

SPANISH (AQA: A-Level 7692)

There are over 300 million native speakers of Spanish throughout the world and Spanish is the second most widely spoken language after English. Indeed not only is it thriving in its traditional heartland of Spain and Latin America, but there are increasingly large areas of the United States where it is the main language.

The A-Level course is a broad one, ranging from the peaks of the Spanish Sierra Nevada to the Mayan lands of Mexico and the foothills of the Andes. The Hispanic world is enormously diverse and many of its aspects are open to study, be they sociological such as the environment or women and gender in society, historical such as the arrival of the conquerors in the new world, artistic such as the paintings of Dali or literary such as works by Lorca.

A-Level Spanish is a demanding but rewarding subject. By the end of their course, students will have acquired a range of skills such as the ability to critically analyse texts, to speak logically and coherently, to conduct research and to write with clarity and precision. Furthermore, they will be competent users of one of the world's major languages. In order to maximise linguistic and cultural awareness, a Sixth Form trip to Madrid is organised during the first week of the October half-term.

The new A-Level specification builds on the knowledge, understanding and skills gained at GCSE. It constitutes an integrated study with a focus on language, culture and society. It fosters a range of transferable skills, including communication, critical thinking and creativity, which are valuable to the individual and to society. Students will develop their understanding of themes relating to the society and culture of the country or countries where Spanish is spoken, and their language skills; they will do this by using authentic spoken and written sources in Spanish. The approach is a focus on how Spanish-speaking society has been shaped, socially and culturally, and how it continues to change. Students study aspects of the social context together with aspects of the artistic life of Spanish-speaking countries.

This specification encourages students to:

- enhance their linguistic skills and promote and develop their capacity for critical thinking on the basis of their knowledge and understanding of the language, culture and society of the country or countries where the language is spoken
- develop control of the language system to convey meaning, using spoken and written skills, including an extended range of vocabulary, for both practical and intellectual purposes as increasingly confident, accurate and independent users of the language
- develop their ability to interact effectively with users of the language in speech and in writing, including through online media
- develop language learning skills and strategies, including communication strategies to sustain communication and build fluency and confidence
- engage critically with intellectually stimulating texts, films and other materials in the original language, developing an appreciation of sophisticated and creative uses of the language and understanding them within their cultural and social context
- develop knowledge about matters central to the society and culture, past and present, of the country or countries where the language is spoken
- mediate between cultures and between speakers of the language and speakers of English
- foster their ability to learn other languages

- equip themselves with transferable skills such as autonomy, resourcefulness, creativity, critical thinking, and linguistic, cultural and cognitive flexibility that will enable them to proceed to further study or to employment.

Content of the course:

Aspects of Hispanic society

- Modern and traditional values (Los valores tradicionales y modernos)
- Cyberspace (El ciberespacio)
- Equal rights (La igualdad de los sexos)

Artistic culture in the Hispanic world

- Modern day idols (La influencia de los ídolos)
- Spanish regional identity (La identidad regional en España)
- Cultural heritage or cultural landscape (El patrimonio cultural)

Multiculturalism in Hispanic society

- Immigration (La inmigración)
- Racism (El racismo)
- Cohabitation (La convivencia)

Aspects of political life in the Hispanic world

- Youngsters of today (Jóvenes de hoy)
- Monarchy and dictators (Monarquía y dictaduras)
- Popular movements (Los movimientos populares)

Literature and film

- *La casa de Bernarda Alba*, Federico García Lorca
- *Volver*, Pedro Almodóvar



WHERE NEXT?

Jessica Radley

Linguistics at the University of Cambridge

Studied Spanish, French, Mathematics and Further Mathematics