

Examiners' Report  
June 2016

GCE Spanish 6SP02 01

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## **Introduction**

The Understanding and Written Response paper tests candidates' ability to extract information from both recorded and written texts. These texts are of varying length and from a range of printed and online sources. There are different question styles ranging from multiple choice to written answers in Spanish and English. The topics covered in this year's comprehension questions were university education, job interviews, water pollution, a costume designer, climate change in Mexico, childhood nutrition and communication between parents and teenagers.

Candidates also had to write an essay of 200-220 words on the subject of exercise. Examiners encountered a high number of essays where candidates had used a pleasing range of tenses and an impressive amount of appropriate vocabulary. The essays responded imaginatively to the bullet points and were, on the whole, very pleasant to read.

It was very pleasing to see that most candidates had been well trained in the requirements of the tasks, although some wrote more words than was allowed and lost marks for content as a consequence. Some scripts were a challenge to read as they were written in poor handwriting or were full of crossing out.

## ***Question 1***

The first question was a listening task about university. This was generally answered well, with full marks being commonly scored.

## **Question 2**

The second question was also a listening task, this time about how to behave appropriately in an interview. Most candidates managed to score either 3 or 4 out of 4 marks.

### **Question 3 (a)**

Question 3 was a listening task about water pollution. Four words from a pool of 8 had to be inserted into sentences summarising the text. This was handled well, with 3 or 4 marks out of 4 being seen very often. The most difficult word to identify was *los desechos* in Q3(b). Grammar provided less of a clue this year than in some previous series, as there were two adjectives and six plural nouns to choose from, so it was not so easy to identify which words were grammatically possible before listening.

## Question 4

Question 4 is the most challenging of the listening tasks, as the text is longer and the answers have to be written in Spanish. Although full sentences are not required, sometimes it is necessary to add a word to something drawn from the recording in order to make the information fit the requirements of the question. For example, in Q4(c), candidates were asked why Manuel Albarrán considered one of his costumes 'spectacular'. Answers that stated: *plumas* or *piel de pez* were not credited while answers that included *tenía*, *tiene*, *usó*, *era de* earned the mark. *Lagarto*, being an unusual word, was accepted even when written *la garto*, although the misheard *piel de gato* was not.

Q4(a) was largely answered correctly with a reference to Manuel's experience. Some candidates did not score if they had used *cómodo* in a way that suggested that metal is comfortable, rather than that the designer was comfortable working with metal. Q4(b) was divided between answers that correctly conveyed that his ideas come from places that he sees or visits and answers that just said that he is a *persona muy visual*; the latter did not score marks.

Q4(d) asked for the contrast that exists in his jewellery. Many candidates stated that it was *elegante y bonita*, which is not a contrast. The idea of *salvaje* also needed to be communicated. Q4(e) was often answered correctly. Where there was an error it was where candidates failed to spot the question word *¿cuándo?* - suggesting that he felt nervous did not answer the question. Other incorrect answers arose where candidates did not pinpoint that it was when he was asked to collaborate with the film, rather than while he was working on it.

Q4(f) was generally answered correctly, but Q4(g) was less successful. Often the word *increíble* was given instead of *creíble*.

An average score for this question was 5 out of 8 marks.

## **Question 5**

The first of the reading tasks was about climate change in Mexico. Five statements had to be matched with four paragraphs describing the effects of climate change on four regions of the country. Typically 4 or 5 out of 5 marks was scored, with Q5(iv) being the hardest element; this is possibly because rain was mentioned in one paragraph, although it was to say that rainfall had diminished. The correct paragraph mentioned that sea levels might rise.

## Question 6

In this question, candidates were given a text about poor childhood nutrition in Spain. Questions and answers were in English. An average score was 3 or 4 out of 5 marks. A particular challenge of this text for some students was the need to use comparatives or superlatives in Q6(a) and Q6(c). Examiners were sympathetic to attempts that were just about understandable. In Q6(a), many candidates started with something along the lines of "*Spain is the second country in Europe...*". Answers that went on to use a superlative (even if not completely natural-sounding), were credited with a mark. Where the answer sounded as though Spain was the second country to have poor children (i.e. there had been one other country with poor children previously), the mark was withheld.

Q6(b) was mostly answered correctly. Q6(c) was more successful than Q6(a). Where a mark was not gained, it was usually because the candidate had suggested that Madrid had the lowest rate of poverty, when actually it was only one of the lowest.

In Q6(d) the concept of *comedores infantiles* proved difficult to convey. Examiners accepted a wide range of answers, including some that were not strictly accurate, like *school canteens*, but which might be more familiar to non-Spanish candidates. If a suggestion was made that sounded as though the food was sold (rather than given freely), this was rejected. Q6(e) was usually answered correctly, except where it was suggested that food was donated. Some candidates misunderstood *tiene en marcha*, and thought that the general public could join a march.

The same rules about grammatical accuracy and spelling apply in this question as in the questions requiring answers in Spanish. Mistakes are tolerated as long as communication is successful. Where a word becomes too similar to another incorrect word, the answer is ambiguous and cannot be credited.

**La nutrición de los niños**

El alcalde de Madrid dijo la semana pasada que, "no hay ningún problema de desnutrición" entre los niños madrileños. Qué frase tan insensible y tan equivocada ya que España es el segundo país de Europa con más pobreza infantil. Una cuarta parte de los niños madrileños no puede comer fruta y verdura todos los días y 2,5 millones de críos están en riesgo de exclusión social. Ciertamente, Madrid tiene una de las tasas más bajas de pobreza, frente a, por ejemplo, Castilla-La Mancha, pero sigue siendo inaceptable.

En julio los comedores infantiles cierran, y muchos niños pierden la única comida sustancial del día. *Ayuda en Acción* tiene en marcha un maravilloso plan de becas para proporcionar almuerzos equilibrados durante el verano. Ya atiende a 7.200 niños y aspira a llegar a más familias. Busca en Internet, *Dile al Hambre* para dar apoyo financiero y ¡alimentemos bien a nuestros niños!

- 6 Read the passage above and answer the following questions **in English**. Your answers must relate exclusively to the passage and convey **all** the relevant information provided.

(d) Why is the summer a difficult time of year for some children?

(1)

Because a lot of childs loss their only diary meal.



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Examiner Comments

In this response, there is an example of a spelling mistake that cannot be overlooked as it has turned one word into another and has therefore made the answer unclear. 'Daily' has been written as 'diary', which would make no sense to an English native speaker.

## Question 7

This is the most challenging of the comprehension questions, as it is lengthy and both questions and answers are in Spanish. Many candidates did not gain the full marks for this question; 7 marks was an average score.

Q7(a) was usually answered well, either suggesting that talking is good for solving problems or that it is good for a relationship. Q7(b) was often answered with an accurately targeted 'lift' from the text about conversations being *monólogos*. Candidates who tried to use their own words were sometimes unsuccessful; as they stated that conversations ended in arguments or that the adolescent was not listening. If they said that one party was not responding, this was accepted.

Q7(c) was tricky, as candidates had to convey the idea that the moment had to be good for both parties and that a moment that suited one party may not suit the other. Candidates who copied *quizá quiera contar algo en el momento menos oportuno*, were not credited, as it is unclear who wants to say something here. Similarly in Q7(d), it was essential to make it clear who was the subject of the actions given: *no sea sincero* and *quedan sin saber lo que les pasa* were not accepted. Q7(e) should have suggested that both parties shout or that both parties want to win. Responses that stated that only the parents shouted were not accepted.

Q7(f) was generally answered well, as was Q7(h). Q7(g) was only awarded 1 mark if both examples were of negative expressions being used. Examiners wanted to see the idea of parents being *gruñones* or that they complained a lot as a second idea. Some candidates took the idea of raising a wall that interrupted communication very literally and offered this as an answer. This is simply a metaphor for *dificultan la comunicación*, which is in the question itself.

In this question, comprehension is being tested, along with the ability to convey the information that has been read. Examiners are lenient with grammar and spelling mistakes, as long as the message is clear and unambiguous.

(e) ¿Por qué son algunas conversaciones como una batalla?

(1)

Porque los dos los padres y el otro hijo o tienen grita.

(f) ¿Cómo pueden llegar a un acuerdo los padres y los hijos?

(1)

Aceptan de pasar tiempo con su familia a cambio de una cosa como en familia

(g) ¿Qué cosas hacen los padres que dificultan la comunicación? Da 2 ideas.

(2)

(i) Tener un actitud negativa

(ii) Levantar un muro que interrumpe el dialogo

(h) ¿Por qué algunos padres tienen éxito en las relaciones con sus hijos?

(1)

Porque tienen hijos que hablan.



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Examiner Comments

Even poor language can result in a mark, as long as the message is clear and the examiner can tell that the candidate has correctly comprehended the question and the text. In this example, the language is unnatural, but the idea is clear.

## Question 8

This question presented candidates with a writing task based on a short stimulus passage and structured around four bullet points. The topic was exercise and sport and required candidates to give their opinion on the importance of exercise, an example of their experience of sport in the past, how exercise can be combined with modern life and the expected effect of the Rio Olympics. The bullet points allow candidates to offer opinions and to use a range of tenses. As always, it was essential that candidates firmly fixed their response on these bullet points. If one point was missed out, a maximum content score of 9 marks was all that could be achieved (rather than a possible 15 marks). It is worth teachers stressing the importance of covering the bullet points. Word length is another possible pitfall. The question clearly states that candidates should write 200-220 words. Answers that exceed this number of words sometimes score a lower mark for content because one or more of the bullet points is covered in the section beyond the maximum word limit, which is not marked.

This year, an average score was 24 out of 30. It was pleasing to see that most candidates did address all of the bullet points, being rewarded with scores above 10 for content. Many essays were well planned and each bullet point was addressed in its own paragraph. This is an excellent technique, as it clearly shows both the candidate and the examiner that the points have been covered.

Bullet point 3, about combining exercise with modern life, proved quite tricky and some candidates simply gave the opinion that it is hard to combine the two without giving any ideas of how to do it. Many candidates came up with imaginative ways to use fitness apps or exercise machines while watching television. Many candidates suggested that one should walk or cycle to work or school. The important issue was not how to define what modern life is, but to suggest ways of exercising that fit in with other demands, like work or leisure. One imaginative idea was *hacer diez flexiones cada vez que vas al cuarto de baño*.

The final bullet point was sometimes covered only briefly, usually because too many words had been used on earlier bullet points. The idea that the Olympics will encourage more people to take up sport was common.

Some excellent vocabulary and ideas were noted, especially in the first bullet point; candidates often had marvellous ideas about the health benefits of exercise. Useful discursive expressions such as *por añadidura* and *como es sabido* were used to good effect. There were lots of examples of the appropriate use of tenses and time clauses, although pre-learned past subjunctives with conditionals were not always successful. Many candidates had spent time before writing to create a list of tenses and verb conjugations as an aide memoire and this often resulted in language that was varied and accurate.

## SECTION C: WRITING

### Texto 8



#### Los Juegos Olímpicos

Un estudio reciente analizó cómo se practican los deportes en América Latina. Del informe se desprende que los Juegos Olímpicos de Londres 2012 inspiraron al 75 % de los latinos a practicar algún deporte.

El 57 % de los interesados en practicar deportes suele realizarlos al aire libre, mientras que el 29 % prefiere ejercitarlos en un gimnasio, y el 14 % dentro de su hogar.

Se espera que las Olimpiadas de Río sigan esta tendencia.

8 Lees un informe sobre el deporte y decides escribir un artículo para la revista del colegio. Debes escribir **200–220 palabras** y debes incluir:

- tu opinión sobre la importancia del ejercicio *-my opinion.*
- tu experiencia de hacer deporte en el pasado
- cómo se puede combinar el ejercicio con la vida moderna
- el efecto que tendrán los Juegos Olímpicos de 2016

Plan *-school magazine article*

1. *- very important to do exercise*

*- to have good health.*

*- Es imprescindible que...*

2. *- I used to play football and basketball*

*- & Recuerdo una vez cuando...*

3. *Ride bikes to school/~~work~~*

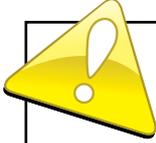
*Extra classes after school /during school.*



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**Examiner Comments**

Planning can help to ensure that ideas are well organised and developed. This could be in Spanish, but does not have to be. This candidate has spent a few minutes marshalling his/her thoughts and making a note of some useful ways to start each paragraph.



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**Examiner Tip**

A few minutes spent planning the essay can be rewarded with better marks for both content and language. Consider doing the plan early on during the exam, so that if you end up with less time for Q8 than is ideal, you have already got your essay structure. This can save last minute panic.

SECTION C: WRITING

~~so~~ ~~de~~ ~~partes~~ >  
 ad. → ~~agreements~~  
 libros - ~~usage~~  
 imp. ~~continuous~~ in the  
 past

Texto 8

practique

hay muchos  
 gimnasios  
 gimnastas



Suj. es importante  
 impresionante  
 aconsejable  
 espero que

el deporte

Los Juegos Olímpicos

Un estudio reciente analizó cómo se practican los deportes en América Latina. Del informe se desprende que los Juegos Olímpicos de Londres 2012 inspiraron al 75 % de los latinos a practicar algún deporte.

El 57 % de los interesados en practicar deportes suele realizarlos al aire libre, mientras que el 29 % prefiere ejercitarlos en un gimnasio, y el 14 % dentro de su hogar.

Se espera que las Olimpiadas de Río sigan esta tendencia.

veinte años

~~las cifras muestran que en~~ ~~veinte~~ ~~años~~ ~~cinco~~ ~~cientos~~ ~~de~~ ~~los~~ ~~adultos~~  
 → ~~mantenese en forma~~ ~~habrán llegado ser obesos.~~

8 Lees un informe sobre el deporte y decides escribir un artículo para la revista del colegio. Debes escribir **200-220 palabras** y debes incluir:

- tu opinión sobre la importancia del ejercicio
- tu experiencia de hacer deporte en el pasado
- cómo se puede combinar el ejercicio con la vida moderna
- el efecto que tendrán los Juegos Olímpicos de 2016

Estoy voy a <sup>escribir</sup> escribir sobre la importancia del ejercicio físico y los juegos Juegos Olímpicos de 2016.

Creo que es imprescindible que hagamos ejercicio por lo menos tres <sup>horas</sup> horas por semana. Esto es porque es ~~mas~~ ~~la~~ importante más fácil <sup>mantenese</sup> ~~mantenese~~ en forma y para tener una buena vida. Además, las cifras <sup>muestran</sup> ~~muestran~~ muestran que en veinte años, cincuenta por ciento de los adultos ~~habrán~~ ~~llegado~~ ~~ser~~ ~~obesos~~ y es posible que puedan adelgazar más con el ejercicio.



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**Examiner Comments**

Here the response to the first bullet point is well developed.



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**Examiner Tip**

Always give several ideas for each bullet point. These may either be separate ideas, or one basic idea with development, as in this case, where the candidate wants to persuade the reader of the health benefits of exercise.

## Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Read the question again after you have answered it to check that your answer matches the type of information required.
- Consider alternative ways of wording your answer; clear and concise is best.
- If you decide to copy words from the text, make sure they fit the question; often you will need to change or add to a 'lift'.
- Practise the first and third person singular of the preterite, as these are often confused.
- Avoid word-for-word translations from English, they very rarely work.
- Cover all four bullet points in Question 8.
- Use one paragraph per bullet point.
- Do not write more than 220 words in Question 8.
- Present Question 8 neatly, perhaps by writing on alternate lines or by re-writing.

## **Grade Boundaries**

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

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