

# I. Introduction to *Puntos de partida*

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*Puntos de partida: An Invitation to Spanish* is a first-year program that emphasizes the four language skills—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—in a communicative approach to language learning. The goal of *Puntos de partida* is to help students learn to communicate in Spanish—converse with others, express their own ideas in writing, and read and understand what others have written. The authors assume that effective communication depends on practice and have included meaningful, communicative exercises and activities as well as contextualized practice. Learning about Hispanic cultures is assumed to be an integral part of the language learning process.

The textbook's eighteen main chapters are preceded by a two-part preliminary chapter, **Ante todo**, which introduces students to the Spanish language, the text format, and the program overall. The eighteen main chapters feature a user-friendly structure that introduces and practices vocabulary and grammar, as well as a wealth of cultural information. A new section, called **Perspectivas culturales**, has been added to each chapter of the Seventh Edition. It integrates the two new *Video Program* segments, **Entrevista cultural** and **Entre amigos**, as well as readings and information about the target country or countries of each chapter. Each of the main chapters also includes an optional section, **Un paso más**, which includes culminating reading and writing exercises. Instructors may use part or all of this section, according to individual needs, interests, and schedules.

A popular feature since the Sixth Edition of *Puntos de partida* is the format of the *Instructor's Edition* (IE) of the textbook. The extensive annotation system for instructors using *Puntos de partida* has always been a matter of utmost pride and care for its authoring team. This edition of the *Puntos de partida* IE keeps the design that allows room to include all notes for each section on the margins; the enlarged trim-size permits the notes to wrap around the Student Edition text. These marginal annotations include suggestions for introducing vocabulary and grammar, preparatory activities, follow-up or extension activities, activity variations, and other useful suggestions for the **Nota cultural**, **Nota comunicativa**, **Lectura**, **Escritura**, and other features of the Student Edition. Experienced users of the *Puntos de partida* IE will find the large-size format of the Seventh Edition a comprehensive instructional resource, and new users will learn readily to navigate the wealth of annotations and other materials now offered by the *Puntos de partida* program.

The enlarged trim size also allows for specialized annotations, which include:

- **Resources:** an at-a-glance listing of the *Puntos* ancillaries available in each chapter
- **National Standards:** these notes highlight some of the activities that fall into the five National Standards, also known as the Five C's: communication, communities, cultures, comparisons, and connections
- **Heritage speaker annotations:** specific notes in Spanish that address issues of importance for those students in class who come from homes in which Spanish is/was spoken
- **Multimedia:** notes that offer suggestions for out-of-class activities involving the use of Internet resources, in addition to suggestions for integrating the *Puntos* video and other media resources
- **Culture:** additional notes that further enhance the cultural content
- **Refrán:** a common Spanish proverb or saying, directly related to the grammar point or vocabulary theme found on the corresponding Student Edition page
- **Bright Idea!:** annotations that offer specific suggestions submitted by an instructor currently using *Puntos de partida* in the classroom

Special care has been given to clarify and standardize all notes. Annotations are color- and design-coded, and follow a clear pattern for the text area where they appear. For instance, Multimedia and National Standards annotations always appear at the bottom of the text, whereas annotations related to explanations of material and exercises are always on the side.

The *Puntos de partida* IE format, with its extensive annotation system, is designed to provide instructors, especially those who are starting to teach, with all the assistance and resources they need to offer students an input-rich, diversified experience learning Spanish. The IE should be used in combination with the “Chapter-by-Chapter Supplementary Materials,” Section VIII of this manual, which unifies clearly all resources for each chapter under one heading.

*Each chapter is organized around a cultural or practical theme, with grammar, vocabulary, and culture working together as an interactive unit.*

The opening pages of each chapter establish the chapter theme with a photograph that highlights an aspect of the theme. The photograph also reflects the target country, or one of the target countries, of the chapter. Marginal annotations in the IE offer suggestions for using this photograph in class. On the right, a small map features the targeted country or countries of the chapter, accompanied by a small photograph of the interviewee featured in the **Entrevista cultural** portion of the video. When two countries are targeted, there are two interviewees. Note that all interviewees are native speakers of the targeted country. Furthermore, each interviewee discusses a topic directly related to the chapter theme. Thus, language and culture are seamlessly united in the video.

The **Vocabulario: Preparación** section focuses on theme-related vocabulary (family, shopping, and so forth). Since most of the chapter vocabulary is introduced in this first major section of the chapter, a focus on vocabulary is achieved that is separate, to a large extent, from the study of grammar. Once students are familiar with theme vocabulary, most of the grammar exercises are based on situations related to the chapter theme and are therefore conducive to natural and meaningful language practice.

The theme is also reentered in the **Videoteca** section toward the end of the chapter, in the recombination activities of the **Un poco de todo** section, in the **Notas culturales** and **En los Estados Unidos y el Canadá...** boxes, and in the **Un paso más** section. Extensive use of photographs and realia provide realistic and informative glimpses of Hispanic cultures.

*Cognate vocabulary and real language are used throughout the text.*

The extensive use of cognate vocabulary, especially in the early chapters, increases students’ ability to communicate in Spanish while making minimum demands for new vocabulary memorization. Use of cognates helps students cope with their linguistic limitations as beginning language learners and encourages them to make linguistic predictions.

In all sections of the text, even in the more mechanical activities, an attempt has been made to present students with “real-world” language. In activities, this means that individual items help students form sentences that they might want to say in real-life situations. Usually the exercise directions or set-up will establish this context. In dialogues and readings, unfamiliar vocabulary and structures are glossed or translated at the bottom of the page (in the case of minidiálogos) rather than avoided. In realia, language is minimally glossed and has not been altered (although some—but not all—typographical errors have been fixed), and in this Instructor’s Manual, instructors will find suggestions for using realia in ways appropriate to students’ language levels at different stages of the course. Thus natural language input is provided, but great care has been taken to ensure that students need not *produce* unfamiliar vocabulary or structures.

*Receptive skills provide the basis for the development of productive skills.*

Throughout *Puntos de partida*, attention is paid to the development of all four language skills. Most sections of the text offer students opportunities to work with new vocabulary and grammar concepts in a receptive mode (listening and reading) before having to produce them actively (speaking or writing). The *Instructor’s Edition* contains abundant suggestions for listening comprehension activities and listening-based follow-ups to text activities.

*Communication is an integral part of each grammar section.*

The opportunity for student self-expression is integrated into each grammar section. The **Práctica** activities are more controlled, form-focused activities. Even here, however, activities are set into contexts that infuse them with meaning: a general, “umbrella” situation, a logical sequence of actions, a story, and so on. Many **Práctica** exercises permit some student input within controlled situations. Others are accompanied by brief comprehension activities (in the student text or in the *Instructor’s Edition*) that focus students’ attention on the meaning of the activity they have just completed. One particular type of **Práctica** activity is called ¡**Anticipemos!**. This special activity often appears as the first activity after a grammar point has been introduced. It is carefully designed to ease students into the use of the new grammar point by requiring only *recognition* of the targeted grammar, rather than *production*. The activities that follow will then require that students produce the grammar point in question.

**Práctica** exercises are followed by the **Conversación** section, in which activities encourage students to use the newly learned structures to talk about personally meaningful topics. Thus, students do not have to wait until the end of the chapter or the end of the book to begin expressing themselves with new structures. Many of the **Conversación** exercises consist of interviews or partner/pair and small-group work, providing students an opportunity to share ideas and use Spanish in a natural, relaxed conversational setting.

*Chapter and text organization provide for built-in review.*

In each chapter, the sections called **Vocabulario: Preparación, Pronunciación, and Gramática** provide a carefully controlled introduction and practice of new materials. The material introduced in these three sections is then combined, reentered, and reviewed in the review activities of the **Un poco de todo** section, and in the readings and writing activities. This systematic reentry and review is designed to reinforce new knowledge and strengthen communication skills.

The **Un poco de todo** sections also provide systematic review of major topics such as **ser/estar**, preterite/imperfect, and so on. **¿Recuerda Ud.?** sections, at the beginning of some **Gramática** sections, review earlier concepts on which new grammar is based. Finally, the new **Autopueba** feature found at the end of many **Gramática** sections offers students the opportunity to instantly review and check their comprehension of that specific grammar point.

*A variety of material and exercises provides flexibility.*

The exercises and activities in *Puntos de partida* encourage the development of all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Many exercises lend themselves to either oral or written practice; individual course goals and instructors’ preferences will determine how they will be used.

Additional activities provided in many sections of the *Instructor’s Edition* and in the Instructor’s Manual and Resource Kit provide supplementary or alternative classroom practice, and individual instructors may select those activities that best meet the needs of their students.

Ancillary materials—Workbook, Laboratory Manual, the CD-ROM, and the Video on CD—provide additional out-of-class practice. Because the answers to many exercises are provided in the student text, Workbook, and Audio Program, students can check their answers at home and in the laboratory, saving class time for conversation practice. Most ancillary materials also offer many exercises and activities (of a more creative or open-ended nature) for which answers are not provided for students. Instructors may wish to collect these exercises to read and/or grade them as a way of monitoring students’ progress.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR SECOND-YEAR PROGRAMS

The choice of an intermediate text to use in second-year courses, after using *Puntos de partida* in the first year, should be determined by the goals of your second-year program. If a focus on grammar is desired, you will want to select a text that has a strong grammar emphasis. If your intermediate program is highly communicative in nature, a text that de-emphasizes grammar in some way may meet your needs.

The following intermediate titles published by McGraw-Hill are appropriate for use in the intermediate sequence following *Puntos de partida*. McGraw-Hill also publishes a wide variety of cultural and literary readers for use as supplements to a text-driven course. Please contact your local McGraw-Hill sales representative for more information on these and other McGraw-Hill titles.

¡*Avance!*: *Intermediate Spanish* (Bretz, Dvorak, Kirschner, Bransdorfer, Kihyet: 2004). This exciting new program is for second-year students of Spanish. In response to requests from many users of the highly acclaimed *Pasajes* series, McGraw-Hill has published this single volume version, which distills the very best of *Pasajes: Lengua, Cultura, and Literatura*. The result is a comprehensive yet manageable program that enriches students' language foundation in thematic vocabulary and grammatical structures with a broad selection of literary and cultural readings.

¿*Qué te parece?* Media Edition (Lee, Young, Wolf, Chandler: 2003). Appropriate for any communicative or proficiency-based intermediate course, ¿*Qué te parece?* Media Edition offers students and instructors a refreshing change from the traditional topics of first- and second-year texts. Highly interesting and thought-provoking topics provide the framework for a complete grammar review with many task-based activities.

*Punto y aparte: Spanish in Review: Moving Toward Fluency* (Foerster, Lambright, Alfonso-Pinto: 2003). This program is the ideal bridge for students who have completed first-year or beginning Spanish and plan to go on to upper division course work in the language. It focuses on seven major communicative functions: describing, comparing, reacting and recommending, narrating in the past, expressing likes and dislikes, hypothesizing, and talking about the future.

*Al corriente: Curso intermedio de español* (Blake, González Pagani, Ramos, Marks: 2003). This one-volume intermediate grammar review offers vocabulary development, grammar presentations, and many communicative activities. Authentic readings from journals and literature help students build reading skills.

*Pasajes: An Intermediate Spanish Program* (Bretz, Dvorak, Kirschner, Bransdorfer: 2002). This popular component program for intermediate Spanish offers instructors great flexibility. Any of the three volumes—*Lengua, Cultura, and Literatura*—can be used alone or in conjunction with each other. For each chapter in *Pasajes*, all three volumes share the same theme, grammar focus, and vocabulary. The Workbook/Laboratory Manual is coordinated with *Pasajes: Lengua* and offers additional practice with vocabulary and structures, as well as listening comprehension, pronunciation practice, and additional readings.

¡*De viva voz!* *Intermediate Conversation and Grammar Review* (Thomas: 2001). This second-year communicative text concentrates on conversation, and emphasizes the thematic and lexical structures necessary to support oral changes.