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**November 2021**

**Pearson Edexcel GCE in Spanish (9SP0\_01)**  
**Paper 1: Listening, Reading and Translation**

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Paper 9SP01 is composed of three distinct sections: Section A is listening, Section B is reading and Section C is a translation from Spanish into English. Sections A and B are a mixture of multiple-choice and open response comprehension questions to be answered in Spanish. The translation in Section C is the only question where English is required. Texts are drawn from the 12 sub-themes from the specification and include fiction and non-fiction, literary, historical and contemporary texts. Over the 10 questions, most of the 12 sub-themes will be covered.

In a similar way to Autumn 2020, the November 2021 series was exceptional in having only a very small cohort; the vast majority of Year 13 students having accepted their Teacher Assessed Grade in Summer 2021.

**Q01** was a series of multiple-choice questions about a listening text based on an interview with the mayor of Campillo de Ranas, a Spanish village famous for hosting gay weddings.

**Q02** was an open-response question worth 5 marks. It was based on the Mexican musical tradition of *narcocorrido*. The question was on the whole answered well. There were some errors with transcription which exposed a misunderstanding of the text, for example where *lealtad* was mis-transcribed as *ley altad*. In Q2(b), some candidates made a guess that offensive lyrics were a characteristic of this style of music, rather than noting that it is the type of instrument used or the themes of loyalty and excess that are characteristic of a *narcocorrido*. Few candidates gained both marks in Q2(d); they showed understanding of the attitude of the Mexican government for 1 mark, but rather than state that the US government allows or tolerates the sale of the music, they suggested that the US government encourages it, which was not the idea from the text.

**Q03** was a longer listening passage adapted from an interview with an immigrant from Latin-America who now lives in Spain. Most parts of this question were answered correctly, although Q3(d) provided the greatest challenge, due to the level of detail and conceptual understanding required. In Q3(d), it was necessary to explain who was living a double-life and why that was; answers that simply said that immigrants live a double-life were not awarded a mark; examiners were looking for answers that specified immigrants who had recently arrived. For the second mark, it was necessary to explain that the feeling of a double-life comes from the fact that they are living in Spain yet are still very linked to their home country, e.g., by frequent telephone conversations with family.

**Q04** was based on a report about wine tourism in the Rioja region of Spain. There were two parts to this question: the first 6 marks available were for open-response questions about the introduction to the report, while another 6 marks were available for summaries of the subsequent interviews with some wine growers. In Q4(a)(iii), many candidates did not effectively explain that the tourists who visit specifically because of the wine, generally spend much more money than other types of tourists. The summary in Q4(b)(i) was done well, but in Q04(b)(ii), many candidates were unable to unpick the reason why many wine tourists end up spending most of their money in hotels rather than with the wine producers. This was explained as being due to the schedules of the airlines, because flights arrive late and leave early, thus forcing tourists to stay overnight both before and after their visit to a vineyard.

Candidates are reminded that Q4(b)(i) and Q4(b)(ii) are summary questions, so they should not be tempted to write lengthy answers. Only one detail is needed for each of the bullet points.

**Q05** was an article about a Latin-American TV channel that was changing its schedule and personnel. Candidates had to select a correct ending to four sentences.

For **Q06**, candidates had to select four correct statements from of a list of nine. This question was taken from a book about military aviation during the Spanish Civil War and

described a rare sighting of the aurora borealis that created a sense of mystery and hope during days of bombardment near Barcelona.

In **Q07**, candidates read an information leaflet about refugee centres in Spain. Answers to Q7(a) were often awarded only one of the two available marks, as candidates lifted sections from the text that did not fit the precise requirement of the question. They were asked what basic needs people had to have in order to qualify to enter the centres. Many wrote *carecer de trabajo* rather than just *trabajo*. If they made the same sort of mistake with the second answer (e.g. *no tener dinero*), they were only penalised once. In their answer to Q7(c), some candidates again relied on lifting, when some inference was needed. The question asked what people could do after using the centre's services. One of these services was language courses, so something that people could do afterwards would be to speak Spanish. Many candidates wrote that people could take a language course, which is not what they could do after taking a course, and so was incorrect.

**Q08** was a long passage from a literary text (*La colmena* by Camilo José Cela). In general, the question was answered well, although Q8(b), which required inference, proved challenging. In Q8(b), many candidates assumed that living in the city would be bad for don José's health when in fact he had said that the air in the countryside was bad for his breathing, thus implying that by moving to the city his health would be better. It is always essential to respond appropriately to the question, which may require manipulation or interpretation of the information given in the text. Candidates who simply copy words and phrases from the text or jump to obvious conclusions, run the risk of missing available marks.

**Q09** was another long passage, this one adapted from an article about changes to employment law, with open response questions and answers in Spanish, worth 8 marks. It concerned a change made in 2019 giving workers the right to modify their working hours without penalty. Q9(a) proved difficult; the question asked what happened in March 2019 and many candidates simply answered *una ley*. There needed to be a verb here as a law cannot just happen; examiners were generous in accepting a range of appropriate verbs and verb forms, as long as there was some idea of a law being introduced, started, approved etc. As a general rule, if a question asks "what happened?", there will have to be a verb in the answer.

**Section C** is a translation passage from Spanish into English, marked as 20 discrete sections. There are a number of sections aimed at each grade from E to A\*, so that all candidates in this series were able to score marks for some elements of the passage, but only the strongest candidates were able to score full marks. The passage this year was from the sub-theme of customs and traditions and specifically concerned Spanish national dress. The majority of errors arose not from misunderstanding the text, but from difficulties in expressing the meaning accurately in English. Prepositions caused some issues, for example, "in occasions" was not accepted, nor was "dressing up", as this suggests a different idea than just "dressing". Several interpretations of *a la vanguardia* were accepted, including "at the forefront" and "prominent". Examiners were pleased to find that some relatively unusual vocabulary was correctly understood by the majority of candidates, e.g. *oro, plata, joyas, adornos*.

The word "the" was inserted too often, e.g. "The traditional Spanish clothing" or "the Spanish fashion". Inappropriate use of "the" can give rise to ambiguity in English and will not be accepted where this is the case. Where candidates had done this more than once, however, they lost a mark only on the first occasion, as it was considered a repeat of the same mistake. The section that proved most difficult was: *no supieron evolucionar tanto como los franceses*. Examiners did not accept "did not evolve as much as the French". A more subtle idea was needed, such as "were not able to evolve as well as the French".

On occasion, candidates offered an either/or choice. Examiners should not have to decide for the candidate which word is better. It is the job of the candidate to make the appropriate word selection. Marks are likely to be withheld where two non-identical ideas are given.

Given the performance in this exam, students are offered the following advice:

- In listening questions, take care when transcribing unfamiliar words. Ask yourself whether you are hearing two words or one longer word.
- A summary should be brief. The instructions tell you that you need to give only three details for each summary. If you give three details for just one of the bullet points, you are at risk of not gaining any marks for the two subsequent bullet points.
- Questions may require you to infer an answer and therefore change what is in the text, e.g., if asked what someone has not got, do not state what they have got.
- When tackling the translation, pay particular attention to prepositions as they may change the meaning of what you write.
- Do not overuse the article "the" in the translation. In English this suggests you are referring to something specific.

