

Oral component

In general, students were well prepared for the oral examination and most showed their familiarity with the structure. In the first section students were asked to participate in a conversation (approximately 6 minutes) about the student's personal world, for example school and home life, family and friends, interests and aspirations. Most students performed well in this part of the examination.

The second section involves the Discussion (approximately 7 minutes), which focuses on aspects of the language and culture of Spanish-speaking communities and is based on the Detailed Study. The discussion gave students the opportunity to demonstrate their capacity to discuss a sub-topic in depth. Students, together with their teachers, chose sub-topics that were relevant to the age group and therefore their knowledge and performance were of a high quality. There was a variety of sub-topics chosen, for example *Music and culture in the Spanish-speaking world*. (*La música y la cultura en el Mundo Hispanohablante*) *The Future of Marriage* (*El Futuro del Matrimonio*) and *The Rights of children in the Spanish-speaking world* (*Los Derechos de los Niños en el Mundo Hispanohablante*).

Section 1 – Conversation

Student interaction with the assessors in the first part of the oral examination was very successful. Most students greeted and farewelled the assessors appropriately. Most students were able to converse fluently about their personal world.

Students who were well prepared demonstrated an ability to elaborate on their answers, move the conversation forward and use strategies to link successfully with the assessors. There were excellent students who managed to advance the exchange with accurate and sophisticated language. It was evident that many students were capable of discussing other issues that came up in conversation during those first 7 minutes. Few students gave monosyllabic responses.

Most students were accurate in their vocabulary and grammar but a few still made errors in relation to gender, correct verbs forms and pronouns. Some students had difficulty using the subjunctive mood.

Students demonstrated clarity of expression by correcting their own mistakes and were ready to use sound repair strategies. Assessors were asked several times about the correct name for a subject. It is important that students know the appropriate terminology and use the appropriate strategies when talking about their different school subjects as they may need to use them in Spanish in the conversation.

Section 2 – Discussion

Most students (at the beginning of their Discussion) indicated in no more than one minute whether they had studied Language and Culture through the texts or the VET option. They also indicated the main focus of their subtopic, alerting assessors to any objects brought to support the discussion.

Many students demonstrating their knowledge of the texts mentioned at the beginning of the Discussion, were able to discuss them at length and were capable of giving ideas and opinions. It is important that texts are carefully studied, as sometimes assessors ask particular questions that students need to be adequately prepared in order to discuss. The choice of the sub-topic for the Detailed Study is vital. It should be taken into account that the sub-topic has to be studied for 15 hours of class time, and that there are enough resources in Spanish to allow students to read different texts on the same topic. At least three resources should be chosen from a variety of text-types as stated in the study design. Texts are expected to be in Spanish and may include Internet material. It is also important to make sure that the resources are sufficiently broad to accommodate a range of interests and perspectives to allow students to provide an individual response to complete tasks and to have a meaningful discussion with assessors.

During the Discussion some students demonstrated many ideas and opinions that illustrated the variety of the resources studied and the different text types, but other students experienced difficulty in expressing ideas and opinions and could not substantiate them with evidence from the texts. The discussion of a well developed sub-topic allows students to demonstrate an excellent range of vocabulary and the opportunity to show off their language skills. In a few cases students were under prepared for the discussion of their topic and failed to elaborate.

It is important for students to think deeply about their sub-topic in order to have the confidence to express their opinions with the appropriate vocabulary and grammar. Students should be prepared to paraphrase and express their ideas simply instead of trying to express ideas in complicated Spanish. Most students spoke fluently and clearly, giving interesting ideas and interacting well in the discussion. They also made many references to the texts studied.

Written component

Students seemed well prepared and understood the requirements of the revised VCE Spanish end-of-year written examination. Sections 1 and 2 of the paper, Part A, required responses in English, (11 questions), Part B in Spanish. Although most students responded in the appropriate language, some failed to gain any marks for those particular questions because they did not follow instructions carefully (they answered all Part A in Spanish instead of English).

In sections where word limits are given, unnecessary expansion will not meet the criteria appropriately. Instead, students should use the time to revise and check what they have already written. In Section 3, responses which had no relationship to the set task were also inappropriate.

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Most students read the questions first and then answered them accurately after listening to the text. Students are advised to concentrate on the questions they have in front of them when listening to the text, to make notes during the first listening and to check their impressions in the second listening, before completing the response during the pause. Some students forgot to transfer the information from their notes to the lines provided for answers. Students should read the instructions carefully and make sure they write the required response. Throughout the examination students were given an indication of how long their answers should be by the provision of lines.

When a full sentence was required, this was indicated in the instruction. The marks allocated to a given question also provide a guide to the appropriate detail of the response.

In Text 1, most students responded appropriately, although some answered the questions in Spanish, and received no marks for their answers. In Part B some students wrote a list instead of a short note without the correct structure. In Text 7, Question 19 students did not follow the sequence of dates as it should be followed in a biography.

Text 1 – Answers in English

Question 1

Motorbikes/motorcycles.

Question 2

1. They cost less/are cheaper
2. Protect the environment/are less dangerous to the environment
3. Consume/use less fuel (combustible) [than cars]
4. They are smaller
5. They are easy to park/parking is easier
6. Maintenance is cheaper, because spare parts are cheaper
7. Better for family economy
8. Have become fashionable.

Question 3

1. They had to modify/change traffic laws/traffic laws have been modified
2. Special lanes have been developed for the security of motorists and pedestrians.

Question 4

1. Access to the River Ebro has been closed for 5 weeks
2. The river banks have overflowed (due to heavy rain).

Question 5

1. The banks of the river have been cleaned/swept
2. The damage caused by the flood has been cleaned up to remove contaminated substances.

Question 6

1. Glass
2. Branches
3. Pieces of wood (driftwood).

Text 3 – Answers in English

Question 7

1. Send an application letter/letter and CV/Resume to Personnel/to Mr Carlos Beloso.

Question 8

1. The advertised position would be located at Reception area/office of the Central American Institute of Testing/Chemical Analysis.

Question 9

1. Answer phone calls and clients' questions
2. Attend to clients
3. Indicate to patients where to wait and for how long
4. Computer entering information/receive and process information
5. On computers.

Question 10

(5 possible questions)

1. Full time job
2. 40 hour job (per week)
3. Starts at 8.00 and finishes at 4.30
4. Half hour lunch break
5. Monthly salary and possibility of raise.

Question 11

1. They might encounter some difficulties, but workers will have the opportunity to attend a 2-hour course to learn terminology and codes.
2. No, because there is opportunity for training to learn the terminology
3. Doing a 2-hour course during first week on the job.

Part B – Answers in Spanish

Most students responded accurately and achieved good results to this part of the examination. They demonstrated a very good command of the language and conveyed general and specific aspects of the text appropriately. In general the vocabulary chosen was simple. Other students had difficulty in following instructions carefully and meeting the required text convention. In Question 12 some students wrote a simple list instead of writing a short note addressed to a particular friend. Students should understand and know the differences in the structure of a letter, a note, an article, or a simple list of items.

Text 4

Question 12

Brief letter format (short note)

Querido amigo/Juan:

Aqui tienes mas informacion sobre la fiesta que organizara la universidad.

1. *La fiesta sera el proximo sabado desde las 6 de la tarde hasta las 12.*
2. *Sera amenizada por/Habra orquestas latinoamericanas que tocaran salsa, cumbia y merengue/con musica de Cuba, Chile, Colombia, etc.*
3. *Se serviran/Habra comidas y bebidas tipicas de varios paises hispanoa mericanos.*
4. *La entrada a la fiesta sera gratis, pero hay que pagar por las bebidas y comidas [que se consuman durante el baile]*
5. *Nos vemos en la fiesta, Juanita.*

Text 5

Question 13

1. *La escuela era muy pequena, con solo 2 salones de clase y una pequena casa de Madera que compartian 2 profesores*
2. *Los estudiantes tienen dificultades/hacen sacrificios para ir a la escuela/estudiar*
3. *Viajan grandes distancias a pie o a caballo*
4. *Se quedan en la escuela todo el dia y vuelven a casa de noche*
5. *Aprended materias parecidas a las de la ciudad: matematicas, lectura, escritura, actividades practicas, pero con menos recursos*
6. *Las diversions son limitadas: cantan y bailan [para divertirse]*
7. *Los estudiantes pueden tener problemas en su vida familiar: a veces faltan a clase, porque deben ayudar a sus padres en el campo*

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A

Many students achieved good results as they demonstrated the capacity to convey general and specific aspects of the text. They understood what was required and supplied the information in English. Most of the time they were accurate except for Question 16, Text 6. The term ‘aside’ misled some students who responded differently. The rest of the questions were answered accurately.

It is advisable that students read questions several times until they are sure of what the question is asking. It is also recommended that they bring a bilingual dictionary to the examination.

Text 6 – Answers in English

Question 14

1. Wholemeal/grain, cereals
2. Fruits
3. Grilled fish or chicken
4. Vegetables
5. Eat little, or not too much meat.

Question 15

1. Grilled/steamed food is preferable to deep fried
2. Avoid fried food
3. [Method of food preparation reduces intake of fat].

Question 16

1. Keep fit by doing physical exercise
2. Avoid smoking or alcohol/cut down on smoking
3. Avoid passive smoking.

Question 17

1. Smokers are at risk of getting lung cancer
2. Suffer heart/cardiac attacks
3. Getting bronchitis (and dying as a consequence).

Text 7 – Answers in English**Question 18**

1. Due to constant death threats on her life
2. She feared for her safety.

Question 19

1. By writing her autobiography to inform the rest of the world about living conditions in Guatemala.

Question 20

1. She works for/defends Human Rights
2. She has suffered a lot, but still fights for Human Rights to get her voice heard
3. She won the Nobel Peace Prize
4. She promotes peace and justice

Question 21

1. From winning the Nobel Peace Prize
2. She used part of the money received from the Nobel Peace Prize

Question 22**(11 possible points)**

1. She was born in 1959
Worked in the fields as a child
2. Was a domestic servant
3. 1980: Her father died
4. Sometime later her mother and brother were killed
5. Escaped to Mexico (goes into exile)
6. Writes her autobiography
7. 1992: Wins Nobel Peace Prize
8. Sets up Rigoberta Menchu Foundation
9. Continues to work with indigenous people
10. Later on she returned to Guatemala

Part B

Students were required to write between 150 and 200 words in Spanish and demonstrate the capacity to understand the conventions of a social/personal letter. They were asked to create a new text based on the questions asked in the text provided.

Most students could achieve this, but some did not to include all characteristics of a personal letter even though they managed to talk about many of the aspects contained in the letter.

Text 8 – Answers in Spanish (150–200 words)**Question 23**

Students needed to demonstrate the capacity to answer questions in a letter with the appropriate tenses and expressions. They were also required to observe the conventions of a personal letter, correct format, style and register.

Students needed to respond to a friend by greeting and thanking him/her for the invitation given details of the graduation. They should have specified the date of arrival, where they would stay, what they thought of the offer from 'Uncle Pedro'; if they were willing to prepare their favourite food '*arroz con pollo*'. They should have provided reasons for returning or not returning to Peru and end the letter with a farewell.

Students are reminded that they should not only answer questions in the letter but also respond to comments.

Section 3 – Writing in Spanish**Answer one question in Spanish (200–250 words)****Criteria****Relevance, breadth and depth of content****Appropriateness of structures and sequence****Accuracy, range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar**

Most students performed satisfactorily in this section. Some students did not produce a proper journal entry. They assumed it was a short story. Students should be familiar with different styles of writing for various audiences and should practise writing in different styles for a variety of audiences. They need to apply the techniques for the different types of writing and be aware of how long it takes to write 200 to 250 words.

Students need to list phrases, sentences and follow the flow with relevant phrases. Students should allow time to correct mistakes. They should also plan to make sure they include all aspects that the task requires.

Students were asked to write a journal entry imagining they were a well-known Spanish-speaking person reflecting on an activity in which they had participated recently.

Question 24

This was a popular choice, students had to write using the past tense, and use descriptive adjectives.

Question 25

The task was to write an imaginary story. The beginning was given as follows: 'One night my parents went out and left me alone at home. I was just falling asleep when ...' Students needed to have a good opening for the story, clear imaginative writing, a good sequence of ideas and an effective conclusion.

This was a popular choice, but some students ended up repeating phrases and sentences and sounds were literally transcribed. They used very simple terminology and sometimes did not pay much attention to the sequence of ideas.

Students were expected to have a structure for the story, for example introduction, body, and conclusion as appropriate to the text type. Organisation and sequencing of ideas within and between paragraphs and cohesiveness of writing within and between paragraphs were important for doing well in this section.

Students were expected to show accuracy of vocabulary and grammar and to use a variety of vocabulary and grammatical structures appropriate for the text type/audience, purpose and context of the task.

Question 26

Students were asked to write an article for an UN newsletter to persuade young people to take better care of their environment. It was suggested that they include areas such as: the effect of cars or dangerous chemical waste, disappearing forests or nuclear waste.

Most students conformed to the conventions of the text-type, an article. Some forgot to include the title and author.

When writing an article students should include:

- title and author (fictional name)
- introduction
- well-developed body of the article, good sequencing of ideas
- logical conclusion.

Students were expected to choose appropriate expressions and a logical structure. They needed to use a variety of tenses such as present, future, conditional and others. It was a complex piece of writing to be produced by students.

Question 27

Students were asked to write a script for a talk to give to the members of a Spanish-speaking youth club. The talk was about the effects of racism and how to combat it. They could also include an incident where they witnessed racism and its effects.

This was not a very popular choice. Students who selected this question neglected the structure of the type of text. They needed to write using the past tense when quoting incidents, and present to start the speech. Also they needed to use the conditional to include suggestions and how to solve the problems. They needed to voice their opinion to help others, starting with: 'En mi opinion ...', '*Segun lo que he visto ...*', '*Desde mi punto de vista ...*', '*Segun mi experiencia/o la de ...*', '*Demuestra que ...*'

Students who chose this question, used simple vocabulary, did not have a clear beginning, middle or conclusion. Students should have given one or two examples to illustrate racism, but not give so much emphasis to the 'incident' as to avoid writing a story/anecdote instead.

Students needed to use appropriate vocabulary for the audience: '*Nosotros deberiamos ...*', '*Ustedes deberian*', or impersonal constructions such as: '*Se necesita ...*', '*Hay que ...*' and they also should have concluded the speech and summarised their ideas.