

Supporting Your Child's Spanish Learning

Find out which day(s) your child has Spanish and ask:

- What did you talk about in Spanish today?
- Can you remember the words you used?
- What do the words mean?
- Can you put them together to make a sentence?

Remember to support, rather than test, your child.

Start building a home collection of Spanish and bilingual books, including:

*One or more well-illustrated, children's **picture dictionaries** (DK makes several, such as *My First Spanish Word Book*).

***Story books** that are simple and appealing, such as *Siesta* by Ginger Foglesong Guy.

Look for:

- Just a few words, or one sentence, per page
- Close correspondence between text and illustrations
- Translations of English language favorites
- Any book your child finds compelling

***List books** about vehicles, foods, animals, etc, such as *My Food/Mi comida* by Rebecca Emberley. These books have one image and a matching label per page.

***Bilingual Anthologies** of Latin American children's poems or folktales, such as *Mamá Goose* by Alma Flor Ada and Isabel Campoy. Your child might find some of the poems or chants from class in a book like this.

Use your home collection. Children love finding Spanish words they've learned in class. Refer to books to help your child recall words s/he is working on in school. Encourage your child to bring Spanish books in to share with the class. Try reading simple Spanish stories aloud together.

Find a Spanish-speaking adult friend or neighbor who can engage in simple dialogue with your child.

Check the weekly blog for occasional updates. Also peek into your child's **Spanish word box** and **Spanish notebook** to find out what words your child is learning. Then work these words into conversation at home. When Second Graders study colors and fruits in the fall, for example, shop for them together and serve them at home.

Count! Count fingers and toes, forks and spoons, buses and taxis. Numbers are among the first words Spanish learners master. Your child will remember the numbers if you don't!

Consider **travel to a Spanish-speaking place** during a vacation, and make it a point to venture beyond the tourist track. A little practice in an authentic environment goes a long way. Classroom work can only simulate this kind of real communication.

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September, 2007

