

# Lesson Plan: Yo sí que puedo: Diez lecciones para aprender español usando artefactos de la Guerra Civil Española (Yes I Can!: Ten Lessons to Learn Spanish using Civil War Realia) Spanish

## Lesson Plan

Title	Yo sí que puedo: Diez lecciones para aprender español usando artefactos de la Guerra Civil Española (Yes I Can!: Ten Lessons to Learn Spanish using Civil War Realia)
Subject	Spanish
Level(s)	I (Novice)
World Language Standards	This series of ten lessons can manage to target every ACTFL standard at some point or another. However, by using posters and other real artifacts from and inspired by the Spanish Civil War to teach students to use language, learners will spend most of their time meeting the communication standard 1.2 (to understand and interpret written and spoken language on a variety of topics). As students do activities and follow the outlined suggestions, they will meet the other communication standards. If students begin to ask questions and discuss the content of the posters, as is hoped, they will also meet standard 2.2 (to demonstrate and understanding of the relationship between the products and perspectives of the culture studied). Students will also acquire information and recognize the distinctive viewpoints that are only available through the foreign language and its cultures (standard 3.2). The various activities and discussions may also invite comparisons between the home and target language and culture (standards 4.1 and 4.2) and motivate students to use their knowledge outside of the classroom (standards 5.1 and 5.2).
Keywords	Punctuation, alphabet, spelling, pronunciation, cognate decoding, reading strategies, listening comprehension activities, affirmative <i>vosotros</i> commands, gender, number, days of the week, calendar dates, articles, basic Spanish vocabulary, family members
Essential questions	

Synopsis	<p>These lessons use realia from the Spanish Civil War to build students' competence and confidence in understanding and using Spanish. This lesson is not designed to teach students in any great detail about the Civil War, but rather to plant the seed in their minds for further cultural study. These lessons would be great if taught in a classroom already decorated with a few Civil War posters, or in a school where students knew they would be studying the Civil War in later years. The lessons offer teachers a great way to use the same realia they might use in upper level classes in a way more suitable for beginning language learners. The lessons are designed to take advantage of students' natural curiosity for their world and for what <i>other</i> students are learning to teach them content they need to learn while giving them a taste of lessons to come. These ten brief lessons offer the teacher flexibility. They may be used all together, perhaps for review and expansion after a month or two of Spanish, or they may be interspersed as students need practice on certain key concepts. They can even serve as a review of basic concepts later in the year, or at the beginning of a second-year class, especially one where the series moves at a slower pace. The lessons can stand rather independent from each other. Some do make reference and use of the same posters, and so work very well as a set and in this order, but they may also be used individually if desired.</p>
Standard Alignment(s) used	<p>Although there are no Common Core Standards in Foreign Language, the following Anchor Standards will be reinforced by exploring these same themes in the target language:</p> <p><a href="#">CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4</a></p> <p><a href="#">CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.4</a></p> <p>In Lesson One, specifically: <a href="#">CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.2</a></p>
Recommended Teacher Background	<p>The teacher may wish to amplify his or her background knowledge on the Spanish Civil War, beginning with the ALBA <a href="#">website</a>.</p>
Connection to other disciplines	<p>English/Language Arts, art, social studies, music</p>
Number of class periods	

## Standards

Objectives	Standards addressed
Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.	<a href="#">CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4</a>
Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases by using context clues, analyzing meaningful word parts, and consulting general and specialized reference materials, as appropriate	<a href="#">CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.4</a>
In Lesson One, specifically. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.	<a href="#">CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.2</a>

## Primary Sources

- [“Yo sí que puedo”](#)

## Procedures

### Pre-Assessment, Activation of Prior Knowledge:

If a class is particularly quiet, the teacher may wish to ask students if they have heard of the Spanish Civil War and force some discussion that way. Otherwise, it would likely be preferable to make a short blanket statement that the class will be looking at real artifacts from the Spanish Civil War in order to see how much language they can understand. Let the questions later flow from the realia. An indispensable part of the set-up, however, is to build up students' courage to face authentic text. If the instructor has done similar activities with other texts, all the better. If not, present the lesson as something exciting, for students will be able to show off all they have learned so far. It is easy to get discouraged early in language learning and part of the goal of this lesson is to help generate the interest and confidence to prevent that.

As class discussions take place, the teacher will be able to informally gauge students' knowledge and fill in any necessary gaps. Issues that may arise include the multiple viewpoints of the Spanish Civil War including basic facts as to why the war is relevant today, and the creation and use of propaganda posters and songs.

Each individual lesson begins with a statement on what the learner should know in terms of Spanish language ability before being introduced to that lesson. The teacher will find that these lessons are appropriate for novice level learners in their first months of Spanish. Lesson Activities:

#### 1. Lead-In/Hook:

The lesson itself is a two-way hook. The use of realia is meant to hook the students into learning Spanish, because they can see a real application for the language beyond their classroom and textbook. Moreover, as the students begin to wonder what is going on in the individual posters they are seeing, they should be invited to ask and comment. The teacher can then take advantage of these moments and teach them about the history of the Spanish Civil War, in appropriate doses, and in English when necessary.

Many of us who teach language would agree that our real hook for teaching language is the culture and civilization. By using realia that they can only access in Spanish, you will perk their interest in the history and in the language. The real beauty of these lessons can often be found in their digressions. Do not be afraid to follow where the class leads you. All the while, they may be happy to be keeping you "off topic", but you will know that the war was the real topic after all, and you will hold them responsible for that knowledge in your assessments.

#### 2. Step by Step:

##### *Lesson One: Tildes y puntuación (Slides 2-13)*

- For this lesson, students need very minimal background knowledge. They will likely have some knowledge that special marks and punctuation are used in Spanish. This is an appropriate lesson to use for a teacher who is beginning to teach conventions of proper written Spanish.
- Show slide 3, pointing out the ñ. You may want to show them at this time that it may be written as a squiggly or straight line.
- Show slide 4, reinforcing the ñ and then calling attention to the use of exclamation points.
- Show slide 5 to illustrate the use of question marks, but then also show how they were carried over by poster makers into English (slide 6) and French (slide 7). You may wish to point out that the only two languages that use inverted marks are Spanish and Gallego.
- Show slide 8 with its double exclamation points, and slide 9 with its exclamation points.

- Ask students to find the error in slide 10, that the exclamation points are in the wrong places.
- Slide 11 shows the same departure from normal usage, but because of its sensitive topic, you may wish to move directly to slides 12 and 13, illustrating a correction of the exclamation points in the two phrases from the venereal disease poster.
- It would also be appropriate to call attention to the use of accent marks in these posters and also to remind students that, because they are not required on capital letters, signs and posters often omit them.
- Formal assessment of this topic may only be necessary with struggling learners. You may wish to have common words or sentence fragments available for the students to punctuate and accent correctly on a formal assessment, e.g., *España, ¡atención!, ¿Qué haces tú?*

#### *Lesson Two: Pronunciación y dictado (Slides 14-19)*

- Warm the students up by practicing their vowel sounds. Remind them of how important proper pronunciation of vowels is for generating comprehensible Spanish.
- Show slide 15 and have the students practice pronouncing *¿Qué haces tú para evitar esto?* which contains all five vowel sounds.
- Show slide 16. Have the students practice changing all vowel sounds to the same vowel and repeating the sentences. This helps to train their mouth to return to the same position for each vowel sound. This is also a feature of the Spanish children's song "Dame el perro". (See <http://sonidos.osu.edu/dame-el-perro>)
- Have students practice the words on slide 17, which include sounds that are difficult for native English speakers, the trilled *rr*, the approximant *b/v* sound, and the use of an *s* or *th* sound where English would use a *sh* sound (*atención* vs. *attention*). Encourage students to practice cognate pronunciation correctly; although the words may look alike, they often manifest key differences in their pronunciation.
- Practice listening, pronunciation and spelling through a dictation. Read the students "España: una, grande y libre" as they try to fill in the blanks on slide 18.
- Show them the poster on Slide 19 so they can check their work.
- For assessment, students may record any of their pronunciation work, create other silly sentences in Spanish by replacing vowel sounds or take dictation using a mix of known and easy-to-decipher words, appropriate for their level.

#### *Lesson Three: Pronunciación y Números de 0 a 15 (Slides 20-23)*

- Background knowledge for this lesson includes numbers (at least 0-15) and some basic pronunciation knowledge. Students at this point should have practiced enough to begin making comparisons between English and Spanish.
- Play "Viva la quince brigada" (See slide 21) as an exercise in listening for common interference between English and Spanish pronunciation. Model correct pronunciation for them and ask them to understand the difference. Even though they may not be able to yet speak perfectly, the goal here is to have them understand the difference and desire to speak correctly.
- Practice pronouncing the phrases on slide 22. These lines from the song have some of the same features of pronunciation from the last lesson, those that often present problems to English speakers.
- Since the number fifteen makes an appearance in this song, encourage students to practice counting up to (or beyond, if they can) fifteen. See slide 23.

- Assessment can include asking the students to count orally, showing proper pronunciation. If time permits, students could record their own version of “Viva la quince brigada”. The recordings could be played in class and students can evaluate each other’s pronunciation.

*Lesson Four: Ayer fue, hoy es, mañana será* (Slides 24-29)

- After some practice with days of the week and calendar dates, as students are practicing *ayer fue*, *hoy es* and *mañana será*, this lesson would be a great fit.
- First, show the students slide 25 and ask them to read it. Through using known words and cognates, they should have no problem. Emphasize the key words *fue*, *es* and *será* using slide 26. Then practice with days of the week (slide 27) and calendar dates (slide 28).
- You may also make additional activities where you tell the students to imagine a condition, such as *Hoy es martes, el 15 de abril.* or *Mañana será lunes.* Then ask similar questions to elicit practice with days and dates.
- These questions would make a great informal (asked as students walk in or out of class, asked in partners, recorded for a portfolio) or formal (written quiz) assessment, either used as is, or with one of the imagined conditions explained above.

*Lesson Five: Estrategias para leer* (Slides 29-40)

- This lesson can be done as soon as students are comfortable looking at authentic text in Spanish and trying to make sense of it. They also need to know numbers (at least to ten), *hoy* and *mañana*. For this reason, it makes sense to complete it after lessons three and four. Lesson Five aims to show students three strategies for reading. The first reading focuses on using known information, the second focuses on word study and the third focuses especially on cognates, but all the readings so far have relied on implicit understanding of them as well. The readings, it should be noted, are authentic Spanish Civil War posters, which have significant textual components.
- Before showing the first reading, have students prepare themselves to read by activating their prior knowledge about war and peace, happiness and fear. Show slide 30 and have students respond in a Think – Pair – Share format. The teacher could help the activity along by going around and listening to students as they ‘pair’ and reinforcing words that are going to appear in the reading. Then, as students ‘share’, encourage those students who are headed in the same direction as the reading to offer their thoughts.
- Then, show slide 31 and the magnified version, slide 32.
- Slide 33 blocks out some of the less important words and begins to focus students on individual words and phrases. As students use numbers and cognates to decipher the first two words, then show them that they will have to use extralinguistic knowledge to determine the referent of those ‘seis letras’. Hint to students to look at the poster for a six-letter word (you may want to return to slide 31, where it will be the only word students will likely be able to read).
- Slide 34 then has the word “today” highlighted.
- On slide 35, have students try to understand the phrase “cry of war” before moving on to “tomorrow” (slide 36) “with [its] exclamation of jubilation and peace” (slide 37).
- Emphasize with students that their prior knowledge, including Latin roots in English (jubilation), basic English structures and the idea that war comes with hopes for peace all help them to understand Spanish. Give them the positive reinforcement and encouragement necessary to show that, even at an early level, with just a little help, they can understand sophisticated Spanish written for native speakers.

- Move on to reading two, slide 38. This also comes with a pre-reading activity. Your students don't need to understand the whole picture, but this lesson will help them begin to piece together basic morphology: verb endings and morphemes that are similar in English and Spanish. After studying the words on slide 38, show them slide 39, arm them with the cultural knowledge explained on it and ask them to piece together the meaning of the poster.
- Again, reward effort and praise achievement. Show them how much they can understand using decoding techniques available to them.
- Understanding the earlier slides required understanding cognates. The third reading will give students more sophistication in using cognates, as it will help them understand the various kinds of cognates that exist. Show them slide 40 and ask them what it means, allowing for mistakes to be generated. Have the students work through mistakes, using good questioning techniques as necessary. Have them understand that *armas/arms* is a cognate, but to only one meaning of the English word and that *patria* may not be a cognate, but its meaning is not utterly incomprehensible, either. *Pan* will likely throw them for a loop, which is when you can teach about false cognates. Students will be happy to know that *justicia* is indeed a direct cognate.
- Slide 41 offers students a framework for understanding cognates. They can be direct, indirect or false. Yet, one still needs to be careful not to overgeneralize meanings. The previous two readings built students' confidence. This one should do so as well, by teaching them to reach out to try to understand indirect cognates. Students often use this concept to begin thinking in terms of mnemonic devices. Mnemonic devices can also be clever ways of remembering indirect cognates: "Put the *pan* in the pan to make grilled cheese. Once, I counted to *once*." If it bothers students to learn of false cognates, redirect their frustration into this creative route.
- Armed with reading strategies, students can be asked to find some material of interest to them on the internet. Encourage them to think of a topic of interest, about which they know a lot already and then to search for small texts about it in Spanish. (This works especially well for sports news, for example.) They can then find the text and work to decode it, using cognates and word study techniques. They can check for false cognates in the dictionary if they see that something doesn't make sense. These are all great ideas for project-based assessment. The teacher may also wish to use a more formal assessment generated with another Spanish Civil War poster from a later slide in the presentation. Be sensitive not to frustrate them; the idea is to build their confidence.

#### Lesson Six: Mandatos plurales (Slides 42-50)

- This lesson is designed to teach second-person informal plural (*vosotros*) positive commands. This can be a great help to a teacher who uses this form with his or her students, but it can also be a worthwhile lesson to classes where these forms are not heard. Since the forms are so simple to generate (change the *r* of the infinitive to a *d*), it can be one of the easiest grammar lessons ever taught, and can even be used with a more advanced class who was never exposed to this form.
- Begin by showing slides 43-45. In each of these slides, there is a vocative of direct address, "*Obreros, Campesinos, Soldados, Intelectuales*," "*¡¡Mujeres!!*," "*¡Pueblos de Levante!*", that shows that the intended audience is always a collective. Show the students that this is the reason for the plural command. You may wish to model this to them by calling them "*Chicos*" or "*Estudiantes*". Then point out the command forms. Use gestures to emphasize the function of the imperative.

- Slide 46 has the command followed by the direct address. A group of animated young people might love to learn and use this command. The teacher can reinforce it constantly by encouraging them to ‘attack’ their assignment, project, homework, and so on.
- When they see the infinitive in slide 47, it may be helpful to get them to remember the command form. Show them the command form here, but also get them to form the imperatives of *atacar* and *vencer*.
- Slide 48 has two more commands, one of which may even be used as a classroom rule: “¡Respetad su propiedad!”
- Slides 49 and 50 have exercises to practice what they’ve learned. In the first exercise, students are asked to supply the morpheme *-d* to complete classroom commands (that use some of the same verbs from the posters) and then translate them into English. If the students have been hearing the teacher use these commands, this exercise will go even better. The second exercise has students think of the verbs from the posters that will complete the partial English to Spanish translations.
- Assessment ideas include giving the students commands and having them respond (informal, listening), creating a poster of their own illustrating a classroom rule (formal, writing), or testing them using formats similar to the exercises. Slide 73 (part of Lesson Ten) has another example of a plural command, echoing one of the commands in Slide 48.

#### Lesson Seven: Entrevistas (Slides 51-53)

- This lesson is designed to build confidence in listening comprehension using authentic yet deliberate spoken Spanish. The brief vignettes are famous contemporary Spaniards playing the roles of those who disappeared in the Spanish Civil War and are now interred in common graves. Students will not understand all or even most of it, but they will understand the basic setup of each account as well as some basic language items.
- Play “*Contra la impunidad*” from slide 52. On a first listen, ask them how each interview starts and ends (“*Me llamo...*” / Some variation of “*No tuve abogado ni juicio ni sentencia. Mi familia sigue buscándome. ¿Hasta cuándo?*”) On a second listen, then see if they can hear the names. See if they understand anything else. They may understand numbers, months and dates. Be sure to validate anything they thought they heard. Remind them to be happy they understood anything at all, and to keep trying. Reward effort.
- Have students generate their own short videoclips about themselves, using the ideas on slide 53. These could be recorded and used for portfolio or formal assessment. You could also use only a part of the “*Contra la impunidad*” video in class and save a couple of vignettes for a listening quiz. It might also be great to revisit this video in a later Spanish class in order to show students how much more they understand later and then to remake their own clips to show in their portfolios how they have progressed.

#### Lesson Eight: Género de sustantivos (Slides 54-68)

- This lesson teaches and reinforces basic information about gender, number and articles (especially definite articles) in Spanish. Students unfamiliar with the concept will likely need some practice beforehand, but this lesson can serve as a great review and expansion.
- Slide 55 starts with mostly nouns used for people, reinforcing the notion of grammatical gender in a concrete way that students can understand.
- Slide 56 has more nouns, including those that are neuter in English.

- Slide 57 emphasizes the concept of gender and number, using the singular examples from slide 55 with the plural examples from slide 56.
- Slide 58 then focuses on plural nouns.
- Slide 59 introduces the practice exercises.
- The first practice exercise (slide 60) has nouns involving people, but also includes one special case (*los camaradas*). Be sure not to be too harsh on students or play the “gotcha” game with them, but rather emphasize to them the need to be alert for exceptions.
- Slides 61-68 are a series of progressively more difficult exercises where posters have the articles blocked out and students are asked to supply them. Students may remember some of the posters from earlier exercises, and it is fine if they do; repetition is the key to mastery.
- The teacher may wish to use any of the practice exercises for assessment (formally or informally) as well. Slide 73 (part of Lesson Ten) has two posters that can also offer additional practice or assessment on article usage.

#### *Lesson Nine: ¿Qué es esto? (Slides 69-71)*

- Lesson Nine practices with one of the fundamental questions of five year olds and elementary foreign language students, “What is this?”. This lesson simply calls students’ attention to the fact that twice in Lessons One and Two they saw the word *esto* (*¿Qué haces tú para evitar esto?* and *¡Esto es el fascismo!*)
- They can use this word to form the question *¿Qué es esto?* and practice their vocabulary, and singular indefinite articles. (See slide 70.) The teacher can offer practice with any picture showing students’ vocabulary words, or a picture like the classroom scene on slide 71.
- This is a question that can easily be asked of students orally or in writing for informal or formal assessment.

#### *Lesson Ten: ¿Grande o pequeño? (Slides 72-74)*

- This lesson serves as a great review lesson, while still introducing a new concept.
- Students can look at and comment on the posters on slide 73. They might use their reading strategies from Lesson Five, remember the line *España: una grande y libre* from Lesson Two, recognize the plural command from what they learned in Lesson Six or notice the gender of nouns from the content of Lesson Eight. They may also think back to lesson One and realize that the tilde is missing over *pequeño* once they compare what they see to the correct pronunciation modeled by the teacher.
- Once they have practiced reading the posters, they can read the list of cognates on slide 74 and decide if each item is *grande* or *pequeño*.
- Similar questions can be asked for informal or formal assessment. This entire lesson can also be used as an assessment. See “Post-Assessment”, below.

#### 3.- Closure:

Closure for this lesson will involve two elements, the first cultural and the second linguistic. First, the teacher will need to tie up (though not tightly) any of the loose ends of discussion that have been provoked by the students’ engagement with the civil war materials. Again, the goal was to have the students think they were getting you off-topic. Now, you can solidify any discussion you’ve had, though leaving some questions open for further inquiry using some of the ideas below (in Differentiation and Post-Assessment) and in upper levels of Spanish. Second, the teacher should again remind the students that, even with the basic Spanish they

have, they are ready to engage with authentic text and should not be afraid of it. They should be encouraged to then set out on their own and look for more, either related to the war, or on a topic of their own interest.

### **Differentiation:**

The instructor has considerable flexibility to decide how and when these ten lessons would be appropriate in his or her classroom. In addition to the options mentioned above, the lessons may also be used at a point later in Spanish I as a way to refresh students' skills and remind them of some fundamental concepts. Advanced students, or even just students who find themselves particularly interested in the topic of the Spanish Civil War, may wish to do some extra research or have extra discussions with the instructor.

### **Post-Assessment**

Each of the individual lessons comes with suggestions for informal and formal assessment. The following are ideas for a more global post-assessment.

- As noted above, use Lesson Ten as a quiz.
- Prepare a quiz on what you the teacher deem to be the more important lessons, using a blend of vocabulary from the posters and that which has been studied in class.
- Have students make a poster inspired by those they have seen to display a classroom rule. This was a suggestion used in Lesson Six, but a rubric can also be developed to require the students to: use proper accents and punctuation (Lesson One), read their poster aloud (Lessons Two-Three) and use articles correctly (Lesson Eight). Students may be challenged to incorporate elements from other lessons (the verb *to be*, Lesson Four, for example) and will also have to read each other's posters, using the strategies from Lesson Five.
- Have students make a slightly more involved presentation about themselves than the one they did in Lesson Seven. It may have to include proper articles (Lesson Eight) and be graded on pronunciation (Lessons Two and Three).
- Have students create interactive skits with each other. They can give directions to a small group (Lesson Six) and ask and answer questions, like those found Lessons Four, Nine and Ten.
- Have students find more Spanish Civil War posters online using a Google Image Search. Reward them for finding some of the same words, language features and other items they have noticed.