VAN METER COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
Spanish Department

**Van Meter Proficiency Based Language Program Syllabus**
**Please Follow the Van Meter World Language Department on Facebook for class updates, newsletters and class happenings! (aka.. Fun pictures of Spanish happenings!)**

**2026-2027 School year Supply List:**

1. **Headphones**- we use these frequently and for listening tests, you will need your own.
2. Single subject **notebook** for Spanish specific class- this will stay in classroom
(your student may have a notebook from the previous year- if it is in good condition we will plan on using it the following year- please consult with your student)
3. **pens/pencils** *you need daily

*Optional: Markerboard/clipboard (personal use), Dry erase markers, Old sock/dry eraser*

**Señora Wigant's Class Expectations:**

**Be Safe**

*think of those around you

**Be Respectful**

*being Kind is all encompassing for Spanish classes as students develop and acquire language at different levels and everyone is part of a team
*ALWAYS try/do your best
VMCSD school policy for cell phones are in effect: cell phones will stay in the backpack

**Be Responsible**

*Communication is key
*Attend class/be physically and mentally present - the only way to grow and acquire in a second language is to engage daily and try your best
*Participate daily/Actively engaged
*Speaking Spanish - if you don't know how to say something, ask, then say it in Spanish/repeat

**Absences:**

Attendance and active participation in the target language in class is vital to successful language acquisition.Students are assessed daily on their inner personal communication grade, being present and communicative in class is equally important as practicing with reading, listening and writing. If you are absent please communicate with your teacher. Students with schedule conflicts must set up an alternate plan in advance to ensure consistent, accurate delivery of the language. If a special situation arises please see your teacher in advance so that we can make a plan on when you can attend class (shuffle schedule) so that you do not miss input. If you ever have questions, please contact your teacher.
***3 unexcused tardies will result in a detention, and then a detention for each tardy thereafter.***

**Students in all Spanish proficiency classes and years of Spanish are assessed on the following standards:**

**Speaking:**
***Interpersonal communication-*** Students are able to carry out dialogue while speaking in conversations, participating actively in class, dialogue between person to person in class in Spanish

***Presentational Speaking-*** Students are able to describe a situation using structures that have been acquired without back and forth dialogue.

**Writing:**

***Presentational Writing:***

Without assistance, students are able to write using varied tenses and subjects to describe a situation modeling all language acquired.

***Fluency writing:*** Students are able to show what they understand and have acquired naturally in a 5 minute write. The goal is to express meaning without using any english and increase fluency with a variety of structures, tenses, subjects all at or showing growth beyond the current proficiency. This is a weekly assessment that is documented regularly and tracked for student progress in acquisition.

**Listening:**

***Listening Comprehension:*** By listening to various authentic resources, students are able to identify meaning and are able to make connections between acquired language and new structures through various authentic resources and spoken text.

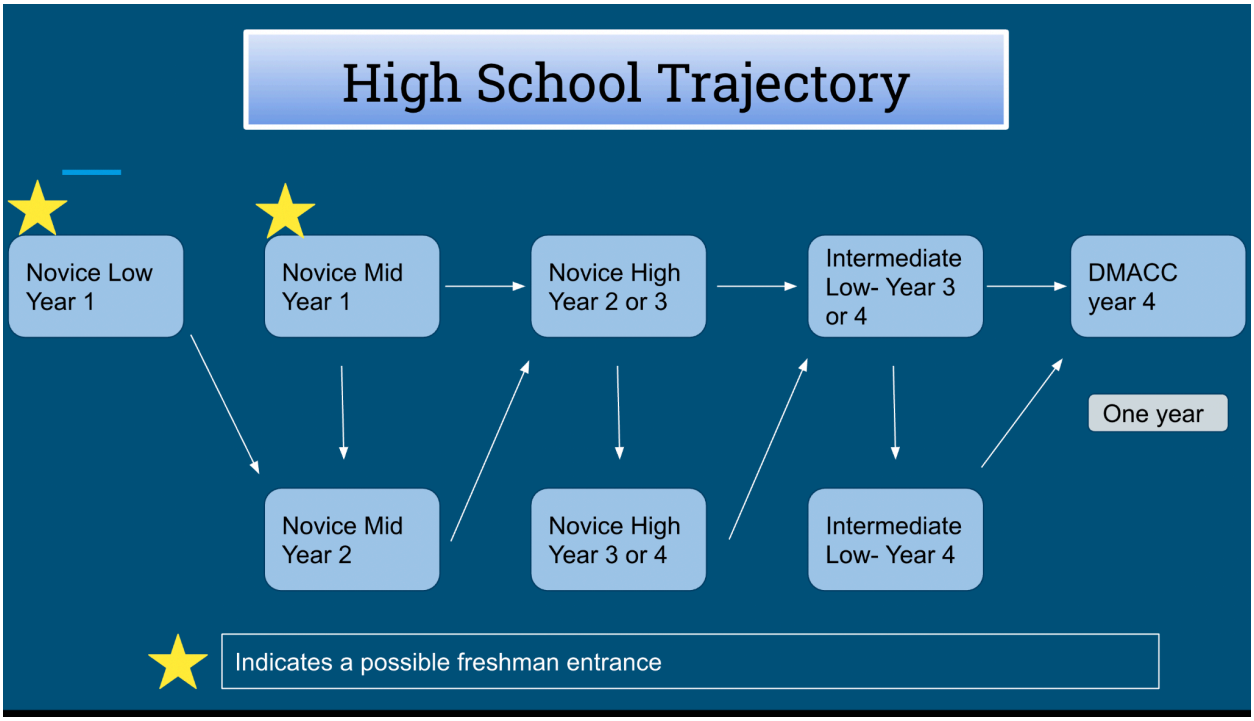
**Reading:**

***Reading Comprehension:*** Students are able to infer and decode the meaning of complex, unfamiliar texts on a variety of topics.

**Proficiency Based Classes & Progressions:**

The Van Meter Spanish program allows students to acquire Spanish in a proficiency-based program. Natural Language acquisition occurs quickly through the Novice states. As students expand on their vocabulary and navigate grammar, although acquisition doesn't slow down, their movement through proficiencies does. This allows us to individualize learning and provide the best instruction while challenging all students. Students are earning credit by taking a Spanish course that is appropriate for their level of language acquisition. Students are allowed to take up to two years at a proficiency level counting as a separate class and year of Spanish in order to show mastery at each level and move on to the next proficiency. Each level is built in a two year rotating curriculum to allow students to further acquire and develop skills for optimal growth. Most students will take up to two years at a proficiency level. Student progress demonstrated throughout the whole year with assessments in reading, speaking, listening and writing are considered in student placement by the language teachers. Incoming high school students including transfers from other schools will be assessed for accurate placement within a proficiency level that matches the student skill set. This does not negate any years of Spanish already earned, rather placement at their learning level honoring their years of learning. A student who receives a C average at the end of a grading period will not be recommended to continue to the next level. Students with multiple C's, F's and/or Zeros (0) in the skill sets do not demonstrate consistent growth and are at risk of failing. They will not be recommended to proceed to the next proficiency level. Students who achieve B's in skills by means of reassessment will be recommended to remain in the current proficiency so that they can strengthen their skills. This method of class progression allows Personalized learning for all students in the Spanish program and for students who have not mastered skills to continue a second year in the same proficiency level until mastery at that level; counting as a separate year of instruction in all proficiency levels except Novice Low which is a one year course.

**Below is a model of the progression a student could take:**




| Class Placements Year 1 | Class Placements Year 2 | Class Placements Year 3 | Class Placements Year 4 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Intro to Novice (1yr)<br>or<br>Novice (1 yr) | Novice Mid A | Novice Mid B<br><br>Novice High A | Novice High A<br><br>Novice High B<br><br>Intermediate A |
| Novice Mid A | Novice Mid B<br><br>Novice High A | Novice High B<br><br>Intermediate A | Novice High A<br><br>Intermediate B<br><br>DMACC |

***Example of 6 different paths of a Van Meter Freshman's four year Spanish Plan:***

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Year 1 Novice/intro*<br>*Year 2 Novice Mid*<br>*Year 3 Novice Mid*<br>*Year 4 Novice High* | *Year 1 Novice/intro*<br>*Year 2 Novice Mid*<br>*Year 3 Novice High*<br>*Year 4 Novice High* | *Year 1 Novice Mid*<br>*Year 2 Novice Mid*<br>*Year 3 Novice H*<br>*Year 4 Novice H* | *Year 1 Novice Mid*<br>*Year 2 Novice High*<br>*Year 3 Novice High*<br>*Year 4 Intermediate* | *Year 1 Novice Mid*<br>*Year 2 Novice High*<br>*Year 3 Intermediate*<br>*Year 4 Intermediate* | *Year 1 Novice Mid*<br>*Year 2 Novice High*<br>*Year 3 Intermediate*<br>*Year 4 DMACC* |

*Freshman-Seniors can all start at Novice and Mid; one does not need to begin their language process as a freshman. Brand new students to Spanish will begin in Intro to Novice. An assessment is given prior to placement and assessments are referred to in order to ensure the student is able to properly grow in the language. Sometimes adjustments need to be made for individual students at the language department's discretion.*

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**Teaching with Comprehensible Input at Van Meter:**
Our Van Meter Spanish curriculum is based on delivering engaging, compelling, comprehensible input to students. This means we repeat words and phrases (input) that students understand (comprehensible) in order to convey meaning. To make words and phrases comprehensible, we use gestures, translation (written and oral), pictures questions etc.

Teaching with Comprehensible Input (TCI) is a strategy that has been gaining international momentum over the past several years. As a team, we have presented at conferences and coached teachers wishing to teach with CI. We are proud to be the first program in Iowa with a proficiency based K-12 program teaching with Comprehensible Input.

Language is a gift that, once acquired, cannot be taken away. We are so proud of all of our Van Meter students and love that we can offer them this opportunity to begin their life-long language journey starting in elementary through their senior year.

## Class descriptions:

**Novice and Intro to Novice** **GRADES 9-12**

This course is designed for students with limited to no understanding of Spanish language. Spanish. A Novice-Low student acquires the structure of basic language patterns, high frequency structures and vocabulary. At the novice level, students will be able to recognize words they have heard and repeat and/or produce single words and short phrases. Students will begin to answer a variety of questions to which they have been exposed repeatedly. Additionally students will:

- Have exposure to present, past and future (in all persons) with a limited exposure to other tenses using sheltered verbs (Super 7 and sweet 16).
- Focus on listening, reading, writing. Minimal spontaneous communication.

**Novice Mid:** **GRADES 9-12**

A Novice-Mid student continues to acquire structure of basic language patterns, high frequency structures and vocabulary. Students produce short phrases and connecting words. Students will answer a variety of questions to which they have been exposed repeatedly and are producing language spontaneously. Students will:

- Have exposure to present, past and future (in all persons) with a limited exposure to a variety of other tenses using sheltered verbs (Sweet 16) and vocabulary.
- Focus on listening, reading, writing and speaking, broadening and expanding spontaneous communication into complete sentences.

**Novice High** **GRADES 10-12**

This course is designed for students who successfully completed Spanish Novice Mid with an A or B average. A Novice High student continues to acquire structure of basic language presented at the Novice level, high frequency structures and vocabulary. As more structures are introduced and recycled, students will begin to provide information using words, phrases and sentences and are able to

elaborate on their thoughts. They will begin to speak confidently using the high frequency structures introduced and recycled in Novice Mid practicing with new structures and expanded phrases within varying tenses at the high level.

Continued exposure present, past, future and perfect tenses with more exposure to a variety of tenses using sheltered vocabulary.

Focus on listening, reading, writing and Speaking. Communication of recycled structures begins to become more spontaneous.

**Intermediate** **GRADES 10-12**

This course is designed for students with previous study of or successful completion with an A or successfully completed Novice High, with a B average or above. An Intermediate-Low student continues to acquire structure of basic language patterns, high frequency structures and vocabulary. As more structures are introduced and recycled, students will continue to provide information using complete sentences and connectors spontaneously. Students begin to convey complete, comprehensible messages and continue conversations using recycled structures and circumlocution. Students begin to differentiate tenses and refine skills in reading, listening, writing and speaking. Students begin to maneuver among a variety of tenses. They will continue to communicate more confidently using the high frequency structures introduced and recycled in previous courses and create their own language construction. Students will:

- Have exposure to all tenses using sheltered vocabulary.
- Focus on listening, reading and writing. Communication of recycled structures continues to become more spontaneous.

**DMACC concurrent enrollment** option is offered at this proficiency level for qualifying students.

This course is designed for students who successfully completed Intermediate - Mid/High with an A or B average or above and the student has acquired structure of basic language patterns, high frequency structures and vocabulary.

Students convey complete, comprehensible messages and continue conversations using recycled structures and circumlocution. Focus moves towards refinement as students differentiate tenses through reading, listening, writing and speaking.

**Seal of Biliteracy:**

Regardless of the proficiency level, all Van Meter students are encouraged and have the opportunity to take the Seal of Biliteracy test their Senior year in High School. This assessment is an honor and an accolade of language acquisition accomplishment. Students who earn the seal of biliteracy are able to use this honor for scholarship opportunities, at some Universities that honor the assessment levels for college credit and placement and in the career world beyond the school setting. Any Spanish student, during their senior year of High School has the opportunity to take an assessment regardless of proficiency level in order to earn scores for placement with the Seal of Biliteracy. This accolade will be honored at graduation with a seal on the student's transcripts and a certificate with the seal for each senior and students who earn the state seal of biliteracy.

**World Travel:**
The Van Meter Spanish classes have had opportunities to travel to Spanish speaking countries through EF Tours since 2010.We just returned from **Peru this last Summer**! We will be enrolling in **Panama Costa Rica 2028** this Fall! Students who are currently in high school **can enroll on this trip now!** Please reach out to Mrs. Wigant for more information!

If you should ever have questions or concerns please reach out to us!
**The Van Meter Spanish Team**

Stacey Wigant- High School Spanish- Novice Mid & Novice High
stacey.wigant@vmbulldogs.com
Melissa Newell- High School Spanish- ntermediate & DMACC-
melissa.newell@vmbulldogs.com
Zoe Carlson- Middle School Spanish grades 6-8 and High School Spanish Novice-
zoe.carlson@vmbulldogs.com

**Van Meter World Language Mission Statement** - We inspire and guide students in language acquisition by creating safe, engaging and compelling settings where language is acquired naturally.

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# WHAT TO EXPECT: SPANISH CLASS

I studied Spanish for four years but I don't remember any of it!

Your child should be able to speak Spanish **better** in 40 years than they can while they're in my class. This class is the first step in a lifetime of learning.

**How can you help?**

**Be a student:** Ask your child to share what we are doing in class.

**Notice Spanish: Help your child see the Spanish being used in your community.**

**Practice curiosity:** Ask English language learners that you meet to share their stories with you!

The **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS** that we use in class are proven to be effective based on Second Language Acquisition research from the last four decades.

"We acquire language when we understand messages; when we understand what people tell us and when we understand what we read."

*—Dr. Stephen Krashen*

**COURSE RESOURCES:**

**stories**
**songs**
**current events**
**novels**
**film**
**articles**
**art**
**legends**
**history**

**YOUR CHILD WILL:**

- read in Spanish
- listen in Spanish
- respond as able using signals at first, then words in Spanish, then phrases

**YOUR CHILD WILL NOT:**

- memorize vocabulary lists
- practice verb conjugations
- learn about Spanish in English

"Proficient learners can communicate about something appropriately and accurately for a purpose."

**PROFICIENCY IS THE GOAL**





**All four modalities:** We listen, read, write, and speak in Spanish.

**Language and culture:** We use the language to explore our cultures, Spanish-speaking cultures, world cultures, and ancient cultures.






**Real world preparation:** We use useful language in the class so that we are prepared to communicate in the real world.

**Student centered:** We center our interactions on what each student needs, knows, and can do now and what each student needs in order to move forward.