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Examiner's Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel GCSE

In Spanish (1SP0)

Paper: 3H (Reading and Understanding in Spanish)

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Spanish GCSE Reading Examination June 2023 Higher Level

1SP0 3H assesses candidates' understanding of written Spanish across a range of different text types. The examination consists of 10 questions and the unit is worth 50 marks. The assessment is divided into three sections, A, B and C. The first 6 questions in Section A are set in English. Section B contains three questions set in Spanish. Section C consists of one translation passage from Spanish into English. Candidates had 60 minutes in which to complete their answers.

Texts for individual questions within the assessment use high frequency language and vary in length. Literary texts consist of short extracts from texts that may have been adapted and abridged from authentic sources to be appropriate to this level.

SECTION A

Question 1

Candidates were asked to read about Car-free day in Barcelona.

Q01a) Candidates were asked why people were complaining about the high number of cars.

This was generally well answered.

Successful candidates answered that people were unable to sleep or rest at night. The main focus was that their sleep was being disrupted.

Less successful answers referred to the presence of cars 24 hours a day or the fact that there was too much noise.

Q01b) Candidates were asked for how long Barcelona closed its streets.

Successful candidates identified that it was for the morning, all morning, or the whole morning.

Less successful answers involved the mention of the whole day or for 24 hours or a week. Another popular misconception was that they closed the streets every morning.

Q01c) Candidates were asked how we know that the car-free day was not nationwide.

This was generally well answered, and candidates included either that the event was not celebrated in other cities or people went to work/ carried on with their normal activities.

Less successful candidates struggled with the word *ciudades*, thinking it referred to other countries. Others thought that *otras* meant eight and that there were 8 cities that did not celebrate car-free day.

Question 2

Candidates read a literary text extract from 'Todo lo que era sólido' by Antonio Molina.

Q02a) Candidates were asked why José is having a party.

There was a lot of confusion about this question. The mark was lost for failing to include the word success. Some candidates thought that José was celebrating for owning, starting up, leaving, or selling a business. Many candidates believed the party was to celebrate José living moving to the USA.

Negocios and éxito were incorrectly identified as negotiations and exit from/ leaving.

Q02b) Candidates were asked how many guests would be at the party.

This was well answered, many candidates recognised *Mil* as one thousand. Less successful candidates sat on the fence and offered: lots or a few. Some candidates thought the answer was 100 / one million. Some offered thousands and other focussed on 20, the number of chefs that would be cooking for the party and chose 20 as their answer.

Q02c) Candidates had to identify why Spanish food was being served.

Potentially correct answers here included that José was from Spain, was born there or that it was his nationality. Also correct was the idea that there were 20 Spanish chefs catering the event or that he had brought the ingredients over from Spain.

Less successful candidates suggested that he grew up there or lived in Spain.

Q02d) Candidates were asked how the party would end.

This question proved difficult for many. Those who knew the vocabulary were able to successfully identify that there would be fireworks. Many candidates recognised *artificiales* but few made sensible guesses; fires, smoke, flames, cakes, food, even vaping was mentioned. Other candidates guessed at all sorts of other things that might be found at a party such as confetti, balloons, live music, food and speeches.

Question 3

This question required candidates to read Isabel's blog about Travelling by plane.

Q03a)

Here, the candidates were asked what Isabel says about plane travel.

Candidates needed to identify the fact that she felt it wasn't always the best way to travel. Some candidates incorrectly answered that there were always a lot of people in airports.

Q03b) Here, candidates were asked to identify what was new in her airport.

Candidates struggled here with many saying simply that there was a new system in place. *Equipaje* was mistaken for *equipo*, leading some to answer that there was a new team or new staff at the airport. Others thought *equipaje* meant

equipment and many candidates gave this as their answer. Several others referred to new security systems.

Q03c) Candidates needed to identify what we knew about Isabel's flight.

This question was well answered overall with most candidates identifying that it had been delayed. The flight lasted three hours, the flight lasted 7 hours overall or that the flight was going to Madrid were also correct.

The mark scheme did not require candidates to know that *niebla* is *fog*, most candidates thought it meant snow.

Q03d) Candidates were asked to infer how they thought Isabel felt when she saw her suitcase.

Successful candidates were able to identify that her suitcase had been broken and therefore she was likely to feel upset, angry, frustrated. Many candidates did not know the word *rota* and this led to incorrect inferences that she felt happy or relieved to see her case.

Although this is an inference question, it is also worth remembering that this is a reading comprehension paper and the key sentence from the passage that needed to be understood was *mi maleta estaba rota*, hence a negative emotion was needed.

Q03e) This question asked candidates what Isabel said about doing the trip by coach instead of by plane.

This was very well handled by the majority of candidates who successfully identified that it was faster by coach. Only a few reversed this to incorrectly suggest that flying was faster. A few candidates unfortunately thought that autocar referred to a car rather than a bus.

Question 4

This required the candidates to read a literary text extract from *La casa del crepúsculo* by Laura Gallego and respond to five multiple choice questions.

Overall, this question was well answered by many candidates.

Question 5

Candidates read a text about Holiday destinations.

Q05a-d) The candidates were asked to read an article about four holiday destinations: Málaga, Tarifa, Sevilla and El Bosque and then choose the correct destination to fill in the blanks.

Q05e) This question required candidates to identify how you get to the castle in Málaga.

Successful candidates identified that you use a lift or elevator. Less successful candidates understood the idea that altitude but did not know the word *ascensor*. There was a wide variety of answers, including: cable car, a helicopter, a ladder.

The word *exterior* invited many to talk about exterior roads/ walls.
Ascensor was sometimes translated as escalator.

Q05f) This question required candidates to identify the best way to visit Seville.

This question was handled extremely well. Most candidates identified on foot or with a local.

Question 6

Q06i) This question required candidates to read a report and identify the three correct statements about extreme sports.

If candidates had selected more than the required three boxes, then the first three crosses were taken as their answers and any later selections were disallowed.

Q06ii) This question required candidates to read about extreme Sports and identify what we learn about the cost of insurance.

Most candidates correctly stated that it was costly/ expensive.

A common misconception was that insurance was necessary or needed due to the danger involved in extreme sports.

Q06iii) This question asked the candidates to identify one quality needed to do extreme sports.

Many candidates understood that *sana* means healthy and many candidates correctly answered be healthy. Others wrote correctly that you would need to be very hard-working.

Less successful candidates Instead of offering the idea of hard working made sensible guesses such as enthusiastic/ be willing to take risks/ be brave/ be strong.

SECTION B

This section asked the candidates to respond to 3 questions in Spanish.

Question 7

This question required candidates to read Marta's blog *Mi Trabajo* and answer five multiple choice questions in Spanish.

The most successful answers were (a) and (c).

The least successful answers was (b)

Question 8

Question 8 required candidates to read the comments made by four young people, Ramón, Carolina, Manuel, and Juana, about help in the community and then choose the correct names to match up with the statements in 8a) to 8e).

Overall, this question was handled very well by many candidates.

The least successful answer was (b)

Question 9 This required that candidates read a text about home schooling.

Q09a) Here, candidates needed to identify two reasons why Roxana decided to educate her daughter Alicia at home.

Many candidates were able to correctly lift from the text that she lacked *confianza en sí misma* and that her *rendimiento escolar era bajo*.

Those who lost marks here lifted incorrect sections of the text to say that *Alicia era bajo* or just referred to *el rendimiento de Alicia* without completing the answer. Likewise, *poca confianza* without the reference to *en sí misma* was insufficient as on its own. Many candidates chose *no era por falta de inteligencia* which also constituted an incorrect answer. No marks were awarded for untargeted lifts and order of elements applied if large chunks of text were lifted.

Q09b) In this question, the candidates needed to identify what would help improve teacher-student relationships.

Most candidates understood that the classes were too large but many simply lifted *las clases son demasiado grandes* which unfortunately did not answer the question they had been asked. They needed to convert this into the suggestion that classes need to be smaller. If they wrote *clases menos grandes* or *clases más pequeñas*, they were awarded the mark.

Q09c) Candidates were asked to identify what home-schooled children had that was different to other children.

Successful candidates were able to identify that they gained *habilidades valiosas* or *habilidades útiles para el futuro*. Others correctly identified that they received an *educación equilibrada*.

Less successful answers targeted the idea that the students would have *trabajos exitosos* in the future.

Q09d) Candidates were required to identify what the current situation is with regards to home-schooling on Spain.

This was generally well handled with most correctly targeting *el número de familias que quiere educar a sus hijos en casa está subiendo (cada vez más)*. Some candidates unfortunately lifted too much or too little from the text, resulting in an untargeted lift which did not correctly answer the question. Answers such as *cada vez más* without an explanation of what it referred to constitute an incorrect answer.

SECTION C

Question 10

This question asked the candidates to translate a Spanish text consisting of four sentences into English.

Overall, candidates performed very well in this question this year and we saw some pleasing translation skills.

Soy voluntaria en Chile y por las mañanas ayudo a los niños en un colegio.

The first sentence was generally well translated by most candidates. Both *voluntaria* and *colegio* were familiar words. Some had difficulty with 'in the mornings' and referred to 'tomorrow' instead. This often made them refer to incorrect tenses for *ayudo*. Many candidates were unsure about *ayudo*, translating it as I teach in a school.

Overall, most candidates handled the first sentence competently.

Esta semana me tuve que levantar temprano para preparar el desayuno.

The second sentence provided greater challenge to the candidates.

Esta semana was not always recognised and the separation of the reflexive pronoun from the rest of the verb in *me tuve que levantar* seemed to confuse some candidates. Many candidates translated *levantarse* as to wake up rather than to get up.

Tuve que was often translated in the present tense because the candidates who recognised *esta semana* assumed it needed a present tense verb rather than the preterite.

Temprano was another piece of vocabulary that many candidates did not recognise, with many thinking it meant 'temporarily'. This led to candidates trying to make their translations fit around that word, which overall was unsuccessful as they suggested that they were having to temporarily help with breakfast, wash up etc.

A few candidates did not recognise the word *desayuno* and translated it as lunch, dinner, lessons, depending on how they had translated *ayudo* in the first sentence.

As a cognate, *preparar* posed very few problems.

Aunque el trabajo es duro, me siento alegre de estar aquí.

A large number of candidates knew the word *aunque*, but there were some who chose to omit it completely.

Duro was another word which some candidates struggled with. Some correctly rendered the sense of it as tough or challenging but others struggled, often translating it as long, durable or tiring.

Many candidates did not recognise *alegre* as meaning happy and mistakenly took *me siento* for *lo siento*. This resulted in many translations which conveyed the idea of regret, feeling sorry they had taken the job, ideas about having to just put up with it or that they felt bad for the children in their care at school.

El año que viene, voy a volver para trabajar en el mismo lugar.

The last sentence was also challenging for some candidates.

El año que viene was recognised by many candidates which in turn meant that many understood that there was a sense of a future intention. The majority of

candidates also understood *voy a*, again helping them to render the idea of a future intention.

More problematic was *volver* which was less well recognised overall, resulting in guesswork by some candidates in the latter part of the final sentence. Many thought that *volver* might refer to looking for a new or different job, especially if they had misunderstood *me siento* in the third sentence. Some confused *volver* with *volar* or *vuelo* so a small number of candidates referred to flying.

Mismo lugar similarly was often dependent on what candidates had decided earlier in the translation. If they had understood *me siento* to mean I'm sorry then they translated *mismo lugar* as a different place, a different job or a better job. Others translated it as closer to home or another job.

Summary and advice to centres

A number of marks were lost due to candidates being unfamiliar with vocabulary such as *temprano*, *alegre*, *desayuno*, *duro*. Verbs such as *levantar(se)*, *me siento*, *tuve que* and *volver* proved challenging for some candidates. Adverbs of time were well handled overall but *por las mañanas*, *esta semana* and *el año que viene* were not always recognised.

Candidates need to be advised to be careful with targeted lifts so that they focus on the key point involved. Some lifts were untargeted, causing candidates to select irrelevant material. Likewise, the indiscriminate lifting of large sections of text can result in a correct answer followed by something else that then negates the first part of the answer.

Candidates should be reminded that the exam rubric requires that certain questions be answered in the target language and that failure to do so will result in a zero score for that answer. This year there were thankfully very few candidates who answered Q09 in English and who therefore scored no marks for that question.

In question 10, it would be useful to give a reminder to the candidates that they need to check back through their work in order to ensure that the translation they have produced makes sense. Whilst many candidates were extremely focussed and accurate, there were some candidates who chose to write an extended amount of irrelevant material. Pleasingly, there were very few candidates this year who chose to leave sections of the question completely blank – most candidates did make an attempt to translate the text.

Conclusion

Most centres had prepared their candidates well, so they had a good understanding of the requirements of this unit. The examiners marking this unit appreciated the efforts that the teachers had made to allow their candidates to reach their full potential.