



Preparing Middle and Secondary Students for a Global Society

Today, nearly nine million U.S. students study foreign languages across the K–12 educational system, and more than 32% of all secondary level students enroll in coursework to study a foreign language (ACTFL, 2010). Of the languages studied, 72% of students in the U.S. choose to study Spanish. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL, 2010) recommends that foreign language programs expand, and enrollment targets rise, in order to prepare a new generation of American students to be competitive internationally.

Research on foreign language teaching and learning reflects four main 21st-century learning principles. These principles include: theories related to adolescent learning; use of authentic text; exposure to multiculturalism and the lives of real people and cultures; and integration of technology. These four principles are integrated throughout the *Español Santillana* curriculum to engage and motivate middle and secondary students. Below we describe how *Español Santillana* addresses these four principles.

I. How does *Español Santillana* engage middle and secondary students to learn Spanish as a World Language?

Today's adolescents (between the ages of 12 and 18 years) interact with more material and information than ever before. Yet how do adolescents learn and what engages adolescents in the learning process? We know from research that adolescent learning is unlike the learning that occurs during other developmental stages. Erickson's (1959/1994) seminal work refers to this period as one of identity development, where adolescents begin to develop a sense of self and personal identity, emphasizing the need for social relationships.

More recent research on adolescent learning underscores the distinct brain development that occurs during this period. Dr. Jay Giedd (see PBS, 2001) of the

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) has conducted groundbreaking research on adolescent brain development. In contrast to the myth that brain development occurs primarily by the age of three, Giedd has found that a second wave of overproduction of gray matter develops in the brain, reporting that "brain maturation does not stop at age 10, but continues into the teen years and even into the 20s." Importantly for teachers of middle and secondary students, the brain also begins to "prune" or discontinue connections of neurons that are not being used. So, engaging students in areas such as foreign language learning during adolescence will strengthen this area of development for the long term.

Teachers of middle and secondary students can engage adolescents using purposeful teaching techniques. According to Wolf (2010), engaging those students occurs in two primary ways: first by ensuring that the information has **meaning**; and second by ensuring that the information makes an **emotional connection**. In fact, Wolf notes that meaning and emotion are crucial; they grab the adolescent brain's attention and facilitate learning. Finally, Egan of the Imaginative Education Research Group (see IERG, 2014) notes that engaging students in learning tasks that allow them to access their imaginations during the learning process will build motivation and support student learning. Secondary students often experience conflicting values due to their changing perceptions of self and their roles within their communities. Although every child is different, it is safe to say that adolescents share the following characteristics of development:

They all

- want to feel part of a peer group;
- want to participate in active learning activities with peers; and
- require adult support, direction, and calm guidance.

Español Santillana meets the needs of adolescent language learners through its materials, resources,

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and instructional guides for teachers. The *Español Santillana* curriculum engages students in meaningful tasks, empowers them to make personal connections to authentic materials, and uses their imaginations to explore cultures from throughout the Spanish-speaking world. Each unit presents students with four challenges related to the people, regions, or cultures of a country. For example, teams of students prepare a meal containing paiche in Iquitos, Peru, and compete in a stairs marathon in Valparaíso, Chile. The students themselves determine the winner of each challenge.

II. Does Español Santillana use authentic texts?

One of the strengths of the *Español Santillana* program is its use of authentic reading selections and materials to engage students; Santillana is the largest publisher of authentic Spanish textbooks and materials in the world. This is why *Español Santillana* is able to incorporate authentic reading selections that contextualize culture and engage students in learning Spanish. That means that authentic texts that support student language and literacy development are already available and embedded in the curriculum. The Modern Language Association (MLA, 2007) has recommended a curriculum “in which language, culture, and literature are taught as a continuous whole.” In fact, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS, 2014) have called for the use of authentic text throughout the language arts curriculum, and ACTFL (2010) recommends building strong links between the Common Core State Standards and the learning of foreign languages.

Español Santillana uses authentic texts from authors throughout the world, both within the textbook and in the accompanying enrichment libraries. In addition to the authentic reading selections of spiraling complexity in every unit, every level of *Español Santillana* is also accompanied by an Enrichment Library of high-interest, low-difficulty texts. These literacy resources include work by famous authors of the Spanish-speaking literary world, such as Alma Flor Ada, Emma Romeu, Federico García Lorca, Rosa Montero, Jorge Luis Borges, and Gabriel García Márquez, that relate to topics that adolescent learners want to read more about. These texts, both literary and informational, support unit themes, develop vocabulary, and build cultural awareness for students at all levels in the language learning process.

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Español Santillana High School Level 1



Español Santillana High School Level 4

III. How does Español Santillana relate to multiculturalism and global education?

Students today have access to increasing amounts of information via the Internet and through the use of online materials, games, audio, and videos. Access to this information can either reinforce negative stereotypes of speakers of other languages, or build new and positive views of people from different cultural backgrounds.

Noting the need to learn about different cultures, Spring (2007) notes that “[m]ulticultural education is a necessity as the speed of globalization and the mass migration of people bring into contact most of the world’s population” (p. xiii). Spring defines “culture” as “socially transmitted behavior patterns, ways of thinking and perceiving the world, arts, beliefs, institutions and all

other products of human work and thought.” Essentially, Spring takes a broad view of culture, far beyond the “heroes and holidays” view of culture that prevails in foreign language curricula and that are most frequently taught in school (Bennett, 2014).

Español Santillana challenges foreign language students to understand how their own culture might differ from, or be similar to, those of their peers from Spanish-speaking countries. It also facilitates teachers’ planning of activities by providing resources and materials that will help students to learn about cultural differences and dispel negative stereotypes of people from those countries. For example, the curriculum in *Español Santillana* includes indigenous peoples’ practices and lifestyles; notes varied clothing and footwear that reflects cultural lifestyle differences; and refers to personal hygiene,

aesthetics, food, music, art, and other cultural markers among Hispanics.

Addressing differences and similarities through comparing and contrasting with speakers builds Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) for adolescent language learners. These skills are essential to formulating a critical awareness of the way cultural norms differ around the world, and aim at building cross-cultural communication skills and cultural competence. Beginning as early as Level 1, students are prompted to analyze how lifestyles and dress differ from their own traditional clothing and ways of life. They are also provided multiple opportunities to compare and contrast the grammar and structural differences between English and Spanish via the use of cognates; this builds language learners' metalinguistic awareness.

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ing have become mainstays for today's youth. Indeed, technology is no longer an add-on to school curriculum; rather, it is a fundamental tool used by adolescent learners to engage with the curriculum. Our fansdelespañol.com (Fans del Español) web site provides audio (sound) and visual (images) resources, with an imaginative and engaging adventure-style curriculum that meets the needs of adolescent learners of Spanish. In addition,

teachers who prefer the use of e-books gain the added benefit of accessing an embedded glossary in both English and Spanish for their language learners. In the student e-books, the *fotonovelas*, or graphic novels, used in the *Español Santillana* series include speech bubbles set by the main characters. Clicking on the bubbles allows students to immediately access audio in Spanish to hear the characters speaking.

Technology allows teachers to differentiate learning for students who have distinct learning needs. It can enhance a curriculum for students who wish to utilize an embedded dictionary; refer students to build vocabulary through word etymology and studies; build background to topics through audio and video; and even enable international communication with peoples from across the world through social and digital media sources. Used as a resource throughout the program, technology engages language learners and motivates them to participate in multi-modal ways.

CONEXIONES: INGLÉS

Palabras prestadas

Muchas palabras pasan de una lengua a otra. *Suéter* es una palabra española procedente del inglés, igual que las palabras *jersey* y *pijama*.

44 Investiga. Find the Spanish names of these articles of clothing.

1. anorak	2. bikini	3. moccasin	4. pullover	5. uniform
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IV. How does *Español Santillana* build technology into the curriculum?

Helen Haste, a researcher at Harvard's Graduate School of Education (HGSE, 2009), studies technology and youth participation in education. She views young adult learners in two ways: as "tool users," who can manipulate tools to capture and communicate with the world; and "problem solvers," who use logic to work through problems and solve puzzles around them.

Dehmler (2009), studying technology's impact on youth, noted that young people today live in an interconnected, networked world, which can be accessed both day and night. Cell phones as hand-held computers, television, video, online gaming, and online learn-



About Santillana

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