



Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Most students understood the requirements of the written examination and were well prepared. Some sections of the paper required a response in English and others a response in Spanish. It was very important for students to answer in the correct language, as responses in the wrong language were considered incorrect and were not awarded any marks. Students needed to read the tasks and follow instructions carefully and make good use of the time and space provided for taking notes.

Students should be aware of the following information:

- students should attempt all questions
- responses in the wrong language will receive no credit
- no credit will be given for notes or drafts. Marks will be awarded only for answers given in the space provided on the examination paper
- the meaning of the response should be conveyed accurately for marks to be awarded
- not all questions based on a text require factual answers; some are higher-order thinking questions and require analysis, so that students can demonstrate that they understood the text at a deeper level.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A – Answer in English

In this section, most students answered the questions correctly. The questions were based on the information heard on the recordings. Students needed to listen carefully and take notes during both readings of the text, as this would have assisted them in completing their answers.

Text 1

The first text consisted of an advertisement for a gymnasium that offered a special program and a promotion. The answers to the questions were as follows.

Question 1a.

The time you can go to the fitness room on Sundays is from 9 am to 6 pm.

Question 1b.

Activities located in the leisure centre that you could take part in were (any two of):

- pilates
- yoga
- boxing
- salsa
- gym
- swimming
- aquatics
- aerobics.

Question 1c.

The advertisement makes a direct appeal to people who:

- want to get fit
- have very little time or people who are busy
- want to feel good (or improve their wellbeing) right away.

Question 1d.

The special offer was if you enrol before the end of the month, you can get a 25% discount.

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Text 2

The second text consisted of a dialogue between a tourist and a travel agent.

Question 2a.

The distance from the apartment to the:

- Playa Brava is half a block
- casino is one block
- the bus terminal is three blocks.

Question 2b.

The man always takes his little (or small) dog (or puppy) with him on holidays.

Question 2c.

The correct statements were:

- you can walk from the casino to the bus terminal
- there is space in the garage for one car.

Question 2d.

Extra facilities offered by the apartment building offered included:

- a cleaning service
- 24-hour security
- two heated pools
- a garage.

Part B – Answer in Spanish

Text 3

This text consisted of comments on a radio program regarding the recent Nobel Prize awarded to the Peruvian writer Mario Vargas Llosa.

Question 3a.

Vargas Llosa was so delighted to win the Nobel Prize because he felt it was recognition of literature in the Spanish language.

Question 3b.

Vargas Llosa was involved in a wide range of activities such as:

- he was in military school
- he studied law (in Lima and Madrid)
- he worked as a language teacher
- he worked as a journalist
- he was involved in politics (and was candidate for presidency)
- he wrote over two dozen works of fiction and non-fiction as well as articles (journalism).

Question 3c.

Nowadays, Vargas Llosa:

- teaches at Princeton University (in New York)
- continues to write and publish
- has recently written another book.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Text 4

This text consisted of a piece of writing related to *The Camino of St James* or *the St James pilgrimage*.

Question 4a.

Santiago's life is remembered by:

- festivities taking place on the 25th of July
- the pilgrimage being so popular

- his life being linked to the legendary St James Way.

Question 4b.

His remains were taken from Palestine to Galicia and buried where today the city of Santiago de Compostela is situated.

Question 4c.

The pilgrimage to his tomb began in the year 950 with the arrival of the first pilgrim. The tomb was then converted to a centre of Christian worship.

Question 4d.

Along the Camino bridges, hospitals, hostels, monasteries and abbeys were built. They were built to assist the pilgrims.

Question 4e.

The first Golden Age of the pilgrimage came to an end in 1588.

Date	Event	Reason	Result
1588	Archbishop Clemente hid Santiago's tomb.	He did this because he was worried that English pirates would attack the tomb.	The remains of the Apostle's body were lost or misplaced for three centuries.
Nineteenth century	The body was found.	<i>People had been searching for it for a long time.</i>	There was renewed interest: a new Renaissance of pilgrimages began.

Question 4f.

People completed this pilgrimage in the second half of the twentieth century for the following reasons: tourism, or for sporting, cultural, artistic or religious interest.

Part B – Answer in Spanish

Text 5

This text consisted of a piece of narrative based on a migrant family's anecdote. Students were required to answer in full sentences in Spanish.

Question 5a.

The weather conditions were very stormy and the passengers could not sleep or eat.

Question 5b.

The circumstances that caused Maria's feeling of desperation were the disappearance of her son and the possibility that he might have fallen into the ocean.

Question 5c.

The sounds associated with the possible disappearance of the child were:

- the sounds of the great storm
- the roar of the waves
- the fury of the wind.

Question 5d.

Suddenly, a murmur was heard and then the murmur was followed by shouts of happiness.

Question 5e.

Maria (the mother) and her children were on the ship because they had left Hungary and were going to Argentina in search of peace and prosperity.

Section 3 – Writing in Spanish

In preparing for this section, students were encouraged to practise different kinds of writing (informative, persuasive, evaluative, personal and imaginative) and the conventions that correspond to each text type. Students would benefit from practising the different text types and revising verbs and tenses.

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Many of the written pieces complied with the requirements of the task and were excellent. Some, however, lacked structure, content and appropriate use of grammatical structures. It is recommended that students practise writing different text types throughout the year. Reading texts in Spanish is also a very effective method of improving written expression. Some examples of appropriate reading material are short stories, novels, articles and magazines.

Question 6

Students were required to write a persuasive letter to obtain sponsorship to attend a conference. Students were asked to give at least three reasons why the sponsoring organisation should give them the money to attend.

Question 7

Students were required to write the text for a personal speech for the awards night of their school. The title of the speech was 'Follow your dreams'.

Question 8

Students were required to write an evaluative report about the advantages and disadvantages of using Internet-based social networking.

Question 9

Students were required to write a short, informative article describing the life of a Spanish-speaking migrant in Australia.

Question 10

This question asked students to write an imaginative story entitled 'Lost in the big city' for a story-writing competition run by a daily newspaper. Students are reminded that they must pay attention to the requirements of the written task and observe the appropriate writing style.

The following is a good example of a response to Question 10.

Perdido en la gran ciudad

Eran las tres de la tarde de un caluroso día de verano. La estación central se encontraba repleta de personas. Algunas preparándose para abordar su tren camino a casa y otras descendiendo de los viejos vagones de la locomotora proveniente de Osorno, Una pequeña ciudad al Sur de Chile. Esta era la primera vez que Pedro había andado solo en tren, y la primera vez en la que había puesto pie en Santiago, la gran ciudad.

Pedro tenía sólo seis años. En un arriesgado intento para salir adelante, sus esforzados padres lo enviaron a Santiago a vivir con unos primos, para que pudiera estudiar y tener un mejor futuro, un futuro muy difícil de alcanzar en el pequeño pueblo en el que vivía. Allí, la vida se movía alrededor de la granja y los trabajos manuales.

Se suponía que su tío Juan lo esperaba en la estación, pero él no se encontraba en ninguna parte. ¿Habrán recibido la carta? ¿Sabrán que estoy aquí? Poco a poco, el flujo de pasajeros en apuro fue disminuyendo y a estación se fue quedando vacía. 'Quizás me están esperando afuera,' pensó Pedro y salió a la calle. Un insoportable calor que él nunca había sentido le recibió en la calle. Atrás quedaron los frondosos y altos árboles, las charcas que se formaban cuando llovía y el constante olor a flores y vegetación. En cambio, un grotesco paisaje adornado por concreto y decenas de automóviles –que él apenas conocía– formaban parte del entorno.

Ante tal escena él decidió volver a la estación, cuando un hombre de mediana edad llamó su nombre. Era su tío Juan, 'Estudia mucho y escríbenos'. Las palabras de su madre resonaban en su cabeza.

La gran ciudad iba a convertirse en su nuevo hogar.