

All of the exercises could be done on paper or perhaps from a tape recorder for a purely oral approach, but none of these would give the random selection nor the immediate feedback provided by the program. The student is given a breakdown of the areas covered and the number right and wrong in each. The program offers an opportunity for students to go over basic concepts and concentrate on their weak ones as indicated by the scores on the tests.

I strongly recommend the program for those who want a supplement to basic exercises in first year Spanish programs.

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ARENAS, REINALDO. *Lecturas fáciles: Lazarillo de Tormes*. Ed. José Olivio Jiménez. New York: Regents, 1984. Pp. xv, 63. Paper.

CAÑAS, DIONISIO. *Lecturas fáciles: ¿Qué dice el periódico?*. Ed. José Olivio Jiménez. New York: Regents, 1983. Pp. xi, 70. Paper.

COLÓN, ELISEO. *Lecturas fáciles: Ritmos y melodías*. Ed. José Olivio Jiménez. New York: Regents, 1983. Pp. xi, 67. Paper.

FERNÁNDEZ, JESSE. *Lecturas fáciles: Abra su propio negocio*. Ed. José Olivio Jiménez. New York: Regents, 1984. Pp. xi, 68. Paper.

Lecturas fáciles is a series of readers divided into four thematic categories as well as four levels of proficiency based on an incremental vocabulary of five hundred words. The two sources of the vocabulary are *Vocabulario del español hablado* by Luis Márquez Villegas (Madrid: Sociedad General Española de Librería, 1975) and *Frequency Dictionary of Spanish Words* by Alphonse Juilland and Eugenio Chang-Rodríguez (The Hague: Mouton, 1964). Other vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and grammatical structures that fall outside the designed level are glossed. The four readers included in this review are examples of the three thematic categories of everyday life, art and culture, and literature at the third level of proficiency. Each reader is divided into chapters followed by a variety of exercises to stimulate conversation on the content and to practice the vocabulary of the selec-

tions. An answer key is included at the end of the text and is perforated if the instructor prefers that the students not have access to the answers.

In spite of being classified as readers at the third level of proficiency, the exact level is somewhat unclear because neither is the year indicated nor the base vocabulary listed, which may be considered weaknesses by some. According to the preface, the topics have been selected to encourage use of the language and knowledge of Hispanic culture. From this perspective the texts fulfill their goals.

Lazarillo de Tormes, a simplified but accurate version of the classic, can be used successfully by those instructors who prefer to have students read literary selections instead of contemporary or topical readings. In addition to the simplified version, the glossing of more difficult expressions makes this a very readable text for language classes. However, given the level of the reading, it would be advisable to place the vocabulary at the bottom of the page like the other readers instead of the end. The text also includes a brief prologue in English and Spanish that effectively orients the students to the literary context.

¿Qué dice el periódico?, an example of the theme everyday life, is a series of actual selections from several Hispanic newspapers giving the students a varied exposure to the press. The selections are organized according to the sections of a newspaper such as current events, advertisements, weather. In general, the selections are interesting and conducive to stimulating conversation. In addition, the variety of topics is very effective to expose students to a diverse, yet practical vocabulary. Each chapter is preceded by a brief introduction to the nature of the column, a list of glossed vocabulary, and a series of questions that familiarize the student with the selection.

As an example of the topic art and culture, *Ritmos y melodías* describes the music and representative dance of several Latin American countries as well as the instruments and costumes. To add to the scope of the reading, the historical context is given. Although the dances are sometimes difficult to visualize because of the detailed descriptions of the movements, the reading on the whole is interesting and of special interest to those instructors who desire to add a folkloric note to the class. Like the pre-

vious text, this one includes preliminary questions to direct the students' reading.

Abra su propio negocio, another example of the theme of everyday life, incorporates practical business vocabulary through a description of the process of opening a business. For a program with a more practical and business focus, this text is an interesting and effective method of introducing commercial vocabulary instead of lists of terms. Like the other readers, the chapters open with a list of questions, an effective aid to orient the students' reading.

The exercises that accompany all four readers are designed primarily to stimulate discussion and to practice vocabulary. The two types of questions based on the content are comprehension checks and general discussion questions. Both types achieve their goal. The other exercises designed to develop vocabulary are of varying effectiveness and interest. In particular, exercises involving filling the blank with items from the reading (*Ritmos*, p. 46) or placing words in the proper order (*¿Qué dice?*, p. 6) are very mechanical and, as such, are not as interesting. Others such as word building (*Lazarillo*, p. 53) or synonyms (*Abra*, p. 42) are more beneficial.

In sum, unlike other readers, *Lecturas fáciles* offer the instructor the opportunity to select from diverse yet specialized readings the ones that relate most closely to the focus of the course, whether it has a traditional or practical approach.

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BRETZ, MARY LEE, TRISHA DVORAK & CARL KIRSCHNER. *Pasajes: Lengua*. New York: Random House, 1983. Pp. xvi, 324. Paper. *Pasajes: Literatura*. Pp. xii, 225. Paper. *Pasajes: Cultura*. Pp. xiv, 239. Paper. *Pasajes: Actividades*. Pp. xii, 192. Paper. *Cuaderno de práctica—Expresión oral, comprensión, composición*. Pp. 263. Paper.

Pasajes is a series of five texts intended for use in second-year college Spanish programs. The five books include a core grammar text, a cultural reader, a literary reader, an activities manual, and a workbook/laboratory manual.

These various books are organized in such a manner that the same structures and similar lexical items are emphasized in a given chapter across all five components. Suggestions for use of the components is provided in the instructor's manual, including detailed programming for semesters, quarters, or trimesters. Quite original in nature, the many materials have been tested in the authors' classrooms, and the list of Spanish-language instructors who reviewed the manuscripts before publication is impressive. The amount of material presented for potential use in the classroom is most noteworthy.

Pasajes: Lengua is the general review of Spanish grammar with exercises, explanations (in English), and many other activities. The illustrations (cartoons) preceding each given chapter for the purpose of later discussion could be greatly improved. In fact, these caricatures are somewhat misleading (e.g., the gang "hanging around" the car, p. 268) and difficult to recognize. Real photographs should be used and could have been included with relative ease. To begin the *conversemos* sections with only questions contingent upon the drawings might be somewhat weak, even for an intermediate level class. In that no particular methodological approach is emphasized, this core grammar is quite acceptable and adaptable to different purposes and classes. However, the concept of the subjunctive mood could be simplified. Although grammatically correct, it is always confusing to students to use "impersonal expressions," "embedded subjects," and subordinate clauses with ease.

Pasajes: Cultura consists of fourteen chapters (e.g., *La muerte y el mundo del más allá*, *Los hispanos en los Estados Unidos*, and *La ley y la libertad individual*) and provides an overview of contemporary Hispanic culture, including Spain, Hispanic America, and the Hispanic in the United States. Perhaps the *Práctica de Lectura* could be shortened and the reading selections expanded. For example, the "word guessing" part should already be a skill acquired through elementary Spanish. To associate *población* with *analfabeta*, and *diciembre* with *aguinaldos* in a given coherent sentence should be automatic by the intermediate level. Also, in the *pequeño glosario de términos raciales*, why not give the explanations/definitions in Spanish? In the discussion regarding Puerto Ricans (p. 188) the city of Bridgeport,