



La chica quiere café

A COMPLETE LESSON TO BEGIN
THE YEAR RIGHT IN LEVEL 1 SPANISH

by Bryce Hedstrom





LA CHICA QUIERE CAFÉ

THE GIRL WANTS COFFEE

Cover photo by unsplash.com

Illustrations by Bryce Hedstrom



This can be the first full story of the school year for a Spanish I class. It can be told at **the beginning of the second or third week of class**, or it can be saved until later.

CONTENTS

How to Get Students Reading Right Away	1
Teach High-Frequency Verbs with TPR the First Week	2
Teach Useful Vocabulary with Movement	2
Create and Expand on a Simple Story	3
Let Students Shine	3
Student-Generated Sentences in Spanish	4
English Translation of Student-Generated Sentences	5
Follow Up	6
How to Get Them There	7
Structure and Delivery of the Story	7
Vocabulary Choice	8
Finishing the Story	10
Effective Instruction in this Lesson	11
Sample Class Story—Spanish Translation	13
Sample Class Story—English Translation	14
Vocabulary Check	15
Fill-in-the-Blank (Spanish)	16
Fill-in-the-Blank (English)	17
Assessment	18
La chica quiere café: Prueba (Spanish)	19
The Girl Wants Coffee: Quiz (English)	20

The written story, student handouts, and a quiz follow the initial explanation. There are also versions of the story and quiz in English for those that do not teach Spanish.

HOW TO GET STUDENTS READING RIGHT AWAY

Participants in seminars and workshops often ask how beginning students can quickly begin to read independently. Baby steps like this are what works. Here's the short version:

1. Teach high frequency verbs beginning on the first day of class.
2. Create a simple story with your class using those verbs. Use student answers to make it fun.
3. Write up the story and have students read it.

That's it—the usual teaching with storytelling. But there's a bit more behind it that makes everything work smoothly to develop the skills and confidence in students to get them reading early on. Here's the fuller explanation:



Bryce Hedstrom

TEACH HIGH-FREQUENCY VERBS WITH TPR THE FIRST WEEK

These 14 high frequency verbs can be taught and used (in the third person singular form of the present tense) with classical TPR gestures, unusual commands, and a few short scenarios in the first week. Most verbs at this stage should be high-frequency—the most commonly used verbs in the language:

hay, es, está, tiene, quiere, le gusta, le dice, le da, toma, pone, habla, come, mira, sonríe

there is, is, is, has, wants, likes it, says to him/her, gives her/him, takes, puts, talks, eats, looks at, smiles

Verbs should be taught in a “ready to wear” mode, meaning that they are presented in the third person, present tense plus the indirect object, if needed. At this stage, the indirect object is presented as part of the verb from the very first time students heard it. So, **dar** (to give) is not taught as an infinitive. Instead, it is presented as **le da** (gives him/her). Same with **le dice** (says to her/him) and **le gusta** (she/he likes it). The logic being that these verbs almost always require an indirect object, so students might as well hear them paired together from the initial exposure and not have to unlearn bad habits later. Beginners tend to memorize language chunks. This chunked pairing makes sense to the mind of a novice language learner.



These verbs come from this list of [Important Verbs](#)

TEACH USEFUL VOCABULARY WITH MOVEMENT

In previous lessons in the first two weeks, students can also learn:

- A few **body parts** by singing and moving to *The Hokey Pokey*, and *Head & Shoulders, Knees & Toes*. Get video links for these songs and others your students need to know here: [Songs All Spanish Students Need to Know](#)

Download the lyrics to the body parts songs here:

[Cabeza Hombros Rodillas y Pies](#) [El Joqui Poqui](#)

- Some **basic colors** with games and mini stories
Download the color lessons here: [Teaching the Colors in Spanish](#)
Download just the color song lyrics: [Los Colores Song](#)

All of these songs, and many more, are included in [Songs for Spanish Class eBook](#)

- Some useful **classroom objects** with TPR gestures, mainly pointing at, looking at, touching and yelling at things in the classroom.
- A few **courtesy expressions** just to keep us all polite. These were picked up at the door to the classroom in the form of passwords. See more here: [Call & Response, Rejoinders, and Passwords](#)
- Many students had also picked up a few **common adjectives and nouns** along the way from *Sustained Silent Reading* time, both in class and by checking out books to read on their own at home.

PREVIEW

CREATE AND EXPAND ON A SIMPLE STORY

This is an activity that can be done as a follow-up to a short story between week 2 and 3 of a Spanish 1 class. The Bell Ringer/Do Now assignment, called the **Repasito** (the Little Review, a Warm-Up, activity for students to do at the beginning of class) in the example, directs students to write five sentences in Spanish about the drawing. The drawing has to do with the story each class is presented with the day before.

Here is the basic story in 4 sentences:

A girl wants coffee.

A boy has coffee.

The girl gives the boy... [an object to trade]

The boy gives the girl the coffee.



It can almost immediately be expanded to about twice as many sentences. Expect the story to change a bit as you tell it in different classes, depending on the ability of the class and energy level of the teacher.

There is a girl in Spanish class. She wants coffee, but she doesn't have any coffee.

There is a boy in Spanish class too. He has coffee.

It is good coffee.

The girl gives the boy... [several different objects to trade for the coffee].

The girl gives the boy a toad.

The boy gives the girl the coffee.

Students were asked (above) to write five sentences about this drawing the next day as their *Repasito*.

LET STUDENTS SHINE

This is where the extra words in the student-generated sentences in the example below come from. Most of the extra words were from the class "super-stars" who were allowed to add the extra sentences they had thought up once everyone else in the class had exhausted all of their possibilities. This is important. The super-stars do not get to dominate everything. Let everyone have a turn at bat.

The verbs **necesita** (needs) and **cambia** (trades) had also been used a few times in class, but had not been explicitly taught. Nevertheless, a few students in each class managed to create sentences with those verbs. They had also likely seen these words in the novels they had been reading for Sustained Silent Reading time.

How can level 1 students generate so many unique sentences?

Competition between different class periods helps, and so does free voluntary reading.

Ask a student to write the number of sentences each class comes up with on the white board each hour. Each class will try to outdo the previous one. During the last two classes, you might even want to throw out the lesson plan because students will all be engaged and want to do nothing but come up with more and more sentences than the other periods. No translating devices should be allowed. They may even work for the entire period, even though the original activity (the **Repasito** above) may have been planned to take up only about 5 minutes. During those last two periods, you may want to have a student act as an MC, and call on classmates to say sentences while you sit in the back and write out each sentence that is said—correcting the grammar along the way.

STUDENT-GENERATED SENTENCES IN SPANISH

The story below, created entirely from student sentences, contains a total of 690 words. The sentences were corrected as the teacher wrote them down. Not every sentence was 100% correct grammatically, when students aid them, but the meaning of most sentences was clear. That meaning was expressed with slightly improved grammar for the written version presented to students.

This was a good start to getting kids' confidence up about reading in Spanish. Reading a story of almost 700 total words in beginning of week three of Spanish 1 is significant. This is a big step to preparing students to read independently—and some had already begun to do so on their own. These short, high-interest, easy readers (language learner novels crafted with controlled vocabulary especially for novices) are within their reach when this happens.

Spanish teachers will notice how the vocabulary is simplified for this novice level. It was early in the semester, so students had small vocabularies. Students may have said **café pelo** for the girl's brown hair color, instead of **pelo castaño**. But **pelo café** was written, to express better word order, but still with comprehensible wording. Students may have said **Tiene nariz grande** for "He has a big nose", but it was written as **Él tiene una nariz grande**.

Much of the extra vocabulary came from students who had already begun reading extra simplified language learner novels on their own. They were able to do this because of the high-frequency verbs they had been taught with TPR in class the first week.

Here are the 101 sentences that one class wrote:

1. **Hay un chico.**
2. **Hay una chica.**
3. **Hay café.**
4. **Hay un sapo.**
5. **Hay dos personas.**
6. **Hay dos estudiantes.**
7. **Hay una chica y un chico.**

8. **El chico es bajo.**
9. **El chico es gordo.**
10. **El chico tiene una cabeza grande.**
11. **El chico tiene pelo café.**
12. **El pelo del chico es corto.**
13. **El chico tiene una nariz grande.**
14. **El chico tiene orejas grandes.**
15. **El chico tiene ojos pequeños.**

16. **La chica tiene una sonrisa grande.**
17. **La chica tiene una boca grande.**
18. **La chica tiene pelo café.**
19. **La chica tiene pelo largo.**
20. **La chica tiene ojos grandes.**
21. **La chica tiene una nariz pequeña.**

22. **El chico tiene café.**
23. **El café tiene leche.**
24. **El café es bueno.**
25. **El café está muy caliente.**
26. **La mano del chico está caliente porque tiene café caliente en la mano.**
27. **La chica tiene café.**

28. **No es café bueno.**
29. **La chica quiere café bueno.**
30. **La chica necesita café bueno.**
31. **A la chica le gusta el café bueno.**
32. **La chica quiere el café del chico.**

33. **La chica sonríe al chico.**
34. **El chico no le da el café.**
35. **La chica le da un lápiz al chico.**
36. **Pero el chico no le da el café.**
37. **La chica le da un libro al chico.**
38. **Pero el chico no le da el café.**
39. **La chica le da una planta al chico.**
40. **Pero el chico no le da el café.**
41. **La chica le da una mochila al chico.**
42. **Pero el chico no le da el café.**
43. **La chica no sonríe.**

44. **Hay un sapo.**
45. **El sapo es pequeño.**
46. **El sapo es verde.**
47. **El sapo es gordo.**
48. **El sapo no tiene pelo.**
49. **El sapo no habla inglés.**
50. **El sapo come bichos.**
51. **Es un sapo guapo.**

52. **La chica mira el sapo.**
53. **La chica tiene una idea.**
54. **La chica agarra el sapo.**
55. **La chica tiene el sapo.**
56. **La chica tiene el sapo en la mano.**



57. **A la chica no le gusta el sapo.**
58. **El chico mira a la chica.**
59. **El chico mira el sapo.**
60. **El sapo mira al chico.**
61. **El sapo sonr e al chico.**
62. **El chico sonr e.**
63. **Al chico le gusta el sapo.**

64. **La chica mira al chico.**
65. **La chica sonr e al chico.**
66. **A la chica le gustan los ojos del chico.**

67. **El chico est a nervioso.**
68. **Al chico le gusta la chica.**
69. **El chico sonr e.**
70. **La chica mira el caf e del chico.**
71. **La chica todav a quiere el caf e.**
72. **La chica todav a necesita el caf e.**
73. **La chica todav a necesita beber caf e.**
74. **La chica todav a quiere tener el caf e del chico.**

75. **El chico quiere el sapo.**
76. **El chico y la chica hablan.**
77. **La chica le dice: – quieres el sapo?**
78. **La chica le dice: –quiero cambiar el sapo por el caf e.**

79. **La chica le dice: –el caf e, por favor.**
80. **La chica quiere el caf e y el chico quiere el sapo.**
81. **La chica le dice: –quiero el caf e.**
82. **El chico quiere cambiar con la chica.**
83. **El chico sonr e y le dice: –quiero el sapo.**

84. **La chica cambia con el chico.**
85. **El chico y la chica cambian el caf e por el sapo.**
86. **La chica le da el sapo al chico.**
87. **La chica pone el sapo en la mano del chico.**
88. **El chico agarra el sapo.**
89. **El chico le da el caf e a la chica.**
90. **El chico pone el caf e en la mano de la chica.**
91. **La chica toma el caf e.**
92. **El chico le dice: –gracias.**
93. **La chica le dice: –de nada.**

94. **La chica sonr e.**
95. **Al sapo le gusta el chico.**
96. **El sapo sonr e.**
97. **El sapo le dice –ribit.**
98. **El chico toma el sapo.**
99. **El chico sonr e.**
100. **Todos sonr en.**
101. **El chico y la chica y el sapo son amigos.**

There are 690 total Spanish words in the story above. All were created by student-generated sentences, with minor corrections by the teacher. When students re-read this consolidated version of the story the next day, all were engaged. They felt they had helped to create these sentences. All claimed that everything was understandable.

Reading 690 words in L2, and understanding them all, and being engaged in the reading is a good start for the beginning of the 3rd week of level 1. 690 words is 1/2 to 1/3 of the total word count in many beginning novels. Not bad! Point this out to students to encourage them.

FOLLOW UP

Rearrange the random student sentences to create a narrative like the one below, which the students can read with one another using [Ping Pong Reading](#)

Each student will have a copy of these sentences. In a class, the sentences would only be written in L2. Sentences are translated into English below for readers here that do not speak Spanish. Students enjoy searching for the sentences they have said as they do the ping-pong activity. It becomes compelling reading because each student can see sentences that seem as though they have spoken themselves.

Keep in mind that the following sentences/story is a composite. No one student, would be able to come up with all of these sentences. It will be a group effort. Nonetheless, **nearly every student should be...**