Subject Pronouns in Spanish

\*yo — I

\*tú — you (informal or familiar singular)

usted — you (formal singular)

\*él, ella — he, she

nosotros, nosotras — we (the first form refers to a group of males or males and females, while the second form refers to females only)

vosotros, vosotras — you (informal or familiar plural; the first form refers to a group of males or males and females, while the second form refers to females only; this pronoun is seldom used in most parts of Latin America)

ustedes — you (formal plural)

\*ellos, ellas — they (the first form refers to a group of males or males and females, while the second form refers to females only)

\*only these subject pronouns would be used at primary school level.

Unlike in English, the subject pronoun in Spanish is implied by the conjugation of the verb, so is often left out. If it is included, it is added for:

1 Emphasis, e.g.

Tengo 8 años → I am 8 years old

**Yo** tengo 8 años → **I** am 8 years old

2 To avoid ambiguity, e.g.

Pablo y María son alumnos. Él trabaja bien. (Pablo and María are pupils. He works well). Without the subject pronoun, it is impossible to tell whom the second sentence refers to).

3 Change of subject, e.g. when contrasting two subjects, the subject pronouns are frequently used.

Yo estudio y ella escucha música. I'm studying and she's listening to music.