

FIRST LANGUAGE SPANISH

Paper 8665/22
Reading and Writing

Key message

In order to access every mark on this paper, candidates should follow the instructions in the rubrics carefully, avoid lifting five or more words from the text to answer comprehension questions, keep to the word limit in **Question 5**, and make sure that they attempt an answer to every question.

General comments

All scripts were generally well presented, and response to the two texts, dealing with the related topics of renewable energy and sustainable transport, was often good. There was little evidence of any difficulty with time management.

Comments on specific questions

SECCIÓN PRIMERA

Question 1

The majority of candidates were aware of the technique required to answer this question, although there were some who thought it was necessary to copy out the whole sentence which contained the targeted phrase, and a few who treated this as an exercise in paraphrasing.

It is important to answer with a phrase from the text which is a precise match to that of the question, and careful cross-checking should ensure that no additional words are included either before or after the matched phrase. Any such additions invalidate otherwise correct answers. A good way to check at a glance that an answer contains no extras or omissions is to copy out the paraphrase in the question and then write the answer phrase on the line beneath. Often, although not always, (e.g. **Question 1(c)**), the targeted phrase is of a similar length to the one in the question.

The most likely answers to contain unnecessary additions were:

(b) – answers continued with *...de panel solar*.

(c) – answers continued with *...de energía*.

Otherwise correct answers in **(c)** were sometimes invalidated by the omission of *para* at the start of the phrase.

Question 2

This usually proves to be one of the more demanding exercises on the paper. In addition to performing the language manipulations required in this question, it is important to check that the answers fit back into the original text and retain the same meaning. The technique mentioned above of copying out the phrase as it appears on the question paper before writing the answer underneath can help to ensure that this is the case. It should also be possible to tell at a glance whether in making the manipulation any elements have been added or omitted.

(a) The conversion from the passive present continuous to the active form was successfully achieved by most candidates.

- (b) The use of *llevar* + present participle in temporal expressions was recognised by some candidates and several different permutations of the structure were used. Others appeared less familiar with the structure.
- (c) Many candidates recognised that the conditional, *sería suficiente*, was needed here.
- (d) Many realised that *poder* would be required in the answer but not so many put this into the conditional form, and only a minority were successful in using the impersonal *se podría comparar*.
- (e) There were many different ways of performing a manipulation to give a correct answer. Most candidates correctly opted for a subjunctive construction but some did not offer the necessary plural *capturen*.

Question 3

Comprehension of the text was generally good, and candidates who gave clear, detailed answers in their own words were able to access the higher mark ranges. Candidates who correctly identified the points which were being tested but who answered in brief phrases, or had difficulties in producing a successful paraphrase, were credited for content where appropriate – provided that fewer than five words of text had been copied – but were unable to access the full range of marks available for Quality of Language.

- (a) Most candidates scored two marks for noting that the solar panels could change the way in which we travel and obtain energy. The expression *aprovechamos la infraestructura de red de carreteras* was not well understood.
- (b) Marks for identifying the high costs of the project and lack of advanced technology were commonly awarded. Only a few candidates added that an insufficient amount of asphalted road surface was also a barrier to the implementation of the project.
- (c) Most candidates readily identified the facts which were required to answer this question, and those who were able to express them clearly scored maximum marks. Most difficulty was encountered in stating that the 'solar highways' would have similar construction costs to conventional roads.
- (d) The marks in brackets at the end of each question give a clear indication as to how many points are being sought in the answer. This was a four-mark question and four distinct points were needed to score the maximum. The four separate advantages of the 'intelligent roads', although often successfully identified, proved less easy to paraphrase without copying five or more words of text. Some answers carelessly indicated that *las nuevas carreteras generarán energía para 500 casas*.
- (e) Many candidates scored two marks here, although some copied the entire phrase *hasta 17 000 horas de luz al año* which meant that they missed out on one of the available marks.

SECCIÓN SEGUNDA

Question 4

There was possibly greater familiarity with the topic in this text on sustainable transport and marks were on average higher than those for the previous exercise.

- (a) Nearly all candidates mentioned the fact that transport is a major contributor to global warming, and many were able to paraphrase the details relating to greenhouse gases and increases in CO₂ emissions. Occasionally marks were lost when vague over-generalisations were offered for the very specific data contained in the paragraph.
- (b) Raising public awareness of the importance of sustainable transport, improving air quality in the cities and counteracting climate change were all commonly identified. Marks were occasionally lost when, perhaps more by oversight than intention, the phrases *la importancia de la movilidad sostenible* and *mejorar la calidad del aire* were copied directly from the text.
- (c) The question and the relevant parts of the text were clearly understood, with the result that many candidates scored the two marks available. The copied phrase *cooperación de todos los ciudadanos* occasionally invalidated an otherwise correct answer.

- (d) This was another four-mark question, indicating that four distinct points were being sought. Comprehension was generally good. The phrase *el sistema de transporte público* was occasionally copied directly from the text and marks were sometimes lost by stating that public transport should be used rather than it should be improved.
- (e) The best responses successfully noted that to ride a bicycle in traffic was perceived to be dangerous in Spain, and also mentioned the cultural barriers to this practice without copying the phrase *la bicicleta esté mal vista*. Most candidates were able to state that it was uncommon to see VIPs on bicycles in Spain.

Question 5

Good examination technique is extremely important in this question and can often make a significant difference to the marks awarded. Most candidates seemed to be aware of the need to keep to the limit of 140 words for both parts of the question. Anything in excess of 160 words is disregarded, and in extreme cases this can lead to no marks being awarded for the second part.

- (a) The technique required for achieving a good mark in this task is to note, in the very limited number of words available, details from the texts which answer the question which has been asked. Generalisations, often required by other forms of summary writing, are usually too vague to score. Each relevant specific detail corresponds to one mark. Introductions, such as *Ambos textos tienen como finalidad proporcionar medidas para crear un mundo más verde y ecológico para equiparar todo el daño causado* waste words and score nothing for content. It should also be noted that marks are not awarded for personal opinion here. As environmental issues are clearly very familiar subject matter, a few candidates added information and opinions which did not feature in the texts and therefore could not be credited. Despite a noticeable tendency to focus more on details from the second text, candidates who employed the required technique scored well.
- (b) The personal response was generally done well, and most candidates were of the opinion that the car is a problem where they live. In the two or three sentences which are usually available for this task any ideas that are different from those expressed in the texts, combined with a personal opinion, will usually score highly.

The quality of candidates' written Spanish, both here and throughout the paper, was generally up to the standard required by this examination, with the marks falling between the Sound and Very Good range.

Resources

A selection of Example Candidate Responses together with revised and updated Schemes of Work are now available to download from the Teacher Support website <http://teachers.cie.org.uk>.

FIRST LANGUAGE SPANISH

Paper 8665/42

Texts

Key messages

- Candidates should study the stylistic and thematic qualities of the text and not simply the storyline.
- Candidates must read the question carefully and respond to all aspects of their chosen question.
- Each answer must include specific references to the text, which are directly relevant to the question asked.
- References to the text must be correct, for example names of characters.
- Any background to the text must be accurate, for example the date the text was written.
- Option **(a)** questions in *Sección Primera* require more extensive treatment in part **(iii)**, where candidates are expected to refer in detail to the work as a whole, not simply the printed extract.
- Candidates need to focus on essay-writing skills. It is expected that they can write an answer with a clear introduction and conclusion, and that the discussion includes relevant detailed material.

General comments

Examiners commented that the general standard of work was good; candidates had studied the texts carefully and presented answers legibly. However, greater focus on the question set and improved essay-writing skills would benefit a large number of candidates.

In some cases candidates did not clearly indicate which question they had chosen to answer and Centres are requested to remind candidates to write the question number, e.g. '2(b)', before they start their essay.

Comments on specific questions

Sección Primera

Question 1 Ernesto Sábato: *El túnel*

Option **(a)** was the most popular here. The majority of candidates noted that Allende passed the letter to Castel. The best answers examined the importance of "...*me pertenecía*" in detail, showing how Castel's possessive nature led to the death of María.

Option **(b)** was answered well by those candidates who had studied the symbolism of the names and how these related to the themes of the text.

Question 2 Pedro Calderón de la Barca: *El alcalde de Zalamea*

Marks awarded to answers to both options for this text were particularly dependent on close reading of the questions. Candidates must respond to all parts of the question; in many cases the focus was limited because candidates did not pay attention to the specific wording.

In option **(a)**, most candidates picked out key parts of the extract to support their argument and answered parts **(i)** and **(ii)** thoroughly. Part **(iii)** required understanding of irony as a vehicle for the exploration of the themes. A significant number of essays dealt with the themes alone, or took it to mean criticism of the society portrayed.

Option **(b)** asked candidates to reflect on the importance of verisimilitude in the text and how the moral message of the theme. The best answers gave examples of Calderón's depiction of life and the way the characters were made credible. This enhanced the themes, as the audience were able to identify with the individuals and gain greater understanding of the moral dilemmas. A description of the text alone did not constitute a full answer.

Question 3 Luis Sepúlveda: *Un viejo que leía novelas de amor*

Answers on this text were generally less detailed, with fewer specific references to support the discussion. This limited the marks available to those essays. It serves as an example of the way in which some candidates read the texts with too much focus on the story and less on the novel as a work of literature.

Option **(a)**, parts **(i)** and **(ii)** were answered well. Part **(iii)** required candidates to respond to the ironic quotation and show how this is discussed in the text. There are many examples of both incidents and the attitude of individuals to support an answer. It needed to be made clear that candidates understood "el desierto" and the ecological message of the text.

The question in option **(b)** is often the first focus of discussion when studying this text. Many answers here reflected the points made earlier – little cohesion to the argument or awareness of the importance of the "novelas de amor" as a central element within the novel. Candidates needed to consider the novel as a construct, a work of the imagination, where every part has been included for a specific purpose, and analyse it accordingly.

Question 4 Lauro Olmo: *La camisa*

Option **(a)** was a popular question and resulted in sound essays. Candidates were able to discuss the different ways Olmo used alcohol and drunkenness within the text, both to inform the audience regarding the social issues and to underline many other themes.

In option **(b)**, the wording of the question did not invite candidates to choose a theme and write about it. The focus was on "machismo"; candidates needed to analyse how this is presented in the play in the first instance and then, if they wished, go on to show how another theme may be considered central to the message of the text.

Sección Segunda

Question 5 Carmen Laforet: *Nada*

- (a)** This was the least popular question on this text. There were a few very good answers, where candidates had clearly studied the historical background of the text and were able to show not only the physical deprivation of the time, but also the spiritual, emotional and personal aspects.
- (b)** Many candidates chose this question, and generally answered well. There was much material to support the idea that Andrea's time in Barcelona had been completely negative. The best essays included these references as well as a more considered analysis of what Andrea learned and how this informed her decision to leave.

Question 6 Laura Esquivel: *Como agua para chocolate*

- (a)** A very large number of candidates answered this question. The factors that differentiated between responses were the level of detail and the sophistication of analysis. Many essays dealt with the development of the relationship between Tita and Mamá Elena chronologically, and analysed how their characters were revealed in key interactions and events. Some candidates ignored the important revelation of Mamá Elena's lover. The majority of answers made some reference to "realmente" in the question, which suggests more than the normal response to grief.
- (b)** This question also attracted many responses. Candidates showed detailed knowledge of the text and the best essays traced Nacha's influence beyond her death, in pivotal incidents in Tita's life. It was interesting to note that no reference was made to Nacha's ethnic background.

Question 7 Federico García Lorca: *Yerma*

Almost all candidates chose to write on this text.

- (a) This was the most popular option. All candidates were able to discuss a number of characters at a simple level, state whether they were happy or not. Within a very wide range of answers, the best analysed degrees of happiness and changing situations for Juan, Yerma and some other characters. There was a lack of subtlety in assessing the nature of the relationship between Víctor and Yerma, and only a small number of essays considered why there was so much unhappiness.
- (b) Most essays focused on the closing scene, and there was limited evidence of critical analysis. A number of candidates stated that the final scene was the key one because the audience finds out what happens in the end. The best examples of this choice included the ability to trace elements presaging and leading to the denouement. A few very good answers chose a different scene and analysed interactions between characters in detail as well as explaining symbols found throughout the text. By examining their function in that scene and showing how the themes developed, candidates showed appreciation of the dramatist's skill.

Question 8 Alfonsina Storni: *Selección de poemas*

There were few responses to this text.

- (a) This question gave scope for a range of interpretations and choice of poems.
- (b) Candidates who had prepared these poems thoroughly were able to give a convincing analysis.

Concluding remarks

Centres are continuing to choose texts that appeal to their candidates and the enthusiasm is apparent. In order to maximise the effort spent in reading and preparing the texts, candidates would benefit from further guidance in interpreting questions and in essay writing-skills.

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