

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback

June 2011

GCSE Spanish (5SP03) Paper 3F

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Background to Paper

In both reading papers students are asked to demonstrate their understanding of a range of different written texts types. Items selected for testing cover different contexts and styles. They are written to reflect a balanced coverage of all the common topic areas. Types of questions used to assess candidate's performance include: matching pictures to words, multiple choice, completing grids, selecting between a number of given options and identifying correct statements from a list of possible options. There is in addition, one question on each paper that requires candidates to provide short answers to specific questions posed in English. Each question has a total of 4 marks except for Grades A and A* where the total is 8 marks. All rubrics are given in English.

At Foundation level candidates are required to demonstrate their understanding of short, simple texts that relate to familiar contexts. However in questions that target Grades C and D items read may also include a variety of both familiar and unfamiliar language and which relate to past, present and future events.

General comments

Generally candidates performed appropriately on each paper of the papers set. Marks for each ranged between forty to eighty per cent on each task set. In the crossover questions common to both papers, candidates entered at Higher tier as anticipated were about 20% more successful than those entered for the Foundation tier.

Detailed comments

As a rule, candidates followed the instructions given in the rubric for all the different types of questions set.

Spelling

The spelling of some English words proved problematic for some candidates. However, examiners were sympathetic in their responses and where spelling was phonically recognisable versions of required words were credited positively.

Grammar

In question 4 candidates were required to read a text message referring to a birthday celebration and to respond indicating the appropriate time zone of each event. Some candidates struggled with recognising verbs in different tenses.

Candidate's performance

Most candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the rubrics and the general format of the examination. It was evident that they had been well prepared and had practiced in preparation for the examination. The higher paper proved to be accessible to all candidates. Entry selections made by centres were appropriate. Questions set clearly tested their knowledge and understanding of Spanish. Very good candidates scored highly throughout each paper set. They demonstrated a clear and precise understanding of the subtleties expected at the higher level questions, in terms of content vocabulary, grammar and

level of inference. Very few candidates left significant gaps in their answers or failed to complete the paper at either level. Crossover questions generally discriminated well and were completed more accurately by candidates who entered at the higher level.

In question 10, some candidates lost marks because they did not follow the instructions given in the rubric and answered in Spanish rather than in English. Centres need to remind their candidates to ensure they follow all instructions given very carefully in the future.

Question 1

This question was generally well done by all candidates. Some difficulties occurred with 'monedero' and 'camiseta'.

Question 2

The majority of the candidates scored 3 of the 4 marks available. Some candidates failed to recognise 'traje de baño'.

Question 3

The majority of candidates in this range scored 2/3 marks. Wrong choices made were mainly random.

Question 4

This question proved to be a good discriminator. Weaker candidates frequently struggled to recognize the different tenses used in the text. There was some evidence of guesswork.

Question 5

Candidates found this question challenging. Only 50% scored the full 4 marks available for this question. Wrong choices made were mainly random.

Question 6

This question was generally well done by most candidates and gave the true F and G candidates an opportunity to score good marks.

Question 7

Most candidates scored between 2/3 of the 4 points available. Most frequently wrong responses were: 7(i) *ayuntamiento*, 7 (ii) *quinientos*

Question 8

Many candidates scored at least 3 out of the 4 marks available for this question.

Question 9

Many candidates in the Grade F/G range scored well in this question. Some candidates failed to make the link between '*Science*' and '*Química*'.

Question 10

This question discriminated well between weaker performing and better performing candidates.

Q10(a) Problems were encountered with recognising *biblioteca* as the place where the bag was lost.

Q10(b) Identifying the two of the three items missing proved problematic. Most were able to identify one item but slightly less than 50% of candidates were able to identify two. *Guantes* was rarely selected.

Q10(c) There was evidence of some guesswork in this question. Most particularly where candidates failing to correctly interpret: to *send his mobile phone number*, the correct answer, simply provided answers such as: *ring her mobile number, borrow his mobile phone, help her find her mobile phone*. None of which were correct.

Despite the notice in the rubric some candidates answered this question in Spanish and therefore failed to score any of the marks available.

Conclusion

The outcome of this unit was pleasing. The majority of centres had prepared their candidates thoroughly so they had a good understanding of the requirements of this unit and responded well to its demands

Grade Boundaries

The modern foreign languages specifications share a common design, but the assessments in different languages are not identical. Grade boundaries at unit level reflect these differences in assessments, ensuring that candidate outcomes across these specifications are comparable at specification level.

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link: <http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

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