

Talk Spanish 2 in the classroom: Units 6–10

Unit 6

6.1 Ir: immediate future

To practise **ir**, you could use dice as for earlier irregular verbs or organise a survey where everybody mingles to ask as many people as possible in five minutes or so: **¿Adónde vas a ir de vacaciones este año?** With real or fictional answers, they say where they're going and when. Give them the option of adding who they're going with and using **vamos**.

Then, working in groups or as a whole class, learners reveal their findings, using **va/van**.

6.2 Ir: simple past

Activity 6.1 also works with **¿Adónde fuiste de vacaciones el año pasado?**, but there are also other ways of practising this.

Provide everyone with four blank pieces of card – it makes life easier to have two in one colour and two in another. Ask everybody to write a destination on two cards of one colour. This should be a Spanish town or island, or another European country. On the cards in the second colour they put down two means of transport.

Arrange learners in pairs, shuffle the cards, then give each pair four random cards of each colour, face down. They take turns to ask **¿Adónde fuiste de vacaciones?** The partner picks up a place card and a transport card and replies accordingly.

Pull the activity together by asking everybody to make a statement about the person they worked with, saying where they went and how they got there.

6.3 Consolidating the past tenses

- Although learners have now been taught the structures for talking about the past, a lot of practice is usually needed for them to be fully confident, so activities are needed to encourage narrative. At the simplest level, this can involve learners at the start of a class chatting and sharing news about

where they've been and what they've been doing at the weekend, since the previous meeting or on a specified day.

- You can make it more interactive with a series of statements which learners have to prove true or false by asking each other questions. You need just a few statements, for example: three people went to [a local city] on Saturday; one person hired a car this week; four people ate at a restaurant; one person bought a new shirt – in short, recycling familiar vocabulary to practise the new structures. You can use your personal knowledge of the class to include at least one statement you know to be true – although it really doesn't matter if they all turn out to be false.
Everyone circulates, asking questions to find out who did what, then you can draw the activity together and find out which of your statements turned out to be true.

6.4 Fantasy lives

Variety (and some humour too) can be introduced by providing prompts for learners to describe a fantasy existence rather than their own. The prompts could come from a newspaper and include, for example, scenes of places, events or people in the news, adverts for films or TV programmes, an airline promotion for cheap flights or weekend breaks, or shots of celebrities; or they could be a restaurant menu, a luxury hotel brochure, etc. Learners work in pairs with one prompt between them, and prepare a few phrases, using **yo** or **nosotros** as you (or they) choose. Encourage them to be as imaginative as they like. Allow a finite time for the preparation, then pairs tell the rest of the class what they 'did'. This provides listening practice for everybody and gives you the opportunity to focus on linguistic accuracy.

6.5 Different places

Display two pictures showing different holiday destinations, for example a busy seaside resort and a mountain, a city and a village in the country. Invite comments and descriptive statements from the class, including preferences: **(no) me gusta(n)**, **(no) me interesa(n)**, **prefiero**.

For those interested in following this up at home, suggest that they write about a visit to one of these places (or to another place of their choice).

6.6 Personal diary

Now that learners have had exposure to the past tenses, you could bring together the language of previous units, and tell them about what you've been doing over the past week. Keep it simple, then draw them into the conversation, asking them where they've been, what they've eaten, who they've seen, and so on.

Unit 7

To get learners familiar with the vocabulary for clothes and colours it's worth investing a little time in creating sets of cards depicting items of clothing in various colours.

7.1 Clothes and colours

Learners work in groups with a pile of the cards face down on the table. One person picks a card but doesn't show it. The rest of the group have to find out what it is by asking, for example, **¿Es una camisa?**, to which the person with the card replies **Sí, es una camisa** or **No, no es una camisa**, as the case may be. When someone has guessed the item correctly, they then have to find out what colour it is by asking, for example, **¿Es una camisa blanca?** After three guesses, the person with the card says what it is.

You can add interest by awarding a point to a person who guesses correctly, and a point to the card holder if nobody gets it right.

7.2 Asking for a specific item

The clothes cards can be used for a variation of Happy Families, which gives practice in asking for a specific item. For this, every person also has an individual 'shopping list'.

They work in groups of about four, each having a quarter of the cards, which they keep hidden from the others. Working clockwise, they take it in turns to ask the person sitting next to them if that person has an item from their shopping list, for example **Estoy buscando una chaqueta negra**. If that person has the item, they have to give the card up.

The winner is the first person to obtain pictures of every item on their list.

7.3 Expressing an opinion

You can also use the clothes cards, together with dice or cards featuring smiley or cross faces, to comment on the clothes and practise expressing opinions. When a person picks a card and a smiley face, they have to find something positive to say about the item, for example **El cinturón me parece precioso**. If a cross face is picked, they have to express a negative opinion, for example **Esta chaqueta me parece demasiado pequeña**.

After this controlled practice in groups, learners go on to describe and give their opinion of clothes worn by people in the news (as seen in pictures from magazines, colour supplements etc.). Alternatively, this stage could be done as a whole-class activity.

7.4 Witnesses

Show the class a picture of a few people together, and introduce one of them, but without mentioning their appearance or preparing the class for what follows – the element of surprise is essential. Let them see the picture for about a minute, without writing anything down, then take the image away and ask the class to tell you in Spanish what that person is wearing.

7.5 Comparisons

To practise **más/menos** and revise numbers at the same time, divide the class into groups, each group representing a colour. Write on the board the names of four or five items of clothing (including a plural item such as **zapatos**) and ask groups to agree the price of those items.

Everyone then circulates and asks the price of as many items as they can in a specified time, noting the prices in the various colours.

Bring everyone together and ask, for example, **¿Cuánto cuesta el cinturón negro?** When someone supplies the answer, ask questions along the lines of **¿Y el rojo? ¿Es más o menos caro?** The pace of the questioning can become quite brisk as they become familiar with the language.

7.6 Focus on vocabulary and grammatical detail

Activities such as the one featuring the **bolsa de viaje** on page 69 are designed to boost vocabulary while at the same time familiarising learners (who may have little grammatical awareness) with specific linguistic features, in this case, adjectives.

There are countless items for sale on the internet that can be used in a similar way. Learners could work on a few in groups in the classroom, which would leave the **bolsa** for them to discover at home.

7.7 Word association

A word-association chain can be an entertaining end to a lesson, designed to consolidate and boost vocabulary. You start it off with, for example, **camisa** and invite learners to supply another word with some link to **camisa**. Next you need a word associated with the second word, and so on.

Learners will tend to use words from this unit because they're fresh in their minds. It provides useful consolidation but it does limit the scope of the activity, so encourage them to look beyond.

Because learners at this level don't have an extensive vocabulary, it can be necessary to provide the occasional new word or some clever steering to stop the chain grinding to a halt.

Unit 8

8.1 Parts of the body

Describing symptoms needs knowledge of parts of the body. Like so many other vocabulary families, this can be gained effectively with picture cards. If you don't have pictures of body parts, simply make multiple small copies of a person, and use arrows or colour to highlight the various parts. Include some plurals.

These can be used very simply in the first instance by naming them at random as a card is picked up.

8.2 Describing symptoms and giving health advice

One way of practising both symptoms and health advice is for learners to work in pairs, using the body-parts cards. One person picks up a card and says something involving that part of the body. The partner has to think of a useful piece of advice directly relevant to what's just been said. This is not an easy exercise – but it tends to be one where progress is clearly visible as the activity develops.

8.3 Other people's symptoms

To practise describing the symptoms of a third person, you could start with a combined effort – which often yields impressive results. Display an image of someone who is clearly in some kind of difficulty. Ask simple questions to tease out what might be hurting, where the person might be and what's happened. Then invite suggestions about what they should do, using **deber**. This draws the unit together.

8.4 Talking about an incident or accident

This activity combines the past tenses and health, and the eventual aim is for learners to be able to talk about an incident that happened in the past, including reporting any injuries the speaker or others may have suffered. It's an ambitious aim, which might best be achieved in stages.

- Write a story containing all the elements, and print enough copies for one per group. Cut each copy into its component sentences and give to groups to re-assemble and understand the story.

- Bring everyone together and ask questions about what happened. Learners' answers will show you whether there's a need to revisit any grammar points.
- Finally, put up some key nouns (or images depicting them) – a time, a place, one or more persons, a part of the body – and ask learners to tell the story themselves.
- Any learners interested in following this up at home can write the story up or make up a completely different incident.

8.5 Alternative health

On the internet you'll find any number of promotions such as the ones on page 79. If you find a few to discuss in class, the ones in the book can be left for learners to discover at home.

Unit 9

9.1 Making suggestions

- Prompts from local newspapers, like the ones suggested for 6.4 (for example adverts for the cinema, theatre, restaurant and sporting events) are useful for controlled practice of the first person plural imperative. They can be used for pair, small group and whole-class practice.
- If you normally organise a social occasion during the course, then this is the time to agree the format – in Spanish.
- Set a fictional context, and ask the class to come up with suggestions for an event. Encourage the discussion to include learners' preferences and opinions: **(no) me gusta(n)**, **(no) me interesa(n)**, **prefiero**, **ése me parece**, etc.

9.2 Oral invitations

Practise oral invitations with a paired phone activity, ideally making sure partners can't see each other's faces while they're talking, since this adds the relevant 'blind' dimension to the activity.

Beforehand, everyone prepares individually by creating a personal diary for the week ahead and filling in eight separate entries for various commitments.

In pairs, learners take it in turns to issue an invitation for an event of their choice on a particular day: morning, afternoon or evening. Their partner replies according to their diary: if they're 'free', they accept the invitation; if they have a commitment, they apologise and decline (or suggest a different day).

9.3 Written invitations

9.2 could be followed up with written invitations and replies, which can take the form of emails, letters or texts, with consequent variation in level of formality.

9.4 Talking about people

Talking about people can draw together Units 1 (family and work), 3 (leisure interests and likes and dislikes), 4 (home), 7 (clothes) and 9 (character and physical attributes) – making it an excellent opportunity for revision.

One context for this is as witnesses to an incident. Show a picture of a person, remove it and ask learners to provide as much information as possible about what the person is like physically and what they're wearing.

Take care when combining this with an incident as that would logically expect the imperfect rather than the present tense. And, while **era** itself does not present a major problem, bringing in the imperfect of other verbs as well would diffuse the focus substantially.

9.5 Comparing people

Extend 9.4 to include more people, of differing builds and heights, with different hair and eye colouring etc. for contrast and comparison using **más/menos** and **guapo, gordito**, etc.

9.6 Describing a person in detail

Start the ball rolling by describing an unnamed famous person and ask the class to work out the identity. Go on to describe other famous people, making them progressively less easy to guess, so that learners have to ask questions to work out who they are.

Then, give learners working in small teams some time to prepare their own descriptions: about six statements, which can include physical attributes, character, nationality, family, home, job, interests, etc.

Bring everyone together for a team activity where a member of each team reads out the team description and the other teams ask questions and work out who it is. Put a time limit on each. The first team to guess the famous person correctly wins a point; if nobody manages to guess a team's famous person correctly, that team wins two points.

An alternative is to play Twenty Questions, without presentations. Teams take it in turns to be in the spotlight while the rest of the class have the opportunity of asking up to 20 questions to ascertain the identity of the mystery personality.

The only questions not allowed are **¿Cómo se llama?** and **¿Quién es?**

Unit 10

10.1 Food vocabulary

- To boost vocabulary relating to foodstuffs, you could start with a whole-class activity where you name various Spanish dishes and learners brainstorm the ingredients. Including quantities provides revision of numbers, which is always useful.
- For a similar activity involving the names of dishes and cooking methods, you present about five batches of four or five ingredients, and learners work in teams to come up with dishes that can be made from each batch. The team with the most dishes wins.
- Write out a simple recipe and blank out the verbs. You can either ask learners to deduce what they are or provide them and ask learners to insert them in the correct gaps.

10.2 Understanding recipes

Write out the recipe for a simple Spanish dish, cut each instruction into a separate strip, then ask learners in groups to rearrange the strips and tell you what the dish is. Make it more challenging by putting a time limit on it. It's an easy activity to prepare, so it's worth preparing a range of recipes of varying length and complexity.

10.3 Giving out a recipe

This requires preparation at home beforehand. Ask everyone to bring in a recipe in Spanish for a dish they personally like. In groups or as a whole class (depending on the size of the class) they take it in turns to say first of all why they've chosen it, for example where and when they've eaten or cooked it. They then describe how to cook it and recommend what to drink with it. Wine lovers can elaborate here on the wine they recommend.

As an alternative, before presenting the recipe, you could use a similar approach to 9.6, where the class (or groups) ask the person with the recipe up to 20 questions to find out what it is without being told. Brainstorm questions beforehand if you want to make sure they include specific ones.

10.4 Memorable meals

To revise the past tense in another context, hand out four blank cards per person, ideally in four different colours. Ask them to write a place in Spain on one colour, the name of a famous person on the second, two items from a menu on the third and a wine on the fourth.

Collect the cards, shuffle them and randomly give one of each colour to everyone. They then circulate asking others where they went, who they went with, what they ate and what they drank. Everyone replies according to the cards they hold. The conversation ends with **¿Te ha gustado?** and a suitable response.

Afterwards, invite learners to talk in the third person about the most memorable combination they came across during their conversations.

10.5 Eating places

Display some pictures of various eating places, for example a fast-food counter, gourmet restaurant, large busy bar or small intimate restaurant. Brainstorm the sort of food you might eat in the different places before going on to establish as many comparisons as you can, in terms of, for example, size, price and quality.

10.6 Drawing all the units together

An event of sorts is the ideal context for drawing together the Talk Spanish 2 course content. That event could be an end-of-course party but a fictional one offers a more extravagant scope.

The activity is in several phases:

1. Start with a class discussion to come up with suggestions for the event, including place, date and time. Encourage an exotic venue.
2. Next, the guest list: everyone suggests one well-known person and has to say something about them.
3. Depending on the time allocated for the activity, they can then continue working as a whole group or go into smaller groups with specific tasks for each, for example producing the invitation, supplying directions to the venue, describing places to stay locally, summarising the weather at the time of year or drawing up menu(s). Encourage debate in Spanish, including, for example, **prefiero** and **quisiera**.
4. The products of phase three are then shared and discussed as a class – giving the opportunity to focus on linguistic detail.

5. To keep the momentum going during the 'event' (i.e. when learners circulate), give everyone a slip of paper with a specific task on it, which they need to say to or ask as many people as they want. Make these varied; for example, commenting on the food or wine, asking when someone arrived, asking what work someone does, whether they like water sports, whether they have seen a particular film or been to a particular place – i.e. random questions spanning the whole course. Revisiting them like this out of the blue is very useful practice. Encourage learners to be as outrageous as they want in their responses.
6. Finish off by working in groups to come up with an email or letter thanking the host and including at least one snippet of information gathered during the 'event'.