

PLACING NATIVE SPEAKERS IN SPANISH CLASSES

Lower level Spanish classes (Spanish I & II, and even Spanish III) are NOT for native speakers.

Those classes are designed to teach beginning Spanish to English speakers. Native speakers have different needs. Placing a native speaker in a lower level Spanish class is like putting a high school student in a first or second grade class: It is a waste of time—the student will not learn much, he will be bored and frustrated, and he will probably just get into trouble. Rather than taking a lower level Spanish class, **Better Options for a Native Speaker** are:

- 1. Take German, French, Chinese, or some other language.** Why not become *trilingual*?
- 2. Take the highest level Spanish class that you can handle.** Take a class, or a series of classes, like *Spanish for Spanish Speakers I or II, Spanish III or IV, or even AP Spanish* if you are ready (See the *Specific Placement Guidelines for Native Speakers* below).
- 3. Go on independent study.** This is a year of free voluntary reading in Spanish (and reading may actually be the BEST way to learn language). You will check out books in Spanish of your choice from the library. The only requirements are that: **(a)** The book is written in Spanish and **(b)** The book is ***interesting*** and ***comprehensible*** to you. You will read during class time every day and write a 3-sentence reaction to what you read each day and turn it in. Your grade will start with a 100%. Your grade will drop by 3% for each day that you do not complete and turn in the assignment by the end of class.
- 4. Enroll in a lower level Spanish class (like Spanish I, II or III) and just play the game.** With this option you are basically putting in seat time and trying to get credit. **This is an option ONLY if there is NO problem with your behavior.** If the teacher has any trouble with your behavior you will lose this choice; you will then have to choose one of the other options above. If you choose to take a lower level class you will still be required to stay awake, participate and not cause any problems. "Playing the game" also includes not answering questions too quickly, which can be hard to do. You will often have to hold yourself back and not answer too quickly, and sometimes not even answer at all. The other students that are learning Spanish in lower level classes cannot speak or think in Spanish as quickly as a native speaker can, and answers that are too quick will interrupt the learning process for them. A native speaker is in a lower level Spanish class for credit only. If you choose this option, then so be it, but you must have a good attitude and you must help the class to learn the language, not hinder it.

SPECIFIC PLACEMENT GUIDELINES FOR NATIVE SPEAKERS

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| Spanish for Spanish Speakers I | For students that speak Spanish at home, but cannot read or write much Spanish. These students have had <u>little to no formal education in Spanish (no school to 1st or 2nd grade)</u> , but want to preserve their heritage and begin to learn to read and write in Spanish. |
| Spanish for Spanish Speakers II | For students that speak Spanish fluently at home and with their friends at school, and can read and write Spanish, to a degree. These students may have had <u>some formal schooling in Spanish (2nd to 5th grade)</u> , but not consistently. This is for students that want to preserve their heritage language skills and improve their Spanish reading and writing skills and in a challenging environment. |
| Spanish IV | For students with a Spanish-speaking background who are <u>slightly below grade level</u> in their formal education and ability to read and write in Spanish. Spanish IV is also for non-native speakers that have passed Spanish III, but are not yet ready for <i>AP Spanish</i> classes. |
| AP Spanish | Advanced Placement (AP) Spanish is for students who are from a Spanish-speaking background and are <u>at or near grade level</u> in their ability to read and write in Spanish. <i>AP Spanish</i> class is also for non-native speakers that have passed Spanish IV or have passed Spanish III and have the instructor's permission). <i>AP Spanish</i> is equivalent to a 4 th semester college-level Spanish class or higher and requires a considerable time commitment and advanced study skills. |