



# **Examiners' Report**

## **June 2022**

**International GCSE Spanish 4SP1 02**

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## Introduction

There are two sections to this paper. Section A is reading comprehension and Section B is writing and a grammar exercise. The two opening questions of this paper are based on medium length texts, each with a complete-the-sentence format. Q03 is based on three short texts and a who-said-what grid to complete. Q04 is a note-taking exercise. Q05 is a long reading passage with questions and answers in Spanish. Q06 is a short writing task where candidates have to include four stimulus words. Centres are strongly advised to ensure that candidates are trained to use all of the words and to include them verbatim. Q07 is a long writing question with three choices of essay, each requiring a different style of writing (eg a blog, an email, an article) and being based around four bullet points. The bullet points will encourage the use of a variety of tenses and an opinion. The grammar exercise is Q08. Candidates are given a text with ten gaps and a word (eg an infinitive or an adjective) that must be manipulated to fit correctly into each gap. One point is awarded for a word correctly modified. Subject-verb agreement, two verb combinations, tenses and adjective agreement are all tested. The rubric reminds candidates that there may be words that do not need to be changed at all (eg where an infinitive is grammatically correct, or a masculine singular adjective form is required). There are grammatical items of different levels of complexity, so that the exercise is accessible to candidates of all abilities, but there is scope here for the most able to be stretched.

In this series, Q01 was about the services offered by the post office in Spain. Candidates had to select the correct sentence ending from a choice of four. Most candidates scored well here.

## Question 2

Q02 was about the use of computers by older people in Uruguay. Candidates had to complete sentences summarising the text, by selecting from a bank of words. Candidates needed to consider not just meaning, but also grammar in order to make their selection. For example, when completing the sentence *Cada día muchas personas mayores leen un ...digital*, the only answers that would fit grammatically are the masculine singular nouns, and of these only *libro* and *periódico* are logical. Although the exercise looks like a choice of 1 out of 12, by using logic, the choice can be as narrow as 1 out of 2. Most candidates scored more than half marks.

### Question 3

Q03 was based on statements by three people about their future plans. Candidates had to indicate which of the three had made each of the seven statements. The instructions inform the candidates that some statements may refer to more than one person or to none of them. Candidates have to place eight crosses in the appropriate boxes. Most candidates followed this instruction, although there were some who gave more than or fewer than eight. For each cross above eight that is offered, 1 mark is deducted from the total score. It was a real wasted chance to score for those candidates who only placed six or seven crosses.

## Question 4

Q04 was about forest fires. Ten items of information from the text were required in note form. These were a range of numbers, individual words and short phrases. Q04(d) and Q04(h) were largely answered without problems. Q04(a) was frequently answered with *autopista* or *Andalucía*. In Q04(b), the correct number, 12, from the *docena* mentioned in the text, was sometimes mixed up with the emergency phone number, 112. The question asked for the number of calls, not the number to call. Q04(c) was often not answered effectively, with many candidates opting to write the incomplete lift from the text *se cerró toda*. Candidates need to think carefully about what they are writing. The effect on the motorway could have been given with either a shorter or a longer lift: *se cerró* or *se cerró toda la autopista*. The half-way house version is meaningless. Q04(d) was usually answered well, although a number of candidates wrote about helicopters and technicians, which are not emergency services. Q04(f) caused some issues, with some candidates understanding *mañana* as tomorrow, rather than morning. *Antes de las once* (which is the time the evacuees returned home) was another common incorrect answer.

Only short answers are required in this question. Sometimes this could be a number or a single word.

Completa la tabla con palabras **en español** o con números.

**Ejemplo:** Número de incendios activos: ..... **1** .....

- (a) Lugar de origen de los incendios: las colinas ..... (1)
- (b) Número de llamadas: 17 ..... (1)
- (c) Efecto en la autopista: se cerró la autopista ..... (1)
- (d) Servicios de emergencia: bomberos ..... y técnicos de operaciones ..... (2)
- (e) Lugar más afectado: los pueblos cercanos ..... (1)
- (f) Evacuación – ¿Cuándo? Temprano por la mañana ..... (1)
- (g) Número de heridos: 0 ..... (1)
- (h) Causas posibles: actividad humana ..... y sequía ..... (2)



In this example, the candidate has given brief but correct answers to all questions, except in Q04(d) where the second element is not an emergency service and so does not score.



Avoid the temptation to write too much. This question is all about note-taking.

## Question 5

Q05 was a literary text taken from *El otro árbol de Guernica* by Luis de Castresana. A knowledge of the text was not necessary. Some candidates scored well on this challenging question, but many found it very difficult. The major barrier to scoring was injudicious lifting of whole chunks of text. In Q05(a), many candidates lifted *hablándole a su hermano* or *le hablaba de sus estudios*. Neither of these answers has a subject or explains who is speaking to whom. Another common answer that did not score was to simply state that the brothers shared a room. This is not proof of the good relationship between them. Successful answers mentioned how the brothers talked to each other. Santi's age in Q05(b) caused a lot of issues, with many candidates taking *la misma edad* from the text without realising that the longer sentence it is part of says 'as if they were the same age'. Successful answers said that Santi was younger, smaller or not the same age as Juanito.

Q05(c) was generally answered successfully. A correct answer in Q05(d) relied on the candidate adding something like *Juanito dijo* in front of the phrases about Santi's beard and size. In Q05(e), most candidates were able to score 1 mark by lifting *hay música en la plaza*, although a considerable number transposed *plaza* for *playa*, which could not be accepted. A lot of candidates continued the lift with *he quedado con unos amigos* and of course the first person verb will not work here. Successful answers contained a verb in the third person or used a phrase such as *para encontrar a sus amigos*. Most candidates were successful in Q05(f), although some wrongly stated that Santi *se sintió nervioso*.



Grammar and spelling are not tested in the comprehension questions on this paper, so mistakes can be made without necessarily losing a mark. It all depends on whether understanding of the text can be effectively communicated without ambiguity.

(d) ¿Por qué Santi miró a su hermano con gratitud un día? Da **dos** ideas.

(2)

Su hermano dijo que pronto Santi va a salir la barba,  
su hermano dijo que Santi es casi tan grande como  
Juanito



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Examiner Comments

In this example, the first part of the answer for Q05(d) is not grammatically correct, but it is clear that the candidate has understood the text and this understanding has been communicated sufficiently well to be clear and unambiguous, so the mark is awarded.



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Examiner Tip

Write answers in as simple a way as possible, this is almost always better than overcomplicated responses. Mistakes can be overlooked if the message is clear enough.

## Question 6

The short writing task in Q06 was about 'My week'. Many candidates performed well, writing interesting accounts of their week in accurate Spanish. Weaker candidates used simple sentences, but there were many candidates who went far beyond the level of language expected in this question, including idiomatic phrases, a variety of tenses and examples of complex expressions such as the subjunctive. The majority of candidates scored full marks for Linguistic Knowledge and Accuracy.

Unfortunately, some candidates lost Communication and Content marks as they failed to refer to all four stimulus words or they used a word inappropriately because they did not understand it. This year, there were fewer candidates who changed any of the words, although *los lunes* was sometimes given instead of *el lunes*. In most instances this did not affect the mark, although candidates should be aware that they are unlikely to score full marks for Content and Communication if they do not use the four words or phrases verbatim. Almost all of the work offered this year was correctly focused on 'My week'. Teachers should reinforce the importance of reading the instructions and the title carefully.

It is essential to use all of the stimulus words as they are written. There will always be one word or phrase that prompts candidates to use a tense other than the present.

6

el lunes ✓

ayer ✓

deberes ✓

tarde ✓

Escribe entre 60 y 75 palabras **en español** sobre "Mi semana". **Debes** utilizar todas las palabras mencionadas arriba.

(10)

Ayer, ~~tuve~~ ~~muchos~~ ~~deberes~~ porque en mi colegio estudié ~~las~~ las matemáticas, las ciencias y geografía. También, comí pasta y después mis clases, jugué al netball con mis amigos. También, tuve muchos deberes porque tengo muchos exámenes la semana próxima.

El lunes, ~~trabaja~~ ~~de~~ ~~trabaja~~ ~~en~~ la mañana voy a estudiar <sup>por mis exámenes</sup> pero por la tarde voy a ~~relajarse~~ relajarme. También voy a salir con mis amigos a un restaurante cerca de mi casa.



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In this example, the candidate has found clever ways to include all the words and has used both a past and future time frame. It is possible, however, for candidates to score full marks for language even if they only use one tense.

This response scored 10 marks.



Take a leaf out of the book of this candidate and tick off the stimulus words as you use them, this will make sure you do not miss out on content marks.

## Question 7 (a)

The longer writing tasks in Q07 produced many interesting essays. Q07(c) (about staying at a friend's house) was the most popular of the three options and Q07(b) (about school rules and discipline), the least popular. Q07(a) was about earning and spending money.

For the first bullet point of Q07(a) many candidates confused *ganar* with *gastar* and referred to what they bought with their money, rather than how they earned it. For these candidates, this meant that the first bullet point could not be considered to have been addressed. Other candidates wrote really imaginative accounts of part-time jobs and getting money for birthdays.

Examiners are looking for each bullet point to be covered and developed.

No tengo mucho tiempo trabajar a causa de la escuela  
sin embargo a mis padres les gusta d mis padres  
me dan algún dinero si lavo los platos. Cuando sea  
mayor, tendré un trabajo de semana.



This example shows a well-developed first point that correctly explains how the writer earns money. The basic idea is that he/she is paid for washing the dishes at home, but this has been developed by saying that there is not much time for a job because of school and also that he/she will have a job when they are older.



Put your response to each bullet point in a separate paragraph. Add extra detail to develop your main idea. You do not need to write half a page on each bullet point, a few lines will do.

## Question 7 (b)

It would be fair to say that Q07(b) was not handled well by a section of the candidates who chose this option. The first bullet point referred to the picture of a teacher in a classroom and was designed to give an opportunity to write in the past tense. The majority of candidates treated this more like the picture description from the oral exam and simply described what was in the picture. This meant that in some cases they did not use the past tense at all in the essay.

The second and third bullets were handled with greater success, although some essays just contained a description of the uniform, rather than an opinion on it. The final bullet point proved particularly challenging for some candidates, who wrote about things they would like to change about their school in general, rather than imagining a rule that will change in the future. It was clear that some candidates had written a generic essay about school, without tailoring their response to the requirements of this particular question. While teachers must obviously encourage their students to practise writing essays in class, they should emphasise the need to respond to the question set.

Every essay stimulus will give candidates the opportunity to use a past tense, a future/conditional and an opinion.

Voy a hablar sobre la disciplina en mi colegio. En el foto creo que la profesora esta enseñando algo y los niños estan muy atentas.

Bueno, en mi escuela hay un mixto de profesores estrictos y relajados. La mayoría de mis profesores estan tranquilos pero si estas jugando en clase normalmente gritan o algo asi - se depende de profesor. Tambien, en mi colegio debes a llevar uniforme pero personalmente creo que es útil por el razon que durante las mañanas no necesitas a elegir a elegir ropa. Además, con uniforme hay menos comentarios negativos sobre ropa porque cada persona llevan el mismo camiseta.



In this example, a very basic present tense description was all that was offered for the first bullet point. By contrast the next two bullet points (both in the second paragraph) are developed with several ideas. There are issues with the language, but this candidate scored well on content for three of the bullet points, missing out on some marks because there was really no mention of what had happened in the classroom in the picture. The language mark was also affected slightly because the candidate did not show that he/she could handle a past tense.



Look for opportunities in the essay to include a range of tenses and an opinion.

## Question 7 (c)

Examiners read many delightful and highly developed responses to Q07(c), full of imagination about houses both old and modern, with five bedrooms, games rooms, cinema rooms and swimming pools, about activities in the house such as cooking, playing in the pool and birthday parties. Frequently, they were written in excellent, varied Spanish.

The main places where performance was less impressive were in responses where the aim of the task had been ignored. Many candidates described their own house and not a friend's house where they were staying. This meant that the first point could only be considered as being partially successful. As for the second bullet point, examiners were frequently presented simply with a description of the bedroom, and not an opinion. In the third bullet point the activity referred to was often something outside the house, eg on the beach or in the town. It seemed as though many candidates had written a standard essay about 'My home', rather than a piece of writing adapted to the requirements of the question.

The essay stimulus will always include an opportunity to give an opinion.



Hola madre y padre,  
¡La casa de mi amigo es <sup>muy hermosa</sup> ~~pasajante~~! Hay <sup>muchos</sup> ~~muchas~~ <sup>grande</sup> dormitorios y una ~~grata~~ cocina <sup>para hornear y cocinar</sup> ~~mucho~~ <sup>diferentes</sup> comidas. También, \* en la casa, hay una piscina que me gusta mucho. Pero el mejor, para mi, es el jardín. Me encanta las flores y plantas. Y en el futuro, si tuviera <sup>mi propio casa</sup> ~~más dinero~~, me gustaría tener un jardín como lo. Igualmente, ~~mi de~~ el dormitorio de mi amiga es muy <sup>bonito</sup> ~~bonita~~, con paredes rosas y muchas ~~carteles~~ decoraciones. Pero desde mi punto de vista, hay demasiada rosa y la cama es bastante incómoda. Y a pesar de que es grande, hay solamente una <sup>en su dormitorio</sup> ventana ~~que~~ no me gusta ~~porque~~ la luz es muy importante en un habitación, a mi juicio. El sábado pasado en la casa de mi amiga, ~~por~~ jugé una juego de mesa con mi amiga y su hermana en el salón. Entonces, fuimos a la piscina y nadamos. ~~El agua era bastante fría~~ <sup>Y después de nadar, comimos</sup> ~~me~~ <sup>almorzamos</sup> en el jardín. Comí una ensalada con verduras frescas de el jardín y un bocadillo con queso. El clima era muy soleado y fue muy divertido. Por la tarde, ~~mi~~ mi amiga y yo hornearmos un pastel que fue muy delicioso. Fue un buen día, no sólo me gustó jugar la juego de mesa o nadar en la piscina, sino también la comida fue ~~increyable~~ muy buena. En el futuro, seré tirar la casa por la ventana <sup>pequeña</sup> cuando ~~construire~~ <sup>construire</sup> tendré mi propio casa. Cuando era ~~joven~~ <sup>niña</sup>, no tenía <sup>un</sup> ~~una~~ <sup>casita</sup> ~~casita~~ jardín, y me hubiera gustado ~~una~~ <sup>un</sup> jardín. Y por está

razón me gustaría una casa <sup>pequeña</sup> ~~pequeña~~ <sup>con</sup> ~~un~~ gran jardín.

Estoy de acuerdo que ~~la~~ casa es importante pero en mi opinión una pequeña casa vale la pena por un jardín hermosa. En <sup>futura</sup> mi casa, será muchas ventanas <sup>etiquetas</sup> y a pesar de que ~~se~~ costarán un ojo de la cara. Espero, ~~en el futuro,~~ <sup>tener</sup> la casa de mis sueños en el futuro.



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Examiner Comments

This is a lovely example of an essay that is full of details.

In the extract starting with "Igualmente" in line 8 and ending with "sino también la comida fue muy buena", two bullet points are covered (opinion on bedroom and activities last Saturday).

Although there are some errors in the language, everything is easy to follow. Each bullet point is thoroughly developed with a number of ideas. This essay scored full marks for both content and language.



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Examiner Tip

Avoid rewriting an essay you have practised. You must respond to the bullet points, so if you are asked to give an opinion, a simple description will not do. If you are asked to write about activities you did in the house, you will not be rewarded if you only mention activities you did in other locations.

## Question 8

The grammar test in Q08, where candidates had to modify ten given words, was based on a text about a walk around a city. This task was designed to give the strongest candidates the chance to stand out. The adjective agreements in Q08(c) *famosos* and Q08(e) *mexicana* were the most accessible. The imperative *sigue* in Q08(b) was often incorrectly rendered and the simple future in Q08(j) *verás* was only rarely conjugated correctly. The accurate use of *gustar*, as in Q08(h) remains stubbornly beyond the reach of many candidates at this level.

The correct use of accents is tested in this question, however, where an accent can be considered non-essential, ie its presence or absence will not change the meaning of the word, a mistake can be tolerated.

- (a) comenzar (1)
- (b) sigue (1)
- (c) famosos (1)
- (d) va (1)
- (e) mexicana (1)
- (f) pintaba (1)
- (g) estar (1)
- (h) gustará (1)
- (i) este (1)
- (j) verás (1)



This example has redundant accents on *sigue* and *gusta*, and these can be accepted as their presence does not cause any ambiguity. The essential accent on *verás* is present.

This response scored 7 marks.



Learn spelling and accent rules, particularly on verbs in different tenses, as these are often tested in this question.

## Paper Summary

A considerable number of candidates showed linguistic flair at a level beyond what is expected. These were not necessarily native speakers and should be commended. Whilst many did write in very accurate Spanish, examiners also saw, particularly in the Q07 essays, many basic errors with tenses, gender and spelling. A few examples from Q07(a) include: *las tiendas es buena, quiero compro, la semana próximo, la semana pasada voy al centro comercial*. From Q07(b): *los profesores es estricto, muchas deberes, la maquillaje, uniforme incómoda*. And from Q07(c): *casa moderno, paredes blancos, cama cómodo, la casa no es en la ciudad*.

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

- use grammar rules to narrow down your choices in Q03;
- in Q04 and Q05, make sure that any phrases copied from the text make complete sense and respond directly to the question;
- use all four stimulus words exactly as they are printed in Q06;
- respond to the bullet points as they are written and include examples of three time frames and an opinion in Q07;
- complete all questions, including Q08.

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