



Spanish

November 2, 2007

Dear RMDS Preschool Parents,

The children have been introduced to greetings, numbers, colors, actions and body parts through games, songs, reading and activities.

We start every class by singing "Hola means hello" and "Buenos Dias". Both songs have Spanish lines that are then followed by the English meaning. The information in each song is reinforced through discussion and participation. For example, after we sing "Hola", I go over the meaning of the words hola, amigos and ninos and the children then take turns in greeting each other. After "Buenos Dias" I again go over the meanings of the phrases and then might ask each child, "Como estas?" Or I might have the children greet each other and ask the name of the child on their left. "Hola, como te llamas?" We have started small dialogue with greetings (for most of the children, I use prompts). "Hola Jane!", "Hola Susan!", "Como estas?", "Muy bien gracias, como estas?" "Muy bien gracias."

We use a color song and colored balls to learn the colors. We sing, "Red is rojo, green is verde, blue we call azul, yellow is amarillo, these are our colors!" while we play with colored balls. The children sit in a circle, each one holding a colored ball and facing a child with the same color ball as theirs. As we sing the song, each child rolls the ball to their partner when their color comes up. The children will change colors after a couple turns. After we finish playing this I will have them stand up and jump or put their ball on their head as I call out different colors.

Children are being introduced to counting and number concepts through songs and reading. We have used two books for number introduction, "Tres Amigos" and "Fiesta". The children count with me as we learn new words throughout the stories. Songs we have used to connect to numbers are "Uno, Dos, Tres - Chocolate", "Los Numeros" (The Number Song) and "Uno, Dos, Tres Pinguinos" (One, Two, Three Penguins). We sing "Chocolate" with a parachute. Each child holds onto a "handle" of the parachute and lifts it as we count "uno, dos, tres". Since the parachute has three colors, I also use this game to reinforce the names of the colors in Spanish. I do this by asking the children who are holding rojo to raise their hands and call out rojo etc. At the end of the song the children run under the parachute. Needless to say, this song and game is a favorite of every child in the class! While we sing the "Number Song" we jump to each number. And, with "Uno, Dos, Tres Pinguinos", I assign each child a number. When we sing their number they walk towards me like a penguin (camina como un pinguino). At the end of the song we have a classroom full of singing penguins.

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Actions have been introduced by playing "Alto" (freeze) or musical chairs. I will start the music, call an action and then do it with the children, continually repeating the word of the action as they do it. When I stop the music, I say "Alto!" or "Sientense!" and the children either freeze or find a chair and sit down. We have run, jumped, walked, danced and crawled (brinca, corre, baila, camina and gatea). We have also played "Alto" as animales. The children will crawl around the room and I will call out an animal, which they then pretend to be until I say "Alto". They have been gatos, perros, and leones (cats, dogs and lions).

Parts of the body are being introduced through looking at pictures of a baby and his/her ojos, orejas, boca, nariz, manos and pies (eyes, ears, mouth, nose, hands and feet). I connect the baby and his/her facial features to theirs. For example, after showing them the baby's ojos, I have them say ojos and then have them touch their eyes and say ojos. We have also done, "Head and Shoulders, Knees and Toes" in Spanish. But, their favorite body song of all is "Mi Cuerpo Hace Musica" (I Make Music with My Body). We make music with our manos, pies, boca and cintura (hands, feet, mouth and waist). The children clap their hands, stomp their feet say "la, la, la" with their mouth and even though you can't make a sound with your waist, you can say "cha, cha, cha" while moving it!

We are also doing a song in Spanish that they already know in English - "La Arana Pequenita" (The Itsy Bitsy Spider). We usually do this song twice with a "discussion" in between. For example I will ask the children to show me their "aranas" (spiders). The familiar song and hand actions help them to understand the correlating Spanish words.

Sometimes a child will tell me, "I'm tired." I will say, "Estas cansado/a?" and then we will play the "tired game". I will tell the children, "Duermanse" (go to sleep) and we will all go to sleep after saying "Buenas Noches" (good night). We will all sleep until I say "Despiertense!" (wake up) and they all jump up, stretch their arms and say "Buenos Dias!" (good morning).

We end class by singing, "Adios Amigos, Goodbye my Friends." When the children leave, they call out "Adios! Adios!"

Best Regards,
Susan Peterson