and "me duelen" (one is singular and one is plural). During the sports unit, they learned how to say the sports, express a like or a dislike to the sport, and how well they played the sports using the verb "jugar." Most recently, the second graders learned nine verbs of activities they would participate in while at a park. Some of the verbs included: eat, play, run, talk, listen, read... They learned them very quickly as we put actions to them. We studied math in Spanish and went to an imaginary bank. We talked about the exchange rate of money from country to country and I showed them pesos I brought back from Mexico. For fun, I allowed the students to shade the coins on paper to take home. This was great fun for them. During Cinco de Mayo week, the students created their own Mexican flags for the fiesta celebration.

The third grade students learned a variety of adjectives in describing people. They learned how to change the adjectives to make them agree in number and gender. They played a Guess Who game where I would describe a student and they had to figure out who I was talking about. This was a favorite. As they read cartoon-like paragraphs, the students learned how to use the pronouns él vs. ella (he vs. she). They used magazine pictures to write and present to the class a description of their picture. During a few classes the students also wrote some riddles of their own in Spanish. A celebrity or person we all knew was selected and their Spanish riddle was written to describe him or her. We had to guess who their mystery person was as we went around the class and shared. The students also developed a mini book describing the members in their family. They learned how to compare two people as the expression “_____ es más _____ que _____” was used. Telling time in Spanish is not too difficult but is a little different than the way we tell the time in English. They learned how to say time on the hour, ½ past the hour, ¼ past the hour, and ¼ to the hour. After a few activities and races they did very well with this. Daily activities were connected to time as they created a poster showing me their day. This included some reflexive verbs. Job well done. Most recently, the third graders read a few mini-skits in front of the class to practice their reading and speaking skills more. They loved to role-play the characters and I enjoyed seeing them have fun with the language. During Cinco de Mayo week, the students made an art piece called “papel picado.” They enjoyed designing their masterpiece and we hung them in the room for all to see.

The fourth graders continued to wrap up the study of seasons and the weather as we continued to prepare for our imaginary trip. Then, transportation was introduced as planning to travel to our destination was discussed. They learned the vocabulary of a variety of different means of transportation and also how to compare them based on if they were fast, slow, too big, and too small. The verb “IR”, which translates to “to go”, was taught to the students to be used with the transportation words. The pronoun chart was taught along with the verb as the students learned how to conjugate a verb in Spanish. For the past month or so, the students have been working in groups preparing to present a skit for their parents and some other SPA students. The students performed: A Day with Three Friends (Un Día Con Tres Amigos), Canal PAN-ORAMA (A Weather Report), The Three Pigs (Los Tres Puercos), and A Fifteenth Birthday (Una Quinceañera). They practiced their lines, designed their own props and costumes, and worked together to perfect their performance. They learned new vocabulary, spoke Spanish in front of an audience, and had fun with the Spanish language. Job well done by all the fourth grade students! I am proud of them. Thank you to Mrs. Lowing for the use of the classroom stage and to all of you parents as you helped your child prepare for their performance. A special thank you to Miss Jackson as she assisted the students when I was not in the building, helped the students with the Smart Board displays, and always had them ready to get started when it was time for us to practice.

Muchas gracias for all of your continued support this year. I have thoroughly enjoyed teaching your children and watching their Spanish skills grow throughout the school year. I wish you all a fun-filled summer vacation and hope my students practice their Spanish during the summer.

Sinceramente,

Señora Saumier