

## TEACHING CONJUGATIONS VISUAL

**Materials needed:** White poster board, different colored markers, scissors, and transparent tape

In order to help students who are visual learners understand the concept of conjugation,

1. Cut white poster board into sections which are 6" x 18" in dimension (or 6" x 24" depending on length of the infinitive). Make one visual of your main verb for *each* of your classes.
2. Write the infinitive ***hablar***, or verb of your choice, on it in black block letters which can easily be seen from all parts of the classroom. On the back of the card write ***to speak***, making sure that the ***to*** is directly behind the ***ar*** on the front of the card, and the ***speak*** is directly behind the ***habl***. It is helpful to write several **AR** verb infinitives for demonstration purposes.

**H a b l a r**

Front of card

**To      talk**

Back of card

3. Make 6" x 8" cards with each of the subject pronouns written in a different colored marker with their English meanings on the other side, written with the same color of marker.

Examples:

**o**

Front of card

**I**

Back of card

**as**

Front

**you**

Back

4. Explain to the students that the AR form of the verb is called the infinitive, and that the infinitive is divided into two parts: the stem and the ending. Show them the front and back of the card, pointing out that the ***habl*** portion of the verb gives the meaning,

while the **ar** portion means **to**. Point out that this form of the verb does not tell us who is talking.

5. After drilling the students on the parts of the infinitive and assessing that they understand the purpose and meaning of the infinitive, tell them that, if you want to say that someone or something is performing the action of the verb, you have to take off the **ar/to** ending and add a subject ending. Then, with scissors, cut off the **ar** portion of the infinitive. Ask them what part of the word is left; hopefully, they will say, “the stem.”
6. Pick up the card with the subject pronoun **I** on it. Tape it to the portion of the card which says **speak**; tape it in front of the word **speak**. Show them the card which now says, “I speak.” Turn the card over so that they see “Hablo.” Ask them what letter was added to the stem to make it mean that the pronoun **I** is the subject. They answer, “The letter **o**.”

**H a b l o**

Front of card

**I      t a l k**

Back of card

7. Take off the **l/o** ending and follow this procedure for **tú** and **él, ella, Ud.**, reinforcing as you go, the meaning of the endings which have been added to the stem. Turn the card back and forth frequently so that they can get a visual image of the subject endings and their English meanings.
8. At this point, you might choose to follow this procedure with some of the other infinitives to ensure that the students have mastered the singular subject endings and their meanings. After you feel that they have grasped the concept and can conjugate any regular **AR** verb in the singular, use the same technique to teach the plural forms of verb conjugation.

I have found this method of teaching conjugation to be particularly helpful to my students who are visual learners. It is also a technique by which students can teach the concept to others who have been absent. They love to do it, and it gives you an opportunity to see

them demonstrate their comprehension by explaining it to others. It's a great way to review, too!

**NOTE\*\*\*** This method would also work with **ER/IR** verb conjugations should you choose to teach them "from scratch" as you did the **AR** verbs.

**Special thanks to Dr. Suzanne Caldwell Ross for the creation and sharing of this idea several years ago. Many students have benefited from her generosity. ¡Gracias, Suzanne!**

iiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii Also, another little tip for helping students to remember the nosotros form (in the present tense) when they get into stem-changing verbs, or if they have a problem remembering which ending goes with the verb. Have them write the infinitive. When they have written it, tell them to extend the letter *r* into the letter *m*, then add **os**. In that way, the nosotros form will always be spelled right. It works with just about every verb except **ser** and **ir** !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!