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Introduction

Formerly as UW-La Crosse modern language majors, you were required to complete two writing emphasis courses, at least one of which was a course in our department. Beginning the fall semester of 2002, you will be able to fulfill your writing emphasis requirement through the newly organized Writing in the Modern Language Major Program. In this program you will use writing as a tool for learning a second language. You will also become proficient in using the written language in various genres in which you may be asked to write upon graduating with a modern language major. Instead of being concentrated in one or two courses, instruction to improve your writing skills will be incorporated into all of the courses you will take as a modern language major. As you move through the major, you will be asked to take ownership of the writing process and to become increasingly more self-directed and able to self-edit and self-evaluate for content, clarity, coherence and organization as well as grammar, syntax, spelling and punctuation.

The Writing-in-the -Major Program

Your work in developing effective writing processes in the modern language major actually begins even before the courses required for the major. In Spanish/French/German 201 (the intermediate level) students begin systematic development of the writing skills necessary to do the formal writing required of a modern language major. Below you will find summarized the general expectations for each level of study.

At the 200 level, emphasis is on sound paragraph construction, with clear topic sentences and appropriate supporting examples. In 202, you will also be encouraged to expand your vocabulary and use more complex sentence structures.

In 300-level language courses, you will work with authentic texts, both aural and written, identifying essential information and learning to summarize the most important ideas and to express them in your own words. Compositions at this level will require you to develop a main thesis, with several supporting paragraphs and to make use of effective introductions and conclusions. Composition assignments include a realistic context and audience when appropriate.

In the 300-level Introduction to Literature course you will learn the essential characteristics of literary genres and examine various interpretive strategies for approaching literature. In this course some of the most important objectives are: working with register in language use, developing the ability to synthesize ideas from various sources (individual reading, supplementary materials, class discussion) and combining them into a coherent essay. In order to develop a sensitivity to point of view, you may be asked to do one or more of the following types of assignments: writing to a character in the literary work (with a particular objective/relationship in mind), taking on the point of view of a character, writing an original poem, essay or short story inspired by a reading, studying a theatrical character from the point of view of an actor.

In the more advanced courses at the 300 and 400 level, you will work on developing a more polished, idiomatic style in the target language. You will learn that writing relatively correct sentences in the target language is only a first goal, that you can also learn to produce writing that is more powerful, more elegant, more persuasive or more amusing. You will work on the following skills: refinement of organization in longer essays; thesis development with several paragraphs each developing and supporting part of the thesis along with a strong introduction and conclusion; using more complex syntax, in particular coordinating and subordinating conjunctions with proper use of indicative and subjunctive moods; developing rhetorical structure and use of cohesive devices.

The goal of the department over the course of four years would be for you to develop many of the characteristics of an Advanced-level writer, although Intermediate-High is the minimum acceptable level for teacher certification. The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) defines the Advanced level as follows:

Able to write routine social correspondence and join sentences in simple discourse of at least several paragraphs in length on familiar topics. Can take notes, write cohesive summaries, as well as narratives and descriptions of a factual nature. Has sufficient writing vocabulary to express self simply with some circumlocution. May still make errors in punctuation and spelling. Good control of the morphology and most frequently used syntactic structures, e.g., common word order patterns, coordination, subordination, but makes frequent errors in producing complex sentences. Uses a limited number of cohesive devices, such as pronouns, accurately. Writing may resemble literal translations from the native language, but a sense of organization (rhetorical structure) is emerging. Writing is understandable to natives not used to reading the writing of non-natives.

In addition to the above characteristics of the ACTFL Advanced level, we expect that you will be able to do the following in writing upon completion of the French, Spanish or German Studies major:

- Incorporate information and points of view gleaned from a variety of sources into a coherent, critical essay
- Write in sociolinguistic registers appropriate to a variety of situations (e.g. letter to a personal friend vs. business letter)
- Demonstrate cultural knowledge and sensitivity
- Analyze an issue and present the arguments in a logical and organized manner
- Document sources appropriately

Types of Writing and Their Purpose

As part of this program you will be asked to do two very different types of writing: informal writing and formal writing. It is important that you understand the differences between them.

Informal Writing

Purpose: To help you learn the content of the course.

Audience: Yourself (and, occasionally, others very familiar with your subject and purpose, such as your classmates and your instructor)

Examples: Journals, in-class notes, notes taken out of class, informal activities done in class (lists, brainstorming, categorizing, elaborating, free writing) and early drafts of formal writing; homework assignments incorporating specific vocabulary and grammatical structures

Correctness: Only what is necessary for understanding. The purpose of these varied writing activities is to practice what is being or has been learned and to give you a creative outlet for your ideas. (You may be asked to do simple editing—e.g. checking for agreement of nouns, adjectives and articles—on homework assignments and in journals.)

Evaluation: Informal writing is not meant to be judged as a well-written display of knowledge; it is effective if

- everyone who needs to read it can understand it
- it helps you explore and develop your thoughts and feelings
- it helps you recognize and organize what you know
- it reveals what you don't know or are confused about
- it stimulates further reflection and dialogue
- it helps you to acquire new structures and vocabulary

Formal Writing

Purposes: The following are some possible purposes of formal writing:

- To communicate your knowledge
- to display your skill in applying concepts
- to make requests
- to seek information
- to present yourself to others
- to persuade

Audience: Your instructor and/or other readers, such as peers in the profession or general readers, people in business, schools or tourism in the countries where the target language is spoken

Examples: Guided compositions; compositions based on a specific theme but for which you are free to develop your ideas; a formal letter incorporating specific grammatical aspects; a critical evaluation or response to a specific reading or topic. These writing assignments will go through a “developmental” stage with a number of drafts which will receive feedback for content, organization and mechanics.

Correctness: The writing must follow the conventions your audience expects and is familiar with: spelling, punctuation, grammar, proper format and style.

Evaluation: Potential readers of formal writing have clear expectations that should be taken into consideration by the writer. Your formal writing will be evaluated with those expectations in mind. In particular, your writing should display:

- clear organization
- adequate development of ideas
- clear reasoning and transitions
- effective engagement and guidance of potential readers
- informed use of the conventions of the form (e.g. documentation style and proper citation of sources for a research paper, appropriate formal language for a business letter)

Use of the process approach: feedback and evaluation criteria

As a crucial component in the Writing-in-the-Major Program, faculty in the Department of Modern Languages have agreed on common criteria and a common process to be used in responding to your written work. For many writing assignments you will be asked to do multiple drafts. Because you face the challenge of a new syntax and grammar, faculty members have agreed that feedback on the first draft of formal writing assignments will focus more on content and cultural authenticity, on clarity and comprehensibility of ideas, and on organization and overall structure and less on grammatical accuracy. In subsequent drafts, you will receive more detailed feedback on grammatical difficulties, with a focus on recurring problems, so that you can begin forming a personal list of concepts to keep in mind when beginning or revising subsequent written work.

The model criteria agreed upon by all faculty as the basis for evaluating formal written work are included in the appendices of this manual and can also be found posted on the departmental web page and in the Language Resource Center where you meet with tutors. These criteria will be adapted according to the specific assignment and the level of the class. Faculty will provide you with specific criteria for all formal writing assignments. For formal writing assignments with multiple drafts, grading will take into account the work done throughout the process rather than awarding a grade based solely on a final draft.

Throughout the writing process, you will be held increasingly more responsible for your own editing and revision. In order to aid you in improving this aspect of your writing, faculty have agreed on a common set of editing symbols which will help you to correct your own errors. These will vary from one language to another but will have in common the goal of helping you to identify your areas of grammatical difficulty and to become increasingly better at correcting them yourself.

Availability of Writing Aids

While feedback from your instructors is important in the process of learning to write, in order to improve your written communication, you will need to take increasing responsibility for editing and revising your own work. In addition to the above-mentioned criteria and correction symbols, a number of other aids are provided for your use. Included in this packet is the Guide to Editing Your Written Work, a step-by-step outline to lead you through the editing process. It also includes a list of conjunctions, relative pronouns and other words and phrases useful to you in putting together compound and complex sentences, a list of some of the most commonly used idiomatic expressions in your language, including some of the false or partial cognates which contrast markedly with English usage. You should regularly consult this quick and easy reference to aid you in making your writing more comprehensible to the native reader.

Dictionaries are available from Textbook Rental and can also be consulted in the library and the Language Resource Center. Also available in the Language Resource Center are various references, electronic writing assistants and spelling/grammar checks. All UW-La Crosse computer labs now have grammar and spelling check for languages other than English in their word processing program. If you have trouble accessing the appropriate programs or features in any of the labs, please request assistance. For general assistance in writing (organization, documentation, ideas for introductions and conclusions, etc.), the English Writing Center can also provide valuable advice. It is located in 304 Carl Wimberly (North) Hall. Beginning at the 200 level you will receive explicit instruction (as deemed necessary by the instructor) in the effective use of these tools. If you feel that you need more assistance, please ask your instructor to provide you with additional help.

Plagiarism and proper citation of sources

Whenever you use information from other sources in your writing, you have an academic and ethical responsibility to give proper credit to those sources. Failure to do so—even unintentionally—constitutes plagiarism and is subject to disciplinary action. The University of Wisconsin System rules contain the following statement regarding academic misconduct:

UWS 14.01 STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES: The Board of Regents, administrators, faculty, academic staff, and students of the University of Wisconsin system believe that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to the mission of higher education and of the University of Wisconsin System. The University has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors. Students who violate these standards must be confronted and must accept the consequences of their actions.

Proper representation of your work includes not only footnoting your sources but also inserting material from other sources into your own work in a way that makes it clear what is "yours" and what is "theirs." There are many useful Internet sites that provide guidance on how to achieve this goal. You are strongly encouraged to consult your instructor or any of the following sites for help with this important and question.

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html>

<http://condor.stcloud.msus.edu/~scogdill/339/paraphra.html>

<http://library.byu.edu/~rdh/eurodocs/cite.html>

<http://www.hamilton.edu/academics/resource/wc/AvoidingPlagiarism.html>

<http://sja.ucdavis.edu/avoid.htm>

<http://www.writing.northwestern.edu/tips/plag.html>

It is also important to note that if you use the work of others in place of your own, you are the loser, since you are depriving yourself of the opportunity to further develop your own intellectual and linguistic skills.

Typing accents on the computer

Accents in Windows

There are standard key combinations which allow you to type accents in Microsoft Word. First, type the key combination (nothing will appear), then type the letter to be accented (both letter and accent appear together).

PRESS THESE KEYS...	...RELEASE, THEN TYPE...	...FOR THIS LETTER
Ctrl + Shift + ~	n	ñ
Ctrl + ´	a, e, i, o, u	á, é, í, ó, ú
Ctrl + `	a, e, i, o, u	à, è, ì, ò, ù
Ctrl + Shift + ^	a, e, i, o, u	â, ê, î, ô, û
Ctrl + Shift + :	a, e, i, o, u	ä, ë, ï, ö, ü
Ctrl + ,	c	ç
Ctrl + Alt + Shift + ?		¿
Ctrl + Alt + Shift + !		¡

Note: There is a simplified procedure (not requiring the Control key) if the US International Keyboard is selected. This is available on the Language Resource Center computers.

Accents on Macintosh Computers

<option> + e, then e (or other vowel) = é
 <option> + ` , then e (or other vowel) = è
 <option> + u, then e (or other vowel) = ë
 <option> + i , then e (or other vowel) = ê

<option> + n, then n = ñ
 <option>, + c = ç
 <option> + ? = ¿
 <option> + ! = ¡

Personal Responsibility

As you receive more detailed feedback on grammatical difficulties, you will be asked to keep a progressive personalized list of problem areas which you should consult when working on future assignments. You should carry this list forward from one level of instruction to another and may be asked by an instructor to show this personal editing list. Ultimately, you are responsible for your own progress in learning to communicate more effectively in writing. When you turn in a formal writing draft, it is your responsibility to have edited your paper for basic grammatical accuracy, such as agreement (masculine/feminine, singular/plural, subject/verb and noun/modifier) and certain other features that typically pose problems to those writing in a second language. An instructor has the right to refuse to read and give credit for drafts that neglect this common and essential step in the writing process. Some instructors may require that you sign off on this step, certifying that you have proofread for a given set of common errors.

The Modern Language Major Writing Portfolio

As a modern language major you will be required to keep a writing portfolio. You should keep in this portfolio two samples of informal writing and at least one complete formal writing project (with all drafts and comments) for each upper-level course taken in the major. It is your responsibility to have this portfolio available to be checked at the time of the final examination in each major level course. You may wish to consult with individual instructors regarding the selection of writing samples to be placed in this portfolio. In your portfolio you must also have a copy of your personal list of grammatical problem areas which you need to refer to when revising or editing your formal writing.

The department is aware that some students in upper-level classes are not certain yet whether or not they are planning to major in the modern language. Since the writing emphasis requirement for graduation will be fulfilled for modern language majors through the new Writing in the Modern Language Major Program, we are asking that all students in 300-level courses and above keep a portfolio. Periodically, a number of student portfolios will be selected to be reviewed more thoroughly for purposes of programmatic assessment. With this in mind, it is important for you to keep your portfolio up to date. In addition to helping us determine how well our program is helping students learn, the portfolio will be valuable to you in monitoring your own progress toward increasingly greater proficiency in the language.

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL STUDIES of UW-LA CROSSE
FOREIGN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT COMPOSITION EVALUATION GUIDE

Appendix A – Evaluation criteria

COMPOSITION SCORED ON 50 TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS

I. Content and Consideration of Reader (15 points)

13-15 Interesting content and presentation; clear, fluid ideas which are well conceived and developed with sufficient pertinent examples. Consideration of potential readers readily apparent. Signs of originality or thoughtful analysis of topic and information. Research of topic evident.

11-12 Some interesting content; some points not pertinent, sustained and/or fully developed. Consideration of potential readers not always apparent. Some original, some conventional ideas. Generally clear and complete coverage of ideas/topic. Some repetition of ideas.

9-10 Conventional ideas or clichés; little supporting detail included. Difficult to follow development of argument or pertinent ideas. Consideration of readers rarely apparent. Lacking in forethought, insightfulness, originality and clarity. Little or no research of topic in evidence. Some misunderstanding and confusion of information and/or ideas.

7-8 Significant and unnecessary repetition of similar basic ideas. Cursory; gives the impression of writing just to hastily complete the assignment. Consideration of reader not apparent. Incomplete development of ideas and topic leading to confusion and misinterpretation by reader. No research apparent. Misunderstandings of information and poor comprehension of ideas. Inadequate or irrelevant content. Restatements of same basic ideas.

II. Structure and Organization; Logic and Transitions (10 points)

10 Logical progression of ideas from introduction to conclusion with well executed transitions between sentences and paragraphs. Good and appropriate paragraph division. Coherent structure apparent in paragraphs with topic sentences and conclusions.

8-9 Logical progression of ideas but often lacks transitions between paragraphs; difficulties evident in paragraph division and organization. Some structural weaknesses.

6-7 Gaps in logic or no transitions. Lacks organization and well formed paragraphs.

5 Disorganized; appears to have been written as thoughts appeared to the writer. Illogical transitions from idea to idea and between paragraphs. Incomplete, fragmented, and difficult to understand. Unacceptable.

III. Grammatical Accuracy: Verb tenses and moods, syntax, morphology, adjectives and articles, adverbs, relative clauses, pronouns; special uses such as preterit vs. imperfect, future of probability, unplanned occurrences, indirect discourse, if clauses, sequence of tenses, etc. (10 points)

9-10 Appropriate level of complexity in syntax with very few errors, if any. Evidence of careful attention to all aspects of accuracy.

8 Confined to simpler sentence structures with a few errors OR shows variety and complexity in syntax with errors that do not affect comprehensibility.

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- 7 Occasional errors affect comprehensibility. Simplified and repetitious sentence structure.
- 6 Errors frequently affect comprehensibility. Many verb forms incorrect. Poor and simplistic syntax. Many errors that could have been avoided with careful and appropriate use of reference materials, verb charts, or consultation.
- 4-5 Message is largely incomprehensible due to inaccurate grammar which alters or obscures it, OR reader must know English in order to comprehend message. Almost no evidence of syntactical conventions of target language. Shows lack of attempt to use appropriate resources to check grammatical accuracy.

IV. Vocabulary (10 points)

- 10 Uses appropriate and varied vocabulary, including target language idioms, to fit the topic. Incorporates new vocabulary from course materials. Good dictionary skills evident.
- 8-9 Usually appropriate vocabulary with some variety; some errors in usage that do not affect message. Some problems with dictionary usage. Occasional use of idioms, but some inaccuracies due to influence of English.
- 6-7 Often uses inappropriate or nonspecific vocabulary (e.g. overuse of *thing* in place of specific term). Repetitious and limited vocabulary. Imposition of English expressions into target language. Errors that could have been avoided by checking dictionary and using course materials more fully and thoroughly.
- 4-5 Uses only elementary vocabulary; creates nonexistent words from English OR uses words from English. No evidence of knowledge of idiomatic usage or of appropriate use of source materials, including the dictionary.

V. Punctuation, Spelling and Presentation; Editing and Proofreading (5 points)

- 5 Correct spelling (including accents) and punctuation; neatly typed with correct format as specified by instructor (font, type-size, indentation). Evidence of careful editing and proofreading of paper.
- 4 Occasional mechanical errors. Some incorrect spelling, lack of punctuation and care in presentation and/or format. Some errors that could have been avoided by better editing and proofreading.
- 2-3 Frequent mechanical errors. Sloppiness and inattention to detail which contributes to some incomprehension or ambiguity. Spelling often inaccurate.
- 0-1 English spelling and punctuation; no accents; mechanical errors in most sentences. Sloppy, careless and inappropriate attention to details which frustrate reader and create incomprehension and confusion.

Comments:

adapted from Kimberly A Nance and Isidro J. Rivera, *Técnicas de composición*. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1996, pp. xii-xiii.

II. Mejorar tu estilo

A. Ideas para empezar a escribir.

1. Escribir una "lluvia" de palabras" o un "mapa de ideas"
2. Añadir vocabulario, buscar palabras, adjetivos y adverbios. Pensar.
3. Volver a escribir las ideas, usando otras palabras.
4. Escribir un esquema (outline), un primer borrador, etc. Volver a leerlo y hacer cambios.
5. Lo importante es escribir.

B. How to get from the introductory paragraph to the second paragraph. . .in Spanish.

A muchos estudiantes, les gusta concluir el primer párrafo con algo como "I will now explain. . ." Para decir esto en español, se dice "A continuación, explico. . ." (planteo, etc.)

C. Use transitional expressions to combine short sentences:

1. After you have written your "lluvia de palabras," write a first "borrador" (draft). Be sure to have a central idea (thesis, opinion) which you want to prove. Try to express your ideas in short, simple sentences. Be sure that each sentence has a subject and verb. Use adjectives and adverbs appropriately. Use words with which you are familiar because you have seen them used in texts, and you have used them before in other work. Avoid using the dictionary unless you are certain that you have chosen the right word.
2. Read your "primer borrador." Decide which sentences have a logical relationship and combine them. Choose transitional expressions that show the logical relationship between the ideas.

Transitional expressions

para empezar		Así	so
para comenzar	to begin	así que	
primero	first	por consecuencia	therefore
en primer lugar	first of all	por eso	for that reason
mientras	while	por esa razón	
cuando	when	pero	but
de vez en cuando	from time to time	sino + noun	but rather,
sobre todo	above all	sino que + S + V	instead
especialmente	especially	también	also
específicamente	specifically	y	and
además	besides, in addition, also	ni . . . ni	neither. . . nor
entonces	then	o . . . o	either. . . or
luego		no . . . tampoco	neither

después	next, then	a pesar de + noun	in spite of
por ejemplo	for example	a pesar de que + S+V	in spite of
otro ejemplo es	another example is	antes de + noun	before
en otras palabras	in other words	antes de + que + S+V	before (+subj.)
por un lado	on one hand	después de + noun	
por otro lado		después de + que +S+V	after
en cambio	on the other hand	para + infinitivo	(in
order)to+inf			
de otra forma	otherwise	para que +S+V	so that (+subj)
al contrario	on the contrary	porque	because
sin embargo	however	por, a causa de +noun	because
de todos modos		a menos que + S+V	unless (+ subj)
de todas maneras	nevertheless	con tal de que + S+V	provided that (+subj.)
ya no	not anymore		
todavía no	not yet	puesto que, ya que	since, given
todavía, aún	still	como (causal)	that (+subj.)
o sea	es decir	para terminar	finally
hasta + noun	until	para resumir	
hasta + que +S+V	until + clause	como resultado	as a result
igualmente	equally	en conclusión	in conclusion
brevemente	briefly	resumiendo	in summary
en una palabra	in one word	finalmente	

3. Write a "segundo borrador." Add the transitional expressions and make changes. For example, if you combine the following sentences together with *sino que*, some words will no longer be necessary.

Ejemplo: No jugaba ni juegos divertidos ni practicaba deportes nunca. Ella solamente pasaba la vida en ayudar a su mamá con los quehaceres domésticos.

No jugaba ni juegos divertidos ni practicaba deportes nunca, sino que pasaba la vida en ayudar a su mamá con los quehaceres domésticos.

Palabras y expresiones fácilmente confundidas

Hay muchas palabras en inglés que no tienen un solo equivalente en español sino a veces muchos. Esta lista incluye la mayoría de las palabras más comunes que a menudo confunden a los que aprende el español. A continuación hay otras listas de expresiones comunes y expresiones en que el uso de las preposiciones es distinto en español y en inglés.

- actually – realmente (actualmente = currently, nowadays)
- appear - parecer (to seem), aparecer (to show up, as in fairy godmother) ¡OJO!: aparece does NOT mean “seems”
- alone – solo/sola (without an accent); with an accent means “only”
- to ask - preguntar (to ask a question, often followed by a question word) or pedir (to ask for something--don't translate the “for”, Ej: Voy a pedirles dinero a mis padres = I'm going to ask my parents for money. -to ask someone to do something--with subjunctive, Ej: Pídele que te ayude. = Ask her to help you) or hacer una pregunta (literally--to ask a question)
- to attend - asistir a (be present at) ¡OJO! to assist meaning to help=ayudar
- because - ¡OJO! por o a causa de = because of; porque = because, but NOT at the beginning of a clause; use como, debido a que, or a causa de que Ej: Because he didn't eat his carrots, they didn't give him his dessert. Como no comió las zanahorias, no le dieron el postre.
- to become - ponerse (only with adjectives: involuntary emotional or physical state: red, pale, happy) volverse (like poner except it indicates a more drastic change—as in volverse loco--, a lasting change – as in leaves turning red--, an unexpected change or a sudden change), hacerse (refers to a person, becoming purposely, through one's own *efforts*), llegar a ser (“to get to be” - the culmination of a process, often with outside influence), convertirse en (used only with nouns, “to turn into”, hacerse may be used as a synonym in this sense)
- corner - rincón (corner of a room, or figuratively speaking), esquina (outwardly pointing!, as in street corner, corner of a paper, napkin, etc) comisura (corner of the mouth or lips) close - íntimo (closely united in a relationship, close friends) cerca (adv) - in proximity, cercano (adj. as in close relative, or place, un pariente cercano o un pueblo cercano) unida (as in family) una familia unida
- custom, customs, costume – costumbre (habit, custom); la aduana (customs) disfraz (costume); disfrazarse (to disguise oneself)
- date - fecha (calendar date) cita (as appointment or arranged meeting) ¡OJO! “cita” refers only to the meeting not the person, salir con X (to go out with, to have a date with) acompañante, novio, amigo (person you go out with)
- fact - hecho (proven fact, deed, event) dato (data, estadísticas, findings) los datos ¡OJO! EXPRESSIONS: The fact is = El hecho es que... It's a fact. = Es un hecho.
- to feel - sentirse + adjetivo (to feel: bad, good, sick, lonely) sentir (to feel something, + noun, the wind, a cat's fur against your legs, etc; can mean regret = Lo siento; siento mucho no poder ir a tu concierto) does NOT mean “to think” or “have an opinion” as in English “I feel that he is doing a very good job” use creer

- feeling – sentimiento (mental or emotional sentiment, a feeling produced from within oneself) sensación (a sensation or impression that one receives from a given stimulus outside of oneself) sensibilidad (artistic feeling or sensitivity)
- first – al principio (at first, in the beginning) primero (first: First, I'm going to speak about) for the first time (por primera vez) en primer lugar (in the first place)
- free - libre (having freedom to act in a particular way) ser libre (not enslaved) estar libre (not busy, or released from jail or servitude) gratis (not costing anything)
- to happen - ocurrir (¡OJO! dos r's una C) pasar, suceder
- How long have you ¿Cuánto tiempo hace que (+present tense) or ¿Cuánto tiempo llevas (+ place or + verb +ndo) ¿Cuánto tiempo hace que estudias español? ¿Cuánto tiempo llevas estudiando español?
- hurt - doler, (ue) stem-changing verb (to ache, with pronouns me te le nos os les) lastimar or hacer daño, transitive verb: (to cause someone bodily injury, used figuratively as well) ofender (hurt someone's feelings)
- to introduce - presentar (one person to another)
- to know - saber (to know facts, how to do something + infinitive, used before an interrogative); conocer (to be familiar with or acquainted with someone or something, to know by experience)
- to leave - salir (person or thing physically moving away from a place + de if noun follows: to leave home = salir de casa; to leave someone or something behind (dejar, transitive verb) Ella dejó sus libros en casa. Los inmigrantes dejaron a sus familias para buscar una vida nueva.
- long/short - largo (long) bajo (short of height) corto (short of length) corto, breve (brief)
- to mean – significar (used with definitions, not used with person as subject) querer decir (used with definitions or with persons to indicate intended meaning, ie, this is what I meant , “esto es lo que quería decir”
- to meet - conocer (to be introduced to for the first time), encontrar or encontrarse (an encounter, planned or by chance, between people or between a person and a thing), if the verb is intransitive, ie no object, use encontrarse: vamos a encontrarnos a las cinco) reunirse (to have a meeting or to get together)
- to miss - perder (miss an opportunity, deadline, bus, train, etc. because of poor timing) faltar a (miss an appointment or class, because of not showing up) echar de menos, extrañar (miss someone or something that's absent or far away)
- to move - mudarse (to move from one house to another) or trasladarse (to transfer or change from one location (¡job, city) to another) or mover (to move an object or part of your body, + "algo", transitive); moverse (to mover, as in a person or thing that moves by itself)
- only - único (adjective as in only child) sólo or solamente (adverb, used with verbs, to have only "X" of something; Sólo tengo tres dólares.)
- pretend - fingir (to fake or feign) pretender (to expect or to claim) ¡OJO! pretender no significa "to pretend" in the sense of faking
- question - una pregunta (interrogative statement) or cuestión (subject matter as in: la cuestión de si una persona tiene derecho a un trabajo que paga lo suficiente para vivir es una cuestión interesante)

- quiet - callado (not talking or not talkative), silencioso (silent, free from noise), tranquilo (free from disturbing influences) en calma or con calma (calm or calmly)
- to realize darse cuenta de (to figure out or come to the realization of) or realizar (to achieve one's goals)
- to refuse - negarse a + INF (refusal to do something) no querer + INF (in preterite is same as negarse a) rechazar + noun (reject something, as an offer or invitation)
- to quit - dejar de + INF (to stop doing something) Ej.: He She quit smoking. = Dejó de fumar
- to return - intransitive (means without a direct object: I returned home)=volver or regresar, transitive (with a direct object, I returned books, money) =devolver. {¡OJO! If you use devolver intransitively (without an object) it means to throw up)
- sane - cuerdo (in possession of mental faculties) ¡OJO! sano = healthy Both adjectives are frequently used w/ estar or ser: Ella está sana. (She's in a healthy state or condition.) Hacer ejercicio es muy sano. (Exercising is a healthy type of activity.)
- to save - ahorrar (money) salvar (to rescue or save from danger) guardar (to set aside, also means to keep)
- sense or feeling - emociones (emotions as in happiness, sadness etc.) sentimientos (feelings in a more abstract sense) sentidos - (as in the 5 senses, el tacto, el olfato, la vista, el oído, y el gusto) sentido comu'n (common sense), sentido del humor (sense of humor), sensación (sensation or impression, or great excitement), sensibilidad (artistic feeling)
- since - desde (refers to time Since 1945 or since last week, desde 1945, desde la semana pasada) ya que, puesto que or como (cause & effect: because or given that; Since he didn't have any money... Como no tenía dinero..., no podía hacer nada.)
- to sit down - sentarse, be sitting down (estar sentado)
- story - historia or cuento ¡OJO! la cuenta = the bill or the check (in a restaurant)
- to succeed - tener éxito (to be successful) lograr (to succeed in doing something, to obtain or achieve a goal, or to manage to do something Ej: Por fin logré hablar con él.)
- to support - soportar (in a physical sense, to bear the weight of); sostener or mantene (to provide financial subsistence); apoyar (to support emotionally or to back or favor an opinion, ideology, political party)
- to take - llevar (to transport , carry, or take someone or something somewhere) tomar (most other cases: to take something in one's hands, to take in beverages or food, a bus or train, etc, an exam, a vacation) ¡OJO! :
 - to take a trip = hacer
 - to take something away from someone = quitarle algo a alguien
 - to take off clothes = quitarse la ropa
 - to take back, return something = devolver + direct object
 - to take something down = bajar + direct object
 - to take something up = subir + direct object
 - to take something out = sacar + direct object
 - to take advantage of = aprovecharse de
 - to take a certain amount of time to do something, (Ej: Yo tardé 10 minutos en llegar)

- to tell - contar (a story, or joke) or decir (the truth, more general)
- to think - pensar (mental process) pensar & creer also mean to have an opinion, to think of- ¡OJO! 2 different expressions: pensar en (to have general thoughts about, to have something or someone on/in your mind) pensar de (to have an opinion or point of view) Also: thinking of doing something, planning or intending to do something = pensar + infinitive (Ej: ¿Qué piensas hacer este fin de semana?)
- time – divertirse, pasarlo bien, to have a good time; disfrutar de, gozar de – to enjoy something
- time - vez (a specific occasion, once, two times, how many times) tiempo (an amount of time, a long time, how much time; or a specific period, such as a historical era = aquel tiempo or aquellos tiempos), época (synonym of tiempo in sense of specific era or period of time), hora (refers to the hour of the day or the moment for doing something, ie find a "time" (an hour of the day) when I can see you
- try – tratar de + infinitive, or intentar + infinitive or direct object pronoun (to try to do something; to try a food (probar); probarse (to try something on)
- what - cuál (what's your last name, telephone number, etc.), lo que (what when it's not a question) qué (with identifications and definitions)
- which = cuál w/verbs, qué w/nouns
- to work - trabajar (to work, as in physical or mental labor) or funcionar (to work or function as in a mechanical device, strategy, etc.)

Otras expresiones

to turn "x" number of years - cumplir "x" años

to be one's turn - tocarle a uno - Les toca a ustedes. = It's your turn.

to drop (ie. to let fall) dejar caer -

to say goodbye to - despedirse de -

to begin doing something - echarse a, ponerse a -

to make fun of - burlarse de -

to do well – salir bien (in an exam) -

to do something again - volver + a + INF - Ella volvió a reírse. = She laughed again.

Prepositions not needed in Spanish: buscar (to look for) mirar (to look at) pedir (to ask for) esperar (to wait for)

Prepositions needed in Spanish: entrar en (to enter) comenzar a / empezar a + infinitivo
ayudar a + infinitivo

Preposition different from English: depender de, consistir en, llegar a, casarse con, enamorarse de, reírse de - to laugh at; soñar con - to dream about

Words omitted in English but not in Spanish: que for that : I know she's coming = Yo sé que ella viene. para with infinitive to express the idea of purpose When the kids get home from school they go to the computer to play. Cuando los niños llegan a casa, se dirigen al ordenador para jugar. Definite articles to express a group, or idea in general, an abstraction or generalization, Kids these days know more about computers than in my generation. Los niños de hoy en día saben más sobre las computadoras que los de mi generación

Omissions in Spanish but not in English The "an" of another (another problem = otro problema; no se expresa "an" en español)