



**General Certificate of Secondary Education
June 2011**

Spanish

46951

(Specification 4695)

Unit 1: Listening

Report on the Examination

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General Comments

Students had no difficulties following the rubric and were comfortable with the question styles. They performed well at Foundation but the Higher paper was found to be more challenging.

It is possible that certain areas of vocabulary were less well known than in previous years and it is important that students do not focus too exclusively on the topic areas selected for their speaking and writing tasks thereby neglecting other aspects that will be tested in the reading and listening examinations.

Certain questions, requiring knowledge of specific items of vocabulary, were badly done and centres should note that these types of question set out to test detail, as outlined in the grade descriptors for F and C. Other questions require an overall understanding of the whole issue.

Foundation Tier

Question 1

Between 86% and 97% answered the three questions correctly and the question provided an accessible opener for the students.

Question 2

Questions 2(a) – 2(c) were very well answered but 2(d) proved more challenging with only 55% able to link *el lago* to the picture of a lake.

Question 3

This question, which also appeared on the Higher paper, caused real problems because of lack of knowledge of certain items of vocabulary: *revistas* and *botas*. As 'cartons' was accepted for *cartón* Question 3a was answered more successfully. This style of question is not new. In previous papers students have been required to produce 2 pieces of information to achieve one mark. This question was presented in such a way so as to make it clear to students that two pieces of information were required in order that they did not mistakenly give a one word answer. As this question targeted the D/C grades it was thought to be fair to expect two short pieces of information for one mark, given that all the words were within the context of the environment, a context with which students are normally familiar and comfortable.

Question 4

This question was well answered. Between 83% and 95% correctly tackled the four parts to this question on leisure activities.

Question 5

This was a variant of the well established positive/negative style question and students coped comfortably with it. Part (a) was very well done, with 97% able to identify the advantages being discussed. Part (c) was the most challenging, but still almost 70% of students picked out the drawbacks of the job of the postman.

Question 6

This question was aimed at the more able students and did indeed differentiate well. Over 60% could recognise *residencia de ancianos* but, perhaps surprisingly, only 36% could link *recogiendo basura y limpiando el río* with ‘environmental association’.

Question 7

This question, requiring recognition of food vocabulary, was fairly well done. Between 62% and 71% answered the three questions correctly.

Question 8

This question targeted the D/C grades but was more challenging than was expected. In part (a) very few recognised *prácticas laborales* as ‘work experience’, a phrase well known by the majority in previous years. Many students answered ‘chemist’ for part (b), selecting their answer from the sounds in *Sabes que mis tños...* and not connecting with the word *peluquería*. In part (c) many were able to jot down *el mes que viene* in note form but fewer were able to say what the phrase meant.

Question 9

This question was very well done: over 90% gave the correct answer in (a) and (c). Part (b) achieved a success rate of almost 81%.

Question 10

The students found this question very accessible. Over 96% answered the last three parts correctly and almost 80% recognised *abuelos* to score a mark in part (a).

Higher Tier

Question 1

Although this was more successfully tackled than at Foundation, this question was not well done. This is one of the types of questions that targets understanding of detail and, here, two pieces of information were required in order to score one mark (see comments for Foundation Question 3). Very few students knew *pilas* but the word is on the Foundation vocabulary list and in the topic area of the environment, which was the question context here.

Question 2

This question was well answered and each question was correctly handled by over three quarters of the students.

Question 3

This question was targeted at the more able students and, bearing this in mind, the question was relatively well done. Part (ii) was answered correctly by 82% and the other parts were successfully tackled by between 48% and 60%.

Question 4

For a cross over question (one that appears on both Foundation and Higher) this question was badly done. In part (a) less than half managed to link *prácticas laborales* to ‘work experience’ and in part (b) *peluquería* to ‘hairdresser’. In part (c) slightly more recognised *el mes que viene* as ‘next month’ but in part (d) *esperar los resultados* was overlooked by the majority.

Question 5

This was a challenging question about online shopping and differentiated well. Part (a) was most accessible: 68% answered it correctly. The remaining parts achieved around the 50% success rate.

In part (b) students needed to pick up the fact that bookshop *está a punto de cerrar* and that *todo el mundo compra por ordenador*. Key phrases to guide the students towards the correct answer for part (c) were *siempre busco en la Red y miro el precio*.

Question 6

Students were required to decide whether advantages or disadvantages of certain jobs were being discussed (similar to the positive/negative answers in other years) and they coped very comfortably. Part (a) was the most accessible, achieving a success rate of almost 99%, and even the most challenging question, part (c), was answered correctly by 86%.

Question 7

The familiar context of school meant that students found this question fairly accessible and the first three parts were done well by three quarters of students, on average. The fourth part contained less common vocabulary (*monasterio, mezquita*) but was still done well by 63%.

Question 8

This question about Colombian immigrants in Spain was aimed at A* students and was certainly found very challenging. The rubric is reminding students that they will hear more than one reason and that they must select the **main** reason as the correct answer and discard the extra information. The rubric **exactly** means that full details are required to get the mark.

Question 9

Part (a) was the most demanding section as many students did not understand *vagos* and *egoístas*, but opted for ‘irresponsible and anti social’ as the correct answer. 41% got it right. Over three quarters were successful with part (b), showing a good knowledge of the vocabulary in this topic area ‘Relationships and Choices’.

Question 10

The different parts to this question met with varying degrees of success. In part (c) almost 75% correctly linked the weather problems to the illness option and 63% realised the passport had been lost not stolen in part (d). Just under half the students correctly handled the first two parts to the question which was targeted at grade A.

Advice to teachers

- Encourage students to listen to the end of each item before deciding on their answer.
- Encourage students to be precise when asked to write an answer in English, for example Higher Question 8. The necessity for precision is particularly important in this type of question where the use of the word **exactly** means the answer requires **exact** and **full** details. Students will be expected to give full details in their responses in order to achieve the mark. For example in 8b(i) it was not sufficient to answer 'better education system'; it was essential to answer fully 'for her son to get a better education'.
- As commented above, it should be made clear to students aiming for the top grades that precise details will be required when answering in English. In Higher Question 8a(i) for example, where the question requires the **main** reason given, students should expect to hear more than one reason and to sift the information given and discard all but the required facts. In 8a(i), the recording clearly keys in the correct answer by giving "pero mi mayor motivación ... fue...". Therefore students should give only the information following these words, namely 'to improve her lifestyle' and reject any previous points, not part of the **main** reason.
- Use past legacy papers for class practice, especially the Section B questions on the Higher papers as these target similar issues and elicit higher level responses typical of the A and A* grades in the current examination.
- Take note of the comments made about the items of vocabulary which were not known by many students. Ensure that your future students know these words as there is every chance that the vocabulary will be used in subsequent examinations.
- Use creative ways to teach the vocabulary listed in the specification. For example, within a context or theme students can be asked to link words with similar meanings, opposite meanings, indicate the odd one out from a list of three etc. As a starter, one liner headlines of the current day's news can introduce targeted vocabulary and reinforce grammar, e.g. *No llueve en África - la sequía prolongada continúa castigando a miles de personas*. Such techniques, if used regularly, help students to acquire a very wide vocabulary over a short period of time.
- Ensure that students know the comparisons and the expressions of time as listed in the specification vocabulary list as these items were not well known by students this year.

Advice to students

- Write **one** letter in the answer box e.g.

A

You will not gain a mark if you write more than one, even if one of the letters is correct. If you want to change your answer, cross out your wrong answer e.g.

B

 A
and write your changed answer next to the answer box.
- Ensure your writing is clear and legible. Do not use stylized/unusual letter formation in the examination as examiners may not be able to read your answers.

- Always look at and follow the example where given: especially if you have to write in a box, e.g. Foundation Question 8 / Higher Question 4. If the example gives an adjective you should give an adjective in your response, if the example gives a verb you should answer with a verb and if the example gives a noun then a noun should be given in your answer.
- Learn vocabulary. Learn words a few at a time but on a regular basis. Set yourself a target of perhaps 5 words a day from the new words you have learned in class during the week. Over five days you will have learned 25 words.
- Pay attention to the small words like *mejor* and *peor* as they are often used in examinations to test your ability to understand comparisons. You also need to understand adjectives which help you to understand opinions.
- Always listen to the whole item before writing your answer.
- Use the 5 minutes reading time wisely and pay careful attention to those questions which ask you to answer by writing in English.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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