



GCSE

SPANISH

8698/RF: Reading Foundation
Report on the Examination

8698
June 2022

Version: 1.0

Further copies of this Report are available from aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2022 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.
AQA retains the copyright on all its publications. However, registered schools/colleges for AQA are permitted to copy material from this booklet for their own internal use, with the following important exception: AQA cannot give permission to schools/colleges to photocopy any material that is acknowledged to a third party even for internal use within the centre.

General comments

It was pleasing to see such high numbers of students taking this exam after very interrupted teaching. In line with Ofqual requirements, the reading exams had been through a vocabulary review to take into consideration the difficulties that the pandemic had created. As such, items of vocabulary that were not on the specification were not tested and most had been removed and replaced with vocabulary from the specification or cognates. There were no new question types so the students were very familiar with the question styles. Where examples were given, on the whole students tried to follow them in their own answers. When students did not follow the example they sometimes did themselves a disservice by copying out and including information that made their answer ambiguous.

Spelling in English and in Spanish was poor at times and illegible handwriting was a problem to decipher. The letters in boxes were particularly unclear and some students included letters and or numbers that were not listed in the options. Some students used obliques in their answers which should be discouraged as this creates ambiguity and more often than not the answers are rendered incorrect. The foundation translation was challenging for many students which brought the average mark down from previous years.

Question 1

An accessible start to the paper targeting the lower grades and as such was very well done.

Question 2

Students do find this question style more challenging yet it was well done again. Part 2 (the NM) was, as expected, the most challenging of the 4 sections.

Question 3

Foundation papers have to include two extended texts for students to show that they can read and understand a text in full and question 3 was the first of these. It was split into three clear paragraphs to ensure accessibility, readability and clarity for all students. Parts 1 and 2 were well done but part 3 proved more challenging. Students needed to understand *algunos* to eliminate option A but unfortunately this was the most popular answer. Only the more able students were able to read on to the end of the text to realise that option C (Electric bikes will go down in price) was the correct answer.

Question 4

Students are very familiar with this question style and are also assisted by the example answers. Answering in English and in Spanish is challenging for the majority of students at foundation tier. With this in mind, this question is targeting the more able students working to attain the higher grades and differentiated very well. Not all students will be able to get these questions right but they must be included to give more able students the opportunity to show what they have learnt. Many students created answers based on understanding *necesario* so that 'it is necessary for climate change' was a common albeit incorrect answer. Others made a verb out of *contra* and gave answers such as 'to control climate change' which was also marked wrong. Credit to those who knew the verb *luchar*. Well done!

In part two, unfortunately students wrote about ‘water bottles’ instead of ‘bottles of water’ which are two different things. The verb *evitar* was correctly understood by only the more able students who were the target audience. Part three was the more challenging of the three parts. In answering the ‘why’ section, some students did not include a verb, although it was indicated in the example in part 2. As a result they lost marks when they wrote answers such as ‘it is important for a healthy diet’. *Platos* became ‘plates’ and *sana* was more often translated as ‘good’ than ‘healthy’. This question gave students working at higher grades an opportunity to be justly rewarded for their accurate understanding. Well done to them!

Question 5

Although targeting the lower grades students were not fazed by the literature context of this question.

Question 6

This question set out to test students’ understanding of different time frames. Again, it is a question style that students are familiar with. Parts 1, 2 and 4 were supported by time markers (*hoy, hace un mes* and *la semana que viene*) so it was inevitable that more students got these parts right. Part 3 was the more challenging part of the question, despite the use of what was intended to be an easily recognisable preterite *fue*.

Question 7

This question targets more able students and requires verbal answers in English. Students are given an example of how to answer the questions and how much information to include. Those who did follow the example performed better than those who wrote only one word answers such as ‘impossible’/‘easy’/‘fast’. Some students followed the example too closely in part one and many wrote ‘impossible to use’ – changing the adjective but not changing the verb. ‘*Entender*’ was correctly translated by only the more able students. The mark scheme was expanded to allow ‘figure out’ or ‘work out’ as alternatives to ‘understand’. In part two the mark scheme was again expanded to include ‘watch’ as well as ‘see’ although it did not make much sense to ‘watch’ the numbers on a smartphone. The mark scheme originally focussed on one of the advantages of the battery, but many students included the fact that there was a high volume as well as a fast charging battery, so they were rewarded with the mark for their more detailed answer.

Question 8

Targeting the middle grades, and testing a range of verbs of emotion, this question was challenging in parts 1 and 3. The verbs *fastidia* and *cansarse* were less well known than *aburrirse* and *ponerse tonto*.

Question 9

This question was targeting the lower grades and as such the majority of students performed very well, even though the environment is a topic which some students find challenging.

Section B

Question 10

Section B opened with a letter based on the Identity and Culture theme with a focus on family, friends and free-time activities. It was deliberately designed to give students confidence at the start of the section in Spanish. It targeted the lower grades and was well done in parts 1 and 2 but some students found part 3 more challenging.

Question 11

The challenge increased with question 11 which was of medium demand and tested opinions and vocabulary from the 'Technology in everyday life' section of the specification. Many students scored 1 out of the 2 marks available in part 1.

Pasión made correct answers to 11.2 very accessible but the vocabulary in section of the text on '*la madre de Yoselí*' proved challenging for almost half of the students taking the exam.

Question 12

This question was challenging and as such is intended to target the higher grades although the question style is one with which students will be familiar. Writing in the target language gives those aiming for the higher grades an opportunity to show their precise understanding. The example showed students that they needed to include a verb and a noun in their answer and that this information could be lifted from the text. Students did not need to manipulate the Spanish in order to achieve the marks. Students should limit the information that they include to avoid themselves in creating ambiguity but adding extraneous, often incorrect, information. Very few students copied out whole chunks of the text which was really pleasing. Some students wrote in English but on the whole answers were in Spanish. Although students are not penalised for incorrect spelling, they should be aware that poor spelling could create ambiguity and they should take care to copy accurately from the text.

Full answers were required throughout, so answers such as '*suspender*', '*cambiar*', '*seguir*' and '*trabajar*' on their own were not given a mark. Those who included the extra word *odio* in their answer to part 1 were credited with a mark. Eg '*odio suspender exámenes*' was given a mark.

Those students who included extra information about it being '*absurdo de llevar corbata*' were given a mark as long as they had written about the fact that it is necessary to '*cambiar las reglas*'. Poor spelling of *reglas* often led to students losing a mark here though. *Reglas* became *regalos* or *redes* and these were rejected because the misspelling created a different word which was incorrect.

Spelling of *seguir* was very poor. The letter 'g' was unclear and often became a 'q'. New verbs were created such as *suguir* so it must be emphasised to students that they need to copy accurately from the text. Some students copied extra information from the text in part 3. For example some wrote '*no puedo seguir la clase*' which was given a mark. However, others wrote '*puedo seguir la clase*' which created ambiguity because the whole sentence then read '*A Fernando, le molestan los estudiantes maleducados porque no le es posible puedo seguir la clase*' so it was unclear whether Fernando could or could not follow the class. The question is designed so that students can get the mark by following the example so they should be discouraged from including extra information.

In part 4 both answers '*trabajar de aprendiz*' and '*no quiero estar en paro*' were awarded a mark. There were some very poor spellings of *aprendiz* which were unrecognisable as Spanish words and were not given a mark.

Question 13

This was the second extended text and also the second literary text. Part 1 was challenging in that students had to sum up Sira's mother's feelings. Part 2 tested opinions and sadly the majority answered P+N. *Caramelos* was only recognised as *algo dulce* by a minority of students but part 4 was quite well done. This question targeted the higher grades and parts 2 and 3 certainly differentiated well.

Question 14

Question 14 was an accessible question to finish section B. It was targeting the lower grades and was well done on the whole apart from part 3 where *muebles* was perhaps a barrier to understanding for many students.

Question 15 translation

Well done to all of those students who persevered throughout the translation. It is a challenging skill and worth 9 marks so they can pick up a few extra marks by having a go and persevering to the end. It is designed to test structures rather than vocabulary and targets grades all levels of demand in different sections. Students need to be precise in their translation rather than paraphrasing and should be particularly aware of small words such as *per*, *con*, *mi*.

Mi padre es cocinero was the most accessible section although some misspellings of the word 'chef' led to some students losing a mark. (chef became chief)

Dice que en su restaurante – some students gave up at this point. Some introduced a 'dice'. Others were unable to recognise 'su'.

tiene que hacer – It is interesting to note that only the more able students know the difference between *tene*' and *tener que*.

un poco de todo – was not very well known.

pero le gusta más – students need to know the difference between *más* and *mucho* and need to be careful where they place the word 'more' in the English translation. For example, some students wrote that 'he likes to create more original menus' which is quite a different meaning from 'he likes to create different menus more'.

crear menús originales – a singular 'menu' was accepted here. Over these two mini sections, the main problem was where the students wrote **more**.

Estudió en Francia – the preterite was being tested here in the third person. Many students put the verb in the first person 'I studied in France' or if they got the verb right they wrote about the French language rather than the country.

con los mejores profesores – Students had to use the plural here and many lost the mark because they did not use it.

Me gustaría trabajar para él – Only the more able students were able to differentiate between *me gusta* and *me gustaría*. Some students continued along the theme of the best teachers and wrote about 'working for them' rather than 'working for him' which was a pity.

Advice to students

- Read the introduction to the question. This will help you to give appropriate answers.
- Make sure that your letters are clear when you are answering with a letter.
- Use the correct set of letters eg (P, N or P+N) (T,F, NM) or (P,N,F).
- Read forwards and backwards in a text from the key word in the question. Sometimes the answer comes after the key word and sometimes it comes before.
- Do not copy whole chunks of Spanish because you might include the wrong answer as well as the right answer.
- If you are asked to give **one** reason, only give one.
- Translate every word in the translation.

Advice to teachers

- Train students to spot distractors and practise this in class.
- Draw attention to the list of important verbs in the specification and make sure your students are familiar with them.
- Encourage your students to use capital letters when answering with a letter and to make them legible even if they change their answer.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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