



GCSE

SPANISH

8698/RF Reading Foundation tier
Report on the Examination

8698
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General Comments

Many of the questions mirrored those in the two papers published as Specimen Assessment Materials and this helped students to be familiar with the question styles. As a general principle, students were given credit for all answers which conveyed the key idea intelligibly and without ambiguity, whether the answer was in English or in Spanish. Marks were not awarded where errors in spelling, punctuation or grammar led to a failure to communicate the key ideas without ambiguity. Students should be discouraged from giving alternative or additional information in an answer as this may make the key idea ambiguous and therefore not able to be credited.

Section A

Question 1

The new specification sets out to expose students to different types of written language, including literary texts. The opening question on this Foundation exam was based on a literary text and, thanks to teachers encouraging students to approach these in the same way as other stimulus texts, students answered well, especially in parts 01.2 and 01.4. In part 01.1 the most popular answer was option A, showing that the majority of students were misled by the distractor *flores* in the first line.

Question 2

Most of the jobs were well known, except for *bombero*.

Question 3

Just over 50% of the students got full marks here. The topic of family relationships is clearly well known.

Question 4

Some key verbs proved surprisingly difficult for many students. In part 04.1, for example, only 1.8% of the students knew the verb *conocer*. In part 04.2, *equipo* and *prueba* were not well known and many thought that *jefe* was a man called Jeff. Part 04.4 was answered well, however, and 63.8% of the students scored the mark.

Question 5

Students were given an example to follow yet only 4.6% of them were able to give both the correct noun **and** the correct adjective in part 05.1. In part 05.2, the noun *alojamiento* was not well known, but some students made intelligent guesses based on the context, showing good use of communication strategies. For example, “food and a place to stay” was creditworthy.

Question 6

This question asked students to demonstrate an ability to find the key idea from a longer text with distractors. They were successful in both parts. It helped that the word ‘most’ was emboldened and students knew that short, but important, phrases which were essential in previous specifications, such as *sobre todo* and *en especial*, would help them to identify the correct answers.

Question 7

The question style here appeared in both sets of specimen materials and tested the students' ability to recognise the relationship between past, present and future events. In part 07.1, with reference to the yoga, the most popular answer was 'N', perhaps because students did not recognise the immediate future in line 2, *voy a hacer*. In parts 07.3 and 07.4, over half of the students answered correctly. This showed a good ability to recognise the relationship between the three time frames.

Question 8

Students are usually successful at identifying opinions, but here they found the phrases *me dan miedo* and *estoy harta* challenging. In part 08.3 it would seem that students were distracted by *estupendo* instead of focussing on *todas las edades* in option D.

Question 9

Although the context was from a new area of the specification, Customs and festivals (in the target language-speaking countries/communities), the actual vocabulary tested in Question 9 came from the environment sub-topic of Theme 2. From the choice of recyclable materials (*cartón, plástico* and *vidrio*), students recognised *plástico* most easily, hence option C was, unfortunately, the most popular answer.

Question 10

Students could see clearly from the example given in question 10 that they needed to write a noun **and** an adjective for each mark and, although they tended to know some of the nouns, the adjectives were less well known. Less than 1% of the students understood *mantequilla salada* in part 10.3.

Section B**Question 11**

On the whole students understood the rubrics in the target language but some students wrote letters that were not actually one of the options, for example T, X and P. Free-time activities is a well-known topic and students scored well, especially in parts 11.1 and 11.2 of this question.

Question 12

The gap-filling style of question had started to feature in the previous specification so students were familiar with the question style and they did understand what to do, despite the fact that the rubrics were in the target language. Only 18.4% of the students scored full marks on this question, however, so it differentiated well.

Question 13

Once again, this question style had appeared on both sets of the Specimen Assessment Materials, so students who had used these as practice papers knew what to do. Marks were not awarded to those students who copied whole chunks of text or, in some cases, the whole text. Part of the skill

being tested here is being able to identify the key ideas from longer texts and to write only the key idea as an answer. Students who copied out partial sentences made their answers ambiguous. For example, in 13.2 “*falta clases de apoyo*” was a common answer. By including ‘*falta*’ the students made their answer ambiguous. Similarly, in 13.3, answers such as “*Nueva York pero me apetece más ir de visita a Alemania*” were ambiguous and thus marked incorrect. Students should learn how to spot the distractors, to identify the key idea and write **only** the key idea.

Question 14

This was the question based on a literary text, set in the target language section of the exam. Students were lured by word matching so, for example, in part 14.1 option C was the most popular answer because students matched *larga* with *largas horas* in line 2 of the text. Similarly, in 14.2, students matched *beber* with *bebía*, which led to option A becoming the most popular answer. Students should be advised that this is not good practice.

Question 15

Of the three possible types of future plan on offer, getting married was the least well known; only 36.3% of the students scored a mark for part 15.3.

Section C – Translation

It was particularly pleasing to see such a range of efforts on the translation, where every word counts. 33.5% of the students scored five marks or more out of the nine marks available. This was a super effort, especially at the end of the examination. Stumbling blocks were *canción*, *la gente*, *calle* and the verb *mandar*. Students should be aware that small link words are important in the translation, for example *cuando*, and that precision is essential in a task of this type to score highly.

Advice to Students

- Read the introduction to the question. This will help you to give sensible answers.
- Answer every question, especially where you have to write a letter. If in doubt, have a guess!
- Read the whole of the sentence so that you can check that your first reaction is right. If you think the answer is ‘N’ (Now) for example, read on to make sure that this is not the distractor and that the correct answer is in fact ‘F’ (Future) or ‘P’ (Past).
- Do not copy whole chunks of Spanish because you might include the wrong answer as well as the correct answer.
- Do not change the Spanish – copy it exactly from the Spanish passage.
- Translate every word in the translation section.

Advice to Teachers

- Encourage all of your students to answer every question, especially the multiple choice questions. By having a guess your students could pick up extra marks.
- Less able students may be encouraged to start the exam by answering the multiple choice questions so that they pick up some marks, however few.

- Instruct students **not** to copy out whole chunks of Spanish.
- Train students to spot distractors and practise this in class.
- Encourage students to revisit language they learned in their Key Stage 3 studies regularly. Vocabulary relating to food, colours, days of the week, etc., may all be tested at GCSE.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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