

MFL (Spanish)



## WHAT THEY'LL LEARN

- To join in with an authentic Spanish rhyme/song and to give clues to an object using the name of the initial letter in Spanish
- To understand and use prepositions of place to describe images
- To understand and give directions using prepositions

# Using a game for learning prepositions



Authentic stories and songs is a great way of introducing language in a non-threatening way, says **Lisa Stevens**

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“The National Curriculum for languages aims to ensure that all pupils understand and respond to... written language from a variety of authentic sources... Pupils should be taught to read carefully and show understanding of words, phrases and simple writing [and] appreciate stories, song, poems and rhymes in the language” (Languages PoS). Children learn and develop their skills in language through rhymes and songs as they include a lot of repetition, are often short and the rhythm/tune adds to ease of memorisation. Stories too are a familiar, safe form for children.



from the maths cupboard to practise the vocabulary either as a whole group or in pairs. Go on to show an image with a number of different shapes and ask questions using *¿Dónde está...?* (Where is...?) to check understanding.

Instead of geometric shapes you could recycle any vocabulary, for example, animals, or perhaps tangible things that can be found around the room.

## 2 | BUILD UP IMAGES

Start with two items, such as a circle and a square, on top of each another to introduce *sobre* (on top of) saying *Un círculo sobre un cuadrado*, or *Un círculo rojo sobre un cuadrado azul*. Repeat this to introduce further prepositions such as *en* (on/in) *al lado de* (next to) *delante de* (in front of) *detrás de* (behind) *debajo de* (under). Practise the new prepositions by playing true/false games, showing an image and making

## START HERE

This lesson is inspired by the book *Veó Veó* by Antonio Rubio y Óscar Villán. *Veó Veó* is the Spanish version of *I spy* and there is a rhyme associated with it that works as a short dialogue: it's a call and response, with the leader saying the parts in red and everyone else responding with the blue words before someone guesses.

**Veó veó** (I see, I see) **¿Qué ves?** (What do you see?) **Una cosita** (A thing) **Y ¿qué cosita es?** (And what thing is it?) **Empieza con la...** (It begins with...) **¿Qué será? ¿Qué será? ¿Qué será?** What can it be? This is a good opportunity to practise the alphabet in Spanish.



## MAIN LESSON

### 1 | OBJECTS

In the book, as two half moons play the game, they spy a series of objects on top of each other: *una estrella sobre un pez* (a star on top of a fish) then *un pez en la nube azul* (a fish on the blue cloud), *la nube sobre un ciempiés* (the cloud on top of a centipede) and *un ciempiés sobre un iglú* (a centipede on top of an igloo).

This could be simplified by using geometric shapes such as *un círculo*, *un rectángulo*, *un triángulo*, *una estrella* and so on. To increase the challenge, you could add adjectives too – *el círculo azul*, *el círculo rojo*, *el cuadrado grande*, *la estrella pequeña*. Use 2D shapes

**“Children learn and develop their skills in language through rhymes and songs as they include a lot of repetition”**



## EXTENDING THE LESSON

- Build up the complexity of the description with multiple prepositions.
- Take the learning outside into a larger space and create an assault course or maze that learners must cross together by giving one another directions, picking up objects as they go.
- Create a QR treasure hunt with spoken clues to the ‘treasure’ revealed by scanning a QR code.
- Give learners a cuddly toy/object to photograph in a variety of places of their choice and then describe using prepositions, or give them a list of required photos to create.

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a statement that learners must decide is correct or not. Once learners are secure in their understanding of these prepositions, ask them to place 2D shapes or draw an image according to your instructions. Confident learners might like to give instructions to a partner or take on the teacher role.

### 3 | STORY

Model how to build up a series of images as in the original text, creating a story with two images on the first page, three on the second, four on the next and so on. Learners can choose who is playing Vejo Vejo and what they see. They could stick to geometric shapes, write

a themed story with objects seen in the garden or a zoo, or could use a dictionary to find vocabulary that matches their ideas. More advanced learners could incorporate adjectives and write in full sentences, for example, *El tigre feroz está al lado de la jirafa gruñona* (The fierce tiger is next to the grumpy giraffe); *El ratón pequeño y gris está sobre el tigre feroz* (the small grey mouse is on the fierce tiger). Alternatively, rather than writing the story, you could create a class ‘story’ in the style of Grandma’s shopping, adding a new component each go and creating an image on the IWB to aid retelling.

*Lisa Stevens is a primary languages educator and consultant who teaches at two Birmingham primary schools. She has consulted on a various projects including the BBC Schools Radio series ¡Mi Madrid! for KS2 Spanish learners.*

## USEFUL QUESTIONS

- Is it acceptable to sacrifice some accuracy (for example, de el, using *está* instead of *estan* for plurals) for the sake of communication in this activity?
- Could this activity be used as a way of ensuring regular language ‘inputs’ outside of discrete lessons – for example, giving instructions to place things in places around the room, explaining where things go and so on, playing games that recycle the language?
- Is this a skill that has applications beyond the classroom?