

Spanish: Senior Cycle (Fifth and Sixth Year)

Overview of skills

Senior Cycle builds upon the foundations established during the Junior Cycle. Over the two year course pupils will be preparing for the Leaving Certificate exam. Teachers focus on helping candidates to acquire the necessary skills to enable them to cope when working independently under exam conditions but also to gain valuable communication skills that can be transferred to other settings. Pupils are exposed to the style of questions they will encounter in the exam and are equipped with the comprehension skills and vocabulary needed to tackle these.

The main components of the course are:

- Reading comprehension skills (translating, questions to answer, finding synonyms, summarising a text)
- Written expression (writing letters, notes and diary entries, written opinions and dialogues)
- Listening comprehension skills
- Speaking (conversation and role plays)

Oral & aural work form 45% of the exam and are skills regularly practiced in class. The use of interactive online resources is encouraged.

Topics

The approach to learning the language is still largely topic based and builds upon previous knowledge. Themes covered include:

- School
- Spanish Festivals & Holidays & Tourism
- Family, relationships & friendships
- House, home and city
- Young people & free time
- Diet & Health
- The world of work
- Society and the world

Grammar

As previously noted, grammar is integral to the topics studied and without a solid understanding of grammar, it is difficult to study a language at an Honours level. Pupils should regularly set aside time to review verbs, tenses and other grammar points covered in class. It is vital that pupils learn from their mistakes and review feedback from teachers.

Homework and assessment

Spanish teachers set homework most evenings. It is crucial that pupils complete all homework as it provides an opportunity to review and revise material covered in class.

Increasingly pupils are expected to develop self-discipline and to review vocabulary independently.

5th year: October test, Christmas exam (aural & written paper), Summer exam (all four components tested).

6th year: October test, Christmas exam (aural & written paper), Mock exam (oral, aural & written paper).

In class teachers will also give shorter tests regularly on the various components, eg. Vocabulary / grammar. The oral exams are usually held during April. Consult www.sec.ie for up to date information.

Leaving Certificate Examination

The exam consists of three parts:

- Oral examination (speaking) Tested on one roleplay out of five prepared; a ten minute conversation with an external examiner
- Aural examination (listening):
- Written paper: Reading comprehension and written expression

There is a Higher Level paper and an Ordinary level paper. At Senior Cycle there is an Ordinary Level class.

Textbooks:

Español en acción

Vamos a escuchar 2 listening book

Spanish dictionary.

www.wordreference.com is also highly recommended as a reliable online tool.