
GCSE SPANISH

8698/RH Higher Reading
Report on the Examination

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General Introduction to the November Series

This has been an unusual exam series in many ways. Entry patterns have been very different from those normally seen in the summer, and students had a very different experience in preparation for these exams. It is therefore more difficult to make meaningful comparisons between the range of student responses seen in this series and those seen in a normal summer series. The smaller entry also means that there is less evidence available for examiners to comment on.

In this report, senior examiners will summarise the performance of students in this series in a way that is as helpful as possible to teachers preparing future cohorts while taking into account the unusual circumstances and limited evidence available.

Overview of Entry

This year's entry albeit much smaller than 2019, performed well on this exam paper. The mean mark was quite a lot higher than last year. It is pleasing to report that students can identify different tenses, they are not intimidated by the literature texts and their performance on the translation is getting better. Students follow the guidance set in the example answers where they are given, leading to a higher incidence of correct answers.

Comments on Individual Questions

Question 1

This was an accessible start to the examination. The majority of students could successfully distinguish between *consumo alto* and *consumo bajo* to give a correct answer. By following the example answer, students realised that two words were required. As such, one word answers such as 'meat' were not awarded a mark.

Question 2

This text featured on both the foundation and higher paper and as expected, students entered at higher tier performed much better than the foundation students who had difficulty with part 3. All parts of the question at higher tier had a success rate of over 90%. Students were able to select the correct answers from the distracters showing careful reading skills.

Question 3

This was the first of two extended texts at higher tier and targeted the higher grades. The expression *tener miedo* was well known in part 1. In part 2, half of the student entry were able to pick out the busiest time for online shopping. Students found it easier to identify the main reason for growth in online shopping in part 3. Artificial Intelligence was well spotted by almost 80% of the student entry but around 56% successfully identified the fact that the products were more luxurious than five years ago. Less than half of the student entry answered part 6 correctly.

Question 4

This text featured on both foundation and higher papers and tested students' ability to identify different tenses. Higher tier students are well practised in this skill.

Question 5

This question type required students to translate both the question and the circled answer and they have seen this question style over many years. Aimed at the higher grades, it required precise reading and understanding skills. As such it is a question style which differentiates well. Incomplete answers did not get a mark. Eg: 5.3 those students who missed out 'funny' to describe the videos lost the mark.

Question 6

This question was aimed at the middle grades and tested scanning skills and students did this really well. The most challenging parts of a T/F/NM question type tend to be the NM parts and there were two NM answers in Question 6. Despite this over 75% of the student entry got parts 1 and 3 correct which was very pleasing.

Question 7

It seems that students were not intimidated by the literature texts and treated them as any other text which was encouraging. Deciding whether only one statement or both were correct was a challenging skill requiring very careful reading. Students performed well in parts 2,3 and 4 but found part 1 challenging, perhaps because part A appeared in the first paragraph and part B in the second paragraph. This required very careful checking.

Question 8

This question was really well done by over 90% of the student entry. It was particularly pleasing to see that students were able to successfully identify different tenses in part 2.

Question 9

This question was the same question type as in Question 7 but the context was different. Once again students showed skills in cross referencing the information in the answer options with the extended text from Esther and they performed well.

Question 10

This question was aimed at the medium grades and was well done by over 80% of students. Some were drawn to the reference *drogata* in paragraph B when answering parts 2 and 4 and lost marks because of this.

Question 11

This question targeted higher grades and required students to draw conclusions from a series of mini texts. The nature of this cohort meant that the question was answered well and a high proportion of the students were able to successfully draw conclusions.

Question 12

This question was designed to be challenging. It was pleasing to see how many of this year's cohort selected the correct answers from this multiple-choice type question.

Question 13

Students were required to answer in the target language for this question. The example answer was there to help students to realise that in this case they could answer each question with a single word. It was not necessary to conjugate the verbs or manipulate the language at all. Students need to know that answers can, and should, be lifted from the text. Teachers and students have read and responded to previous reports where they have been advised to follow the example and lift answers. It is really pleasing to see that the majority of students are no longer copying out large chunks of the Spanish but are providing just the required information in their answers.

Question 14

The text included some vocabulary clues for the answer to Antonio's favourite aspect of the *fiestas*. These were *ropa* and *trajes*. However, the students also had to understand the phrase *mi momento estrella*. Many students were able to identify these clues. Students were also successful at finding the clues for the second part of the answer. (*de fantasía* and *superimaginativos*).

Olga's case, rested on students understanding the verbs *llamar (más) la atención*, *pintarse* and *reír*. These verbs were well known, as was the adjective *graciosos*. Students' performance was good on this question.

Question 15

Overall, this year's cohort performed well on question 15. Students and teachers need to be aware that the translation is set up to test grammatical structures rather than vocabulary.

The passage was divided into 9 key messages, as in the table below.

1	Me llevo bien con	This was well done
2	el futuro marido de mi hermana.	Some students wrote about 'my sister's fiancé' which was given a mark.
3	Se conocieron por Internet	'They met on the Internet' was a common correct answer.
4	y se enamoraron inmediatamente.	Some students forgot to translate <i>inmediatamente</i> but on the whole this message was clearly conveyed.
5	Hace un mes vivían con nosotros	The structure <i>hace + time</i> caused problems for many students. Answers such as 'They lived with us for a month' were not awarded a mark.
6	pero acaban de irse a un pueblo cercano.	This section was the most challenging part of the translation. The structure <i>acabar de</i> was almost, but not exactly, translated correctly.

		Answers such as ‘they just went to a nearby village’ were not awarded a mark. Students had to write ‘ have just gone.....’ to get a mark.
7	Espero que nos visiten el domingo que viene	Some students did not translate <i>nos</i> and others had problems correctly translating <i>el domingo que viene</i> .
8	porque solemos ir a la iglesia	There were some good translations of the verb <i>soler</i> .
9	y llevamos comida a los sin techo.	In translating the verb <i>llevar</i> , verbs such as ‘to bring’, ‘to carry’ and ‘to take’ were accepted, but others such as ‘to give out’ and ‘to distribute’ were rejected.

Concluding Remarks

In general, the demands of this paper were similar to those in previous series. As already mentioned, the marks overall were higher, but this was a reflection of the ability of the students rather than of the examination itself.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.