



A Guide to “making the grade” in Sra. Fruit’s Spanish Class

Grading for Learning: this grading system is “Standards –Based.” This means that students will be graded on how well they can perform each standard or skill. As we learn a new skill students will have a “risk-free” period during which practice will not be graded. Instead, students will be given written or spoken feedback on where they need to improve. We will continue to practice each skill before students are asked to perform it on an assessment. Below are other aspects of “Standards-Based Grading”:

- Students will have more than one opportunity to show mastery of any given skill. All assessment scores will be considered when assigning a final score for the quarter. More weight will be given to more current scores **if** student shows a general trend toward improvement. If there is not an obvious trend than emphasis will be given to the most commonly occurring score (the “mode”).
- Students will be formally assessed on each skill in several ways which may include quizzes, tests, writing assignments, oral quizzes, & performed dialogues. Before a formal assessment students will have practiced each skill in class with feedback from the teacher and peers.
- Student performance of a given skill will receive one of the following ratings: Advanced Plus, Advanced, Proficient, Basic, Below Basic, No Grade, or Incomplete

For grading purposes the following scale will be used (see p. 2 of this handout for more information regarding these levels):

Advanced +	= 10 points or 100%	
Advanced	= 9.5 points or 95%	
Proficient	= 8.5 points or 85%	(Proficient+ = 9 points or 90%)
Basic	= 7.5 points or 75%	(Basic + = 8 points or 80%)
Below Basic	= 6.5 points or 65%	
No Grade	= 5 points or 50% (only given when student intentionally leaves an assessment blank, providing no way to assess skills)	
Incomplete	= student has not completed the assessment. Upon completion a numerical score will be assigned	



- Skills grades will continue to be adjusted on Infinite Campus as more data is gathered on each student’s skill level. Skill levels reported at the end of the quarter are final and will not change (with the exception of an incomplete).
- At the end of the quarter each skill will be given equal weight (unless noted by the teacher) and all skills scores will be averaged to compute the final grade. (90-100% = A; 80-89% = B; 70-79% = C; 60-69% = D; Lower than 60% = F)
- Homework completed during our “risk-free” practice period will be reported through Infinite Campus but will not affect final grades. This will simply be a tool for students and parents to monitor effort.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Participation is the key to practicing and learning Spanish. It is important for the teacher to be able to evaluate how well students understand how to perform each skill. By calling on students the teacher is gathering information on how well everyone in the class is doing. Therefore the teacher will use the following procedures in class:



- Any one may be called on. While the teacher may at times ask for volunteers, more often she will call on students without asking them to raise their hands first. WHY? Because the teacher needs to know if *all* of the students understand, not just the few with their hands up.
- No-opt out. Students will not be able to give the simple answer of “I don’t know.” The teacher will follow up with specific questions to find out how much the student knows/doesn’t know and if the student knows where to find the information needed. *It is important that students understand the teacher is not picking on anyone during this procedure.* It is the teacher’s job to figure out “where things went wrong” and to re-teach students who “don’t know” the answer. With guided help from the teacher students often realize they DO know the answer, they just lacked the confidence to attempt the skill.
- Group response. We will use this procedure often in Spanish class. The teacher will ask students to repeat or recite words and answers together. This technique allows all students to practice without being “singled out.” It is a great way to practice pronunciation of new Spanish words without the fear of sounding silly. Your individual voice is lost in the group. The more you practice during this phase the more comfortable you will be during the “anyone may be called on” portion of class. During group response students should NOT attempt to be funny by extending answers or altering their voices.
- Partner/Group practice. All grades in Spanish class will be given on an individual basis. There will be no “group grades.” However, we will use partners and groups often to practice a skill. Sometimes students will choose their partner or group, but often the teacher will choose. WHY? Because students need to learn to speak Spanish with anyone and everyone, not just their best friends in class. When students are called upon to use their Spanish skills in the real world it will most likely be with a stranger (at the mall, supermarket, or on vacation, etc.). To mimic the “stress” of this situation, students will be expected to practice with a wide range of partners in class.

GENERAL PERFORMANCE LEVELS: *The following information on performance levels should be used as a guideline only. All levels will be revisited by the teacher and students before an assessment is given; adjustments specific to each skill will be made as necessary. Any changes will be presented to students clearly and with advance warning.*

ADVANCED: student demonstrates superior academic performance. Accomplishes all tasks mentioned at the proficient level with no or almost no errors. When possible student also expands sentences to be more complex. EX: Instead of saying *Juan lee (Juan reads)*. Student may say *Juan lee en la biblioteca de su escuela (Juan reads in the library of his school)*. Certain skills may require the use of “bonus” vocabulary or grammar to earn an advanced score. Students who accomplish all of this with no errors may earn a score of Advanced + (=10 points).

PROFICIENT +: Student has demonstrated proficient level and is moving towards advanced (but isn’t quite there yet).

PROFICIENT: student demonstrates satisfactory academic performance. Work indicates a solid understanding or display of the skill with few errors. Student uses required vocabulary, grammatical structures, and spelling/pronunciation correctly MOST of the time. Typical errors may be classified “silly” mistakes: missed or incorrect articles; spelling a word correctly one place and incorrectly another place; forgetting a vocabulary word. In other words: the teacher can tell the student “gets how to do the skill” and can perform it “with few errors.” Students may have made an attempt at expanding sentences or using bonus vocabulary/grammar, but were not successful.

BASIC+: Student has demonstrated basic level and is moving towards proficient (but isn’t quite there yet).

BASIC: student sometimes demonstrates the skill, but errors are common. Inconsistent use of vocabulary, grammatical structures, and/or spelling/pronunciation impedes communication. In other words: student “gets” some of the concepts, but doesn’t demonstrate full understanding.

BELOW BASIC: student demonstrates unacceptable performance. Student shows limited knowledge of the communicative skill. Student can say some words in Spanish, but they are not used in correct combination to show meaning. Errors are common as well as lack of required vocabulary and/or grammatical structures. In other words: student has learned some Spanish, but cannot use it in a meaningful way to communicate.