

ART AND ECOLOGY IN SPANISH

Ideal for family vacations or school partnerships.

Program Description: Children and youth improve their Spanish through class work and dynamic activities and outings. The students spend part of each day with their Mexican peers, engaged in activities related to art and ecology, which includes reforestation and visiting family farms.

The goal of this program is for children from other countries to learn and practice in Spanish while making real, human connections with their Mexican counterparts. This helps them to understand cultural differences, gain an awareness of local environmental and social problems and do some volunteer work that contributes to the solutions of these problems.

The program is set up so parents can take classes at UNIVERSAL while their children participate in this program, if desired. We recommend that the family do a Universal-sponsored homestay with a Mexican family together.

The three levels of Spanish classes include activities related to art and ecology, featuring art projects, experiments, etc. Books on these themes are for reading and writing practice. All four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing, are taught at all levels. Students make marked improvements in their oral conversational skills due to the wealth of the exposure to oral Spanish during the two weeks of the program.

All of teachers in the Children and Youth Program are trained in the Universal approach and have experience working with children.

Each session runs as scheduled with minimum of five participants.

Program Coordinator: Loraine Woodard. Loraine is a middle school teacher from San Francisco, CA, and has a Master of Arts in Teaching Global and Environmental Literacy. She has lived in Mexico for ten years, just outside of Cuernavaca in the beautiful mountainous protected area called Huitzilac, where she works on environmental popular education projects.

She coordinates Universal's children and youth programs, provides appropriate materials and feedback to the Spanish teachers and accompanies the children on outings and activities.

School Partnerships

We encourage school partnerships and can accommodate student groups who come accompanied with their teachers. If you have a particular focus for your group, we can arrange activities accordingly.

Los Colibríes (The Hummingbirds) Children's Program:

Age Range: 6 – 12

Los Venados (The Deer) Youth Program:

Age Range: 13 -17

Sessions in 2010:

- June 21 - July 2
- July 5 - July 16
- July 19 - 30

Program:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday:

8:00 to 11:00 – Spanish Classes at UNIVERSAL (focus on art and ecology)

11:00 – 1:10 – Outing (walking to nearby sites, parks, museums, etc.)

1:10 – 4:00 – Lunch with families and free time

4:00 – 6:00 – Culture, Sports and Arts Activities (3 days a week – afternoons are free on Fridays)

Wednesdays:

8:00 to 11:00 – Spanish Classes at UNIVERSAL (focus on art and ecology)

11:00 – 7:00 – Outing to a nearby mountain community (Huitzilac – half an hour north of UNIVERSAL) where Loraine does environmental work.

- Participate in an environmental program with local children and youth, coordinated by Loraine, including visits to productive projects, hikes, and reforestation.
- Learn about local environmental problems, discuss them with people from the town (with translation if necessary) and contribute to making improvements through reforestation and other activities that might emerge from the groups' observations and discussions.

- Bring a sack lunch and enjoy a bonfire at the end. Parents are invited to join us on these Wednesday outings.

Los Colibríes Children's Program:

Children will participate in classes together with Mexican children from the neighborhood of similar ages. Themes include:

- Composting
- Planting vegetables
- Cooking with local ingredients
- Paper maché and other traditional local crafts
- Swimming pool games
- Racquetball, relays, ping pong tournaments, soccer games
- Preparing and presenting a puppet show in Spanish on ecological concerns

Los Venados Youth Program:

Students leave Universal some afternoons to participate with local youth in soccer practices, art and dance classes, swimming tournaments, etc. (Transportation and accompaniment provided by Universal.)

Other afternoons, local youth arrive to Universal to participate in activities offered on site for this program, making use of Universal's recreational facilities.

Program Overview:

Day 1 - Saturday - Participants arrive and settle in with homestay families

Day 2 - Sunday - Orientation at Universal and city walk in downtown Cuernavaca

Day 3 - 12 - Program as described above, with optional weekend trips or the weekend is on your own.

Day 15 - Saturday – Bid farewell to new friends and leave for the airport

Cost and Conditions: The cost for these programs (either Los Colibríes or Los Venados) is \$400.00 per session (registration fee of \$100 will be waived for these two programs if parents are also taking classes at Universal.) Fee includes:

- All language instruction
- All materials for classes and activities
- Transportation and admission fees

Wednesday trip included in costs.

Price does not include airfare, room or board, transportation to and from airport, optional weekend trips, which range from \$20 - \$40 US for most day trips. Please ask about what specific trips are planned for the dates you are considering. We recommend that the families do a Universal-sponsored homestay together.

Children must be accompanied by an adult during their stay in Cuernavaca, who will be responsible for the minor/s outside of the program's scheduled activities.

[Click here to see trip opportunities](#)

FORMS OF PAYMENT:

- Traveler's checks
- Cash
- Credit card: An extra credit card fee of 2.5 % applied.