

Examiners' Report Summer 2008

IGCSE

IGCSE Spanish(4440)

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4440/01 Listening Examiner's report

General comments

There was a slight increase in the number of entries for this paper this year. Overall candidates performed well. Topics covered and task types set which were similar to last year, presented few apparent difficulties to candidates. Once again, teachers are to be congratulated on the way in which they had clearly prepared their candidates for the examination. Comments on individual sections of the paper are included below.

Questions 1-5

The greater majority of candidates scored 5 out of the 5 marks available for this question. The word azafata item D sometimes caused problems for the weakest candidates.

Questions 6 and 7

The mean mark for this question was 4.8 of the total possible, 5. Candidates scored very well indeed selecting the correct two boxes for each of the two sections of the question. Occasionally periódico in question 6 was missed.

Question 8

Overall this question was well answered. However the rubric prompt ¿Cuándo? was sometimes misinterpreted with some candidates offering the place la playa instead of the time. All the missing items bolso, dinero and teléfono móvil were well recognised.

Questions 9-14

Section a of this question was more successfully answered than section b. In section b weaker candidates whilst recognizing the lexical items, sometimes struggled with making the right connections. For example: biblioteca and leer libros, tiendas and ir de compras.

Questions 15 - 17

This final series of questions targeted Grades A and A* and proved suitably challenging. The majority were able to correctly identify the issues but were less successful in attributing the responses. In particular, question 16 referring to money and the reaction wanting to work but not being allowed to.

4440/02 Reading and writing Examiner's report

The paper proved to be accessible and testing to candidates and the levels of difficulty of question differentiated better than in previous years due to the fact that the range of candidates was greater this session. This was because not all the candidates were native speakers as in previous years and the entry included a range of candidates from home centres whose level of language was much more variable and wide ranging.

Candidates completed the paper in the time allocated, with very few questions left blank or papers incomplete. Centres had clearly prepared their candidates well for the type of questions involved and candidates had practised question types and understood and followed the rubrics and instructions.

Question 1

This question was handled extremely well by candidates and fulfilled its function as a gentle 'warm up' to the paper. A few candidates thought that icon (g), the snowman, represented 'nubes'.

Question 2

The vast majority of candidates performed very well on this question and were successful in choosing sentence endings which both made sense and matched grammatically.

Question 3

This question was handled well and caused no specific difficulties.

Question 4

The first piece of writing in the target language on the paper was handled very successfully by most candidates. Only the very weakest entries were of poor quality. Many of the native speaker entries were considerably over the word guidance although this did not detract from the quality of the language offered.

Question 5

Most candidates, except the very weakest, demonstrated a good understanding of the content of the text and answered well.

Question 6

This question really discriminated among the candidates, both in terms of understanding and quality of language. The overall idea was taken on board by most entries. Some failed to mention exactly what should be kept clean in part (b) and simply lifted the phrase '¿Cómo mantenerlos limpios?' from the original. A few candidates did not understand the idea of the fines standing as an example to *others* in part (f).

Question 7

Candidates opted for all three choices in this question in relatively equitable numbers. The native speakers and those with a good command offered some interesting and entertaining pieces of work, full of idiom and adhering closely to the requirements of the question. Less able candidates fared less well on the grammatical expression, although they too had clearly practised the format and were aware of what needed to be covered in terms of content.

4440/03 Speaking Examiner's report

Of the 57 candidates who took the IGCSE Speaking Test this year, approximately one third were native speakers. The overall standard of the entries, both of native and non-native speakers, was high and the students had been well prepared for the examination.

The tests were professionally and sympathetically conducted by the Teacher Examiners who ensured that their students were given every opportunity to demonstrate their competence over a wide range of vocabulary, tense usage and accurate syntax.

The pictures and photographs selected by the students for the first part of the test were varied and interesting and the Teacher Examiners made full use of the opportunity to encourage the candidates to talk fully and at length about their chosen stimulus material.

The general conversations based on the specific topic areas were professionally conducted and again the students were put at their ease and spoke fluently, comprehensively and in depth, giving their opinions and justifying their points of view.

In general the candidates responded with spontaneity, fluency and accuracy and demonstrated wide knowledge and application of the language. Teacher Examiners are to be congratulated on their timings of the tests and the preparations they had made to ensure that the exams run efficiently and smoothly. The recordings were generally clear and well labelled and the administration carried out by the Centres was in the main thorough and detailed.

Statistics

IGCSE Spanish 4440

Grade	Max Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Lowest mark for award of subject grade (all candidates)	100	85	76	67	59	49	39	30	21
Lowest mark for award of grade for Paper 3, Speaking (optional)	60	51	45	39	33	26	19	13	7

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