

# **Examiners' Report**

## **June 2023**

**Int GCSE Spanish 4SP1 02**

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## Introduction

There are three sections to this paper: Section A is reading comprehension, Section B is writing and Section C is a grammar exercise. The two opening questions of this paper are based on medium length texts, each with a complete-the-sentence format. Question 3 is based on three short texts and a who-said-what grid to complete. Question 4 is a note-taking exercise. Question 5 is a long reading passage with questions and answers in Spanish. Question 6 is a short writing task where candidates have to include four stimulus words. Centres are strongly advised to ensure that candidates are trained to use all of the words and to include them verbatim. Question 7 is a long writing question with three choices of essay, each requiring a different style of writing (eg a blog, an email, an article) and based around four bullet points. The bullet points will encourage the use of a variety of tenses and an opinion. The grammar exercise is question 8. Candidates are given a text with ten gaps and a word (eg an infinitive or an adjective) that must be manipulated to fit correctly into each gap. One point is awarded for a word correctly modified. Subject-verb agreement, two verb combinations, tenses and adjective agreement are all tested. The rubric reminds candidates that there may be words that do not need to be changed at all (eg where an infinitive is grammatically correct, or a masculine singular adjective form is required). There are grammatical items of different levels of complexity, so that the exercise is accessible to candidates of all abilities, but there is scope here for the most able to be stretched.

Question 1 is about the daily routine of the Colombian actress, Sofía Vergara. Candidates had to select the correct sentence ending from a choice of 4. Most candidates scored 4 or 5 out of 6. The most difficult element was the final part where candidates were not always able to link *lleva lo mismo* to *se viste igual*.

## Question 2

This question is about the climate of Latin America. Candidates have to complete sentences summarising the text, by selecting from a bank of words. Candidates need to consider not just meaning, but also grammar in order to make their selection. For example, when completing the sentence: *la temperatura en Argentina es...*, the only answers that can fit grammatically are adjectives, and of these only *agradable* and *variable* are logical. Although the exercise looks like a choice of one out of twelve, by using logic, the choice can be as narrow as one out of two. The element that proved most accessible was Q02(d): *En Canadá, siempre nieva en invierno*. The most difficult element was about the Atacama Desert in Q02(e): *En 2011, nevó en una region donde hay poca lluvia*. Most candidates scored 3 or 4 marks out of 6.

### Question 3

This question is based on statements by three people about how they want to celebrate their birthday. Candidates have to indicate which of the three have made each of the seven statements. The instructions inform the candidates that some statements may refer to more than one person or to none of them. Candidates have to place eight crosses in the appropriate boxes. Most candidates followed this instruction, although there were some who gave more than or fewer than eight. For each cross above eight that is offered, 1 mark is deducted from the total score. It was a real wasted chance to score for those candidates who only placed six or seven crosses. The average score was 6.

## Question 4

This question is about the custom of helping your neighbour. A community from Chiloé in Chile helped to move an entire house. Ten items of information from the text are required in note form. These are a range of numbers, individual words and short phrases. Candidates performed well, with an average score of 7.

Q04(e) was by and large answered well enough for at least 1 mark, although a sizeable number of candidates wrote here about *puertas* and *ventanas*. Q04(d) seemed to be the most difficult with candidates not recognising *maestro* as a profession. Some candidates realised that this was the answer but did not score because they wrote the untargeted lift *maestro decidió*. Another question where marks were missed for the same reason was Q04(f), where *ayudaron con comida* was not accepted.

Completa la tabla con palabras en español o con números.

**Ejemplo:** Lugar de la tradición: América Latina

(a) Ayuda – ¿De quiénes? sus vecinos (1)

(b) Ayuda – tareas usuales: pintar una pared y trabajar en la granja (2)

(c) Ayuda espectacular – ¿Cuándo? llevaron de un lugar a otro (1)

(d) Profesión del dueño: el maestro (1)

(e) Transporte: entraron en el agua y un barco (2)

(f) Dar las gracias – ¿Con qué? comida  
y bebida (2)

(g) Fiesta – número de personas: los cientos (1)



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Examiner Comments

A surprising number of candidates overlooked the word *¿Cuándo?* in Q04(c).

This candidate earns a mark in most parts of this question, but did not realise that Q04(c) requires a day, time or time adverb of some sort.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

It is a good idea to highlight question words to make it very obvious what sort of information you need to find.

## Question 5

Question 5 is a literary text taken from *La Familia de Pascual Duarte* by Camilo José Cela. This is the most challenging comprehension question, although knowledge of the text is not necessary. The average score was 5 out of 10. The first two elements of the question and Q05(e) were generally handled well. The reasons for missing a mark in Q05(a) were when candidates did not stick to the targeted answer: *mayor* but copied a whole chunk of text that included the first person: *ya mayor cuando yo era niño*, or when they said that the father was a moustache, rather than that he had a moustache. In Q05(b) some candidates were confused by the apparent negative in *no poca admiración* and stated that the author did not have admiration for his father.

Candidates were frequently unable to clearly express the answer to Q05(c) if they chose to copy a section of the text, as they rarely manipulated the verb, thus leaving the phrase in the first person: *yo no la oí gritar*. Those who made an attempt to change it to the third person by adding *el autor* as the subject, even when the verb form was incorrect, were able to score. Those who really thought about the answer and used their own words were generally more successful, offering answers about the mother's lack of aggression or her dislike of conflict. Q05(d) saw many candidates earning 1 or 2 marks. Unsuccessful answers were those that did not show a comparison between the mother and father, but just described the mother. Candidates scored with answers that stated, for example, that the mother was thin and the father was fat or that the mother was *larga y delgada al contrario al padre*.

Q05(f) was rarely completely successful. Many candidates were able to pick out *cualquier motivo* for 1 mark, but answers regarding reading the paper and lying were frequently unsuccessful where there was no subject for the verbs, leaving it unclear who was doing what.



Contesta las preguntas **en español** basándote en el texto. No necesitas escribir frases completas.

- (a) ¿Cómo era su padre?  
How was his dad?

(1)

ya mayor cuando él era un niño.

- (b) ¿Qué sentimientos tenía el autor hacia su padre? Da **dos** ideas.

what memories ~~have~~ does the... have about his dad?

(2)

llevaba un estupendo bigote negro y él le tenía un gran  
respeto y no poca admiración.

- (c) ¿Qué quiere decir el autor cuando dice que su madre no era "amiga de los conflictos"?

what is he deciding when he says that his mum was not ~~one~~  
"a friend to the conflicts?"

(1)

no la oí gritar más que en una ocasión.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

Texts are often in the first person but answers should not be, because a first person (I, my etc) must refer to the person who is writing, ie the candidate and this cannot be correct.

This candidate did a good job of changing the first person to the third person in Q05(a), thus earning a mark. In Q05(c), however, no attempt has been made to either add a new subject (*el autor*) or manipulate the verb *oí*. No mark is earned for this part of the question.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Practise changing words from the first person into the third person, eg *mi* – *su*, *yo* – *él/ella*, *oí* – *oyó* etc.

(f) ¿Qué causaba discusiones en la familia? Da **dos** ideas.

(2)

- cualquier motivo, por pequeño que fuese, causaba una discusión;
- la hermana las causaba cuando decía que el padre estaba riñiendo sobre lo que está escrito en el periódico y que el periódico no decía lo que el padre estaba leyendo;

(g) ¿Por qué se marchaba el autor cuando veía que las cosas iban mal entre su padre y su hermana?

(1)

- porque él aprendió que la única manera de sobrevivir las tormentas familiares fue marcharse;



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

Clarity is the most important consideration when writing a response.

This candidate has done an impressive job of explaining all his/her answers, often including a subject with the verb, e.g. *la hermana las causaba*. The grammar and syntax are excellent, in fact beyond that needed at this level. Where there are two answers, these are clearly separated, making the examiner's job very easy.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Since in Spanish it is common to just write a verb with no subject, there can be confusion about who is doing the action. Make sure that WHO is doing the verb is clear.

Contesta las preguntas **en español** basándote en el texto. No necesitas escribir frases completas.

(a) ¿Cómo era su padre?

(1)

Era mayor y con un bigote negro.

(b) ¿Qué sentimientos tenía el autor hacia su padre? Da **dos** ideas.

(2)

Respeto y Admiración

(c) ¿Qué quiere decir el autor cuando dice que su madre no era "amiga de los conflictos"?

(1)

Que no era muy conflictiva.

(d) ¿Qué diferencias había entre la madre y el padre? Da **dos** ideas.

(2)

La madre era larga y delgada y el padre al contrario.

(e) ¿Cómo era la relación entre el padre y la hermana?

(1)

Discutían mucho



It is not necessary to write long sentences to answer the questions. Often a single word or short phrase will do.

This candidate has scored full marks on these questions. Their answers are equally successful but much briefer than those written by the previous candidate.



Find a simple way to express your ideas. Sometimes the more you write, the more chance there is that you will introduce mistakes.

## Question 6

The short writing task is about 'Mi dieta'. As in past series, the majority of candidates scored well here, but some candidates lost communication and content marks as they failed to refer appropriately to all four stimulus words. The most problematic word for candidates was *salud*, which was either used as an adjective: *mi dieta es muy salud* or mistakenly interpreted as salad. The other stimulus word that was not handled well was *ayer*. Candidates often followed this with a present tense or even near future verb. Most candidates scored 8 or 9.

Desayuno es la más importante comida del día porque  
si no desayuno comer es mal para su salud. A veces ~~no~~  
no como desayuno y suelo tener el dolor de estómago. Ayer,  
fui al parque con mis amigos y corrí mucho pero  
después fui cansada porque antes no como comida salud. Siempre  
debes comer verduras con el almuerzo y cena porque es  
saludable.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Comments

This question is aimed at candidates capable of achieving a grade 4. This means that many candidates write a response which is way beyond the level required for full marks.

This candidate has made mistakes but the intention of the piece is clear and the four stimulus words have been used correctly. Interestingly, this candidate has used *salud* as an adjective near the end: *como comida salud*, but they had already used it appropriately earlier: *mal para su salud*. It is also clear from the last line that the correct adjective *saludable* is known.



**ResultsPlus**  
Examiner Tip

Check that you understand the stimulus words. If you use them in a nonsensical way, they will not count.

## Question 7 (a)

As ever, the longer writing tasks in question 7 produced many interesting essays. Q07(c) (about social media) was by far the least popular of the three options with Q07(a) (about holidays), the most popular, followed closely by Q07(b), which was about school.

Examiners were impressed by the quality of candidates' writing. Candidates had a range of vocabulary and structures suitable for the topic area and there were some lovely examples of complex language used to give opinions, justify and narrate events. Some candidates were also able to use both the preterite and imperfect tense. However, many candidates failed to discuss the first day. They talked more generally about their holidays activities and did not include what they did *al llegar*. There were also lapses in the last bullet in which they described a future holiday with no reference to accommodation. At times, it was clear that some candidates were writing a pre-prepared essay and were not addressing the bullet points.



Hola,

Tengo mucha suerte porque el verano pasado tuve la oportunidad de ir a Italia con mi familia en avión por dos semanas. Me encanta viajar al extranjero porque puedo ver cómo la gente vive allí.

Al llegar, tuve hambre así que comí cena en un restaurante. Decidí probar la comida típica no sólo porque es deliciosa sino también porque es ~~distinta~~ diferente. Visitamos muchas ciudades pero mi ciudad preferida era Roma porque las calles <sup>siempre</sup> están llenas de gente y tiene un ambiente único.

~~Yo~~ ~~yo~~ ~~yo~~ Mi experiencia favorita en mundo fui con bicicletas sobre Roma. Me divertí mucho montar en bicicletas con mi familia y fui más rápido que mi hermano. Además me gusta mucho mirar a los objetos antiguos en museos porque me interesa conocer la historia de la ciudad.

Si tuviera mucho dinero, me gustaría ~~me~~ quedarme en un hotel lujoso porque pienso que será muy cómodo con mucho espacio. También si pudiera me gustaría viajar Tokio porque es una ciudad con mucha gente y con mucha tecnología. Me apasiona la tecnología y cuando sea mayor me encantaría trabajar con ordenadores. ¿Dónde te pasaste las vacaciones?

Cuidarte, James



The first thing that examiners do is to look for a response to each of the bullet points. After deciding on a mark for communication and content (CC), they then examine the language to arrive at a mark for linguistic knowledge and accuracy (LKA).

This candidate has done a convincing job of covering the four bullet points, including describing the activities done on arrival and the type of lodging desired for a future holiday, thus earning maximum marks for CC.

The language is not without errors: *tuve la oportunidad ir, las calles está llena, viajar Tokio*. These do not compromise communication though, and there is strong evidence of correct spelling and grammar. There is also evidence of complex language: *no solo...sino, si tuviera...me chiflaría*. This response is worth maximum marks for LKA.



Use a new paragraph for each bullet point; this makes it easier for both you and the examiner to check that you have covered everything.



## Question 7 (b)

There were many impressive responses to Q07(b), again with a range of language and complex structures. However, some candidates did not mention anything to do with the *horario* and only gave a description of their school. Giving opinions on school subjects was possibly the best addressed bullet point but often led to basic errors with *gustar*, incorrect use of *es* / *son* and adjective agreement. Some candidates misinterpreted the last bullet point to mean their own future plans instead of the ideal school of the future.

## Mi Colegio

En ~~mi~~ <sup>peor</sup> mi opinión, lo ~~peor~~ en mi colegio es el horario. Todos los días, hay ocho clases diferentes, ~~después~~ ~~pero~~ y las clases no terminan ~~hasta~~ hasta cinco y media en la tarde. Además, debo que levantarme muy temprano cada mañana a siete menos ~~un~~ cuarto para arriar en colegio a tiempo.

A mi escuela primaria, la química era mi asignatura ~~peor~~ favorita, por lo tanto el año pasado decidí que seguir con esta asignatura, pero ahora, es ~~may~~ ~~pero~~ mucho más difícil. Prefiero mucho las asignaturas creativas como el inglés o el arte, que estudiaré el año próximo.

ellos han jugado al ajedrez desde tuvieron cinco años.

Ayer, después de mis clases, fui al club de ajedrez con mis amigos Diego y Miguel porque me dijeron que es muy divertido. Desafortunadamente, fue muy aburrido y hubiera preferido a jugar al baloncesto en el ~~club~~ polideportivo en lugar de esto.

Si fuera el director de mi colegio, crearía una biblioteca nueva, porque ~~está~~ en este momento nuestra

biblioteca es muy pequeña y antigua. Desafortunadamente, dudo que sea posible porque ~~sería~~ costaría demasiado dinero. Además, en mi colegio ideal, los alumnos podrían usar los portátiles en clase porque serían muy útiles para hacer estudios.



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Examiner Comments

It is important to cover all four bullet points. There will always be one bullet point that offers a chance to use the past tense (BP3: what you did yesterday at school with friends) and one that suggests the use of the future or conditional (BP4: what the ideal school of the future would be like). Although it would be possible to cover these points adequately by using the present tense, that would be a missed opportunity to show your linguistic range.

This candidate scores full marks for CC and for LKA, even though there are mistakes. They have shown a range of tenses.



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Examiner Tip

Examiners are looking to see if you can handle a variety of tenses and express your opinions, so take the opportunities offered in order to do this.

## Question 7 (c)

Q07(c) was answered by a small number of mostly very able candidates who did a good job of covering the bullet points. This choice had the highest average score of 16, with candidates who opted for the other choices scoring an average of 14 or 15 out of 20.

Hasta donde yo sé, redes sociales son muy importantes en el mundo actual. Millones de las <sup>personas</sup> ~~gente~~ usan redes sociales, visto que son muy accesibles. Personalmente uso Instagram dado que es ~~verdad~~ bastante interesante y me entretiene.

Qué yo sepa, las revistas tradicionales son más <sup>confiables</sup> ~~seguras~~ que revistas en línea porque tristemente ~~se~~ noticias en línea pueden ser falsas pero permiten que millones de las personas en todo del mundo estén informadas y en mi entender que es significativo. ~~Demasiadas revistas tradicionales~~ La semana pasada, lei un artículo sobre la película Coco. Era muy interesante y era sobre amistad y familia y por eso vi Coco y lo pasé bomba. Disfruté <sup>de</sup> la película y <sup>hizo</sup> me ~~hizo~~ dar cuenta que este tipo de película es mi género preferido.

En el futuro, los móviles serán destruidos porque el gobierno prohibirá <sup>porque</sup> los móviles y serán demasiados inteligentes y ahora esto hace al gobierno tener miedo. Ojalá que <sup>tenemos</sup> ~~tenemos~~ menos gente que estén enganchada a su móvil.



Some candidates re-write an essay that they have learnt by heart. Although this may mean that the language is correct, it is unlikely that the content will be appropriate. An essay that does not cover the bullet points will score 0 for CC. If it scores 0 for CC, it will also score 0 for LKA, so offering a pre-learnt essay is a risky option.

This candidate has found a clever way to integrate a section that could have been pre-learnt. For BP3: some news you received or read last week, they have written about a film.

This candidate receives full marks for both CC and LKA.



It is okay to have some sentences prepared on common topics like holidays and free time. These can be used as long as they fit the requirements of the essay. Never write a whole essay that you have memorised.

## Question 8

The grammar test in question 8, where candidates have to modify ten given words, is based on a text about jobs that will continue to be needed (or not) in the future. This task is designed to give the strongest candidates the chance to shine, while also offering weaker candidates one or two places where they can score. The elements where most candidates picked up points were the adjective manipulations in Q08(b) *necesarios* and (e) *otra*. Many candidates also scored with regular present tense verb manipulations in Q08(a) *buscas* and (e) *reservan*. The use of infinitive in Q08(h) *elegir* was also correctly spotted by many. The most challenging manipulation was Q08(j) *siendo* following the verb *seguir*. Only the most able candidates were able to score above 8 marks, with the average score being 5 and the most common score being only 3.

It was pleasing to see that this year there were fewer candidates who did not offer any answers to question 8.



- 8 Corrige las palabras (a)–(j). Deben estar de acuerdo con la frase. ¡Ojo! No es siempre necesario cambiar las palabras.

### Los trabajos con un futuro

Si tú (a) [buscar] un trabajo, debes recordar que algunos trabajos son menos (b) [necesario] ahora que en el pasado. Hace 30 años, trabajar en una agencia de viajes pagaba un (c) [bueno] salario y (d) [dar] la posibilidad de viajar. Ahora, ya que los viajeros (e) [reservar] sus vacaciones en línea, no se necesitan agentes. Igualmente, hay cada vez más bancos en Internet, por eso cajero de banco es (f) [otro] profesión que desaparecerá.

Hay trabajos que (g) [existir] en el futuro. Debes (h) [elegir] uno de estos. Afortunadamente, cuando yo salí del colegio, mis profesores me (i) [aconsejar] ser peluquero, una profesión que siempre seguirá (j) [ser] necesaria.

- |                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| (a) buscas      | (1) |
| (b) necesarios  | (1) |
| (c) buen        | (1) |
| (d) daba        | (1) |
| (e) reservan    | (1) |
| (f) otra        | (1) |
| (g) existirán   | (1) |
| (h) elegir      | (1) |
| (i) aconsejaron | (1) |
| (j) ser         | (1) |



This grammar question is designed to test a range of grammatical structures from the most basic (adjective agreement and regular present tense verbs) through to the most complex (compound tenses).

This candidate has confidently handled all types of grammar except the final manipulation which should have been *siendo*.



Learn present tense regular and irregular verb endings and revise adjective agreements as a minimum.



## Paper Summary

Given the performance in this exam, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Use grammar rules to narrow down your choices in question 2.
- In question 4 and 5, take care that any words or phrases copied from the text are properly targeted and do not include too many or too few words to make sense.
- Double-check that you understand the four stimulus words before you start to answer question 6.
- Avoid writing a pre-learnt essay for question 7; you need to include the specific details asked by the bullet points.
- Learn regular and irregular verb endings and revise adjective agreement for question 8.

## Grade boundaries

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<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>

