



Sra. Vakos
Spanish Teacher
440-899-3075 X 2012
vakos@wlake.org
Lee Burneson Middle school



Hola! My name is Sra. Vakos and I am your child's Spanish teacher. I am looking forward to an exciting and successful year. I have high expectations for your child, and I will do all that I can to achieve those expectations. It is my goal to provide all students with an educationally challenging, yet fun, experience in my classroom.

I am a native Spanish speaker that has traveled to Colombia, Spain and Mexico. I earned my bachelors degree from Illinois State University in 1997, with a major in Spanish education, and a minor in French education. I studied abroad in Angers, France in 1995 and chaperoned 18 students to Salamanca, Spain in 1998. I obtained my Masters degree at Ashland University in 2000, and just completed 30 post graduate hours.

My primary goal in Spanish is to help students develop 5 basic skills: listening, speaking, reading, writing and comprehension. I aim to increase students' knowledge and appreciation of diverse cultures and their countries. I strive to help the students build a solid foundation of the Spanish language. This is accomplished by learning the vocabulary and structures of the language and by applying the material taught in our authentic learning environment. The students are always encouraged to actively communicate in the target language as much as possible.

My class provides a fun, safe and interactive atmosphere where students can be creative in their expression, while learning the Spanish language.

Please help your child's success by assisting in the studying process at home. Please check regularly to see if homework has been completed and if extra practice time has been used. You can always access the "homework calendar" on my website through the LBMS teacher web pages. Search for Exploratory teachers and then Sra. Vakos. To help you at home you can refer to the following study tips:

HOW TO STUDY A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

In every level of foreign language, students need to learn new vocabulary and verb forms. Students should hear the words to be memorized, say them out loud, and then write them. Studies show that the more frequently a student reviews his/her vocabulary and verbs, the longer he/she will remember these words. Therefore, foreign language students are encouraged to try a variety of study methods. Please review previously learned material on a daily basis. The following study techniques are suggested.

1. Write the new vocabulary word several times. Be sure to copy it correctly. Pay special attention to accents and genders.
2. Make small vocabulary flashcards to fit in your pocket. Put the English meaning on one side and the foreign language word on the other. Practice aloud if possible. Practice often. Shuffle the cards as you practice. Practice until you can say the words on each side as quickly as you can flash the cards. Before a test, put your cards down in rows on a table. As you look at each card, write the meaning of the word you see on a separate sheet of paper (en español). Check your answers carefully. Write all the misspelled words several times each.
3. To make a vocabulary list, fold and crease a sheet of paper lengthwise. On one side of the crease, write the foreign word. On the other side, write the English meaning. Cover one side. Look at the other. Say the word you see. Try to say the translation. Uncover the word. If you are right, move on to the next word. If you are wrong, say the correct translation



Sra. Vakos
Spanish Teacher
440-899-3075 X 2012
vakos@wlake.org
Lee Burneson Middle school



several times and then begin all over again at the top of your list. Practice both sides until you can move up and down the page rapidly,

4. Word associations and other tricks. Look for the “little word you know in the “big” word. Example “cat” and “or” in the Spanish word “catorce”. Make up a phrase, jingle or story for your vocabulary words whenever you can. HOMES (Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, Superior) is helpful for the Great Lakes. EVERY GOOD BOY DOES FINE works for the music scale. BANGS FOR THE ADJECTIVES IN French that go before the noun and DR MRS VANDERR TRAMPP for verbs conjugated with “etre”. Ask the students what sentences we used to remember the Spanish speaking countries.
5. When you think you know your vocabulary, give yourself a pre-test. Check your answers and write any words you have misspelled several times.
6. Ask someone (your parents, brother, sister, friend) to quiz you orally and in writing. They can help even if they don’t know the language.
7. Make a test tape. Record your vocabulary list in the foreign language and in English. Listen to it several times. Then replay the tape again and try to “beat” the tape translations.
8. Talk to and work with other students on vocabulary. Find out how they study the words. They may be able to help you.
9. By listening to your teacher and imitating him or her (aloud or silently) you improve your speech habits. Try to imitate your teacher’s pronunciation and speed patterns. In doing so, you will form the necessary habits that make you a successful language student.
10. By studying and reading aloud when you are alone, you develop good pronunciation habits and language fluency as well.
11. Always remember to practice the “24 hour rule”, “5-5-5” and the “flip-n-write” activity.
12. Lastly, have fun while studying!!

Bienvenidos a mi “familia latina”

(Welcome to my “Familia Latina”)...our motto in class!

Please feel free to contact me at any time.

¡Muchas Gracias!

Sra. Vakos