

Debunking Stereotypes in Elementary Spanish I

Wednesday, May 14, 2014

Objectives

- See Spanish-speaking world more realistically
- Encourage students to think more inclusively about Hispanics
- Recognize Spanish-speaking countries as diverse and dynamic societies
- Understand contributions Spanish-speakers have made in science, art, architecture, music and literature

Communicative Approach

- Language learning should take place within a non-linguistic theme or context
- This theme or context allows the opportunity to present aspects of Spanish-speaking countries and infuse ideals of inclusion and mutual understanding

Activity

- Chapter 2, University Life
 - Academic in nature
- Lesson on numbers 31+
- Investigation on www.cia.gov
- Goal: broaden students' concept of what Latin America is

Numbers 31 and Higher—Practice Worksheet

For today’s lesson, you will be practicing numbers 31 and higher by doing some internet research on Spanish-speaking countries and comparing them to the United States.

You will be investigating various statistics on www.cia.gov that help determine a country’s level of human development (how suitable a country is for people to prosper). Among some of the stats are life expectancy, literacy, and GDP per capita*. You will also be investigating other statistics that will help you get to know your country in addition to determining its level of human development. Follow the directions below.

Activity

1. Choose a partner. Then, choose a Spanish-speaking country to investigate. Do not choose the same country as your partner. Write your country in column A below.
2. Go to www.cia.gov. Under “Library/Publications,” select “World Factbook”.
3. The World Factbook homepage will appear. You can look up countries either by:
 1. Clicking on the country from the drop-down menu in the upper right of the page
 2. Clicking on the region and country from the interactive map
4. After you click on your country, you will see a bunch of maps, a flag, and a list of topics. To see the statistics, you must expand “People and Society” and “Economy”.
5. Begin filling in column A below with the statistics for your country (number only).
6. When you are finished looking up your country’s information, exchange it with your partner’s, communicating each statistic in Spanish (the rest can be in English), and writing your partner’s information in column B.
7. When you are finished exchanging information, discuss your countries’ level of development, rank them, and decide why you ranked them the way you did.

Rank: 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Statistic	United States	A _____	B _____
Population	313,892,103		
Infant Mortality Rate (Total)	6.17 deaths per 1,000 live births		
Life Expectancy (Total)	79.56 years		
Literacy (Total)	99%		
GDP – Per Capita*	\$52,800		
Population Below Poverty Line	15.1%		
Gini Index**	45		

Results

- Students discover that many Latin American countries have comparable levels of development to the U.S.
- Students have a deeper understanding of income inequality issues, in the U.S. and abroad
- These countries are brought “closer” to the students, and by extension, the speakers of these countries seem less foreign
- More realistic perspective of these countries and Spanish-speakers

Next Steps

- More formalized assessments
- Develop in more detail the project for other lessons:
 - *Gustar*
 - Pastimes
 - Adjectives

Questions?