

# 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 and 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

Comprehension of the two texts, dealing with contrasting attitudes to, and opportunities for, employment in Chile and Spain was generally good. Scripts were usually well presented and legible, and only a few candidates seemed to have had difficulty with time-management. A number of candidates would have benefited from more preparation in how to approach the summary question in 5(a).

## Comments on specific questions

### SECCIÓN PRIMERA

#### Question 1

For the vast majority of candidates this exercise proved to be a sound start to the examination. Other than misidentification of the target phrase, the most common error was to identify the answer correctly but then to invalidate it, either by omitting words or including extra ones.

- (a) The target phrase was usually identified. However, a lot of answers were invalidated by the unnecessary addition of *...a Australia*, or even just *...a*.
- (b) Identification was more of a problem here. A number of candidates incorrectly suggested *están resguardados por la cobertura* rather than *cuentan con el soporte económico*.
- (c) Most candidates found little difficulty in identifying the equivalent expression in the text.
- (d) This was also generally well done.
- (e) The majority also got this right. A common error amongst those who were unsuccessful was to add *...y su tiempo libre* to an otherwise correct answer.

## Question 2

This test in language manipulation proved to be a fairly straightforward exercise. Most scored over half marks, with many scoring high or even maximum marks.

- (a) Most candidates realised that they had to use the preposition *por* after the verb *optar*. However, some of them omitted it or used the preposition *a* instead.
- (b) The need for a subjunctive construction after *es necesario que* was almost universally recognised. A common error amongst the minority who did not score a mark was the omission of *se*.
- (c) This was answered correctly by nearly every candidate.
- (d) Most candidates identified that they had to use the subjunctive or the infinitive in this structure. Several possible manipulations were acceptable.
- (e) This manipulation caused more problems than any of the others. In this exercise it is important to remember that the manipulated phrase should fit back seamlessly into the text in the place of the original version, and candidates should be reminded to try this out before moving on to the next question. Here, in the text, the phrase is followed by ...*por la presión laboral*, and therefore the only way to work *desgastada* into the answer is with a passive construction. A number of verbs were possible (but not *estar*), and all needed to be in a past tense.

## Question 3

Comprehension of the text about young people in Chile who are disinclined to work or study was generally good, and candidates who gave clear, detailed answers to the questions in their own words achieved good marks. Some candidates lost marks when they copied five or more words directly from the text.

- (a) Almost all candidates successfully stated the fact that *ninīs* were those who did not work or study. However, not so many noted that another requirement in order to be categorised as a *nini* was to be aged between fifteen and twenty-nine. Those who did mention this often overlooked the fact that *entre 15 y 29 años* would count as a five word lift.
- (b) Most candidates correctly answered that to be a *nini* was a problem for the over 18s, as those younger than this have to go to school and are covered under the education system. There was some difficulty in understanding *cobertura* amongst less able candidates. To score the second point it was necessary to state that the over 18s felt or believed that they did not fit into the labour market.
- (c) This was a fairly accessible question, and most candidates provided satisfactory answers containing at least two of the three points. A majority correctly stated that *ninīs* from families who could support them economically did not know how to deal with lost opportunities, with many quite legitimately using the paraphrase *combatir posibilidades falladas* from **Question 1(c)** to avoid copying from the text. There was similar success in stating that *ninīs* did not want to do anything until they were sure, with lifts often being avoided this time by repeating the phrase given in answer to **Question 2(d)**. The third point, although often correctly identified, was frequently invalidated by the direct copy *trabajar en lo que no estudiaron*.
- (d) Good marks were often scored for this five mark question. A few candidates did not differentiate between the two parts to the question, and just wrote one answer under (d). This is not to be recommended, as it usually resulted in certain elements in the question not being addressed.
  - (i) Most candidates stated that *ninīs* did not want the same life as their parents because they had witnessed the negative effects that work had had on them, as well as the fact that they were aware that they had sacrificed their present for future benefits. Occasionally, these two answers were collated into one, resulting in the loss of some of the required details. Most of them also stated the fact that *ninīs* did not think that a full time job would provide a better quality of life. A number of answers in this part of the question were invalidated by the lifts *cómo la vida de sus* and *una mejor calidad de vida*.
  - (ii) The fact that *ninīs* preferred their free time or social life to work was well understood. Not so many, however, went on to state that they wanted to succeed and benefit immediately.

- (e) This was mostly well answered, although some answers were invalidated because of lifts or there was a lack of key information. Most candidates correctly stated the fact that *ninis* between the age of 15 and 18 had been expelled from school. Although many also picked upon the idea that young *ninis* were seeking to defy their teachers or parents, a number omitted to say that their means of doing so was to drop out of school. A common lift here was *desafiar a los adultos responsables*. Almost every candidate stated that another reason was the addiction of the *ninis* to alcohol and videogames, with answers sometimes being marred by the direct copying of *adicciones a videojuegos y alcohol*.

## SECCIÓN SEGUNDA

### Question 4

The second text, dealing with the rather gloomy future prospects of young Spaniards, provided a similar level of challenge.

- (a) Most candidates successfully noted that the vision of life held by young Spaniards was contradictory because, although they live comfortably in a democratic society, they believe that their lives will not be better than those of their parents. Sometimes a mark was lost because of the direct copying of *que la de sus padres*.
- (b) Good marks were not so common for this question. Very few candidates picked up a mark for stating that unemployment had been hitting young people hard for a number of years. Nearly all attempted to say that half of the young people were unemployed, although correct answers were often negated by copying either *más del 50% de los (jóvenes españoles)* or *entre 16 y 29 años*. Most candidates were able to state that there would be a lack of jobs related to the specific studies or degrees that candidates were doing at the moment, although less able candidates sometimes misinterpreted this to mean that they could not get a job because they had not studied.
- (c) Candidates all agreed that the economic crisis would have a negative impact on the lives of young people, although further detail was often not supplied. The fact that there would be a negative impact on future careers was often overlooked, and some also stated that economic requirements would be higher, which was really a feature of the crisis itself and not a consequence. The phrase *el bienestar y la calidad de vida* was often copied directly.
- (d) Some candidates misinterpreted this question – often to the detriment of their quality of language mark – and gave their own interpretation of González’s words e.g. *menciona las sombras porque el futuro es negro y es una metáfora...* rather than using the text to find answers to the question. To score the first mark it was necessary to state that young people lacked projects which excited or motivated them. Candidates who scored a mark for the second answer to the question often came up with excellent paraphrases for *derrotados por las circunstancias*.
- (e) Most candidates scored well on this two part question. As with **Question 3(d)**, a few candidates did not differentiate between the two parts, and just wrote one answer.
- (i) This was generally answered well. One or two candidates stated incorrectly that work brought world peace rather than it was the basis of keeping peace in society. One common lift was *punto clave para la paz social*. Candidates also understood well that work allowed the individual to integrate in society, although another common lift was *la integración personal y social*.
- (ii) The majority were able to state correctly at least two of the three required points: that the possible consequence of unemployment was social exclusion which, if it became widespread, could lead to conflict, but that this was unlikely to happen in Spain due to the support of the family.

### 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 160 words is disregarded, and in extreme cases this can lead to no marks being awarded for part (b).

- (a) Once again this question produced the most disappointing answers in the entire examination. Candidates who had achieved good or even excellent marks elsewhere frequently struggled to reach even half marks here. The problem was invariably a lack of familiarity with the required technique, which may be very different from the technique which candidates have been encouraged to use in other forms of summary writing.

For this task the technique required for achieving a good mark is to note, in the limited number of words available, details from the texts which answer the question which has been asked. Rather than look for similarities between the texts – which will often lead to vague generalisations – it is better to consider each text in turn, and pick out specific details which answer the question. Generalisations, often required by other forms of summary writing, are usually too vague to score. It is the relevant specific details which score the marks so incorporating the titles of the texts into the body of the summary will also waste precious words. In this exercise, candidates are not penalised for copying directly from the text(s). It should be remembered, however, that any copied material will not be considered in the Quality of Language mark. Candidates should also refrain from offering personal opinions in this part of the question.

A good example of the required technique for this question begins: *En Chile existen muchos jóvenes llamados ninis que no estudian ni trabajan. No quieren trabajos en aquello que no estudiaron, y prefieren no hacer nada hasta aclarar sus ideas. Suelen pensar distinto que sus padres respecto al trabajo y prefieren navegar en las redes sociales que trabajar. En España...* In fewer than 50 words this candidate scored 5 marks, and also left ample opportunity to increase this score by going on to answer the question with regard to young people in Spain.

In the following example, the candidate used more words and scored nothing, apart from contributing to the Quality of Language mark: *Los jóvenes de esta generación no se están enfocando en las cosas más importantes y se están dejando llevar por cosas menos relevantes. En Chile tenemos a los ninis que no están muy preocupados por su futuro y no están dando importancia a sus deberes. Los jóvenes españoles no están centrados en lo que quieren hacer y se están dejando llevar por la situación del país...*

- (b) In the two or three sentences available for this last part of the examination the vast majority of candidates wrote good answers. Most candidates were able to write about young people and work in their country and gave some appropriate opinions. Occasionally marks were lost when candidates wrote about the general employment situation in their country, without reference to young people.

### Quality of Language

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

# FIRST LANGUAGE SPANISH

Paper 8665/41

Texts

## Key Messages

Candidates who performed well on this paper:

- selected questions carefully, ensuring that both Sections of the paper were covered;
- read each chosen question thoroughly and defined the scope of their answer in an opening paragraph, stating what the question means and the approach to be taken;
- planned their answer carefully. The essay should consist of an introduction, several paragraphs developing the argument and presenting examples from the text and a final paragraph with a clear conclusion;
- kept their answer focused on the question being answered;
- avoided errors, such as writing the wrong names for characters or author, calling a play or poems *una novela* or putting the wrong question number;
- when answering Sección Primera option (a) questions, wrote brief responses of one or two sentences to parts (i) and (ii); most of the answer should be focused on part (iii);
- gave examples from the text specifically chosen to support an argument; avoided narration of the story.

## General Comments

The vast majority of candidates had studied the texts in detail and were aware of the demands of the question paper. However, a significant number gave answers which were too generic, with pre-prepared introductions to the text and author and a lack of focus on the question chosen. Candidates should use all their knowledge and understanding of the text in answering the specific question. Examiners only give credit for material and quotations which are directly relevant.

## Comments on Specific Questions

### **Sección Primera**

**Question 1** Juan Rulfo: *Pedro Páramo*

- (a) (i) and (ii) required only brief responses. Candidates often gave too much narrative detail. Most were able to identify Damiana correctly. In (iii), the best answers considered the statement in the light of events in the village and particularly Pedro Páramo's character and words. Most discussed the idea of purgatory and saw this as not permanent, hence a sign of hope. Some successfully integrated the theme of '*la ilusión*' and the narrative structure – which by its nature does not have a clear way forward – into their answers.
- (b) There were some very good responses to this question, where candidates identified a number of elements such as the fragmented time line, the narrative structure, the use of dialogue, and succeeded in presenting a coherent argument.

**Question 2** Calderón de la Barca: *La vida es sueño*

- (a) Only a brief explanation was needed in (i), although some long narrative answers were offered. In (ii), although some candidates saw only the honour issue, there were good succinct responses including the *sueños/realidad* element. There were some very good answers in (iii) discussing issues of honour, '*obrar bien*', and often '*epifanía*'.
- (b) Candidates tended to produce less effective answers to this question as many interpreted the question in 21<sup>st</sup> century terms. Good answers defined '*la clase gobernante*' and wrote about Basilio, Astolfo and Clotaldo, with some including Segismundo as the King he became.

**Question 3** Jorge Luis Borges: *Ficciones*

- (a) These questions were generally answered clearly and candidates knew the text well. In (iii), some candidates were able to discern themes which are developed further.
- (b) This was a popular choice. The success of the answers depended to some extent on the choice of stories. Many listed the '*argumentos*' and the best were able to show how these stood out because they were expressed through distinctive characters.

**Question 4** Antonio Buero Vallejo: *El concierto de San Ovidio*

- (a) Questions (i) and (ii) were answered clearly and briefly. There were some good answers to (iii) where candidates used the text well to compare and contrast the two characters.
- (b) The best essays here began by explaining the concept of '*sufrir para progresar*' in the context of the play. Most focused on David and showed how he began to change attitudes to benefit those in the future.

**Sección Segunda**

**Question 5** Carmen Laforet: *Nada*

- (a) The question required an analysis of the degree to which Andrea changed, compared with other characters in the novel. The most successful answers explained what constituted a change and how it could be demonstrated, rather than simply listing possible examples.
- (b) In answering this question well, candidates were able to analyse what the '*abuela*' represented, in terms of her role within the family and in wider society in the post-war period. Her physical description and involvement in events in the novel are significant but are not sufficient without evaluation.

**Question 6** Isabel Allende: *La casa de los espíritus*

- (a) This was a popular option. The most effective arguments linked the '*retrato ... de familia*' and '*comentario político*', showing the importance of both themes. Many candidates listed references to each separately, and often missed '*comentario*', only mentioning political parties or incidents.
- (b) There were answers of varied quality to this question. The best considered the nature of Jaime and Amanda's relationship and compared and contrasted this to others in the novel, and analysed interpretations of '*el amor*' in different contexts.

**Question 7** Federico García Lorca: *Bodas de sangre*

- (a) This was a very popular choice. Very good answers showed how the apparently simple setting of an Andalusian village depicted universal themes, and went on to analyse these. Those who focused on the issue of '*un drama*' were not able to develop the argument extensively. A number of answers indicated that some candidates were not familiar with the term '*campesinos andaluces*'.
- (b) There were some very competent responses to this question. These candidates analysed the monologue in detail and expressed its frightening effect on the audience at that point in the play. Many essays did not go on to show how the poetic expression and the action in the play were inextricably linked.

**Question 8** Pablo Neruda: *Veinte poemas de amor y una canción desesperada*

- (a) There were some very good answers, with interesting and even original appreciation of the poem and understanding of the themes. Candidates knew how to discuss poetic language and technique. It is important that candidates are aware of the difference between paraphrase and analysis – a number of responses were hampered by this, and the need to keep to the focus of the question.
- (b) Again, many thorough and thoughtful responses were seen. The precise interpretation of the question depended on the candidate's choice of three poems. Examiners encourage candidates to avoid pre-prepared general essays as these cannot achieve a high grade.