

*Teacher's Diary***A Better Life**

Whenever I despair over how difficult life in the U.S. is for my students, I think about how much harder it would be for them if they were living in their own country. Still, I occasionally have my doubts, especially when I read sentences like the ones below, written by intermediate-level students writing about what they used to do and what they didn't used to do in their country.

I used to feed horses.

I used to walk in the fields.

I used to fish in the river.

I used to swim in the river.

I used to eat my mother's cooking.

I used to run in the streets.

I used to drink agave water.

I used to eat iguana soup.

I used to see the sun rise on New Years day.

I didn't use to drive a car.

I didn't use to use a cell phone.

I didn't use to go shopping

I didn't use to see buildings

I didn't use to buy clothes.

I didn't use to spend a lot of time at home.

I didn't use to go to the gym.

I didn't use to work all the time.

I didn't use to eat pizza.

The Alphabet

(Class, Tutor/Tutee)

Objective

- Teach students the letters of the alphabet in English.

When to do this activity: During the first or second week of class.

Supplies

- *Alphabet* handout (with pronunciation in Spanish): one copy for each student
 - White boards, dry erase markers and erasers (one for each student)
- or
- 8 1/2" x 11" scrap paper cut in half (several sheets for each student)

How to introduce this activity

- Ask your students: *Why take the time to learn the alphabet in English?*

Activity: Part 1

- Distribute the alphabet handout.
- Repeat the alphabet. Explain that, on the handout, the pronunciation is in parentheses. (Many student won't realize this.)
- Teach *capital (mayúscula)* and *lower case (minúscula)*.
- Write "problem letters" on the board and ask student to identify them. The most difficult letters are the vowels, *g, j, k, q, v, w, x, y,* and *z*.
- Almost all students have trouble distinguishing between *E* and *I*. Here's a tip you may want to pass on: Write a lower case *E* and put whiskers on it, then ask what people say when they see a mouse – *eeeeee!* Write a lower case *I* and make the dot look like an eye.
- Pass out dry erase boards, markers, and erasers or large pieces of scrap paper.
- Call out a letter. Student must write the letter. Then hold it up for you to correct.
- Do this for capital and lower case letters.
- Repeat this activity in class for several days.

Activity: Part 2

- Dictate whole words to the students, especially long words, like *Mississippi* and *Wisconsin*. You might also try words like *exit, exercise, electrician, interviewer,* and *engineer* which force students to listen to distinguish between *e* and *i*.

Extension

- Display letters of the alphabet, uppercase and lowercase, around the room and practice them every day.

The Alphabet

A a	/ei/*
B b	/bi/
C c	/si/
D d	/di/
E e	/i/*
F f	/ef/
G g	/chi/
H h	/eich/
I i	/ai/*
J j	/che/
K k	/quei/
L l	/el/
M m	/em/
N n	/en/
O o	/ou/*
P p	/pi/
Q q	/quiu/
R r	/ar/
S s	/es/
T t	/ti/
U u	/iu/*
V v	/vi/
W w	/dabol iu/
X x	/exs/
Y y	/uai/
Z z	/tsi/

*Vowels: A, E, I, O, U

Consonants: all other letters (B, C, D, F, G, H, J, K, L, M, N, P, Q, R, S, T, V, W, X, Y, Z)

Using a Dictionary

(Class, Tutor/Tutee)

Objectives

- To teach students to use a simple dictionary. Many students won't know this!
- To encourage students to use the dictionary in the back of *Paso a paso* and *Step by Step* when they're completing exercises in the book.

When to do this activity: During the first or second week of class.

Supplies

- *Gramática del inglés: Paso a paso 1* or *English Grammar Step by Step 1*: one copy for each student
- *Dictionary Practice*: One for every two students

How to introduce this activity

Ask your students:

- *Why are dictionaries useful? (They tell you the meanings and pronunciations of words you don't know.)*
- *What skill do you need before you can use a dictionary? (You need to know the alphabet.)*

Activity: Part 1

- Ask students to turn to the dictionary on page 113 in their book. Then ask them to turn to the dictionary on page 117. Ask them to explain the difference. (e.g. *On page 113 the words are in English then Spanish and on page 117 they are in Spanish then English.*)
- Choose a letter from the Spanish/English dictionary, with relatively few words, say G. Ask students to explain why the words are ordered the way they are.
- Give students a word in English and ask them to tell you what page the word is on in the English/Spanish dictionary and what that word means in Spanish. Repeat this several times.
- Then give students a word in Spanish and ask them to tell you what page the word is on in the Spanish/English dictionary and what that word means in English. Repeat this several times.

Activity: Part 2

- Divide students into pairs.
- Give each pair a worksheet. Instruct them to use their Spanish/English and English/Spanish dictionaries in the back of their grammar book to answer the questions on the worksheet.
- When students finish, review the answers as a class.

Using a Dictionary

Names

Translate these words from Spanish to English.

1 bajo short

2 también

3 ojo

4 feo

5 suegro

6 pelota

7 guapo

8 padres

9 novio

10 limpio

Translate these words from English to Spanish.

1 garden **jardín**

2 rice

3 tall

4 because

5 notebook

6 purple

7 toy

8 tree

9 girlfriend

10 niece

Extra credit. Using the English/Spanish dictionary find three English words that you don't know. Then, write what those words mean in Spanish.

English

Spanish

1

2

3

How do you say _____ in English?**(Class, Tutor/Tutee)****Objectives**

- To teach students to use phonetic spellings to help in their pronunciation.
- To teach students the expression: **How do you say...**

When to do this activity: During the first or second week of class**Supplies**

- *Gramática del inglés: Paso a paso 1* or *English Grammar Step by Step 1*: one copy for each student
- *How do you say.....in English?:* Class set

Teachers, take note: The phonetic spellings in the dictionary in the back of the grammar book are an attempt to make it as easy as possible for students to pronounce English words correctly. Sometimes this works well; for example, the long *e* sound in English translates nicely into a long *i* in Spanish. Other times, the translation is less clear cut. For example, there is no **th** sound in Spanish so we use **d**.

How to introduce this activity

- Discuss the lack of consistency in pronouncing words in English. (Words like **know** and **now**, **here** and **there**, and **laugh** and **ghost** are good examples.)
- Explain that phonetic spellings help students pronounce words in another language.
- Explain the use of the accent to show the syllable to emphasize:
student (stúdent) *orange* (óransh) *divorced* (divórst)
- Emphasize that the phonetic spellings aren't foolproof. They're just a first step.

Activity 1

- Give each student a worksheet.
- Read the directions as a class.
- Ask students to complete the worksheet, that is, to find English words in their dictionary that they don't know and write those words on their worksheet, along with their meanings in Spanish.

Activity 2

- Write this conversation on the board:
Student A: How do you say _____ in English?
Student B: _____.
- Ask for two volunteers to come to the front of the class with their papers and practice this conversation using the new words they have learned. For example,
Student A: How do you say *amigo* in English?
Student B: *friend*.
- Students divide into pairs to practice the conversation.
- At the end of the class, students share some of the new words they have learned.

How do you say _____ in English?

Name _____

Directions: Look in your English/Spanish dictionary. Write ten words you don't know in English. Try to pronounce each word. Then write what the word means in Spanish.

English words	Spanish translation
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

Vocabulary: *At school*

(Class, Tutor/Tutee)

Objective

- To teach students to identify and spell the names of common items used in a classroom.

When to do this activity: During the first or second week of class

Supplies

- *Vocabulary: At school:* Class set
- Scissors for each student
- Paperclip for each student to clip their vocabulary cards

Before the class begins: Make sure you can identify each drawing: *book, notebook, pencil, pen, dictionary, pencil sharpener, table, chair whiteboard, marker, student, teacher.*

How to introduce this activity

- Ask students to identify various objects around the classroom (book, marker, whiteboard, etc.).

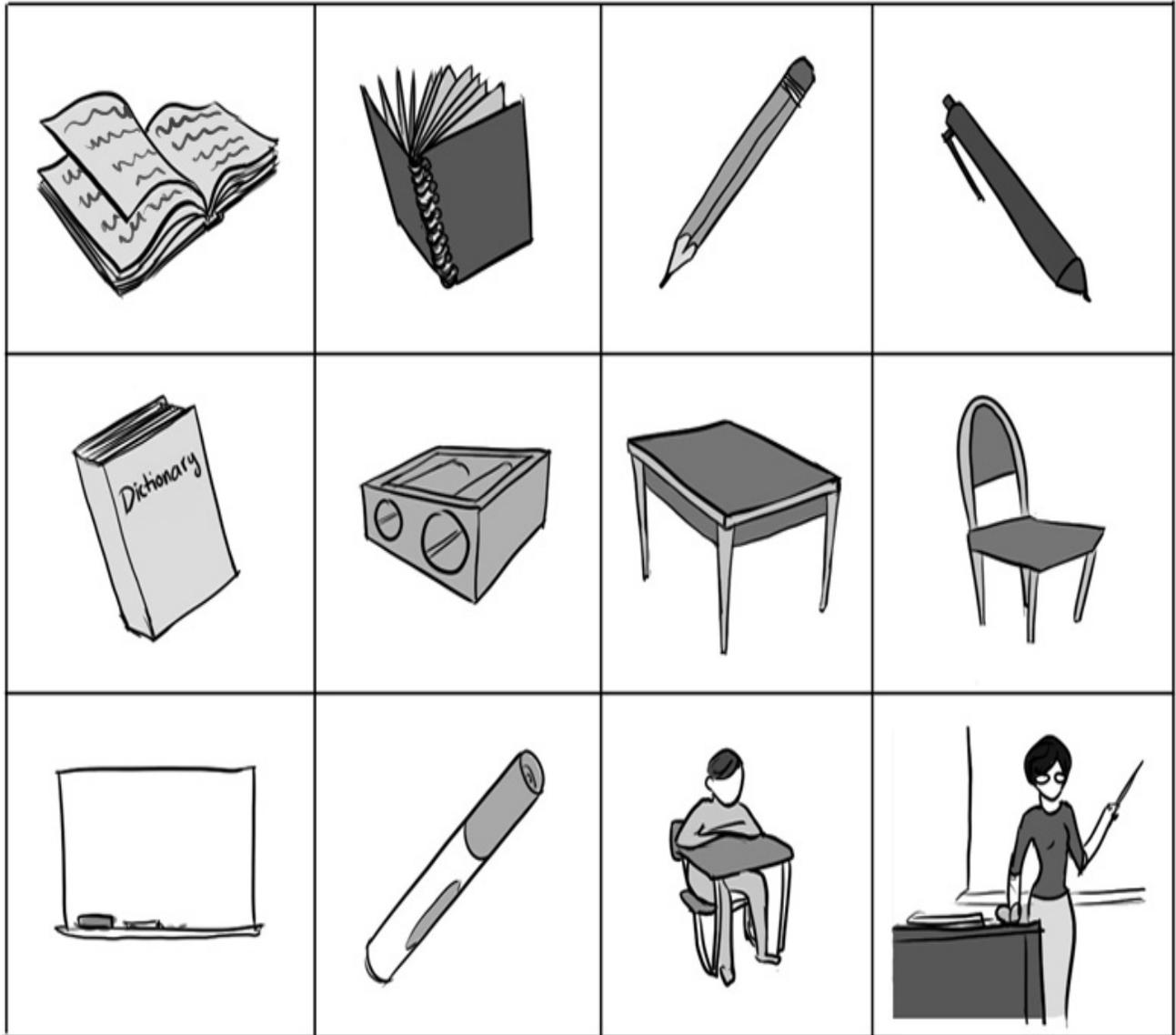
Activity: Part 1

- Distribute the worksheet *Vocabulary: At School*.
- Students cut out their cards.
- After students have cut out their cards, hold up a card and write what it is on the board. Students write the word in English on the back of the card.
- Do this for each card.

Activity: Part 2

- Divide students in pairs.
- Write this conversation on the board:
Student A: What is this?
Student B: It is a _____.
Student A: Spell that please.
Student B: _____.
- Practice the conversation as a class.
- Students practice this conversation, showing their partner a vocabulary card; then asking their partner what it is and how to spell it.

Vocabulary: At school



Four Corners

(Class)

Objective

- Reinforce substituting pronouns for nouns.

When to do this activity: After students have completed Section 1.4 of *Paso a paso 1* or *Step by Step 1*.

Supplies

- *Four Corners cards*. (You need enough so that each student can have one card. If you need more, make your own.)

Before the class begins

- Cut out enough cards so that each student has one.
- On the white board, write **He**, **She**, and **They** in large letters evenly placed across the length of the board.
- If you don't have a white board, make three signs and post them around the room.

How to introduce this activity

- Write these nouns on the board:
Ana Susan The girls Jose Susan and Ana The boys Jose and Ana
- Ask students what subject pronoun they can substitute for each noun. Then write the pronoun under the noun.

Activity

- Give each student a card.
- Each student takes his card and stands under the appropriate sign (e.g. If your sign says **Ana** you stand under the **she** sign.)
- After students are standing under the appropriate sign, students take turns reading their cards. Other students give a *thumbs up* or *thumbs down* to indicate whether the student is standing in the correct location. If the student isn't in the correct location, they move.
- Collect cards and redistribute them, or do the activity again on another day.

 **Four Corners**

Susan	The boy	Nina and Eduardo	My sister
Ana	The boys	The cooks	My friends
Maria and Leonardo	The students	The brothers	My friend
The girl	The teachers	Lucas, Ana, and Armondo	Armando
The girls	Anthony	My sisters	Deborah

Classmate Interviews: *Where are you from?*

(Class)

Objectives

- Build fluency by providing an environment where students can easily converse with each other.
- Build a sense of community by helping students know the names and native countries of their classmates.
- Give students practice spelling their names.

When to do this activity: After students have completed Section 1.5 of *Paso a paso 1* or *Step by Step 1*.

Supplies

- *Classmate Interviews: Where are you from?* Class set

Teachers, take note: In Spanish, *nombre* means *first name*. That's why, when Spanish-speakers are asked their name, they often give only their first name. Explain that, in English, when people ask you your name, you usually give your first and last name unless it's a very informal situation.

How to introduce this activity

- Review the alphabet.
- Teach this vocabulary: *first name, last name, complete name*.

Activity

- Distribute a copy of *Classmate Interviews: Where are you from?* to each student.
- Display *Classmate Interviews: Where are you from?* so all students can see it or copy the conversation on the board.
- Read the conversation a line at a time; ask students to repeat each line as you read it.
- Ask for two student volunteers, one to ask the questions and one to answer them. The volunteers interview each other. Students who are seated record the results of these interviews on their interview forms. You may want to do this with a second pair of volunteers as well.
- Instruct students to move around the classroom, interviewing classmates so they can complete their forms.
- After everyone has completed their forms, ask students about their peers, e.g. *Where is Ana from? Where is Peter from?*
- Note: If most students are from the same country, change the question to *What city are you from?*



Classmate Interviews: Where are you from?

Name _____

Student A: What is your first name?

Student B: My first name is _____

Student A: Spell that please.

Student B: _____

Student A: What is your last name?

Student B: My last name is _____

Student A: Spell that please.

Student B: _____

Student A: Where are you from?

Student B: I am from _____

First name	Last name	Country
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

U.S. Geography

(Class, Tutor/Tutee)

Objectives

- Learn the basics of US geography.
- Distinguish between *cities, states, and countries*.

When to do this activity: After students have completed Section 1.5 of *Paso a paso 1* or *Step by Step 1*.

Supplies

- Large map of North America (or, if you don't have one, use the same map you're giving to students)
- *U.S. map*: class set
- *US Geography 1* handout: one for every pair of students
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How to introduce this activity

- Using a map of North America, demonstrate the difference between *city, state, and country*.

Activity 1

- Give every student a map of North America.
- Ask students questions about the map (e.g. *Is Oregon a city or a state?*)
- Give every pair of students a *US Geography* worksheet.
- Students work in pairs to answer the questions on the worksheet. They don't need to write complete sentences.
- Review the answers as a class.

Activity 2

- Repeat Activity 1 the following day using the *Geography 2* handout.

U.S. Geography 1

Names _____

Directions: Use your map to answer each question. You don't need to write a complete sentence.

1. Is Texas a city or state? _____

2. Is Florida a city or state? _____

3. Is Mexico a state or a country? _____

4. Is Canada a state or a country? _____

5. Is California a city or a state? _____

6. Is Los Angeles in Oregon? _____

7. Is Las Vegas in Nevada? _____

8. Is Salt Lake City in Utah? _____

9. Is Miami in Florida? _____

10. Is Dallas a city or a state? _____

11. Is the United States a state or a country? _____

12. Write five cities in the United States.

13. Write five states in the United States.

14. Write three countries in North America.

15. What city are you in now? _____

16. What state are you in now? _____

U.S. Geography 2

Names _____

Directions: Use your map to answer each question. You don't need to write a complete sentence.

1. Is California a city or state? _____
2. Is Los Angeles a city or state? _____
3. Is Mexico a state or a country? _____
4. Is Canada a state or a country? _____
5. Is Houston a city or a state? _____
6. Is Houston in California? _____
7. Is Seattle in Washington? _____
8. Is Salt Lake City in Texas? _____
9. Is Las Vegas in Nevada? _____
10. Is Nevada a city or a state? _____
11. Is the United States a state or a country? _____
12. What city do you live in? _____
13. What country do you live in? _____
14. What state do you live in? _____

U.S. Map



Classmate Interviews: *What city are you from?*

(Class)

Objectives

- Build fluency by providing an environment where students can easily converse with each other.
- Reinforce the difference between *city* and *country*.
- Build a sense of community by helping students know the names and native countries of their classmates.

When to do this activity: After students have completed Section 1.5 of *Paso a paso 1* or *Step by Step 1*.

Supplies

- *Classmate Interviews: What city are you from?* Class set

Teachers, take note: Many of your students probably will be from small towns. Thus, you may want to explain that **city** is sometimes used to refer to small towns as well as large metropolises.

How to introduce this activity

- Review the alphabet.
- Review this vocabulary: *first name, last name, complete name, city, country*.

Activity

- Distribute a copy of *Classmate Interviews: What city are you from?* to each student.
- Display a copy so everyone can see it or copy the conversation on the board.
- Read the conversation, with students repeating each line after you read it.
- Note that *name* can refer to either *first name* or *complete name*. In this exercise students should use their complete names.
- Ask for two student volunteers, one to ask the questions and one to answer them. The volunteers interview each other. Students who are seated record the results of these interviews on their interview forms.
- Students move around the class interviewing fellow students and completing their forms.
- After everyone has completed their interviews, ask students about their peers, e.g. *What city is Ana from? What country is Ana from?*



Classmate Interviews: What city are you from?

Name _____

Student A: What is your name?

Student B: My name is _____

Student A: Spell that please.

Student B: _____

Student A: What city are you from?

Student B: I am from _____

Student A: What country are you from?

Student B: I am from _____

Name	City	Country
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		

Completing a Student Information Form

(Class, Tutor/Tutee)

Objectives

- Practice completing simple forms.
- Practice using the alphabet to dictate personal information.

When to do this activity: After students have completed Section 1.5 of *Paso a paso 1* or *Step by Step 1*.

Supplies

- *Completing a Student information form*: Class set

Teachers, take note:

- Make sure to explicitly teach students where the spaces and dashes go when writing a phone number. Many Latin American countries have different conventions when writing phone numbers which students naturally want to use when they write their phone number in the US.
- This activity focuses on such a critical skill that you may want to repeat it more than once, with students interviewing different students each time.

How to introduce this activity

- Introduce this vocabulary: *middle initial, street address, zip code, area code, phone number, birthplace*.
- Review this vocabulary: *first name, last name, city, state*.

Activity 1

- Pass out *Completing A Student Information Form* worksheet.
- Student complete the first form for themselves.

Activity 2

- Write these questions on the board:
 - What is your last name?*
 - What is your first name?*
 - What is your middle initial?*
 - What is your street address?*
 - What is your city?*
 - What is your state?*
 - What is your telephone number?*
 - What is your birthplace?*
- Display the worksheet, *Completing a Student Information Form*. Point to a line on the form and ask students to tell you what question they need to ask to elicit the necessary information.
- Students interview two students and complete the form for them. Of course, each student will also be interviewed twice.



Completing a Student Information Form

Directions: Complete this form for yourself.

Last name _____	First name _____	Middle initial ____
Street address _____		
City _____	State _____	Zip code _____
Telephone number _____		
Birthplace _____		

Directions: Complete this form for a classmate.

Last name _____	First name _____	Middle initial ____
Street address _____		
City _____	State _____	Zip code _____
Telephone number _____		
Birthplace _____		

Directions: Complete this form for a classmate.

Last name _____	First name _____	Middle initial ____
Street address _____		
City _____	State _____	Zip code _____
Telephone number _____		
Birthplace _____		

Conversation Practice

(Class, Tutor/Tutee)

Objective

- Build fluency by providing an environment where students repeat the same conversation multiple times and therefore gain fluency.

When to do this activity: After students have completed Chapter 1 of *Paso a paso 1* or *Step by Step 1*.

Supplies

- Class set of the *Conversation Practice* you're doing that day.

How to introduce this activity

- Introduce new vocabulary used in the conversation for that day.
- If you are doing a conversation that includes a question with many possible responses, such as *What is your favorite sport?* make a list of possible responses on the board.

Activity

- Pass out the *Conversation Practice* worksheet and practice the conversation as a class, focusing on pronunciation.
- Students stand in two lines facing each other, line 1 and line 2.
- Student A interviews the student he's facing, Student B. Then, Student B interviews Student A. When students have completed their conversations, you instruct them to change partners:
 - Students in line 1 move to the right. The student at the end of the line moves to the beginning of the line.
 - Students in line 2 don't move.
- The result: Everyone has a new partner and they practice the interview again.

Challenge

- After students have practiced the conversation with several different partners, ask them to practice the conversation without looking at their papers.
- At the end of the activity, ask pairs of students to practice the conversation in front of the class without using their papers.

Conversation Practice

Conversation Practice 1.1: Introductions

Student A: Hi.

Student B: Hi.

Student A: What is your name?

Student B: My name is _____ What is your name?

Student A: My name is _____.

Student B: Nice to meet you.

Student A: Nice to meet you, too.

Conversation Practice 1.2: Where are you from?

Student A: Hello.

Student B: Hi.

Student A: What is your name?

Student B: My name is _____.

Student A: Where are you from?

Student B: _____.

Student A: Nice to meet you.

Student B: Nice to meet you, too.

Conversation Practice

Conversation Practice 1.3: Student information

Student A: What is your name?

Student B: My name is _____

Student A: How are you today?

Student B:

I'm terrific.

I'm fine.

I'm ok.

I'm not so good.

Student A: I want to send you some information. What is your address?

Student B: My address is _____

Student A: What is your telephone number?

Student B: My telephone number is _____

Student A: Where are you from?

Student B: _____

Student A: Nice to talk to you.

Student B: Nice to talk to you, too.

Conversation Practice

Conversation Practice 1.4: Favorites

Student A: Hi.

Student B: Hi.

Student A: What is your name?

Student B: My name is _____

Student A: What is your favorite color?

Student B: My favorite color is _____

Student A: What is your favorite sport?

Student B: My favorite sport is _____

Student A: Thanks for your time.

Student B: You're welcome.

Conversation Practice 1.5: More Favorites

Student A: Hi.

Student B: _____

Student A: What is your name?

Student B: My name is _____

Student A: What is your favorite kind of ice cream?

Student B: My favorite kind of ice cream is _____

Student A: What is your favorite kind of pizza?

Student B: My favorite kind of pizza is _____

Student A: What is your favorite kind of music?

Student B: My favorite kind of music is _____

Student A: Thanks for your time.

Student B: You're welcome.

Scrambled Sentences

(Class, Tutor/Tutee)

Objectives

- Reinforce the notion that sentences are comprised of words that can be combined in many different ways.
- Reinforce the use of the verb *to be*.

When to do this activity: After students have completed Chapter 1 of *Paso a paso 1* or *Step by Step 1*.

Supplies

- *Scrambled Sentences Word Cards*: one for every two students
- *Scrambled Sentences Record Sheet* one for every two students
- Scissors for every two students

How to introduce this activity

- Review how to conjugate the verb *to be*.

Activity

- Divide students in pairs. (Try to match students of similar ability levels. Less advanced students may only write five or six sentences while more advanced students can aim to complete their record sheets and then write more sentences on the back.)
- Give each pair a set of *Scrambled Sentence Word Cards*, a record sheet, and a pair of scissors.
- Students cut out the word cards.
- Working in pairs, students make as many sentences as they can using only the words on the card. Students record each sentence on the record sheet.
- There are more than 25 possible sentences.
- As students finish, ask them to write one or two sentences on the board.

Scrambled Sentences Word Cards

Susan	The boy	Pedro and Pablo	My sister
They	I	She	He
You	the United States	Mexico	Honduras
am	is	are	from

Scrambled Sentences Record Sheet

Names

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20
