

FIRST LANGUAGE SPANISH

Paper 8665/21
Reading and Writing

Key messages

- **Question 1:** seek a phrase in the text which matches perfectly the one in the question. Candidates should take care not to omit words or to include extra words.
- **Question 2:** rewrite the phrases to include the word(s) in brackets. A grammatical manipulation will be required, and care should be taken to ensure that the answer would fit back into the original text, retaining the same meaning.
- **Questions 3/4:** comprehension of texts. Candidates should attempt to answer in their own words. Direct copying of five or more words from the text will usually invalidate an answer.
- **Question 5(a):** summary of relevant details from both texts in answer to the question set. Introduction, conclusions and vague generalisations are not required. Specific, relevant details attract marks.
- **Question 5(b):** personal response. Candidates should give a point of view and, if possible, offer ideas which have not appeared in the texts.
- **Language:** when preparing for the exam, make sure to revise the basic agreements, tenses and verb endings.

General comments

The paper provided an appropriate challenge to candidates across the ability range and the wide spread of marks awarded reflected the varying levels of candidate ability. Comprehension of the two texts dealing with different aspects discrimination in the workplace was variable. A very small minority of scripts showed evidence of poor time management.

This year there were, on the whole, fewer instances of copying of five or more consecutive words directly from the texts in **Questions 3** and **4** but, when candidates did resort to this, they tended to do so time and time again. A number of candidates might have achieved higher marks if they had been better prepared for the exam in terms of examination technique. See more detailed comments later in this report.

Overall, candidates had a good communicative level of Spanish, but this was often impaired by incorrect spelling, lack of accents and occasional incorrect register. Many candidates would have benefited from careful study to avoid spelling errors in verbs - *halla* for *haya*, *haser*, etc, and also confusion between *b/v*, *s* for *ci*, *ce*, *z* etc.

Despite these few shortcomings, candidates for the most part took full advantage of the opportunities offered to show how able they were to meet the different challenges of the various parts of the paper. Candidates across the range were often to be commended for their positive approach to the tasks in hand.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

This should be a relatively undemanding exercise which encourages candidates to read the first text carefully. Many candidates would have boosted their overall totals if they had been more aware of what was required. As stated in the Key message above, candidates should seek a phrase in the text which matches perfectly the one in the question and take care not to omit words or to include extra words.

The paraphrase in the question is printed above the space left for the answer to be written. Therefore, it should be possible to check at a glance that the phrase from the text is a precise match, and contains no extra words or omissions.

This series, answers for **Question 1** were frequently left blank, or else candidates treated this as an exercise in making their own phrases to equate to those given in the questions, instead of looking for them in the text.

- (a) Moderate success was achieved. Perhaps through lack of appreciation of the use of *sober* + infinitive, *frecuentemente* was often omitted. Sometimes otherwise correct answers were invalidated by adding *que...* at the end of the phrase.
- (b) Generally well answered by most candidates. However, a small number included *esté* at the beginning and added *para siempre* at the end.
- (c) Not so much success was achieved here. Those who did find the correct phrase often lost the mark by adding *del trabajo*.
- (d) Many candidates successfully identified the target phrase, although sometimes *formado para esos nichos de trabajo* was offered as an incorrect alternative.
- (e) More success was achieved with this item than any other.

Question 2

In terms of difficulty, this is usually considered to be a more challenging exercise than **Question 1**. However, perhaps through apparent lack of familiarity with the latter, a number of candidates returned higher scores for this question.

As with **Question 1**, the phrase to be manipulated is printed above the space for answering, enabling candidates easily to check that they have produced a phrase with the same meaning. In addition to performing the language manipulations required in this question, it is important to check that answers will fit back into the original text and retain the same meaning. A line number reference is given for candidates to check quickly that this would be the case.

Some candidates failed to score marks because they had not manipulated the sentences using the given words or phrases.

- (a) Only the very strongest candidates gave a correct answer here, with most failing to adapt the verb *hacer* into the plural. Some attempted to use *falta* as a noun, overlooking the fact that *hay una falta* does not convey the meaning of *es necesario*. Candidates should be reminded that they are not permitted to make changes to the cue word or words that they have been given. Even though grammatically correct manipulations could be produced with *faltan*, this was not allowable.
- (b) A good proportion of candidates tackled this question correctly. Most frequent errors were the omission of either *se* or *que*.
- (c) Those who were familiar with the use of *al* + infinitive found this to be straightforward. A common error was to try to associate *al* with a noun rather than a verb, as was shown by incorrect answers such as *cuando visitamos al empresas*.

- (d) A considerable number of candidates recognised that a subjunctive would be required after *en caso de que*. A stumbling block, however, proved to be the correct spelling of *surjan*. Suitable alternatives such as *ocurran* or *haya* (but not *hayan*) were also available.
- (e) Most candidates identified that they had to use the passive voice to manipulate this sentence successfully, although a number overlooked the fact that a subjunctive was usually also required. There were a number of possibilities: *tales ayudas sean conocidas por las compañías / a las compañías les sean conocidas tales ayudas / las compañías tengan conocidas tales ayudas / tales ayudas deben ser conocidas por las compañías*. Answers included *que* at the beginning could not be accepted, as the phrase would no longer fit back into the original text.

Question 3

This text about how certain groups are discriminated against in the workplace was quite demanding and needed careful reading. Candidates who gave clear, detailed answers in their own words achieved good marks. Some candidates lost marks when they copied five or more consecutive words directly from the text, although generally this rule appeared to be quite well known. A small minority disregarded the reference given to the paragraph where the information for each specific question was to be found. Candidates should also always remember that the marks allocated to each question – [2], [3] or [4] – are a reliable guide as to how many pieces of information are being sought.

A few candidates used bullet points to answer **Questions 3 and 4**, thereby restricting their access to the full range of marks for quality of language.

- (a) This was a four-mark question requiring four pieces of information in the answer. Most scored one or two marks but only the top-end candidates scored all four. However, there was not a common pattern of omissions. In other words, some would score two by including the first and third points on the mark scheme while others would score two with points two and four. However, it was common for less able candidates to omit the idea that companies believed that the *desfavorecidos* could not adapt well to work. *Para llegar a final de* were five consecutive words frequently copied directly from the text, as were *dos veces a la semana*.
- (b) Similarly, candidates often scored two or three but rarely all four marks. Again, there was no particular pattern except that, perhaps, the most commonly correct point was the second, *se cree que dan una mala imagen*. As above, it was essential that candidates stated the difference between facts (e.g. lack of resources) and perceptions or opinions about these vulnerable groups (e.g. the perception that they can't adapt).
- (c) This question was probably where candidates performed most poorly. Many seemed to misunderstand that the association helps companies to be aware of the needs of the *desfavorecidos* and not the other way round. Sometimes this resulted from careless language: *les conciencian de lo que necesitan* - without mentioning the *desfavorecidos*. Many failed to understand that people were trained for specific jobs, but most candidates were able to grasp the idea of the association acting as an intermediary, and could adapt this successfully into the third person.
- (d) Candidates provided good answers here, expressing how the government needs to implement laws or measures so that nobody feels excluded from society. Some answers were too general: *el gobierno necesita ayudar a los grupos vulnerables* or did not specify what type of laws or measures needed to be passed - *de inclusión, anti-discriminación* etc. Also quite a few did not specify that physical barriers needed to be removed to provide access for the disabled.
- (e) This was mostly well answered, with some good answers in terms of increasing subsidies. The second point was almost always included here, even if it appeared that the candidate was not sure what the *ayudas* were. A phrases commonly copied directly from the text, however, was *las compañías conozcan tales ayudas*.

Section 2

Question 4

The second text, dealing with discrimination against women in the workplace in Mexico, proved to be a little more accessible, with candidates often scoring slightly higher marks than for the previous question.

- (a) The majority of candidates scored well on this question. The few candidates who missed the first point did so because their answers specified that the number of women in the population had increased - *hay más mujeres en la población* or *mujeres en México son menos que los hombres* – rather than there being more women who were working. The second point was sometimes missed when, rather than stating *hacen trabajos peor pagados*, candidates stated that women's earnings were lower than those of men - a comparison which is not made in this paragraph.
- (b) In order to score the four marks for this question a comparison with men was needed here. Most candidates were able to grasp some of the key points, but very few were awarded all four marks. The majority understood that women participated in education as much as men, and that some got better results. Fewer candidates discussed women's work experience being comparable to that of men, and far fewer could clearly express the idea of female managers earning less; many distilled this point and said that women always earned less than men, an idea that was not in the text. Phrases commonly copied from the text were: *en todos los niveles escolares*, *el índice de mujeres directoras*, and *ganan menos que los hombres*.
- (c) Many candidates were able to express the idea of the laws bringing in too much rigidity in decision making, but a number of them copied too many words consecutively from the text, (*rigidez en las decisiones*), and so could not be credited. Fewer candidates correctly discussed how the law was the only way to increase participation and/or how voluntary means had failed; many talked about its aim, but not why people were in favour.
- (d) This question was one of the better answered in this section, where most candidates could grasp ideas about stereotypes. Some, however, presented ideas as facts or seemed to indicate, for example, that it was *Martínez* who believed women should stay at home. The idea of women's work being seen as something additional was more poorly expressed, and candidates would have done better with careful adaptation of the exact wording in the text. Ideas about temporary contracts and part-time work were well expressed on the whole if candidates managed to avoid direct copying of the phrase *contratos eventuales o a tiempo parcial*.
- (e) The first two points were usually included in candidates' answers: a reduction of centres or services for looking after children and the difficulty for women to combine work and looking after their children. Statistical details ('one in four' or '38%') were required for the final two points. Some candidates successfully converted these details into their own words e.g. *25%* and *un poco menos del 40%*.

Question 5

Good examination technique is extremely important in this question and can often make a significant difference to the marks allocated. Most, but not all, candidates were aware of the need to keep to the limit of 140 words for both parts of the question. Anything in excess of this total is disregarded, and in extreme cases this can lead to no marks being awarded for the second part. A good many candidates this in this June 2016 examination series lost marks by exceeding the stipulated total of 140 words for both parts of this question.

- (a) This question generally produced disappointing answers with scores higher than half marks being the exception rather than the norm. There was a tendency to give general summaries of the texts and point out how the two were linked. Many candidates wasted words by including solutions to problems, for example charities to help the *desfavorecidos*, government measures etc., rather than focussing on the problems, as asked by the question.

The principal problem appeared to be a lack of familiarity with the recommended technique for this form of summary writing. For this task what is required in order to achieve a good mark is to note, in the very limited number of words available, details from the texts which answer the question which has been asked. Superfluous starters such as *en el primer texto / en el segundo texto* waste words. Generalisations, often required by other forms of summary writing, are usually too vague to score. It is the relevant specific details, here with no restraints on copying directly from the text, (other than that this will not be considered when awarding the quality of language mark), which score the marks.

Several marks were lost as a result of lengthy introductions and conclusions. Candidates who wrote generalised summaries or pieces of free writing on the issues raised but without any concrete references to either text, tended to score poorly.

Answers such as: *Texto 1 quiere decir que hay personas en el mundo que están desfavorecidas. Las personas desfavorecidas son los discapacitados, exreclusos y víctimas de violencia de género. Estas personas sufren para encontrar trabajo por lo que piensan las personas de las empresas...*, waste 41 words and score 0 marks for content

In contrast, an answer which begin: *Muchas veces se cree que la gente pobre no podrá adaptarse a un trabajo y que todos los pobres son vagos. Las compañías creen que contratar a alguien pobre transmitiría una imagen negativa...*, scores 3 marks in 33 words words by giving relevant specific details.

- (b) There were many very good answers to this question. Most candidates had something interesting to say about job opportunities in their countries. A lot of them talked about the USA, which they considered to be the land of opportunities. Some referred to the improvements made by Obama, the laws to help people get their first job or the benefits if you cannot find a job, of how there was a job for anyone according to education. Different ideas were given by candidates from South American countries, where discrimination, lack of opportunities and economic crises were cited as obstacles to getting a decent job. Many candidates scored high marks, particularly those who brought a new idea to the table, rather than relying on ideas rehashed from the source texts.

Quality of Language

The quality of candidates' written Spanish, here and throughout the paper, was generally well up to the standard required by this examination. A substantial number appeared to have had first-hand experience of a Spanish speaking environment and wrote the language in the same way as they would speak. Although less able candidates sometimes struggled to perform in **Questions 3 and 4**, often having difficulties with verb formation, their quality of language often improved greatly in **Question 5** when their writing was more free style. Many of the quality of language marks awarded were in the 'Good' or 'Very Good' bands.

FIRST LANGUAGE SPANISH

Paper 8665/22
Reading and Writing

Key messages

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- **Language:** when preparing for the exam, make sure to revise the basic agreements, tenses and verb endings.

General comments

The challenge of this summer's paper was appropriate and the spread of marks awarded reflected the varying levels of candidate ability. All scripts were generally well presented, and response to the two texts, dealing with the benefits and problems associated with touristic development, was pleasing. There was little evidence of any difficulty with time management.

Most candidates attempted all questions and appeared to be aware that they should not copy more than four consecutive words of text in their answers to the comprehension questions. Interestingly, when these transgressions occurred, many were of phrases containing numbers e.g. *al 14% de los ingresos...*, *los Juegos Olímpicos de 1992, menos 29 campos de golf, un campo de 18 hoyos*.

It was pleasing to note skilled attempts at paraphrase. Despite good overall understanding, marks were lost when additional relevant details were not included in answers. (Candidates should keep a careful eye on the number of marks allocated to each question, and gauge the amount of detail to be included accordingly). In **Question 5**, a number of candidates exceeded the 140 word limit; thereby curtailing the number of marks they could score in **Question 5(b)**. The responses to **Question 5(a)** were often vague generalisations scoring poorly, rather than specific details which answered the question.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

Question 1

As stated in the Key message above, candidates should seek a phrase in the text which matches perfectly the one in the question, and take care not to omit words or to include extra words – a feature which often invalidated answers which were otherwise correct.

The majority of candidates scored full marks in this exercise. The most common error was to include extraneous words before or after the targeted phrase. This was most seen in **Question 1 (b)** where *es...* was commonly used to preface the phrase.

Question 2

This, as always, proved to be one of the more demanding exercises in the exam, and maximum or near maximum marks were more often the exception than the rule.

In addition to performing the language manipulations required in this question, it is important to check that answers will fit back into the original text and retain the same meaning. A line number reference is given for candidates to check quickly that this would be the case.

- (a) Candidates were required to produce a passive construction e.g. *puestos (de trabajo) que son generados por el turismo*. Some candidates lost the mark by omitting *que* and writing *puestos son generados*. Other candidates correctly wrote the simpler *puestos (de trabajo) generados por el turismo*. Some candidates were unsuccessful because they started their answer with *los...*, producing a phrase which would not fit back into the original text.
- (b) This was generally done well, although it was apparent that some candidates did not understand the meaning of *hartos*, producing answers such as *los vecinos de Barcelona han dicho basta a estos hartos*. Another error was to use *ser* instead of *estar*.
- (c) This was probably the least well answered question of the exercise. The most common error was to change the order to *el ruido molesta a otros*, which, while grammatically correct, does not fit back into the text in place of the original phrase. Other errors included the omission of *a*, and *los* instead of *les*.
- (d) There was widespread recognition that a subjunctive was required after *es posible que*. There was occasional difficulty in producing the correct subjunctive form of *caer*, and a number of candidates mistakenly put the verb in the third person (*caigan*) which did not reflect the true meaning of the original phrase.
- (e) A number of candidates struggled to render this phrase meaningfully. Incorrect answers included phrases such as, *para reclamar el propósito del espacio*, or *a propósito de reclamar...*

Question 3

The text about the benefits and drawbacks of tourism in Barcelona proved to be accessible to all candidates and a range of marks was scored in answer to the comprehension questions. Some candidates lost marks when they copied more than four consecutive words directly from the text. A small minority of candidates wrongly thought that just one detail would be sufficient to answer each question, instead of being guided by the marks allocated – [2], [3] or [4] – which are a reliable guide as to how many pieces of information are being sought.

- (a) Even the better candidates often failed to include all three points for this question. Most noted that the number of tourists had gone up by six million a year, but many mistakenly wrote that Barcelona's income had risen by 14%. For the third point, candidates frequently claimed that income had risen because of the Olympics. And, if they did make this point successfully, it was often invalidated by copying the 6-word phrase: *tras los Juegos Olímpicos de 1992* directly from the text.

- (b) Most candidates successfully identified either one or both points sought by the mark scheme (workers in tourism were working in worse conditions and are experiencing decreased buying power). Some candidates mistakenly included the *turismo de borrachera* for the second point.
- (c) This question was very accessible and the vast majority were able to score marks, although not necessarily the maximum. This was usually due to a lack of detail. For example, some candidates mentioned that noise was a problem but not that it was coming from shops that were open until late, or that the streets were crowded without mentioning that this meant there was nowhere to sit down.
- (d) Either one or both of the first two points in the mark scheme – *hacer calles peatonales* and *hacer las aceras más anchas* – were successfully noted by most candidates. Only a minority were able to add the third point that *Reverte's* disillusionment is because *las aceras están ocupadas por terrazas*.
- (e) Most candidates scored one or two in this question but often failed to get three. This was either due to copying directly from the text or because they missed an essential detail such as 'profit' in the third point or 'needs' of citizens in the second.

Section 2

Question 4

The second text, dealing with the Cuba's plans to develop tourism appeared to be well understood, with candidates often scoring slightly higher marks than for the previous question.

- (a) The overwhelming majority of candidates mentioned that Cuba wanted to be the centre of tourism in the Caribbean, and that they were planning to build at least 29 golf courses. However, the other two points were a little more elusive. Often, not all the details were given for the second point and the idea of attracting high-class tourism was often missing from the third.
- (b) This question proved to be very accessible with the majority of candidates scoring full marks. The demands that golf courses make on the water supply and the knock-on effect that this can have for the population and agriculture appeared to be clearly understood.
- (c) This question, too, was well answered with candidates successfully noting at least two, if not all three, of the points required. The use of recycled water and drought-resistant grass were usually clearly stated, although greater difficulty was found in paraphrasing *la reducción del área de césped*.
- (d) This question proved a little tougher, with only a few candidates achieving all three marks. Some lost the first by copying *un campo de 18 hoyos*, or they wrote that golf in general, rather than each golf course, brought in \$2 million a year. Only some mentioned the rise in foreign currency coming into Cuba but the vast majority mentioned that more jobs would be created.
- (e) This caused very few problems for the majority of candidates. Again, paraphrasing *para triunfar en el golf* was an issue for some.

Question 5

Good examination technique is extremely important in this question and can often make a significant difference to the marks allocated. It appeared that not all candidates were aware of the need to keep to the limit of 140 words for both parts of the question. Anything in excess of this total is disregarded, and in extreme cases this can lead to no marks being awarded for the second part.

- (a) Despite the relatively high number of overlong answers, many candidates seemed not to realise the importance of including as many ideas from the texts as possible required by this 10 mark question. In other words, they needed to aim at mentioning ten problems and benefits of tourism stated in the two texts. Only a minority included more than six because, all too often, candidates would just write a general summary of what the two texts were about, including irrelevant information (i.e. not related to problems and benefits) and at the same time avoiding the necessary specific detail.

The following is an example of how a candidate included a lot of irrelevant information scored just 1 mark (for *parte importante de ingresos económicos*) in 60 words (almost half the permitted word length of the whole of **Questions 5(a) and (b)**):

En primer lugar, vemos cómo en Barcelona, debido a su aumento turístico en los últimos años, se han llevado a cabo manifestaciones por los vecinos reclamando los derechos al uso de las zonas públicas. En segundo lugar, en Cuba se quiere tratar de promover el turismo asociado al golf, adoptando medidas medioambientales para poder mejorar la situación económica del país.

By contrast, an answer which began:

El turismo tiene como beneficio el hecho de que genera muchos puestos de trabajo y crea la infraestructura de zonas poco desarrollados. El dinero que trae el turismo puede ser un gran instrumento para impulsar la economía a través del aumento de la obtención de divisas. scored four marks in fewer words by giving relevant, specific details.

Candidates need to understand the importance of extracting specific details from the texts in this question in order to gain the marks available. There are no marks for giving a general summary of the theme of the two texts and looking for similarities and differences between them. They should look carefully at the question given on the question paper before planning their response. Candidates should write concise statements of relevant facts in complete sentences – not bullet points, which are usually too abrupt to show the clear meaning.

- (b) In the two or three sentences available for this last part of the examination the vast majority of candidates wrote good answers. Candidates usually had something interesting to say and most scored 4 or 5 marks by listing reasons why their country benefitted or not from tourism and giving their opinions. Better answers included original ideas which were not to be found in the stimulus texts. A number of candidates, however, scored 0 for **Question 5(b)** because they had used up the permitted word limit in **Question 5(a)**.

Quality of Language

The quality of candidates' written Spanish, here and throughout the paper, was well up to the standard required by this examination, with a high proportion of marks in the 'Good' or 'Very Good' bands.

FIRST LANGUAGE SPANISH

Paper 8665/41
Texts

Key messages

These points are dealt with in more detail in the comments on specific questions below,

- Analysis of the text is always required. Simply re-telling the story of the text does not give candidates access to the full range of the mark scheme.
- Candidates should focus their answer directly on the question chosen.
- Candidates should **not** begin their answers with a general introduction presenting information about the author and his or her work.
- All aspects of a text may be examined. For a play, candidates are expected to be able to consider the staging of the work. In prose and poetry, the use of language and the structure of the work are to be studied.
- Candidates must ensure they have the names and settings of the chosen texts correct.
- Candidates must know what type of text is being studied (plays are often incorrectly referred to as *novelas*) and be aware of the essential qualities of each. There may be some confusion by those who have watched the film of a novel, for example.
- Candidates are reminded of the importance of clear handwriting. Legible presentation of a candidate's work is essential for the Examiner to be able find evidence of the candidate meeting the descriptors in the mark scheme.

General comments

It is hoped that future candidates can benefit from the content of this report so that they are successfully able to show their full ability under exam conditions. The key messages above are crucial for candidates to achieve their potential. Examiners have seen many examples of each of these in this session.

The majority of candidates were well prepared for the examination. It is encouraging to note that Examiners are seeing fewer examples of rubric infringements where candidates do not follow the instructions in choosing which questions to answer. It may be worth Centres reinforcing the essential rule that candidates cannot select both the **(a)** and **(b)** option for any one text. To this aim, candidates should study a minimum of three texts from the list provided in the syllabus for the year of study, with at least one text from each section.

Candidates must read the question carefully enough to identify the key concept targeted in the question, and then ensure that their answer is built around it. Pre-prepared 'general introduction' paragraphs are to be discouraged. Such introductions are rarely relevant to the question chosen and this uses valuable time and words which could be put to better effect. Candidates need to practise starting their essays with a first paragraph which addresses the question directly, defining the terms of the points under discussion and beginning a clearly argued essay with a logical and clear conclusion. Practice in essay writing per se is a most useful exercise to attain a high level of achievement in this examination. See the mark scheme for detailed comments on what is being sought in this regard.

Most candidates produced essays of a sensible length, with paragraphs and appropriate use of quotations. Those who chose to copy out long passages from the text, or even the extracts, were not credited for it. Quotation is used to substantiate or illustrate a point in the argument; it is not a point in itself.

The historical and geographical context of a text are important in understanding the work as a whole. Where there was confusion in this regard, it tended to weaken responses. The candidate's intentions must be clear; Examiners often have to make a judgement on which character is being referred to if the name is incorrect. Names should not be abbreviated. Similarly, the century and country in which a work is set must also be known.

Virtually all candidates answered on the texts by either García Márquez, García Lorca or Fernán-Gomez, with a fairly large number of answers on Rulfo and Lope de Vega. This session, there were examples of responses for each of the texts on the list.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

In **Section 1**, the **(a)** option of each question has three distinct parts. Of these, responses to **(i)** and **(ii)** should be the shortest by far, often only requiring one sentence. Candidates are simply being asked questions related directly to the extract printed in the Examination Paper. Part **(iii)**, requires candidates to explore an aspect of the text presented in the extract and to analyse this in relation to the whole text. Responses to part **(iii)** should make up the vast majority of the answer.

Question 1 Juan Rulfo: *Pedro Páramo*

- (a)** In **(i)** and **(ii)**, candidates fulfilled the demands of the questions although some answers were rather too long, reducing time and words available for **(iii)**. Part **(iii)** required responses to focus on *los temas universales*. Candidates discussed a number of these, including *caciquismo*, *machismo*, corruption, poverty, and power. One of the factors which differentiated between the quality of responses was the breadth of the argument. Responses which simply listed the themes without an explanation of how they developed throughout the novel were not able to access the higher mark bands.
- (b)** This question focused on the role of Media Luna in the Reader's understanding of Pedro Páramo's character. The best answers were well planned before writing, with an introductory paragraph outlining what Media Luna (the estate/ranch) meant to Pedro Páramo. Some candidates mistakenly discussed Comala as if it were Media Luna. Many essays explained that Pedro Páramo's sense of optimism or depression were directly reflected in his attitude to the estate. By analysing the events which prompted these, and showing how his character was developed, candidates focused directly on the question and scored highly.

Question 2 Lope de Vega: *Peribáñez y el Comendador de Ocaña*

This text was not as popular as many of the other options.

- (a)** Parts **(i)** and **(ii)** were dealt with satisfactorily. Key words in the question for part **(iii)** were *comprender*, *juzgar* and *Comendador*. So the first aspect to be tackled was to explain what motivated the Comendador to act the way he did. The second part of the question focused on judging his behaviour in the context of the society in which he lived. The best essays included reference to the King and Queen as they were the ultimate judges and their opinion on Peribáñez's actions served to restore harmony in society.
- (b)** The key words in this question were *desenlace* and *optimista*. Candidates who chose this option were largely successful in addressing these requirements. Most concentrated on the issue of loyalty, showing that Peribáñez's loyalty to his wife, the Comendador (until his deceit was uncovered) and the King, was rewarded at the end of the play. The greater view of the threat to society as a whole was less often discussed.

Question 3 Jorge Luis Borges: *Ficciones*

- (a)** This was the less popular option on this text. Parts **(i)** and **(ii)** were generally answered satisfactorily, although the ambiguity of the words in **(ii)** was not always mentioned. For part **(iii)**, Examiners rewarded responses which dealt with the key words *mejor cuento* and *justificar*. This question gave candidates scope to select what they saw as the outstanding elements of *El Sur* and either compare these with another *Ficcion* or use another piece to develop the points made with regard to *El Sur*. Examiners were pleased to see candidates take an individual stance and to engage with the text in this way.
- (b)** The key concepts in the question were *visión de la vida*, *misterio* and *el azar*. Candidates responded well to this question and chose a huge range of *Ficciones* to analyse. Many discussed the themes of labyrinth, library or lottery. Others explored the concept of identity and individuality. All succeeded in choosing two or more pieces to analyse.

Question 4 Fernando Fernán-Gómez: *Las bicicletas son para el verano*

This text was fairly popular, with roughly equal numbers choosing (a) and (b).

- (a) In parts (i) and (ii), most details were correct but some thought Julio had already died at the time of this extract, which was not the case. The point here is that Julio was not a relative. In part (iii), the key idea was to show how this scene helps us understand the play as a whole. The lentil scene is one of the most moving in the play, and underlines the suffering of ordinary citizens during the war. The effect of hunger was going beyond physical discomfort, making characters act against their principles in the struggle to survive. The best answers then proceeded to analyse this theme throughout the play.
- (b) The key words in this question were *impresión, guerra* and *sin escenas del combate*. Most of the scenes were set inside, in the block of flats. The war was present in its effects on the characters and as a background noises of gunshots and bombs and news on the radio. The author gives the audience an impression of the experience of living through a war. Most found the work very effective as the tension created both as psychological fear and actual physical danger were successful.

Section 2

Question 5 Gabriel García Márquez: *El coronel no tiene quien le escriba*

Virtually every candidate answered on this text.

- (a) In this question, the key words were *mensaje político*. Most responses felt that there was a strong political message, seen through the eyes of the colonel and his family. The village was seen as a microcosm of a post-civil war society where the radical elements had been defeated by a right-wing reactionary force. Examples of such a society – no freedom of expression, censorship, poverty, isolation, underground opposition, and violence – were discussed.
- (b) This question's key words were *el coronel [...] es la novela*. The best essays showed how the whole novel is centred on the colonel; the point of view is his; the themes focus on his experiences; other characters are seen in relation to him. There were some interesting analyses and many candidates engaged fully with the novel.

Question 6 Isabel Allende: *Eva Luna*

This was also a relatively popular choice of text.

- (a) In this question the key words were *abuso del poder*. Most essays referred to Rolf Carlé's experience at the hands of his father and to some of Eva's employers. The differentiating factor here was between those who described the events and those who analysed how the theme was used to show the effect on victims, and how it could be overcome. It was also possible to extend the theme to the wider political sphere.
- (b) The key words here were *el amor lo cura todo*. The overall consensus was that yes, it can. Many candidates gave a number of examples from the text, mostly related to Eva, but also including Rolf and Mimí. Some showed how different kinds of love are seen in the novel, and to what extent a character's life can be changed.

Question 7 Federico García Lorca: *Bodas de sangre*

Virtually all candidates wrote about this text.

- (a) In this question, the key words were *técnicas teatrales, situación sencilla* and *drama complejo*. Candidates needed to consider how to structure their answer with care before starting to write. It is always advisable to define terms, so an introductory paragraph outlining the simple dramatic situation, the complexity of the play overall (Act 3) and some theatrical techniques would be helpful. Some referred to the source of the play – the newspaper article does underline the simplicity of the situation. The complexity emerges in the breadth and depth of the themes which arise from this, looking at the dilemma facing *la Novia*, for example. Themes such as 'the pressure of society versus the individual', 'destiny' and 'forces beyond human control' may all be seen as sophisticated aspects of the play. The question asks how these are expressed – many theatrical devices were used. The whole of Act 3 and the supernatural must be analysed. More simple devices such as the symbols introduced in Acts 1 and 2 – the horse, the knife – contribute to the sense of foreboding. It

is important that candidates are aware of the manipulation involved in writing a play – some saw it as a work to be read, rather than live theatre.

- (b) This question had as key words *no está enamorada* and *consiente en casarse*. The essence of this question lay in the social and family pressure on *la Novia* to marry *el Novio*. Many candidates were able to discuss this, and show why the earlier relationship with Leonardo could not be acceptable due to the difference in wealth and standing between *la Novia*'s family and his. There was some confusion regarding the plot. A number of responses indicated that the marriage between *la Novia* and *el Novio* had not taken place. Most succeeded in analysing the scene when *la Novia* is getting ready for her wedding, showing her reluctance. The contrast between *el Novio* and Leonardo was generally well presented, and the best answers contrasted the way *la Novia* reacted to each of the men. As far as *el Novio* was concerned, she was deferential or distant, but she was instinctively drawn to Leonardo and was passionate. Her dilemma between instinct and duty was well explained.

Question 8 Rosalía de Castro: *En las orillas del Sar*

There was a relatively small number of answers on this text.

- (a) In this option, candidates who were able to analyse the ways in which the author unified the poem in a coherent argument were more successful than those who went through the poem stanza by stanza, commenting on each one as the poem progressed. It is worth noting that it is not necessary to quote at length as this does not add to the force of the argument.
- (b) This option was open to many interpretations. The key words to address were *persona apasionada*. Essays focused on a range of topics inspiring passion in the poet, such as deforestation, emigration and social inequality. Candidates who chose this question engaged with the work and seemed to enjoy writing about the poems.

FIRST LANGUAGE SPANISH

Paper 8665/42
Texts

Key messages

These points are dealt with in more detail in the comments on specific questions below,

- Analysis of the text is always required. Simply re-telling the story of the text does not give candidates access to the full range of the mark scheme.
- Candidates should focus their answer directly on the question chosen.
- Candidates should **not** begin their answers with a general introduction presenting information about the author and his or her work.
- All aspects of a text may be examined. For a play, candidates are expected to be able to consider the staging of the work. In prose and poetry, the use of language and the structure of the work are to be studied.
- Candidates must ensure they have the names and settings of the chosen texts correct.
- Candidates must know what type of text is being studied (plays are often incorrectly referred to as *novelas*) and be aware of the essential qualities of each. There may be some confusion by those who have watched the film of a novel, for example.
- Candidates are reminded of the importance of clear handwriting. Legible presentation of a candidate's work is essential for the Examiner to be able find evidence of the candidate meeting the descriptors in the mark scheme.

General comments

It is hoped that future candidates can benefit from the content of this report so that they are successfully able to show their full ability under exam conditions. The key messages above are crucial for candidates to achieve their potential. Examiners have seen many examples of each of these in this session.

The majority of candidates were well prepared for the examination. It is encouraging to note that Examiners are seeing fewer examples of rubric infringements where candidates do not follow the instructions in choosing which questions to answer. It may be worth Centres reinforcing the essential rule that candidates cannot select both the **(a)** and **(b)** option for any one text. To this aim, candidates should study a minimum of three texts from the list provided in the syllabus for the year of study, with at least one text from each section.

Candidates must read the question carefully enough to identify the key concept targeted in the question, and then ensure that their answer is built around it. Pre-prepared 'general introduction' paragraphs are to be discouraged. Such introductions are rarely relevant to the question chosen and this uses valuable time and words which could be put to better effect. Candidates need to practise starting their essays with a first paragraph which addresses the question directly, defining the terms of the points under discussion and beginning a clearly argued essay with a logical and clear conclusion. Practice in essay writing per se is a most useful exercise to attain a high level of achievement in this examination. See the mark scheme for detailed comments on what is being sought in this regard.

Most candidates produced essays of a sensible length, with paragraphs and appropriate use of quotations. Those who chose to copy out long passages from the text, or even the extracts, were not credited for it. Quotation is used to substantiate or illustrate a point in the argument; it is not a point in itself.

The historical and geographical context of a text are important in understanding the work as a whole. Where there was confusion in this regard, it tended to weaken responses. The candidate's intentions must be clear; Examiners often have to make a judgement on which character is being referred to if the name is incorrect. Names should not be abbreviated. Similarly, the century and country in which a work is set must also be known.

Virtually all candidates answered on the texts by either García Márquez, García Lorca or Fernán-Gomez, with a fairly large number of answers on Rulfo and Lope de Vega. This session, there were examples of responses for each of the texts on the list.

Comments on specific questions

Section 1

In **Section 1**, the **(a)** option of each question has three distinct parts. Of these, responses to **(i)** and **(ii)** should be the shortest by far, often only requiring one sentence. Candidates are simply being asked questions related directly to the extract printed in the Examination Paper. Part **(iii)**, requires candidates to explore an aspect of the text presented in the extract and to analyse this in relation to the whole text. Responses to part **(iii)** should make up the vast majority of the answer.

Question 1 Juan Rulfo: *Pedro Páramo*

- (a)** The extract and characters were recognised and points **(i)** and **(ii)** were generally answered correctly. Some responses to **(ii)** were too vague.

In **(iii)**, candidates were required to focus on *la nostalgia*. It is always good practice to define terms – nostalgia was not understood by all. Successful responses mentioned the longing for better and happier times expressed by Dolores and many other characters, both in the world of the spirits and the world of Pedro Páramo in his lifetime.

- (b)** The key words to address in this question were *sufrido* and *vivido*. Most responses focused on suffering and often referred to the spirit world, *caciquismo* and the experience of Pedro Páramo as *cacique*. Candidates also provided successful responses which explained his effect on those dependent on him, as well as historical events and religious life in the village. The best essays selected appropriate examples from across the range of experiences in the novel and drew a conclusion about the novel as a whole.

Question 2 Lope de Vega: *Peribáñez y el Comendador de Ocaña*

- (a)** Parts **(i)** and **(ii)** were generally well done as candidates recognised the passage and understood the events portrayed. In **(iii)**, the key word is *conflicto*. Responses to this part of the question tended to narrate the story which did not attract many marks. There was more success where candidates identified the conflict itself and analysed its importance in the play.

- (b)** The key word to address in this question was *lealtad*. Some candidates read this as a question on honour, which they had prepared and tried to present it as a response. However, essays that do not relate directly to the question set score less well. The best essays recognised that loyalty is indeed a central theme of the play and involves virtually all characters, including the King and Queen. In fact, the concept of loyalty unifies the work. The importance of understanding society at the time in which the play is set was highlighted in a number of essays, where candidates seemed to think that Casilda had the freedom to leave Peribáñez and have a more comfortable life with the Comendador. Examiners saw some thorough responses to this question.

Question 3 Jorge Luis Borges: *Ficciones*

- (a)** This was the less popular of the options on this text. In **(i)**, Menard tried to write the Quijote, not copy or change it; in **(ii)**, although the texts are identical, Borges indicates differences which make the Menard text superior. Part **(iii)** deals with Borges' basic premise that a work of literature exists beyond itself in that the way readers interact with it or are affected by it may change it. At the same time Borges may be satirising literary criticism, he may be being ironic or suggesting that literature creates order in a chaotic world, or considering the idea of the author as God. Borges' work is open to many interpretations. The key focus for responses should have been the purpose of literature.

- (b)** The key words to be addressed here were *percepción* and *memoria*. There were some good answers to this question. A range of *Ficciones* were studied, including '*Funes el memorioso*', '*La muerte y la brújula*', '*La Biblioteca de Babel*' and '*Las ruinas circulares*'. A useful starting point was to consider how people perceive the world – Borges seems to say that we do not understand reality so anything can happen. He also said '*el mundo es un caosy el hombre está perdido...*' Our

perception may be mistaken. What purpose does memory serve? As is usually the case with this text, a number of candidates wrote with real interest and understanding and seemed to enjoy the challenge of Borges.

Question 4 Fernando Fernán-Gómez: *Las bicicletas son para el verano*

- (a) Examiners saw a large number of essays on this question, with some very good ones. In (i), there was a range of opinion as to whether the scene was positive or negative, which was perfectly acceptable provided the opinion was supported with reference to the text. This answer should only have been one or two sentences long. Part (ii) caused some confusion as a number of candidates did not know what a *trinchera* was, but most answered well. A sufficient response would be to say that the presence of trenches indicated that the area was the site of active warfare with the opposing troops digging defences as they were so close.

Answers to part (iii) fell broadly into two categories. The first were those where candidates only referred to the opening scene of the play as a point of comparison or focused only on the scene printed and did not discuss other characters or events in the play. The second, and more successful group were able to see the play as a whole, taking the scene printed as a starting point, and discussed a number of issues. These covered areas such as; what did the play set out to do in the portrayal of a civil war?; the contrast between pre- and post-war life; realism; following the experience of one or two characters to show how the war affected them. Most were determined to include a discussion of the *bicicleta* as a symbol but this needed to be integrated into the argument to be effective.

- (b) The key words to be addressed in this question were *espíritu humano* and *sobrevivir*. As a general point in questions such as these where the candidate is being asked to comment on a theme, the majority of the essay must be focused on that theme and not another which the candidate sees as more important. It may be relevant to point out how the theme in the question interacts or contrasts with another, but in this case the strength of the human spirit seen in the fight for survival is the main focus of the essay.

An excellent starting point, as always, is to show understanding of the key words in the question and to set the scene in the opening paragraph, possibly indicating which aspects of the play will be discussed, such as the lack of food, changing attitudes, reactions to the developing political situation, reactions to danger. The question asks how the characters fought to survive and that aspect had to be present. This meant that a description of the hardships caused by the war did not answer the question. There were some excellent analyses of the 'lentil' episode, where candidates explored the characters' feelings and often related it to Manolita's theft of the piece of bread.

Section 2

Question 5 Gabriel García Márquez: *El coronel no tiene quien le escriba*

- (a) There were very many answers to this question and these attracted marks from across the full range. The key words in the question are *tan sencilla como parece*. The first task is therefore to explain *sencilla*. This encompasses a number of areas – the number of characters and the plot; the language; the themes; the setting, to name some. It was not sufficient to say that the novel is easy to read. Examiners were seeking an analysis of an apparently simple novel which portrays a breadth of vision and criticism of Colombian society as well as a moving portrayal of the married couple. An interesting and successful interpretation was that the simplicity of the novel is elegantly designed to portray the colonel's solitude. A less effective approach was to list the symbols and other literary techniques and then state that as these make the novel harder to understand.

The issues raised in marking this question point to some basic points for all candidates – define your terms and construct an argument before beginning to write.

- (b) The key word here is *metáforas*. By asking candidates to consider the importance, or role of these in the novel, candidates must be prepared to analyse them in terms of how they relate to themes or character portrayal, for example, not just listing them. The strongest answers went beyond the two most obvious metaphors (*gallo* and *carta*).

Question 6 Isabel Allende: *Eva Luna*

- (a) The key words to be addressed here are *no es feminista*. There were some very effective essays, especially where candidates began by explaining what they understood as feminism. It does not mean that the book is mostly about women. Most weighed up the evidence, but some had only considered the novel from one point of view and had not thought about how the male characters were portrayed, as well as the variety of stances seen in the female protagonists. There was an unusual and interesting interpretation of the novel as not feminist, but anti-machismo. Examiners are always pleased to read personal evaluations of the texts, provided they can be substantiated and are focused on the question.
- (b) This was the less popular of the two options on this text. The key words here are *presentación* and *Rolf Carlé*. Candidates often narrated Rolf's unhappy childhood and mentioned how this was similar to Eva's. The best answers recognised his importance in the novel by showing how he had been affected, both physically and psychologically by his experiences as a counterpoint to Eva. There were also discussions regarding the stylistic impact of his appearance in the novel and the overall structure and thematic development. The theme of male experience as a whole was also relevant and Rolf's role could be analysed in the light of the other male protagonists.

Question 7 Federico García Lorca: *Bodas de sangre*

Virtually every candidate answered on this text, with (a) being the more popular option.

- (a) The key words for responses to address in this question were *uso*, *contexto geográfico y rural* and *tragedia*. Of the very many essays, these were the essential points:
- candidates needed to know the setting (Andalucía in southern Spain)
 - the rural setting also encompasses the rural society
 - references to the natural world could be used in the answer but did not constitute the main focus
 - references to the use of colour in the room settings often took the essay off task
 - the contrast between the actual geographical setting in the first two Acts and that of the *bosque* in Act 3 which introduces the supernatural elements.
- (b) The key word in the question was *teatro*. The best answers to this question referred to the songs and in particular to the staging of Act 3, analysing the roles of the *mendiga*, the moon, the *leñadores*, the colour and the lighting. The essential focus was to see the play for what it is, a work intended to be performed on a stage. Even though some candidates mentioned having seen a film or a live production of the play, there seemed to be a misunderstanding of Lorca's intentions. Some saw the question as asking about adapting the work to the stage. Others saw the written work as somehow different from a theatrical production. Those who felt that it was helpful to read the play before seeing it performed made a good point in that the unprepared spectator may miss some of the subtleties of language. Although biographical information about the author is not usually encouraged, the fact that García Lorca ran a very successful touring theatre group may have been helpful in this case. García Lorca used theatrical techniques to full effect as he understood them and had been fully involved in production over a number of years.

Question 8 Rosalía de Castro: *En las orillas de Sar*

- (a) The key word in this question was *sufimiento*. The poem '*Los tristes*' is full of references to a number of aspects of suffering or unhappiness. A summary may be that some people are pursued by darkness with no sense of escape; suffering is everywhere as part of the cycle of life but other individuals are fortunate enough to have a positive experience. Candidates generally knew the work and were able to analyse critically and in detail. The best answers developed their argument and studied the theme and techniques in a structured discussion, which read more fluently than those responses which looked at each stanza in turn. Candidates who chose this text are usually well prepared and respond positively to poetry.
- (b) The key words in this question were *aislada* and *sofa*. Again, as with option (a), candidates were well prepared in the main. All chose three highly appropriate poems, or more, and focused on the question directly. The choice of examples was very individual and as with (a), candidates engaged fully with the text.