

The InvestiGator Club® Spanish Prekindergarten Learning System Robert-Leslie Publishing Response to Texas Resource Review

Robert-Leslie Publishing, The Early Childhood Company® thanks the Texas Resource Review for its review of ***The InvestiGator Club® Spanish Prekindergarten Learning System.***

The Spanish Learning System is based on the same research and early childhood development continuum as the English program. Because the Teacher Guides were not directly translated into Spanish, half or more points were deducted from most indicators. We recommend that reviewers study the English TRR Report to understand the curriculum goals and evidence-based practices in both programs and how the content and strategies address Quality Indicators.

The intent of The InvestiGator Club is to provide developmentally appropriate curricula for ALL three- and four-year-old children, regardless of special needs, languages, or cultural differences. The guidance in the Teacher Guides, even in explicit lessons, is not intended to be used verbatim in English or Spanish. “Scripting” in this program is used as a guide to the types of questions that spark individually relevant, responsive conversations, especially for social-emotional development and hands-on mathematics. Appropriate strategies for PK3 and PK4 are implemented based on children’s individual levels and needs, rather than specific scripting whether in English or Spanish.

Robert-Leslie’s extensive research in early childhood produced a foundation that emphasizes first and foremost children’s own experiences, language, and development. All components for families and children are provided in Spanish. The Spanish Instructional Materials Guide provides guidance to teachers in bilingual and dual language classrooms.

Following are new resources that were submitted to TRR after the initial review, and/or that were not properly considered. Robert-Leslie had the option to request that TRR re-

review up to three (3) indicators with new resources. These materials were not considered for other indicators, regardless of their impact on quality or their match to the wording and meaning of the indicators. Because of this limitation to three indicators, most of the evaluation and scoring does not adequately incorporate the actual program materials, quality, and adherence to indicators.

Families play a key role in planning and delivering authentic learning experiences. The InvestiGator Club begins the year by providing **Guía para la familia** and working with families to complete the **Encuesta familiar en el momento de la inscripción**.

Carteles para rutinas diarias present opportunities for children to discuss weather, morning message, calendar, safety, art, attendance, children's names, birthdays, and vocabulary. **Carteles para rutinas diarias** support oracy across languages by providing opportunities to use differentiated sentence stems that offer repetition and meaningful input from children.

Teachers use the **Palabra de la semana** poster daily to make cross-linguistic connections by using cognates and other aspects of language. Words for each week are written on cards and placed around the classroom or on a word wall.

In the **Investigation Station**, teachers are coached to listen to children's questions and to respond with content words and phrases. Children share discoveries using their new words. Sample questions in the Teacher Guide serve as examples for the types of conversations that are driven by children in any language, as they engage and interact throughout the Investigation project.

Tarjetas de centro displayed in the Centers are labeled with the activity and center name in Spanish. Children use 3-step pictorial directions and Spanish labeling on the front of the card.

Outdoor Creative Play and Learning Cards provide activities for purposeful play outdoors, which allows children to engage in conversations and learn from one another during natural play rather than in the classroom setting.

Vocabulary components build language concepts and cross-linguistic connections through authentic conversations. **Tarjetas didácticas** provide 320 high-utility words with pictures. Children make conceptual connections between words and build key vocabulary patterns. For example, the large photo on one side of the card is a word in a category, such as *colores*. The back of the card shows four other colors, such as *rojo* and *morado*. Or the photo/word is a whole, such as *mapa*, and the four items on the back are parts of that whole, such as *ciudad*, *parque*, and *autopista*.

100 Bilingual Vocabulary Cards present a photo on the front and the English and Spanish words on the back. These cards encourage discussions about the photo in both languages and are used to teach connections between the languages by using cognates and sentence stems for children to fill in the missing words.

Several Spanish components are included for the explicit instruction of Spanish Alphabet Knowledge and Phonological Awareness and to provide multiple opportunities for student practice of these skills specific to the Spanish language and for sound-spelling transfer. These components include:

- ***El libro grande del alfabeto***, which introduces each letter of the Spanish alphabet and associated sounds, lessons, and pictures.
- ***El abecedario de Dilly***, which introduces the alphabet with pictures from the English *Dilly's Alphabet Show*. The English and Spanish picture books are used to help children make connections between the letters and sounds in both languages, noting which pictures begin with the same letters and identifying which ones sound the same or different, and which pictures have completely different sounds.

- **Tarjetas de abecedario de Dilly** use the pictures and letters from *El abecedario de Dilly* and are used to develop Spanish alphabet knowledge and phonological awareness skills and to make connections.
- **Interactive Alphabet Flapboard Spanish and English** provides interactive Alphabet and Phonological Awareness learning games and activities in English and Spanish on the InvestiGator Club Digital Learning System platform. Teachers choose a game in either language to play and reinforce alphabet learning and then switch to the other language to make connections between the two. These are directed activities, with teachers choosing the activity and letters to start. First the teacher is prompted: “Elegir una actividad.” The Spanish games include:
 - Empareja la letra con la ficha
 - Empareja la letra con el disfraz
 - Nombra la letra
 - Empareja el disfraz y la ficha
 - Juego libre

The **Assessment and Intervention Kit** is a culturally, developmentally, and linguistically appropriate assessment system used throughout every day to guide teacher instruction, measure student progress, develop intervention strategies, and engage families. The components include:

- Assessment of Emerging Competencies - Prekindergarten (Spanish)
- Assessment Cards for 4-year-olds (Spanish)
- Encuesta familiar en el momento de la inscripción
- Encuesta familiar de final de año
- Plan individualizado de educación
- Progreso narrative

Implementing Preview/View/Review

During whole group and small group literacy lessons presented in the Teacher Guides, the Spanish Instructional Materials Guide, and the STEAM and Literacy Challenge

Guide, we recommend previewing the vocabulary in one language before reading in the other language. After the reading, children respond and share in both languages. Key vocabulary for every book is presented in both English and Spanish.

We also suggest: “In addition to introducing vocabulary in Spanish and English, teachers should frequently ask children if they would like to share that word or a word that means the same thing in their home language. Encourage children to say the words in both languages. Always use the **Set the Stage** section of the literacy lessons to access children’s own experiences and to build background for the story by connecting their experiences to the story characters and events. After reading the story, in **Make Connections**, help children review these connections and summarize their conclusions.”

The InvestiGator Club includes over 150 books in Spanish, including 100 fiction and nonfiction leveled readers A-E, 7 Dilly and Friends® Social and Emotional Lapbooks and Little Books, 6 Bruno’s Buzz Nonfiction Readers, 21 Interactive Flapboard Stories for Investigations, Literacy, and Math, 12 Investigation and Math Tradebooks, 7 Classic Tales, and 7 Home and Back Books.

The Literacy lessons in the Teacher Guides, Spanish Instructional Materials Guide, and STEAM and Literacy Challenge Guide provide hundreds of opportunities using Spanish texts to engage children with scaffolded questions that build comprehension and develop concepts of print and text analysis, make bilingual connections across texts and vocabulary, and extend lessons throughout each day. The InvestiGator Club Spanish Learning System also includes:

¡Demasiada Diversión! Guide, with lyrics and activities for 37 Spanish and English songs.

Todo es canción: Antología poética, by Alma Flor Ada provides highly acclaimed authentic Spanish poetry with thematic connections to the units and themes in The InvestiGator Club, such as plants, families, water, and more.

Cuentos Que Contaban Nuestras Abuelas, by F. Isabel Campoy and Alma Flor Ada. “Twelve stories from varied roots of Hispanic culture come together in a colorful collection that includes talking ants, magic bagpipes, dancing goats, and flying horses. In some cases the tales emphasize a moral, such as looking for the good in any bad situation as in “Catlina the Fox.” In others, the story illustrates the importance of friends, as in the case of “The Bird of One Thousand Colors.”

The InvestiGator Club also provides a list of **Recommended Spanish Literature** that includes over 200 titles.

Robert-Leslie Publishing welcomes feedback and input from early childhood educators and invites classroom pilots and field participation as we work continuously to expand and improve our programs.