

# LANGUAGE ASSISTANTS PROGRAM



## INTRODUCING OURSELVES

- **YOU:** What is your name? Where are you from?
- **THE PROGRAM:** Why have you decided to be a part of the program? Is it your first time living away from home? What are your expectations regarding this experience?
- **YOUR COUNTRY AND SPAIN:** What do you like best about your country? And about Spain?
- **YOUR SCHOOL:** What region and town is your school located in? What is the name of your school? What grade levels are you going to be working with?
- **YOUR HOUSE:** Do you already have a place to stay? How did you find it? What type of housing is it? Is it far from the school? What means of transportation are you going to use to get around?



## YOUR SCHOOL – Elementary or high school So you know...



- YOU ARE A PART of the Department of Foreign Languages or of the bilingual program.
- Your **schedule** will normally be 12 hours per week.
- You will be assigned a **mentor teacher/contact teacher**.



## You should...

- Support the classroom teacher(s).
- Help strengthen, above all, the **oral and communicative skills** of the students.
- Share aspects of your **culture**.



## If you can, you should also...

- Participate in **extracurricular activities**: cultural activities, sports, field trips, school exchanges, etc.

*These activities can be very **educational** and **enriching**.*

## And if required...

- You may participate in **language training activities for the school teachers.**
- You may collaborate in the **preparation of teaching materials** for classroom use.



## However, you should not be asked to...

- Take **full responsibility** for the class.
- Prepare or correct **exams**.
- Take responsibility for:
  - Assessments and grading
  - Discipline and supervision of the playground
  - The syllabus or year-end review

*You can help, but these are not your responsibility.*

## You may collaborate in the following situations:

- With one or more teachers in the **foreign language** classroom or in **non-linguistic subjects**.
- In the same classroom as the teacher, **helping upon request**.
- When the class is divided into **two groups**: one group with the teacher and another one with you.
- **Preparing your in-class participation** ahead of time, according to the teacher's instructions.



## Materials

- Teachers can provide you with teaching materials or ask you to prepare your **own materials** according to their instructions.
- Find out about the **foreign language department or library** resources (books, CDs, DVDs, etc.).
- There are lots of **online** resources.
- **Authentic materials:**
  - Comics and newspapers
  - Different types of brochures
  - Photo albums
  - Children's books
  - Maps, etc.





## Tools:

- **Class Schedule.**
- **Planning notebook:** write down what you have planned, what you have done and what you haven't, so as not to repeat or skip content with different groups.
- **Class rolls:** to start getting to know the students.
- **Extra teaching materials and activities** to supplement assignments from the teacher.



## WHAT IS EXPECTED OF YOU

What do you think are the qualities of a good language assistant?



### Keep in mind that...

- Above all, you must **use your language**.
- You are a **native** speaker and an “authentic” model of your language and culture.
- You are a **novelty** compared to the teacher.
- You are closer in **age** to the students.
- You can have a **great impact on the motivation** of students to learn languages.

## Also know that...

- You will be **welcomed** by the students, teachers and families.
- Everyone will be **excited to meet you**.
- You have many favorable conditions to help you be **successful** in your work.



## TALK ABOUT YOURSELF

- **YOU**: What are you like? What are your hobbies? Do you think you can be a good language assistant?
  - your family
  - your life
  - your experiences
  - your country
  - your culture
- **YOUR STUDIES**: What have you studied so far?
- **PROFESSIONAL FUTURE**: What do you plan to do when you finish your experience as a language assistant?



## Try to be observant and willing to...



- Learn about Spain and your assigned region.
- Learn about the school, the families, etc.
- Learn about class assignments.
- Build relationships with teachers, students and the whole school community.



## And also try to be...

- Dynamic, proactive.
- Open, receptive.
- Interested, curious.
- Willing, involved.
- Flexible.
- Firm in giving instructions.



## PERSONAL

- Manage your involvement in the program.
- Identify cultural differences.
- Get to know the country's culture.
- Improve your Spanish.
- Adapt to the environment.



## PROFESSIONAL

- Learn about the **teaching-learning** of your language and its culture.
- Get to know the **Spanish education system**.
- Learn about the **curriculum, syllabus, and students' learning objectives**.
- Distinguish between **suitable and unsuitable activities**.
- Behave in a **professional** manner.
- Get to know about the **rules and procedures** of the school and the Department:
  - Organization, school community
  - Contact with students (social media)
  - Use of the facilities, the cafeteria...
  - Use of the students' photos
  - Fire drills
  - Faculty dress code, etc.



## WITH THE STUDENTS

- Address and **change cultural prejudices**.
- **Motivate** students' participation.
- Earn their **respect**.
- Identify and know how to function with different **language levels, interests, needs and abilities**.
- **Manage** the class.



## THIS WILL HELP YOU

- Ensure you are **firm** and **constant** in your tasks and with the rules.
- Remember that while you are not the classroom teacher, you also are not the **students' friend**.
- Create a **classroom routine**.
- Help students create individual and group **work habits**.
- Use **group dynamics** strategies (flexible groupings, quick pace, etc.)



## WITH THE STAFF

- Listen and ask questions
- Ask for help
- Collaborate
- Show initiative and make suggestions



*Remember that in order to learn, you have to be willing to learn. Never forget what you can achieve with a smile and a positive attitude.*

 ATTENTION

## IT WILL ALSO HELP

To attend classes as **an observer** for 1 or 2 weeks before starting to perform your functions as a language assistant.

## TRY TO

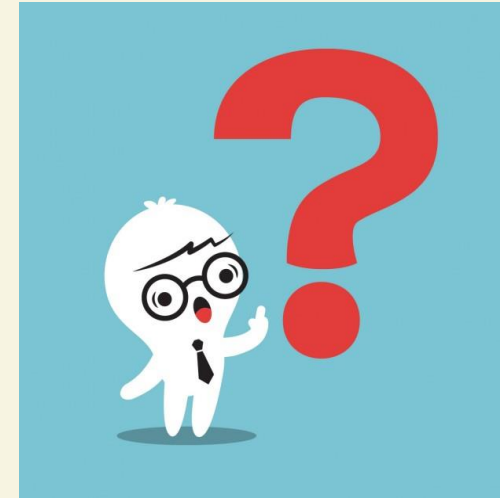
- Be **flexible** with the different schedules the school may propose.
- Negotiate your **schedule (12 hours per week)** as much as possible.
- Talk to your **teacher and the school** if you find yourself in an **unusual situation** (too many hours of class, lack of instruction and preparation on the teacher's part, total responsibility as a group teacher, etc.).



## IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

You should **ask for help in this order**:

1. Your mentor teacher.
2. Head of Department or Head of Studies.
3. Department of Education of your autonomous community.
4. Ministry of Education and Vocational Training-  
"Unidad de Acción Educativa Exterior".
5. The organization in charge of the program in your country.





GOBIERNO  
DE ESPAÑA

MINISTERIO  
DE EDUCACIÓN  
Y FORMACIÓN PROFESIONAL

# CONTACT

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