

## LESSON NOTES

# Absolute Beginner S3 #5 Naming Things in Mexican Spanish

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# 5

## INFORMAL SPANISH

1. MARÍA: ¡Mira Ashley, qué bonito!
2. ASHLEY: ¿Qué es?
3. MARÍA: ¡Es un pájaro azul!
4. ASHLEY: ¡Ay, qué lindo!
5. MARÍA: Y mira allá...
6. ASHLEY: ¡El arcoiris!

## ENGLISH

1. MARÍA: Look, Ashley, how beautiful!
2. ASHLEY: What is it?
3. MARÍA: It's a blue bird!
4. ASHLEY: Oh, how cute!
5. MARÍA: And look over there...
6. ASHLEY: The rainbow!

## VOCABULARY

Spanish	English	Class	Gender
arcoiris	rainbow	noun	masculine

un, una	a / an	article	
pájaro	bird	noun	masculine
el	the	definite article	masculine
ser	to be (permanent characteristics)	verb	
qué	how	interjection	
mirar	look	verb	
lindo	pretty, nice, lovely	adjective	masculine
bonito, (-a)	beautiful, pretty	adjective	masculine
ay	oh!	interjection	
allá	there, over there	adverb	

## SAMPLE SENTENCES

<p>¡Mira el arcoiris!</p> <p>"Look at the rainbow!"</p>	<p>Es un tipo de manzana.</p> <p>"It's a kind of apple."</p>
<p>El gran árbol del jardín atrae pájaros.</p> <p>"The big tree in the back yard attracts birds."</p>	<p>El vino está en la mesa.</p> <p>"The wine is on the table."</p>
<p>¿Eres de los Estados Unidos?</p> <p>"Are you from the United States?"</p>	<p>¿Qué haces?</p> <p>"What do you do?"</p>
<p>La mujer está viendo algo lejos.</p> <p>"The woman is looking at something far away."</p>	<p>¡Qué lindo!</p> <p>"How nice!"</p>

Tenemos una casa linda. "We have a pretty house."	Eres bonita. "You are pretty."
¡Ay Dios! "Oh God!"	Sientate allá. "Sit over there."

## VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

### ***mirar***

We use *mirar*, which means "look," to describe the action of watching something intently as opposed to just seeing. For an even more intent form of looking, use *observar*.

### **¿Qué es?**

In the phrase **¿Qué es?** we conjugate the verb *ser* (permanent condition of being) in the third person *él*, or "it" ("What is it?"). In this case, it refers to "something unknown" and we conjugate it as *él* (*yo soy, tú eres, él es*).

### ***pájaro***

*Pájaro* is a masculine noun with the corresponding article *el*. A more generic word would be *el ave*, which includes other larger animals such as the eagle, hawk, etc. We mostly use *pájaro* to refer to small birds.

### ***¡Qué lindo!***

We use *qué* ("how") for most expressions of admiration or surprise, and it must appear between exclamation marks unless it is a question. Other examples are *¡Qué bien!* ("How good!") and *¡Qué mal!* ("How bad!")

### ***Allá***

*Allá* is an adverb we use to describe a place far removed from the speaker's standpoint.

## GRAMMAR

## The Focus of This Lesson Is to Teach You Indefinite Articles (*Un, Una, Unos, Unas*).

*¿Qué es? ¡Es un pájaro azul!*

"What is it? It's a blue bird!"

The correct use of articles in Spanish denotes mastery of the language. If one learns words from the beginning knowing what gender they belong to, then it's easy. Here are some examples:

<b>Masculine</b>	<b>Feminine</b>
<i>el perro</i> ("the dog")	<i>la vaca</i> ("the cow")
<i>el piano</i> ("the piano")	<i>la trompeta</i> ("the trumpet")
<i>el parque</i> ("the park")	<i>la casa</i> ("the house")

Then we have another kind of article that describes indefinite nouns. These articles differ from the first type in that the speaker is not referring to a particular dog, cow, etc. but to "a dog" in general. Here are some examples.

### For Example:

<b>Masculine</b>	<b>Feminine</b>
<i>un perro</i> ("a dog")	<i>una vaca</i> ("a cow")
<i>un piano</i> ("a piano")	<i>una trompeta</i> ("a trumpet")
<i>un parque</i> ("a park")	<i>una casa</i> ("a house")

Now we have the articles that express number. We use the same four types of articles (definite masculine, definite feminine, indefinite masculine, and definite feminine), but now we change them to their plural form (mostly by simply adding an -s at the end).

### For Example:

<b>Masculine Plural</b>	<b>Feminine Plural</b>
<i>los perros</i> ("the dogs")	<i>las vacas</i> ("the cows")

<i>los pianos</i> ("the pianos")	<i>las trompetas</i> ("the trumpets")
<i>los parques</i> ("the parks")	<i>las casas</i> ("the houses")
<i>unos perros</i> ("some dogs")	<i>unas vacas</i> ("some cows")
<i>unos pianos</i> ("some pianos")	<i>unas trompetas</i> ("some trumpets")
<i>unos parques</i> ("some parks")	<i>unas casas</i> ("some houses")

When Ashley asked *¿Qué es?* María responded *¡Es un pájaro azul!* using the article *un* because *pájaro* is not a definite noun. In other words, there are many blue birds in the sky, and this was just one of them. If on the contrary, the blue bird was the last living specimen in the world, María would have said *Es el pájaro azul*. At the end, Ashley refers to the rainbow by saying *el arcoiris* because traditionally people believe there is only one rainbow and not many...otherwise it would be *un arcoiris*.

### For Example:

1. *Él es un maestro.*  
"He is a teacher."
2. *Él es el maestro.*  
"He is the teacher."

### Examples from This Dialogue

1. *¡Es un pájaro azul!*  
"It's a blue bird!"

## CULTURAL INSIGHT

### How to Avoid Pointing

Pointing at things is okay when we do it to objects, but it is considered rude to point to people directly unless we intend to start a dialogue with them, and even then it may be

rude. Be careful when using the indefinite articles *un* or *una* and *unos* or *unas* when referring to a person. When we do so, the person's identity becomes diffused into a collection of people of the same category. There may be times when this is right to say, but there may be times when it is not. So for example, if you are introducing someone, say *Él es Alejandro y es arquitecto*, but don't say *Él es Alejandro y es un arquitecto*. Saying *un arquitecto* stresses the fact that he is just one among many architects, but saying *arquitecto* avoids stressing that fact and is therefore more respectful. In the same way, when asking someone "Are you a teacher?" say *¿Eres maestro?* and not *¿Eres un maestro?*