

WRITING

This lesson plan is for a 50 minute class of Spanish 508k (beginner-intermediate). It should be done in the very first days of class, when they do not know each other well so the pragmatic aspect of introductions can be exploited. Simultaneously, it is a good way to review the uses of the verb to be, a grammar point they should already know if they register for this course. By writing a short introduction of themselves, they explore one part of the very language corpora generated by the verb to be.

To warm up and help them learn the script of presentations in Spanish without forcing them to talk about themselves, the first activity is based on characters familiar to them. They could be well-known celebrities, athletes, politicians, comedians, etc. They will have the name of a famous persona attached to their back, and they have to guess who they are by asking their partner information about that famous person.

The second activity is a dictogloss. After Al-Batal's class we could question the last step, that is to say, comparing the student reconstruction of it with the original one. In this case we don't think it is problematic because of the level of the text. It is very easy, so it works as an orthography reinforcement activity, and the aim of this particular activity is to write a brief, but well-written introduction.

The third activity is based on the text read for the dictogloss. It is a short description of the tennis player Rafael Nadal. Having this description works as a model for writing their own introductions afterwards. Linking the uses of the verb to be for presentation purposes, the final task will be easier for them.

Finally, in the last activity, as a class, they will decide what they want to share or what they want to know about their classmates. This is important because their presentations will be posted in Blackboard, and they have to respond to two classmates' descriptions with whom they have something in common.

As Prof. Abrams pointed out, the writing assignment has to be planned as a continuum of activities. We tried to layer this assignment as much as possible in 50 minutes, preparing the students to be successful in writing their presentations. Due to their Spanish level, this is a getting skill activity. Presentations are very culturally structured and schematized, so the activity is planned to teach them the script in Spanish. Even if it is very structured, nonetheless, this activity is also an example of communicative writing. By posting their presentations, this feature is accentuated.

Objective: to make the students write an authentic introduction of themselves, so they can get to know their classmates a little bit more.

Subskills: vocabulary related to characteristic and traits, uses of the verb to be.

INSTRUCTIONS	TIME
Activity 1. Identify a character	5 min
Activity 2. Dictogloss about Rafael Nadal	15 min
Activity 3. Rafael Nadal's biography and review of the uses of the verb to be	10 min
Activity 4. Writing a short presentation	20 min

ACTIVIDAD 1. Preguntas para identificarte.

Each student will have the name of a famous person attached to their back (in the last page there is possible list of famous people). You have to find out who you are by asking questions of your partners. To warm up, you can start by asking these questions:

¿Soy hombre o mujer?

¿Cómo soy?

¿Por qué soy famoso?

¿Cuál es mi profesión?

¿De dónde soy?

¿Cuántos años tengo?

ACTIVIDAD 2. Dictogloss. RAFA NADAL

Paso 1. The instructor will read a text out loud once. The second time you have to take notes, focus on keywords.

Paso 2. Compare your notes with a partner.

Paso 3. Listen to the text one more time.

Paso 4. In pairs, try to reconstruct the paragraph using your notes.

Paso 5. Compare your reconstruction to the original. Pay attention to spelling, you may use this vocabulary on your introduction.

Hola. Mi nombre es Rafael Nadal, pero todo el mundo me llama Rafa. Soy de Mallorca, España, y tengo veinte años. Mi cumpleaños es el 3 de junio. Soy un jugador profesional de tenis desde el año 2001. También practico otros deportes como el fútbol y el golf. Soy alto, fuerte y moreno. Mi pelo es largo y oscuro. Soy un jugador competitivo y agresivo y mi torneo favorito es el Roland Garros. La gente dice que soy uno de los mejores jugadores del mundo pero yo creo que todavía tengo mucho que aprender. Cuando tengo un partido, la mayoría de mi familia y mis amigos me ven en la televisión. Mi tío es el único que siempre está en los torneos porque él es mi entrenador. Su nombre es Toni Nadal y siempre está en la pista para apoyarme. Nuestra vida es muy intensa y siempre estamos muy ocupados. Aunque parezco una persona dura, soy muy sensible: una de mis películas favoritas es *Titanic*. Cuando no juego al tenis salgo con mis amigos o voy al cine. Creo que es bueno pasar tiempo con la gente que me quiere. También me encanta la comida. Como mucha pasta y mariscos, ¡me encanta su sabor!

ACTIVIDAD 3. Las presentaciones y el verbo ser

In this activity, we will review the verb to be and its uses. In this case, we will focus on those uses that are appropriate when introducing someone.

Paso 1. Read Rafa Nadal's presentation and identify the main topics.

Paso 2. As you will see in this step, it is almost impossible to introduce yourself without using the verb to be. There are many uses for this verb, follow the instructions to grasp them all.

1. Underline all the forms of the verb "ser".

2. Now give one example from the text for each of the following uses of "ser":
 - a) To identify people and things:

 - b) To describe people and things:

 - c) With **de**, to express origin:

 - d) To express generalizations (only **es**):

3. Complete the following statement:
"We often use the verb **ser** to refer to something that is _____"
 - a) caused temporarily by something else
 - b) a trait, a characteristic

ACTIVIDAD 4. *Now is your turn. You have to write a short presentation of yourself. Before doing it, let's discuss as a class what you are comfortable sharing about yourself with your new classmates.*

Paso 1. What kind of information does a person provide when describing themselves to someone they do not know?

Paso 2. As a group, we will choose 5 topics to be included in a short presentation. Make your proposal. Discuss it with your partner.

Paso 3. According to the topics chosen by the class, write a short presentation to introduce yourself. Post this in the Blackboard discussion section.

Paso 4. On Blackboard, write short (one or two sentences) responses to two classmates' descriptions with whom you have something in common.

POSSIBLE FAMOUS PEOPLE:

Shaquille O'Neal

Paris Hilton

Tiger Woods

Lindsay Lohan

Tom Cruise

Katie Couric

George W. Bush

Oprah Winfrey

Michael Jordan

Hillary Clinton

Vince Young

Serena Williams

Kevin Durant

Cameron Diaz

Shakira

Zach Braff

Brad Pitt

Natalie Portman

Angelina Jolie

Barack Obama

Condoleezza Rice

Martha Stewart

Bill Gates

David Letterman