



BOARD OF STUDIES  
NEW SOUTH WALES

---

# 1998 HSC

---

## **EXAMINATION REPORT**

**Spanish**

© Board of Studies 1999

Published by  
Board of Studies NSW  
GPO Box 5300  
Sydney NSW 2001  
Australia

Tel: (02) 9367 8111

Fax: (02) 9367 8484

Internet: <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au>

February 1999

Schools, colleges or tertiary institutions may reproduce this document, either in part or full, for bona fide study purposes within the school or college.

ISBN 0 7313 4274 7

## Contents

<b>2 UNIT Z</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>LISTENING AND SPEAKING EXAMINATIONS</b>	<b>4</b>
<i>Listening Skills</i>	4
<i>Speaking Skills</i>	6
<i>Section I – Oral Reading</i>	6
<i>Section II – Speaking</i>	7
<b>WRITTEN EXAMINATION</b>	8
<i>Section I – Reading</i>	8
<i>Section II – Writing Skills</i>	9
<b>2/3 UNIT (COMMON)</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>LISTENING AND SPEAKING EXAMINATIONS</b>	<b>11</b>
<i>Listening Skills</i>	11
<i>Speaking Skills</i>	12
<b>WRITTEN EXAMINATION</b>	<b>14</b>
<i>Section I – Language</i>	14
<i>Part A – Reading Comprehension</i>	14
<i>Part B – Writing Skills</i>	16
<i>Section II – Options</i>	17
<i>Part A – Hispanic Prose</i>	17
<i>Part B – Hispanic Theatre</i>	19
<i>Part C – Hispanic Song</i>	20
<b>3 UNIT (ADDITIONAL)</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>LISTENING EXAMINATION</b>	<b>21</b>
<i>Listening Skills</i>	21
<b>WRITTEN EXAMINATION</b>	<b>22</b>
<i>Writing Skills</i>	22

## 1998 HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE

### SPANISH EXAMINATION REPORT

## 2 Unit Z

### Listening and Speaking Examinations

#### Listening Skills (30 marks)

##### General Comments

Students responded relatively well overall and generally demonstrated a fair understanding of spoken Spanish. Most items were answered in sufficient detail, the students being guided by the amount of space provided. It must be stressed, however, that all students should endeavour to include as much relevant detail as possible when answering open-ended questions.

Items 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17 and 18 which involved time, numbers, physical descriptions and house vocabulary, posed no problems for the majority of students.

##### Specific Comments

##### Item 1

Part (a) (i) and (ii) were generally understood.

Part (b) Most students did not include that the writer promised to answer all letters promptly. All relevant detail must be included in the response in order to gain full marks.

##### Item 2

Most students focused on the word *televisión* and automatically ticked option (b), while the correct answer was (d). Students need to listen to the whole situation before reaching a final decision. It is not advisable to base one's response on a single word.

##### Item 3

Part (a) The majority of students missed the fact that the speakers had been out to dinner the year before, as indicated by the expression *el año pasado*, and that this dinner was in Spain, a year later, in return for the woman's hospitality in Mexico.

Part (b) Many students recognised that certain ingredients were mentioned, but were unable to make the necessary cultural inference in order to answer the question in sufficient detail. Students are reminded that the study of a language also comprises a cultural component and that the more widely-known aspects could well be included in the examination.

**Item 7**

- Part (a) As some students had difficulty understanding that *ambiente* referred to the atmosphere or ambience of Buenos Aires, their response was incomplete.
- (Part b) This was done well.

**Item 14**

- Part (a) This was done well.
- Part (b) Many students left out that the work would take about an hour. Students are reminded that they must include all relevant detail referred to in the item.
- Part (c) Most students understood the concept of *conectado*, but did not heed the preceding word *mal*, and so answered that the windscreen wipers were ‘not connected’ rather than ‘badly connected’.

**Item 15**

Some students confused the year, writing 1978 instead of 1968. A significant number had difficulty with the word *soltera*. The majority of students forgot that they were required to answer all items in English.

**Item 16**

Many students had difficulty with the word *vidrio* in relation to windows.

**Item 19**

- Part (a) Many students did not recognise that *Vicente* was a person’s name and that it was he who had won the lottery, so answers were generally incomplete or confused.
- Part (b) Most students answered only part of the question. There were two elements required in the response indicated by the space provided. A complete answer was when Vincent goes to their place that evening for dinner.

**Item 20**

A significant number of students did not tick all three statements which were required, that is, options (b), (c) and (f). Students are reminded that they must listen carefully and include all relevant detail in their responses.

## Speaking Skills (20 marks)

### Section I — Oral Reading

#### General Comments

Most students read the passage confidently and fluently, demonstrating a general understanding of the passage.

As in previous years, in a number of instances, the reading of some students was not sufficiently modulated. Some students read words as isolated elements rather than as a part of a whole sentence. This inappropriate phrasing hindered effective communication. Students are advised, during preparation time, to scan the passage in order to identify related linguistic elements, that is, noun-adjective, verb-adverb, so that they do not split elements which are dependent upon one another in their delivery.

Students should also be mindful that punctuation such as accents, commas and full stops are subject to certain conventions such as inflection and intonation and that these must be observed if effective communication is to occur.

#### Specific Comments

Students are reminded that they must start the Oral Reading passage by reading the actual title of the passage.

A number of students had difficulty with the following:

- |                      |        |                    |
|----------------------|--------|--------------------|
| • <i>juegan</i>      | became | <i>lleguen</i>     |
| • <i>descuido</i>    | became | <i>decido</i>      |
| • <i>aceras</i>      | became | <i>aqueras</i>     |
| • <i>apartándose</i> | became | <i>apartandóse</i> |
| • <i>bordillo</i>    | became | <i>bordilo</i>     |
| • <i>fundamental</i> | became | <i>fandamental</i> |
| • <i>semáforos</i>   | became | <i>semafóros</i>   |
| • <i>niños</i>       | became | <i>ninos</i>       |

## Section II — Speaking

### General Comments

Students are advised to break up a situation or cue into manageable components and to render each element as completely as possible.

If a word or phrase is challenging in the way it is presented, they should try to turn the sentence around and see if the message can still be conveyed faithfully in essence. Students should also attempt as much of a situation as they can, and use synonyms if they cannot remember the exact word.

### Situation 1

Many students used *soy* instead of *estoy* to indicate location.

Generally, students were resourceful in rendering the idea of the boat trip along the coast. The concept of ‘enjoy the sun’ posed difficulties, most students not remembering *disfrutar*; however, most students tried to convey the idea as best as possible. Having to express past, present and future time in the same situation posed difficulties for many students. It is suggested that students practise conceptualising activities in different time spans.

A number of students did not know how to say ‘this morning’ or ‘tomorrow’.

### Situation 2

Very few students knew the word *bigote* — ‘moustache’.

A number of students had difficulty in rendering the concept of ‘the apartment **upstairs**’.

### Situation 3

Many students were unsure how to greet a neighbour when no name was supplied in the cue. They also found it difficult to express ‘What a pleasure’. Students were generally resourceful in commenting about the weather. Overall, the last cue was done well.

### Situation 4

The majority of students had difficulty expressing the concepts of ‘disappointing’ and ‘unhelpful’.

Those who did not know the idiomatic phrase *no vale la pena* found it difficult to convey the sentiments required in the last cue.

### Situation 5

In the first cue, ‘left’ was often rendered by *izquierda*. Students are reminded not to take the cues literally.

Some students did not know the Spanish for ‘movie’. The word ‘subtitle’ was beyond most students, although the more resourceful students attempted to get around the problem by saying *la película, está escrita en inglés?*

‘Lollies’ was another concept which posed significant difficulty for a number of students.

## Written Examination

### Section I — Reading (30 marks)

#### General Comment

Students generally answered most questions well but should still remember to include all relevant details.

#### Question 1 — Bares y Marcha

Part (a) Most students answered this question well, however, many found it difficult to comprehend the meaning of *últimos* (latest) and interpreted it as ‘ultimate’ and not ‘recent’.

Part (b) Students did not answer the question fully. Many did not make a comparison between the past and the present, and simply related the present state of the bar.

Part (c) Students generally answered this question well

Part (d) Students generally answered this question well.

#### Question 2 — ¡Vámonos de excursión!

Part (a) This question was generally answered well, however a significant number of students had difficulty with *resistencia* and interpreted it as ‘resistance’ rather than ‘stamina’ or ‘strength’. Students also had difficulty with *forma* and interpreted it as ‘form’ instead of ‘shape’.

Some students used general knowledge to answer both questions (a) and (c) rather than looking for the information in the text.

Part (b) Students encountered considerable difficulty in locating the appropriate information required to answer the question fully, that is, only writing, ‘taking long walks’ instead of ‘taking long walks on the weekends’.

Part (c) Not included in report.

Part (d) Students should remember to refrain from literal translation, such as association of *alpinistas*.

#### Question 3 — En brazos del fuego

Part (a) A significant number of students were able to identify the four causes of bushfires in the text. However some students once again relied on general knowledge to make up answers.

Part (b) Many students were unable to interpret the relevant information in the text necessary to answer this question. Students were often repetitive in addressing the question.

Part (c) A small minority of students answered this question well. The remainder of the students had difficulty understanding the concept of *se va sumando al de millones de personas* as an individual’s contribution to a global effort, or words to convey that effect.

#### **Question 4 — Un repelente muy natural**

- Part (a) Students had difficulty understanding the concept of *invadida* as ‘overwhelmed’ and not ‘invaded’.
- Part (b) Was well answered.
- Part (c) Was well answered.
- Part (d) Was well answered.

#### **Section II — Writing Skills (20 marks)**

Students are reminded to clearly indicate the question they are attempting.

#### **Question 5 — Guided Dialogue**

Out of the 14 students who answered this question, many students found difficulty in responding fully to the set cues.

Many students did not use the formal register appropriately.

A significant number of students were resourceful when responding to certain cues such as answering the question ‘where does it hurt?’

Students had difficulty using reflexive verbs as well as the past and future tenses.

Words and expressions which most students found difficult to render were:

- |                              |                   |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| • shoulder                   | • treatment       |
| • elbow                      | • it is worse now |
| • you first noticed the pain | • to get better   |

#### **Question 6 — Dialogue in Spanish**

This question was attempted by 11 students and was answered well. The students demonstrated a good range of vocabulary and used punctuation accurately.

On the whole, the conventions required for writing a dialogue were adhered to.

### Question 7 — Letter

Part (a)        The majority of students, 51 in all, chose this question.

While the students were able to use the conventions for letter writing, they did not in general provide sufficient, appropriate detail in relation to the area where they lived and its attractions. Students should refrain from simply listing items like a shopping list and instead should provide a more detailed account of each item mentioned in order to demonstrate more than just a knowledge of vocabulary.

A number of students wrote in a mixture of Spanish and English with some quite interesting vocabulary items created. Students who write in English with the occasional word in Spanish should realise that they are **not** communicating in Spanish and cannot be awarded marks for what they were not able to say in the target language.

Part (b)        In general, the few responses to this question did not contain sufficient information about their home arrangements nor provide sufficient descriptive detail.

Some students combined both 7(a) and 7(b) in their answer.

## 2/3 Unit (Common)

### Listening and Speaking Examinations

#### Listening Skills (25 marks)

##### General Comments

The majority of students demonstrated their understanding of the content of the dialogue and the news items. However, when responses required specific details, many students provided only partial answers. Students are advised to provide **all** the relevant detail in their responses. They should be aware that the amount of space provides an indication of the anticipated length of a response. Because of this, only a few students were able to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the issues raised in the examination.

Students should listen to the whole of the first reading before writing anything down, then jot down points in the Candidate's Notes column. The complete response should be written after the second reading. Students may use pencil for their notes but final response **must** be written legibly in pen (markers experienced some difficulty in deciphering responses that had been written in pencil and then overwritten in pen). Students should also confine their responses to the space provided, that is, they must not extend to the notes column. Students are advised to formulate their response prior to writing it down, so that pools of correction fluid, scratchings out, asterisks and arrows do not dominate the page and confuse the markers.

Students are required to follow instructions in the multiple-choice questions, that is, they must **tick** the correct answer(s), **not** put a cross in the space, colour in the space, circle the letter(s) or write out the letter(s). Incorrect options should be left blank.

Only **one** language should be used throughout the examination **either** English or Spanish and not a mixture of both languages.

As a number of students did not do well in certain questions requiring background knowledge of current affairs and cultural issues, students are advised to watch the news and read the newspaper on a regular basis in preparation for this section of their examination. They should be aware of current affairs, significant events, people and celebrations, both globally, but more specifically, in the Spanish-speaking world. It was obvious from their responses that a number of students had no knowledge of the writer Gabriel Garcia Márquez or of his works.

Students are also encouraged to expand their knowledge of vocabulary related to current and technical issues and to familiarise themselves with neologisms. They should not rely on the use of cognates if writing in English, and, if writing in Spanish, they should use their own words and not quote directly from the text.

In the final minutes they have to finish off their examination, students would be well advised to reread the questions and their answers to ensure that what they have written actually answers the question, makes sense and that they have not left anything out.

## **Dialogue**

Students performed better in this section than in the news items.

Most were familiar with the vocabulary related to information technology and accessing the Internet, reading and the world of literature.

## **Noticia**

### **Noticia No. 1**

Many students were not aware that the answers for question 7, part (a) and (b) were interdependent.

### **Noticia No. 2**

In question 9, the majority of students appeared to have understood the issues raised, but presented the information in the wrong order in their responses. Students are reminded to answer the question in logical progression, that is, answer the first part of the question in part (a) and to give the outcomes of the investigation in part (b).

### **Noticia No. 3**

In question 11, the vast majority of students simply reiterated the information contained in question 10. Students are advised that if a separate question is asked on a text, the information will not have already been solicited in a preceding question.

### **Noticia No. 4**

The majority of students had difficulty understanding the social issues raised when combined with statistical data, therefore their answers did not always represent the facts accurately or make sense.

## **Speaking Skills (15 marks)**

### **General Comments**

The majority of students performed to an above-average standard. Most were able to assume the role required by the situations chosen and present a convincing argument. On the whole, the language used was appropriate and the message clear. The more capable students were able to provide a variety of points in a logical and convincing manner. Their conversations were interesting, realistic and progressed naturally. Less capable students encountered difficulty in expressing their ideas, hampered by a lack of things to say and a very limited vocabulary. They tended to repeat the same ideas in the same words and not make headway in the conversation.

Students are reminded that the situations are artificial, being simply a stimulus to provoke conversation, and require them to be creative. They should also be aware that they are not speaking to their family or friends and that a certain level of language, not 'house' language or slang is expected, even in the Familiar Register; for example, it is not acceptable to say *el kanguro tiene una guagua / un bebé en la guata*. Students should also avoid using Spanglish, such as *soportar* for 'support', *solamente hija* for 'only child' and *salvarme mi tiempo* for 'to save my time', among others.

Students need to make sure that they fully understand the situation they have chosen and the role that they intend to play, where they are and what issues they have to talk about. They also need to clarify for the examiner which role and, in specific cases where there may be confusion, which gender they expect the latter to adopt.

## **Familiar Register**

### **Situation 1**

This was the most popular situation in the Familiar Register. Most of the students who chose this situation established a reasonable argument and expressed themselves confidently.

### **Situation 2**

The students who chose this situation were creative in so far as the reasons they found for wanting to keep a kangaroo as a pet. However, they were challenged by the fact that they really had few, if any, ideas on how to care for such an animal.

### **Situation 3**

This was the second most popular choice. Students were able to argue their case and eventually convince the examiner to visit the doctor. The arguments presented were varied and valid. Students were creative with the symptoms and quick to offer solutions to the problems presented by the examiner.

### **Situation 4**

This was the least popular situation. Students who chose it found it difficult to present arguments which might convince the examiner.

## **Formal Register**

### **Situation 5**

This was one of the more popular situations in the Formal Register. Most students presented an imaginative and convincing argument. Some of the more lively ones went so far as to offer a bribe to the examiner so that charges would be dropped!

### Situation 6

This was also one of the more popular situations. The more capable students had no difficulty bringing the role to life. Less able students were unable to present a convincing argument because they found it difficult to relate to the 'concierge' and to describe where their room was located, when the theft occurred and what was actually taken. One student suggested that a *joyeía* was taken from their luggage.

### Situation 7

The majority of students who attempted this situation showed initiative, argued convincingly and were resourceful in the number of reasons they found to express their discontent with the situation they found in Marbella.

### Situation 8

This was the least popular situation. The more capable students were able to address all the issues raised in the situation and speak on behalf of the group as designated. Those who were less able tended to ignore the fact that they were supposed to be representing a group and persisted in speaking as an individual, no matter how many times the examiner tried to lead them back to the topic. As a result, their arguments tended to be weak, repetitive and very limited, both with regard to expression and ideas.

## Written Examination

### Section I — Language (40 marks)

#### Part A — Reading Comprehension

#### General Comments

In the majority of cases, students showed good overall comprehension of both passages and gave detailed answers to the questions.

Better students were able to encapsulate the essence of the concepts raised, rephrase the ideas using synonyms and explain themselves in their own words. Poorer students tended to quote slabs from the text, sometimes inappropriately.

A few students chose to answer parts of questions 1 and 2 in English intermingled with Spanish. Students are reminded that the instructions require them to answer in '**Either Spanish or English**', not a mixture of both. ALL questions, ie **parts (a) to (d) MUST** be answered in **ONE LANGUAGE ONLY**.

### Question 1 — Pequeños Detalles Que Salvan Vidas

Part (a) This was done well, on the whole. However, many students did not supply sufficient detail in their response.

Students are reminded that the number of lines provided for an answer is usually indicative of the amount of information required.

Part (b) This was generally done well, however weaker students tended to write the same thing in sub-sections (i) and (ii) though expressed each differently.

Part (c) This was a challenging question. Most students only stated that more than twelve beans in the jar meant that the farmer was required to spray. The question required that students outline the process by which the farmer came to have the beans and the jar in the first place and also to provide a rationale for undertaking the inspections. Once again, the number of lines are an indication of the length of the answer required.

Part (d) This was done well.

### Question 2 — El Ruido, Más Limitado Por La Unión Europea

Part (a) This was done well.

Part (b) Many students did not understand or misinterpreted *atascos* and *suciedad*. A significant number translated the latter as ‘suicide’, ‘sewerage’ and even ‘seweragecide’.

Part (c) Few students understood that governments should review the taxes charged on cars and petrol and some very inventive responses were supplied.

Part (d) Sub-sections (i) and (ii) were generally done well, however, a few students included in their answer the fact that the manufacturers should **label** their products clearly and indicate on the same label the level of noise their product would emit outdoors.

Students are reminded that although a global comprehension of the text is essential, it is the understanding of the relevant detail which distinguishes the better from the poorer responses.

Students should also be aware that in the majority of cases, questions follow a logical progression through the text, so that answers will not usually have to be found simply anywhere in a particular passage. In order to organise their answers, students should read the questions first and then locate and highlight the possible answers in the text. They should then re-read the questions and see whether what they have isolated in the text fully answers a given question. Then, and only then, should they transpose the information, in their own words, giving all the necessary details.

Their answers should be expressed clearly, coherently and logically. Poorly worded, garbled, incomplete sentences or fragmented answers cannot be awarded full marks.

## **Part B — Writing Skills**

### **General Comments**

Students made a genuine attempt to fulfil the requirements of the writing tasks. Students attempted question 3 (where words were used rather than the more familiar picture) in a creative manner.

Most students demonstrated that they understood the cues in the questions and used these effectively to develop their ideas. It was most impressive, particularly with regards to structure, that students clearly differentiated between the conventions required producing the story / letter / dialogue / essay.

Students were comfortable with the topics, however, the markers felt that in some instances students had limited their responses by relying solely on the relation of personal events / experiences rather than using their imagination / creativity more.

### **Question 3 — Story**

There was some confusion in this question regarding where to place the cued phrase. Most students correctly placed it at the beginning, but a number did not heed the instructions given. Students should be encouraged to be as creative as possible. With regard to language, students need to ensure that they allow sufficient time to edit their piece of writing and to check for simple spelling mistakes, consistency in tense, agreements etc.

### **Question 4 — Part (a) — Letter**

The letter was again the most frequently attempted of the three questions. Students generally addressed all the cues in the question, ie winning a trip, asking a friend to come along, and selecting places to visit. However, students attempting this question should ensure that they have learnt the basic conventions and structures associated with the letter discourse form, eg city, date, greeting, introduction and conclusion so as to avoid errors such as: *Sydney, 12 de Nov. 1998*.

### **Question 4 — Part (b) — Dialogue**

Most students adhered to the structure of the dialogue and addressed each cue in the question, ie a stranger approaches you, you do not remember him/her, confirm that it's your ex-friend. On the whole, the dialogues were authentic. However, students attempting the dialogue are advised to use expressions and structures that are both appropriate to the context and that demonstrate their ability. Students are reminded that although this is in fact a dialogue, certain literary conventions are required and that one should not use the level of language one adopts when addressing friends in the street. As such, slang expressions are to be avoided.

#### Question 4 — Part (c) — Essay

The responses to this question varied from excellent to poor. The better responses had obvious introductions and conclusions as well as developed arguments throughout. Students discussed both the positive and negative aspects of the 2000 Olympics with concrete examples and personal viewpoints.

If attempting this type of question, students should be aware that merely writing a paragraph or two is insufficient and that the question requires logical argument.

Common errors

- Anglicisms (Spanglish), for example, *Tuve el tiempo de mi vida*;
- Spelling of common words, for example, *Llo, dia, mama* etc;
- Incorrect use of the subjunctive mood;
- Mixed use of tenses within the one sentence;
- Confusion of past participles, for example, *Me murí, podía* etc;
- Using *los* instead of *nos*, for example, *Los fuimos al parque*;
- Misuse and overuse of indirect and direct object pronouns, for example, *Nos íbamos a irnos*;
- Confused use of *ésta, esta, está*.

#### Section II — Options (20 marks)

##### General Comments

Students are advised that when attempting a particular option, ALL questions contained in the option must be answered. Students are further advised to use only one language in their answers, as specified in the instructions.

##### Part A — Hispanic Prose

#### Question 5 — Carmen Martín Gaité, *Fragmentos de interior*

*Fragmentos de interior* was the third most popular choice among students. Overall, students who elected to respond to this question demonstrated that they understood the plot at a fundamental level, but very few were able to engage in a detailed analysis of the content and meaning as required.

- Part (a) This question required that students describe the individual reactions of both Isabel and Jaime to their family's situation and then highlight the differences between their very individual responses. Most students responded well, explaining the differences in reaction both clearly and accurately. However, some students found difficulty in comparing the reactions of the two characters.

- Part (b) This question required that students explain, in detail, how two characters were frustrated with their life as portrayed in the novel and to support their opinion by close reference to the novel. Most students chose to discuss the characters of Agustina and Diego, but it was a challenge for many to identify and argue the characters' frustrations.
- Part (c) This question required that students place the quote in context and explain its place within a sequence of events. It was also expected that students would argue the importance of this quote to the development of events within the narrative. Very few students could locate the quote accurately and completely, and offer an explanation about the circumstances in which it was uttered. As a result, students found it difficult to relate the quote to the development of the story line and suggest its possible importance overall.
- Part (d) This question required that students to give a definition of 'social realism' and discuss, with examples, how the imaginary world of the novel could potentially connect to the world as we know and understand it. Most students limited themselves to giving details of individual characters without linking the broader issues promoted by the novel regarding the historical and sociological context of post-Franco Spain.

#### **Question 6 — Mario Vargas Llosa, *Los cachorros***

This question was among the least popular, only five students attempting it.

- Part (a) This question was generally well answered, with students able to provide relevant and pertinent information as well as distinguish between Cuéllar's behaviour before and after the accident.
- Part (b) Nearly all students understood the nature of machismo and were able to give relevant examples from the text.
- Part (c) On the whole, this question was not handled well. Insufficient detail was given relating to the context. This gave rise to the quotation and its implications regarding Cuéllar's dilemma — whether or not to reveal himself and the consequences of his choice.
- Part (d) Very few students were able to furnish sufficient detail or relevant examples to address the three parts of this question: family, religion and society. Very few considered other contributing factors such as Cuéllar's own ability to choose.

## Part B — Hispanic Theatre

### General Comment

It is vital that students focus on what the question is asking them to do and not simply retell a series of events contained within the text. Students are encouraged to support their discussion of each question with a range of relevant examples drawn from the text. Students are further advised not to use the same examples in answering more than one question. Students are strongly encouraged to consider the question carefully and identify the major focuses/issues to be addressed before attempting an answer.

### Question 7 — Federico Garcia Lorca, *Yerma*

This question was the most popular choice. Answers ranged from planned and focused responses to rambling recounts of the play.

- Part (a) This question required students to define ‘hope’ and ‘hopelessness’ in terms of the play, to provide examples from the play to support these definitions, and to elaborate, using appropriate examples, on the process which caused Yerma to move from one state to the other. While most students could define ‘hope’ and ‘hopelessness’, and some could provide contextual support for the definitions, almost all found it challenging to describe the ‘journey’ and include specific references to the text.
- Part (b) This question required students to indicate what Yerma’s motivation was in killing Juan and to show, with specific reference to the events of the play, if her honour was avenged or not by this act. Generally, students agreed with the statement, but found it difficult to explain how Yerma’s action ‘avenged her honour’. Most students could proffer some reasons for Yerma’s killing of Juan and discuss her motivation for this. However, these students did not demonstrate a clear understanding of the concept of ‘avenging honour’, and thus were not able to clarify the link between motivation and result.
- Part (c) This question required students to place the quote in the context of the play, to link it to the development of the events within the play and to provide proof of its significance through reference to situations/circumstances and the citation of relevant quotes. In general, students found it difficult to locate the quote in terms of who said it, when it was said, where it was said, what provoked it. Students were also challenged by having to place the quote in the continuum of the play and show how its occurrence reflected on past events and contributed to those yet to happen.
- Part (d) This question required students to consider the role played by ‘water’ throughout the play - the interaction between water and Yerma and her life, and to support their explanation with evidence from the text. It proved difficult for a number of students to provide a complete definition of ‘water’ within context. Many students could relate their limited definition to Yerma, her life and situation, but explanations were indirect and unclear. Most students could support their argument with examples from the text, but found it challenging to relate these directly and clearly to Yerma’s life and situation.

### **Question 8 — Mario Benedetti, *Pedro y el capitán***

This question was the second most popular choice among students.

- Part (a) Most students were able to differentiate between the captain's role in reality, the way the captain perceived his role to be at the outset and how this changed by the end of the play.
- Part (b) A significant number of students did not successfully explain how Pedro used 'silence' as a weapon. They were also challenged by having to consider the different types of 'silence' and their consequences.
- Part (c) Students clearly identified the quotation and its context with reference to the captain's family. However, the majority found it difficult to relate the quotation to the reversal of roles which takes place between Pedro and the captain in the play.
- Part (d) Most students were able to relate the play to the existence of torture in society and to brutal methods of interrogation, however few showed any detailed knowledge of the historical background of Uruguay. The majority of students did not relate the issues raised in the play to past and/or current events elsewhere in Latin America or in other areas in the world.

### **Part C — Hispanic Song**

#### **Question 9 — Mecano, *7 de septiembre***

No student chose to answer this question.

- Part (a) This question required that students explain the meaning of the title in relation to the song as a whole and in so doing to discuss the links between the words and images contained within the title and how these are reinforced within the lyrics of the song.
- Part (b) This question required that students supply a definition of 'hope' from within the context of the song and make the link with other images and linguistic devices which support the development of the theme. Students are encouraged to substantiate their claims with specific contextual references.
- Part (c) This question required that students provide details of the significance of the lines to the rest of the song, to place the quote within the development of the song, to explain the implications of the quote and to link it clearly and directly to the remainder of the song.
- Part (d) This question required that students identify the instruments and musical techniques used to create the appropriate images/environments, to locate these within the song, and to link these to the content and the global message conveyed by the song.

### Question 10 — Juan Luis Guerra, *Si saliera petróleo*

This question was among the least popular. An insufficient number of students attempted this question to allow any valid conclusions and comparisons to be drawn from their responses.

- Part (a) This question required students to explain both the meaning of the title and how it relates to the lyrics as a whole. Students should mention the visual images, tone, mood created and quote actual lyrics to support their response.
- Part (b) This question required students to identify the injustices mentioned in the lyrics and show how the songwriter proposes to fight these in endeavoring to achieve better conditions of life for the people. Students needed to provide examples that emphasise the overall optimistic tone of the song.
- Part (c) This question required students to give details regarding where the stanza appears in the development of the song, to explain the implications of the words and images, and to link these to the words and images in the rest of the song.
- Part (d) This question required students to identify the instruments and musical techniques employed to suggest specific musical images/environments, to locate these within the song, and to make the link between these and the content, the mood and the message conveyed by the song as a whole entity.

## 3 Unit (Additional)

### Listening Examination

#### Listening Skills (15 marks)

As in previous years, some students chose to make their notes on the recorded passage in English. This is a practice, which should be actively discouraged. Translating what they have heard to then retranslate their notes into Spanish in such limited time can only be viewed as counterproductive.

Although many students grasped the basic ideas, they were confused by the specific details concerning the countries involved, the percentages, fractions and years mentioned in the text. This led to inaccuracies in the reporting of vital information. Some students extrapolated totally new information from that given, relating ‘facts’ that were not mentioned anywhere in the text. The task of the student is to provide a summary of the essence of what has been said and not create a whole new set of information.

Despite the fact that the full name of the body which had undertaken the study was announced at the start of the passage as *la Organización de las Naciones Unidas* and the number of times ONU was said, a significant number of students did not render this acronym correctly. Several took *las Naciones Unidas* to mean *los Estados Unidos*, therefore presented an exposé of the issues raised from a totally erroneous standpoint.

Many students encountered difficulties with the construction of sentences, preferring stream of consciousness as a style, rather than writing different sentences or using paragraphs to indicate that new ideas were being treated.

A significant number of students had difficulty with the use of articles at the beginning of the sentences or when quoting statistical data, for example, *Cuarta parte de la población* and with verb agreements when dealing with collective nouns, for example, *la onu son or; la gente están*. As these and similar errors are basic grammar, students are advised to pay greater attention to the internalisation of grammatical conventions in the future. In like vein, greater care needs to be taken with spelling and accentuation as these were in many cases poorly handled.

As in previous years, a significant number of students had difficulty finding synonyms or alternative ways of presenting the issues. Students need to increase their vocabulary through wider reading in the target language on a broad range of current issues.

Students are reminded that their résumé should:

- incorporate a title;
- be approximately one hundred words in length;
- be relevant and legible.

Students are advised that marks cannot be awarded for something that is illegible and that care should be exercised in preparing a final response to avoid extensive crossing out, overwriting, use of asterisks and arrows.

The notes and rough draft should be done on the blank page, then a clean copy presented on the lined section of the paper. By the time students reach the examination, they should know how much space is actually needed for them to produce a hundred words, hence a line count with a final tally should not be produced.

## **Written Examination**

### **Writing Skills (35 marks)**

#### **Question 1 — Part (a) — Translation Passage**

On the whole, students gave reasonable responses to the cues and produced some creative and ingenious translations, for example, several words were given for ‘juggler’ and ‘mimes’.

Although some students did not have the precise translation of the English word, they produced clever substitutes, which conveyed the message well.

Some students were challenged by the following:

- proper nouns — Catalanian, Catalonia, Rambla and Catalunya;
- nouns — murmur, pedestrian, gallery (of characters), jugglers, mime (artists) and block;
- verbs — dazzle and resemble.

Adjectival/noun agreements proved problematic to most students.

The majority of students found the last two sentences very challenging. In fact, it was the last section which distinguished the better students from those of lesser ability, because the students who did well in the last section, as a rule, produced good translations of the text.

### **Question 1 — Part (b) — Essay**

Students performed above average in this question and presented nicely developed, imaginative responses, which explored the full parameters of the question and showed sensitivity to the issues raised.

Students on the whole, used complex structures, a sophisticated vocabulary, remembered the correct format for writing a formal letter and used the appropriate register and tone.

Areas of weakness were:

- maintenance of the correct sequencing of tenses;
- jumping from the past tense to the future tense and vice versa;
- agreements of articles, nouns, adjectives and adverbs.

### **Question 2 — Gabriel Garcia Márquez, *Crónica de una muerte anunciada***

Part (a) This was not a popular choice for students, the vast majority opting to do part (b). The responses given were fair to average because students tended to retell the story rather than develop an argument. Most students who attempted this question did not include sufficient direct references to the text.

Part (b) There were several outstanding responses to this question and some very solid attempts at developing original and creative arguments.

Generally speaking, students showed a sound knowledge of the text and were capable of discussing the various themes, ideas and concepts raised by the author. On the whole, the range of vocabulary was appropriate. A small number of students used extremely sophisticated vocabulary and expressed very complex concepts related to the novel, for example:

- the moral expectations of feudal states;
- the ethics demanded of agricultural societies by the Roman Catholic Church;
- the religious symbolism used by Márquez to criticise intolerant and violent societies.

Having said this, there were students who encountered significant difficulty in addressing the question successfully.

Some essays were poorly organised. Ideas did not progress logically due to an obvious lack of planning. Arguments tended to be disjointed, repetitive and at times illogical.

Students are advised to plan their essay, follow the formal essay format and develop a coherent and logical argument that is supported with relevant quotations from the text.

The weaker responses were often attempts to rewrite the novel, with a new plot and resolution.

Some poor responses included errors of fact, which included the misnaming of the author as Gabriel Gar'cia Lorca, the mislocation of the play in Spain and the statement that the *Crónica de una muerte anunciada* was a Spanish tragedy.

In some cases, characters were invented and discussion took place of events that did not occur with characters who did not exist. Many hypothesised about the 'ifs' of the story, ie 'if Bayardo San Román had been completely drunk, he would not have realised that Angela was not a virgin', or, 'if the brothers Vicario had not...'

Students are reminded that they must familiarise themselves carefully and thoroughly with the text and that they must confine their comments and analysis to the text as it is written, not as they would like it to have been written.

ISBN 0 7313 4274 7



9