

FEATURES OF ¡VIVA EL ESPAÑOL!

¡Viva el español! concentrates on many important factors in teaching Spanish to elementary school children. The following features are integrated throughout the program.

Focus on Children

An effective way of motivating children in the learning of foreign language is to make the child's environment the center of communication. The vocabulary and activities introduced in *¡Viva el español!* deal with the child's surroundings, such as the school, the classroom, friends, the house, the family, and the community. The child also learns vocabulary related to fun activities, and practices and reviews the vocabulary through games, songs, conversations with the puppet, pantomime, and role-playing activities that combine speaking skills, physical movement, and creative drama techniques.

Vocabulary and Structures

In *¡Viva el español!* the vocabulary words and structures in each lesson have been carefully planned to introduce the basic words that children will use in their immediate surroundings and gradually spiral outward to encompass the community. The first lessons introduce Spanish names, greetings, classroom vocabulary, and the necessary vocabulary words to encourage communication. In instances in which different words exist for a single object or concept, the most appropriate ones were chosen for elementary-level children who are learning Spanish for the first time.

Cultural Accent

¡Viva el español! introduces the cultures of the Spanish-speaking world through the material contained in **La cultura y tú**. Focusing on culture, this section dovetails with the material and vocabulary covered in the lesson. The objective is to expose children, in the simplest way, to the history and culture of the Spanish-speaking people. Additional hands-on activities that tie into the lesson can be found in the Culture Resource Book. These activities are flexible enough to allow teachers to complete them at any time during the lesson, either as a preview of the culture point of the lesson or as a culmination activity.

Communication Aid: Hand Puppet

One essential component provided in the *¡Viva el español!* Systems is a hand puppet. The hand puppet can be used most effectively with children to develop communication skills. The hand puppet is also very easy for the children to manipulate. Because children can accept the puppet as a "friend" more quickly, communication emerges faster and more spontaneously. During the first few days of class, the children need to be introduced to the puppet so they can identify with it. At the beginning you will need to encourage the children to talk to the puppet and show them how easy and fun it is. Then, during the warm-up sessions, the children should interact with the puppet in a very friendly, informal atmosphere. This tool of communication is very helpful, especially for encouraging children to feel comfortable speaking in front of the class or with a teacher.



Developing Language Skills

System A develops listening, comprehension, and speaking skills. The listening skills are developed through several methods. The everyday warm-up sessions, the review material, and the Audio CDs give children practice in discriminating sounds. The use of the puppet encourages children to begin communicating with each other. Through listening,

children discriminate sounds and begin to comprehend basic structures, expressions, and practical vocabulary words. Through speaking, children are encouraged to make simple statements about themselves and their surroundings. The development of these language skills is reinforced every day through the use of the various components and the activities suggested through the use of the various components and the activities suggested in the lessons.