

Unit 7 Nos presentamos

About the unit

In this unit, pupils learn to compare personal characteristics, to make simple introductions and to express thanks and appreciation.

New language content:

- quantifier *poco*
- regular comparative and superlative adjectives
- formation of adverbs with *-mente*
- direct object pronoun with persons (*le, la, les, las*)

New contexts:

- character descriptions
- meeting people, formally and informally
- being, and welcoming, a guest
- expressing thanks in speech and in a simple informal letter

Alternative contexts: personal descriptions, including personal details; describing members of the family and friends; modes of address; making polite requests.

This unit is expected to take 12–15 hours.

Where the unit fits in

This first unit of year 8 picks up the theme of personal identification, expanding it to include describing character and comparing people. It reinforces and develops pupils' knowledge of gender and agreement, and introduces direct object pronouns used for people. It reinforces understanding of social conventions, including more practice using *usted*.

The unit could serve as preparation for taking part in an exchange visit.

Expectations

At the end of this unit

most pupils will: understand spoken and written descriptions of people, and make comparisons between people; describe themselves and other people, including descriptions of their character, in both speech and writing; use a range of language, including quantifiers and adverbs, to modify their descriptions; respond appropriately in different social situations, *eg* being a guest in a Spanish-speaking family, responding to the receipt of an invitation or gift, using direct object pronouns for persons

some pupils will not have made so much progress and will: understand spoken and written descriptions of people with appropriate stimulus and support; describe themselves and other people in simple terms; use a limited range of quantifiers and adverbs

some pupils will have progressed further and will: use a wider range of language in descriptions; write extended descriptions of people and say why they like or dislike them

Prior learning

It is helpful if pupils already know:

- radical-changing verbs
- all persons of *tener/ser/estar*
- positive commands
- constructions with *gustar, interesar*
- vocabulary for sporting and other activities
- time-related words
- daily routines
- mealtimes
- adjectives of nationality

Resources

Resources include:

- photographs from magazines of people of different ages or family groups
- recorded descriptions of different people
- letters asking for pen-friends, from magazines or websites
- access to the internet
- PCs and word-processing software
- a recording of the Spanish TV version of 'Blind date'

Out-of-school learning

Provide pupils with a list of social conventions in different parts of the Spanish-speaking world, including greetings, accepting, declining, apologising, interjections and exclamations. Pupils use a dictionary to produce a glossary of terms.

Future learning

In unit 8 'La comida' pupils will learn to use the direct object in connection with things rather than persons. They will meet further comparisons in unit 14 'Los medios de comunicación'.

Learning objectives

Pupils should learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Pupils:

Points to note**1**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to consolidate their knowledge of agreement in the context of personal description | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use photographs of people to elicit descriptions from the pupils. Ask them to offer suggestions about age, nationality, family and physical appearance. Reinforce agreement rules. ▲ Pupils may be able to suggest a complete biographical history. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use the language of personal description with confidence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A further related activity can be found in <i>Optional Tests and Tasks 1.3</i>. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to vary and increase the details of the descriptive language they use | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the same photographs, introduce character description, <i>eg simpático, antipático</i>, and qualitative description, <i>eg hermoso, guapo, feo</i>. Make use of quantifiers, <i>eg bastante, muy, poco</i>. See how many words that are similar to English, <i>eg agresivo</i>, pupils can guess and how many synonyms and antonyms they can find, <i>eg simpático, antipático</i>. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> produce an accurate description in greater detail use clues to interpret meaning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils' understanding can be enhanced if photographs of well-known characters from TV soap operas are used. Identifying words that are similar to English, synonyms and antonyms can aid memory work. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to compare one person with another and then with several others | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the comparative and then the superlative of adjectives. Present three male characters on the board, on an OHP, or as photographs. Give each an age, a height and a weight. Create sentences comparing them, <i>eg El Señor Gordo es más grande que el Señor Delgado</i>. Pupils then make similar comparisons, following the model. Use <i>(más) viejo</i> and <i>(más) joven</i> to avoid using <i>mayor</i> and <i>menor</i> at this stage. Extend this activity to a comparison of three female characters. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> make comparisons between people, using appropriate agreement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Mayor</i> and <i>menor</i> are used in unit 14 'Los medios de comunicación'. As homework, pupils could invent other forms of comparison between the characters. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to compose a letter in an informal context | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise with pupils how to write a letter to introduce themselves to a prospective host family in a Spanish-speaking country. They say what they look like, and add a comment on their character, their likes and dislikes. A writing frame can be used to provide support. Pupils could word-process the letter to facilitate redrafting to improve accuracy. As an alternative, pupils write a letter to a prospective Spanish-speaking guest to describe their own family, including the character of any brothers or sisters. ▲ Pupils compare themselves with their siblings, <i>eg Soy más inteligente que mi hermano</i>. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> compose a simple informal letter use the appropriate conventions and style when writing a letter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils were introduced to letter writing in section 8 of unit 6 'Pasatiempos'. There is an opportunity to reintroduce vocabulary relating to where pupils live, their home, daily routines, school and hobbies. Pupils should be familiar with informal letter conventions from their work in English. The letters could be posted or e-mailed to a link school in a Spanish-speaking country. |
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Any activities marked ▲ might be better suited to higher-attaining pupils

Pupils should learn:

Pupils:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to understand descriptive language | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils listen to descriptions of people on tape and write down the main points and details. Vary the descriptions according to the amount of information sought from the pupils. Pupils could write down more familiar material first, eg age, physical description, then add more information as appropriate. Encourage pupils to try to work out the meaning of unfamiliar language from the context or from similarities with words they know in Spanish or in English. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> write down details and main points of descriptions spoken at a near-normal speed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a further exercise, pupils could listen to people in a 'lonely hearts'-type advertisement. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to describe actions using adverbs as modifiers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the formation of adverbs using <i>-mente</i>. Select a few contrasting adjectives which simply need <i>-mente</i> to be added, eg <i>triste</i>, <i>alegre</i>. Mime an action accordingly. Pupils then state the adverb, eg <i>tristemente</i>, to describe the action. Proceed to contrasting adjectives ending in <i>-o</i> and <i>-a</i>, eg <i>furiosola</i>, <i>contentola</i>, to show how these change to <i>-a</i> and then add <i>-mente</i> to form the adverb, and then mime actions as before. Expand this to include expressions of time: <i>Normalmente hago mis deberes a las seis/por la tarde</i>. As part of the context of character description, pupils describe their hobbies; others decide what type of person they are. Revise regular and irregular verbs that relate to hobbies and leisure activities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> vary their use of descriptive language by using adverbs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils have already met adverbs as modifiers in unit 3 'El horario', unit 4 'En casa' and unit 6 'Pasatiempos', eg <i>¿Qué haces/comes normalmente?</i> Introduction of the <i>-mente</i> form at this point does not require lengthy lists of adverbs to be produced. Understanding the principle allows the application of the rule in subsequent situations where adverbs may be needed. The immediate future tense could be taught at this stage (if not covered in unit 6 'Pasatiempos') by adapting sections 9 and 10 from unit 6 and using the context here. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to acquire information about people's character from a variety of sources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils read letters from teenage magazines or websites asking for pen-friends. They decide whether or not to write to that person, and why, eg <i>Prefiero a Juan; es muy simpático e inteligente. No me gusta Juan; es antipático.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop skills of skimming and scanning for information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reintroduce subject pronouns to emphasise choice. Emphasise the use of the personal <i>a</i>, eg <i>Yo prefiero a ... ¿Tú a quién prefieres?</i> A further related activity can be found in <i>Optional Tests and Tasks 1.9</i>. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to understand how direct object pronouns work and how they are formed to use the direct object pronoun to refer to persons | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce the direct object pronoun (for persons). The teacher plays the part of the parent and introduces pupils to one another, modelling the answer, eg <i>¿Conoces a Juan/María? Si le/la conozco</i>. Pupils can practise by asking each other the questions, first in the singular then in the plural. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adapt their spoken and written language by using pronouns | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed explanation of the function of the direct object pronoun is given in unit 8 'La comida'. |
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Any activities marked ▲ might be better suited to higher-attaining pupils

Pupils should learn:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to adapt known language to different contexts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils select a gift to offer to their pen-friend. They explain why they are choosing it, using knowledge about the person. This may be adapted as a reading exercise: offer character descriptions of people and a range of possible gifts. Pupils match the gift to the person. Prompt cards or 'help' boxes could be used to provide support. ▲ Pupils add an explanation of the answer. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use language for a practical purpose | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils could prepare a word-processed file containing descriptions of six gifts (at the top of the page) and six character descriptions (at the bottom). They could 'cut' each character description and 'paste' it above the appropriate gift. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to initiate and develop conversations in the context of meeting the family aspects of social and cultural awareness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reinforce modes of address. Pupils then prepare a role play of their arrival in a Spanish-speaking family. Some will restrict themselves to greetings and introductions, others will introduce material from earlier units, eg mention of mealtimes, showing guest to room and saying where it is, saying what they are going to do. Pupils could include some of the social conventions from their out-of-school activity. ▲ Encourage pupils to include other comments, eg <i>¿Qué tal el viaje?</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> respond appropriately and with the correct forms of address in an informal situation understand formality of <i>usted</i> write and act out role plays | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point out that <i>usted (ustedes)</i> is still widely used in Latin America. Take the opportunity to include material from earlier units in independent work, such as role plays or extended written tasks. Use video presentations to make the context more plausible. |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to express thanks and appreciation in an appropriate register | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils write a thank-you letter to the Spanish-speaking family following their return home. There are opportunities to introduce other adverbs using <i>-mente</i>, eg <i>cordialmente</i>. Pupils write a thank-you letter for a gift received from their pen-friend. Those needing more support could use a writing frame and add simple details of their own. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> write thank-you letters using the correct forms of address (formal and informal), adapting models | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A thank-you letter containing multiple-choice items could be called up on a word processor. The final letter could then be produced by deleting blocks of text. This activity, exclusively focused on reading and selecting, could help pupils consolidate items of vocabulary and structure before they move on to freer writing. |
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End-of-unit activities

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to apply the knowledge, skills and understanding learnt in this unit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils write and present their own version of 'Blind date' to be recorded on video. They could extend this to say why they have chosen candidate 1, 2 or 3. They return to the programme format to say what they think about their chosen partner, using <i>Yo pienso que ... porque...</i> Pupils act in groups as editor of a teenage column in a magazine. They compile a collection of descriptions of people similar to those prepared in this unit and match them to appropriate pupils in the class. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work with others to produce a piece of meaningful language consolidate their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter of the unit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage pupils to work with increasing independence, and to develop key skills such as problem-solving and improving own skills and performance to prepare their way for independent learning and coursework production in the future. |
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Any activities marked ▲ might be better suited to higher-attaining pupils