

Bravo - music based Spanish learning.

<https://learnwithbravo.com/>

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Bravo – music-based Spanish learning is a project aimed at children from reception to year 6 (4-11 years old) that uses music as the tool to teach Spanish, to promote intercultural and social skills and to develop knowledge and understanding. It is designed with two groups in mind; the non-native speaker but also the child with Spanish speaking heritage who wants to develop their inherited language skills.

The resources are available from the website and are downloadable once purchased, meaning that they can be accessed both on and offline. You can purchase individual packs or units that contain resources from a number of packs. Packs currently available are entitled Animals, Emotions, Instruments, Greetings and Colours, and each one contains videos, audios, worksheets covering a variety of skills and activities, student resources, comics and interactive online games. A unit contains materials from more than one pack; for example, the unit “We introduce ourselves” contains materials from the Instruments, Greetings and Emotions packs.

Materials are accompanied by separate lesson plans for ELE (*español como lengua extranjera* i.e. non-native speakers) and *Herencia* (native speakers) that use the following sequence:

- activation (of previous knowledge),
- demonstration (moving that learning forward),
- application (implementing the learning) and
- integration (reflecting on what they’ve learned).

For each topic pack there is a one page infographic that covers didactic suggestions for using the materials, activity suggestions and linguistic/lexical structures covered, and also an abundance of resources to accompany the notes.

The starting point is the song which comes in audio and video form (with and without subtitles) with slightly different lyrics for *Herencia* children; in the one I viewed, the *Herencia* version included the preterite tense. This song forms the basis of all activities that follow with comic strips to allow learners to reconstruct the lyrics, graphics echoed in all the ‘*fichas*’, activities and flashcards featuring the same characters. Songs are cleverly written to include both questions and answers, and to showcase structures that are developed in the resources.

Each set of ‘*fichas*’ includes around 20 separate activities that can be printed off, covering a variety of skills including matching, filling missing letters and gaps, reading and identifying correct responses, writing short phrases and listening and responding to a partner. It concludes with a summative assessment activity (in the case of “We introduce ourselves”, it is an interview) and an “I can” style assessment grid. *Herencia* students have a slightly different final sheet in the ‘*fichas*’ offering the opportunity to give extended responses to questions e.g. giving reasons for feelings. In addition to the ‘*fichas*’ there are pupils’ resources that offer opportunities for independent learning and include sudoku, crosswords, bingo, ‘*tes en raya*’ (noughts and crosses) and ‘*Torre*’ in which children build the tower with words they recall from the unit. There are also flashcards for teachers.

Online resources made with Genially support these activities with drag and drop, join with an arrow and online noughts and crosses. There is also a quiz, which features a dartboard to tell you if your answer is correct; all other activities reveal the correct response but are self-marking.

The advantage of purchasing a Unit is that you get several topics in one, and also detailed notes that set out a 6 lesson plan of how to use the resources and step by step instructions, plus a Genially presentation for each lesson including sound files. Looking at the abundance of materials and the detail of the plans, I would say that they could easily extend beyond a single lesson of 55-60 minutes, as is suggested. Indeed, in some cases I would recommend using more than one lesson as, for example, in lesson 1 of "*En mi jardín*", which introduces numbers 1-10 and 7 animal words, and some explanation of adjectival agreement.

I found the materials engaging and well thought out, and the songs are certainly earworms! I particularly liked the variety of activities offered to review and rehearse a small pot of vocabulary and structures, and the slightly different activities for *Herencia* learners. I can appreciate the cyclical approach taken to revisiting and reinforcing skills and knowledge across activities, topics and units. I feel that it's a resource that could be used equally by non-native and native speakers, both independently at home as well as within a classroom context as part of a scheme or as a standalone unit.

