

C A R I B B E A N E X A M I N A T I O N S C O U N C I L

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS
JUNE 2005**

SPANISH

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**SPANISH
GENERAL AND BASIC PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS
JUNE 2005**

GENERAL COMMENTS

There were varying levels of performance which ranged from excellent to very limited this year. Some candidates demonstrated a good level of linguistic competence, spontaneity, fluency and accuracy.

It is important for candidates to be exposed to as many real-life situations as possible. Teachers are encouraged to find innovative and creative ways of making the learning of the difficult aspects of the language as enjoyable as possible. Learning through dramatization, simulations and other fun-filled activities facilitates much retention and the development of communicative and other skills.

DETAILED COMMENTS

Basic and General Proficiencies

Paper 1 – Multiple Choice

Paper 1 is a Multiple Choice paper divided into two parts: Part A – Listening Comprehension; Part B – Reading Comprehension.

Sections I, II and III in Part A are common to both proficiencies while Section IV is distinct. The four sections comprise 30 items.

Paper 2 – Free Response

General Proficiency

Section 1

Directed Situations (Writing)

Performance on this paper was generally quite good. Many candidates were able to score above half of the allocated 25 marks. It was noted that many candidates who performed badly on the other three questions, made marks that were quite satisfactory on this question. Below, is a breakdown of performance and comments on the individual questions.

Situation 1

You go to a sports shop for a special item but you do not find it. Write a note to the manager who is not there, requesting the item.

- a . Many candidates requested items that may not be at a sports shop and lost marks for failing to put the word **deportivo** after the item.

- b. Some candidates did not make a direct request and therefore lost marks. E.g. Señor gerente tiene un bate de cricket.
- c. Students must remember that the article **el** or **la** is not needed when speaking to or writing directly to a person. E.g. *El señor John me gustaría tener unos pantalones de cricket.
- d. Many candidates were unable to produce appropriate vocabulary for items found in a sports shop. However, most were able to use the function of requesting.

Situation 2

While you are at the gym, you get a text message from your friend with information about the venue for the meeting you had arranged. Write the text message you receive.

- a. Many candidates used the verb 'estar' instead of 'ser' to say where the meeting would be. E.g. *La reunión está en el colegio.
- b. Many candidates wrote the time the meeting would be held without putting a venue and therefore obtained no marks. E.g. *La reunión es a las dos.
- c. Some candidates reminded others of the meeting without putting a venue. E.g. Chica, por favor recuerda la reunión planificada.
- d. Many candidates did not mention anything about the venue. Responses like ¿Dónde está ..? and 'Gracias por la información' were quite common. Most candidates were not able to use **en** for 'at'. Rather they used *'al cine', *'al restaurante'. Candidates used **estar** instead of **ser** meaning to **take place**.

Situation 3

The elevator in the hospital is out of order. What does the notice advising you of this say?

- a. Many candidates used the verb **trabajar** instead of **funcionar**. Some candidates spelt **funcionar** incorrectly. E.g. El ascensor no ***functionar**.
- b. The word **ascensor** was incorrectly spelt. E.g. ***Asensor no está trabajando**.
- c. Most candidates scored marks for this question. However, candidates were not able to use the negative commands appropriately. Many instances of ***fuera de orden**, ***no en servicio** were found.

Situation 4

You are on holiday overseas when you hear that your mother has won an award. Write the e-mail message you send to congratulate her.

This situation was fairly well done, although many candidates spelt the word **felicitaciones** incorrectly e.g. ***felitationes**.

Situation 5

You have been admiring a classmate and wish to let him/her know how you feel. What do you write in the Valentine's Day card you send?

- a. The verb **gustar** was incorrectly used, as most candidates are accustomed to using the singular ending **gusta** and therefore could not visualize **gustas**. E.g. ***me gusta tú** instead of **me gustas tú**. The sentence ***yo amor tu** was also quite frequent, also ***tu me gusta me** /* **mi me gusta tu mucho**.
- b. There were instances where candidates simply put ***Feliz día du su valentín** with no indication of admiration for the person.

Situation 6

Your aunt sends you an e-mail inviting you to a concert. Write a note declining the invitation.

- a. This situation was done quite well. However, many candidates forgot to apologize. E.g. **lo siento**, or **gracias** before giving the reason for declining the invitation.
- b. Some candidates did not read the situation carefully and simply thanked the aunt for the invitation but did not decline.

Situation 7

You are very concerned about the environment but your friend is not. Write a note suggesting to him something he can do to improve the environment.

- a. Many candidates had some very good answers although the vocabulary *environment* which was not really needed but used as the English word e.g. ***environnemente** instead of **ambiente**.

Some good answers included: **No tires la busura en el suelo.**
Limpia tu barrio.

Students must also remember that they need to maintain the different registers of **tú** for friends. **Ud** for adults.

- b. The use of the command form needed here was badly done.

Situation 8

There is a shortage of gasoline in your country and its purchase is being controlled. Write the notice informing the public about the amount they are allowed to purchase.

- a. Many candidates did not read the situation well and therefore did not notice *the amount they are allowed to purchase*, and wrote. E.g. ***Compra poca gasolin**. They also failed to use the polite form of the command.
- b. It was disappointing to note how few candidates used the word for gasoline accurately. Different versions such as ***gas**, ***aceite**, ***petrol** were used. Again through not having read the question

carefully many candidates produced responses such as: ***no tenemos gasoline.**

***Gasolina es veinte dólares por gallon.**

Situation 9

Your assignment is done but you are unable to submit it on a particular date. What apology do you write in a note to your teacher?

- a. This situation was also well done by most candidates. However, many candidates did not mention the apology or make mention of the assignment and therefore failed to gain any marks. E.g. **Mi mamá está en el hospital.**
- b. Many candidates used the word ***asignatura** for assignment.
- c. The use of **salir** for **dejar** was frequent. E.g. ***Señorita Smith he hecho mi tarea de casa sino lo sale.**
- d. Many candidates simply said that they were sorry. There were problems with **lo siento** and **siento que**.

Situation 10

Your neighbour's dog has destroyed a beautiful plant in your garden. Write the brief note you leave for him/her making a recommendation about the dog.

- a. Many students failed to make recommendations and just wrote what the dog did. E.g. ***Tu perro estaba en mi garden. Pedro su perro ha destrozado mi planta muy hermosa y también costoso. or Tu perro comió mis flores.**
- b. The word **perro** was wrongly spelt in a great number of scripts. E.g. ***Pero. *Tú pero es malo.**
- c. Many candidates failed to use the word **amarrar** which was misspelt in most cases e.g. **amarar** or **atar** instead they used **corbata** e.g. ***Corbata tu perro.**

General/Frequent Errors

1. Not reading the situation carefully. Many candidates scored only partial marks, not because of their ability to use the language but due to carelessness. Candidates are advised to read each situation carefully, identify what elements are required and then respond.
2. Not respecting the rubric. Too many candidates lost marks because they wrote more than one sentence. At times the necessary element was in the second sentence.

3. Grammatical and vocabulary errors

ser vs estar

por vs para

gustar

salir vs dejar

tú vs usted

en for at

pero vs sino

más que vs más de

- Very often candidates wrote very lengthy responses. This should be discouraged by teachers as lengthy responses allowed candidates to make many errors. This often led to low scores.
- Candidates at times did not appear to read the situations carefully and so their response did not reflect the requirements of the given situation. e.g. Question 2 - The time was given for the meeting rather than information **about** the venue.
- E.g. Question 5 - Candidates wished classmate a happy Valentine's Day instead of expressing his/her feelings.
- More practice is needed in several functions of the language e.g. Question 4 - congratulating someone. E.g. Question 6 - declining an invitation.
- Candidates are advised to read each situation carefully, identify what elements are required and then respond.

Note to teachers: It is advisable to expose candidates to the functions found in the syllabus. If candidates are acquainted with and practice these functions on a regular basis they will be able to cope more easily with this question.

The following are examples of good work done by candidates:

1. Quiero un traje de baño pero no hay ningún traje de baño en su tienda.
2. Encuéntrame delante del cine a las once.
3. El ascensor no funciona.
4. ¡Felicitaciones mamá!
5. Te admiro mucho y quiero que seas mi novio.
6. Lo siento pero no quiero ir al concierto porque no me gusta el grupo.
7. Tira los papeles en la basura.
8. No se puede comprar más que cincuenta dólares de gasolina.
9. Lo siento pero estaré ausente hasta el martes y así no puedo entregarle mi proyecto mañana.
10. ¡Guarda tu perro travieso en tu corral!

Section 2

Letter/Dialogue/Composition

This question was not beyond the scope of the average student. The letter, dialogue and composition all dealt with topics within the range of the syllabus. The students therefore should have been acquainted with the vocabulary and grammar.

As usual, on the whole, there were some weak responses, but there were also a number of excellent scripts. The overall effort seemed to have been fairly good.

Common Errors

1. Lack of knowledge of irregular verbs - ser, tener /for example ***tenió**
2. Misuse of the prepositions en/ a for example ***fuimos en casa.**
3. Lack of knowledge of the subjunctive after **querer** with different subjects.
4. Anglized vocabulary items such as ***cumunidad**
5. Adjectives and agreements
6. Candidates still writing essays that exceed the word limit.
7. Lack of use of personal 'a'
8. No accent on regular preterite tense
9. Lack of knowledge of common radical changing verbs such as **cerrar**
10. Collective nouns like **gente** often being used
11. The difference between using **conocer** and **saber**
12. Frequent incorrect spelling for **ciudad**
13. Accent frequently left out on the verb form of **está**
14. Incorrect use of the word **facilidades** for facilities
instalaciones and **servicios**
15. Confusion in the use of **por** and **para**

The following are examples of incorrect usage of grammatical phases and expressions:

Por

- *Compré unos pantalones por mi hermano y un reloj por mi hombre.
- *¿Qué compraste por tu mamá?
- *El traje pollo frito, cartas, jugos por nos.
- *Hay un campo de béisbol por jóvenes.

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

- **Nosotros**
 - *Ellos tuvieron una fiesta para nos.
 - *El vecino hizo una torta para nos.

- **A Causa De**
 - *Yo siempre porque de huracán Ivan.
 - *Muchas personas no tienen casas porque del huracán.
 - *No puedo venir a Mexico porque del mal tiempo.

- **Gustar**
 - *Mi madre gusta la casa.
 - *Las personas son muy simpáticas me los gusta.
 - *Lo me gusta
 - *Me gusté lo / no me gusta lo / yo gusta la

- **Divertirse**
 - *Tienes un buen tiempo.
 - *Tuvimos un tiempo bueno.
 - *Vamos a tener un tiempo bueno.

- **Dar la bienvenida**
 - *Ella bienvenido nosotros.
 - *El vecino nos bienvenido con alegría.
 - *Bienvenidaron nosotros con las frutas y una fiesta.

- **Object Pronoun and Verb**
 - *Ellos nos invitamos a su casa.
 - *Los vecinos compramos regalos para mi familia.
 - *Un hombre que vive en la casa al lado invitamos a casa para comida.

- **Agreement - Collective Noun**
 - *La gente son muy simpático y amable.
 - *Durante el verano mi familia compraron una casa.

- **Pronouns**
 - *Fui afuera y encontré los.
 - *Ella tuvo una fiesta grande para mi familia y yo.
 - *Quiero viajar próximo año con tu.

- **Use of Mirar / Parecer**
 - *Los parques miraba muy bonito.
 - *Mi dormitorio miraré fantástico.
 - *Dormitorio va a mirar muy bonito.
 - *Quiero ver los parques como miraré.
 - *La casa mira muy bien.

- HAY
*allí era / hace / esta es / hay esta / eso es / hay son / es / hube /
allí son / hay es / allí estuve / era / este ha.
- JÓVENES
*joven personas / gente joven / joven niños y niñas / joven las
muchachas / joven los muchachos / la gente jóvenes

Sample script

The following is an example of an excellent letter:

San Andres, mayo 23, 2005

Querida Glendy,

Espero que te encuentres bien de salud y feliz junto a tus seres queridos. Quiero disculparme por no poder ir a visitarte. Me imagino que ya oíste del huracán que tocó a nuestro país. Como comprenderas, estas son cosas que yo no puedo controlar y aunque tenía muchas ganas de conocerte a ti y a tu país, Mexico, no podre ir.

Aquí en mi país la estamos pasando de lo peor. El huracán nos dejó casi sin nada. Si sales a las calles, sólo encontrarás árboles destruidos, casas en total ruinas, postes de luz, agua y lodo por donde sea.

Si hubiese podido ir contigo a tu país me hubiese gustado visitar las famosas ruinas de los maya. He oído mucho de esas ruinas y ya que en mi país no hay, iba a ser mi primera experiencia.

De cualquier modo, no quisiera que nuestros planes de ese viaje se olviden. Cuando nos recuperemos de esta desgracia que nos dejo el húracan, espero poner una nueva fecha para ir a visitarte. Escribeme en cuanto puedas.

Con cariño,

Arelie Vasquez

An example of a good dialogue:

Yo: Los vacaciones *era estupendo. Me gusta el país de España.

Raúl: Sí, por supuesto. ¿Qué piensas acerca del hotel?

Yo: Era, muy eficaz. Los servicios *era excelente y los ayudantes *era muy corteses.

Raúl: Estoy de acuerdo. El cuarto de baño era muy limpio y el dormitorio era muy cómodo.

Yo: Sí ¿Recuerdas cuando caíste en el centro comercial?

Raúl: ¿Cómo puedo olvidar? Estaba corriendo cuando caí sobre el hombre viejo con el helado y el chico. El hombre era muy enojado.

Yo: Sí ¡Qué triste!

Raúl: Pues... ¿Qué compraste para tu madre?

Yo: Una camisa blanca, unos vaqueros, un reloj de pulsera y un collar de oro.

Raúl: Bien, Bien, compré una falda para María. Sabes mi hermana, le gustan las faldas.

Yo: También, compré unos pendientes para nuestras primas y unas gorras para los chicos.

Raúl: Recordaré siempre estas vacaciones. ¡Estaba muy emocionante!

YO: ¿Quieres pasar otras vacaciones otra vez conmigo?

Raúl: ¡Por supuesto! El año que viene podemos visitar *Francés en ves de España.

Yo: ¡Fantástico! Podemos visitar Italia, también.

Raúl: No hay problema. Pues debería ir a mi casa ahora. Adiós.

Yo: Sí, tu tambien. Diviértete.

NB: The candidate made some errors, but in general this was good.

An example of a very good essay:

La semana pasada mi familia y yo nos trasladamos a las afueras del pueblo. Mi casa nueva me impresionó mucho puesto que es muy grande y hermosa con un aspecto algo antiguo.

Tengo muchos vecinos amistosos. El que vive a la derecha de mi casa es amable y siempre me saluda con cortesía. Anoche nos invitó para la cena y aunque la comida no era sabrosa, nos disfrutamos mucho.

En está vecindad tenemos una biblioteca y todas las tardes voy allí para estudiar. También hay un parque rodeado de arboles, con un estanque en medio de él. Lo mejor es la piscina pública donde se puede nadar y tostarse al sol.

Mi dormitorio es muy cómodo y tengo que empapelar los paredes. Entonces tengo esperanzas de cubriros con cualquier cartel que reciba o que compre. Después de que ponga mis persianas con dibujos de "Johnny Depp" mi dormitorio será perfecto y estaré muy contenta de vivir aquí.

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

Section III

Reading Comprehension

Question 1

Approximately 90% of the candidates answered this question correctly. However, the general response of the minority was “*in the house*”, “*in the dining room*”. There was also a mixture of English and Spanish in the responses such as “*in the house of the abuelos*”.

Question 2

Many candidates supplied extraneous information in response to this question. They sought to describe the meal in detail rather than say what the family was doing after the meal.

Question 3

Responses to this question varied significantly. The candidates understood that there was an interruption but their answers became distorted when they tried to state who was interrupted (and why). Such responses were “*Alfredo tried to interrupt the conversation/discussion rather than the story*”. “*He jumped through the window*” and “*He tried to steal from the grandfather*”.

****An outrageous response** - “*Alfredo tried to shoot the thief*”.

Question 4

Candidates performed poorly on this question as they misinterpreted the word “*palo*” to mean *chicken, raccoon, turkey, duck, pail, hole, thief*. Furthermore, incorrect responses to this question affected the type of response given in Question 4. For example, in Question 3, “*Since Alfredo tried to steal from his grandfather, his concern (in Question 4) was that he might be caught by his family and disappoint them or He tried to jump through the window because he had no family*”.

****Some outrageous responses** - “*Alfredo was 95 years old*” / “*He wanted to know what he was getting for summer*” / “*He was afraid he would get charged for attempted murder.*”

Question 5

Candidates responded reasonably well to this question but they misinterpreted the word “*churros*” to mean *sandwiches, cereal, marshmallows, cherries, chocolate fritters*. Also, students failed to recognize that “*churros*” and “*chocolate caliente*” were two separate items, something to eat and something to drink. Some wrote “*chocolate covered churros*”.

****An outrageous answer** - “*He went to the kitchen because he heard gunshots*”.

Question 6

This was the most poorly done question with the majority of the responses stating that Raul found the thief *“in the kitchen hanging from the window or going/running through the window”*. The word *“recado”* was misinterpreted to mean *recorder (musical instrument), tape recorder, walkie-talkie*, and *“colgado”* to mean *colgate*. For example, *“Raul found colgate with dentures” “in the kitchen or he found a note written in colgate on the mesh wire of the window”*. Like Question 4, the response to Question 6 was affected by Question 3. For example, *“Raul found the items which Alfredo stole, in the kitchen by the window”*.

****An outrageous answer** - *“Raul found Alfredo with an unlicensed gun in his hand”*.

Question 7

Candidates clearly did not understand that thoughtful means considerate of others' feelings. Their interpretation of the word was that the thief was smart/clever/successful in his attempts to carry out his plan. Hence, the majority of the candidates responded to this question in the negative but with good reasons. For example, the thief wasn't thoughtful because *“ he returned the wallet and that was a stupid thing to do because they can get his fingerprints”*; *“he returned to the scene of the crime”*; *“he could have been caught”*; *“he let Alfredo see his face”*; *a real thief does not leave notes or evidence behind”*. Some candidates, who believed that Alfredo was the thief said that *“he was not thoughtful because he left merchandise behind and after 5 years he does not know how to carry out a perfect robbery”*.

****An outrageous answer** - *“He only dropped the chocolates because he had to dodge bullets”*.

Candidates who stated that the thief was thoughtful indicated that *“he did not harm the family” “he returned the wallet”, “he did not steal anything else”, “he did not enter the house”, “he did not disturb the reunion”, he gave them a warning (via the note) so that they would take greater precautions”*.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

1. Observe the instructions - respond in English and **NOT** Spanish. Answer in sentences and **NOT** phrases.
2. Candidates should have done better overall but it was evident that they did not know some vocabulary items, which affected their general understanding of the passage.
3. Candidates lacked good expression in the English Language - they displayed weak syntax, semantics, spelling and expression which distorted their responses.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHERS:

1. Teach the students to do Reading Comprehension.
2. Subscribe to foreign magazines to give the students greater exposure to the language and to act as a vocabulary builder.
3. Liaise with the English Department for work on general comprehension skills.
4. Teach the students to offer and clearly express their opinions in oral and written forms.
5. Sensitize the students to the various Spanish cultures to build their knowledge base.

Section IV

Expanded Paragraphs

Although it would not have been difficult to build a story-line around the cues, there were three main cues which posed problems owing to the lack of knowledge of vocabulary.

These were:

- 1. Anciana ciega 2. Un mendigo sospechoso 3. La esquina**

There was a reasonable number of scripts which were grammatically accurate and developed a commendable story-line using the cues appropriately.

However, the following were difficulties experienced by candidates:

- The personal **a** was often omitted
- Poor use of indirect and direct object pronouns - subject pronouns were often used instead e.g. ***ayudó ella**
- **Atardecer** became a verb, **Socorro** became a person and verb
- Although **Ayer** was in the first cue, the candidates failed to make use of the required past tenses
- **Esquina** was often misused, becoming an object that was purchased.
- **Gritos** used as a verb e.g. ***ellos gritos la policia.**
- ***Alerto** also used as a verb e.g. ***el detective alerta**
***El detective alertó la policia.**
- Poor subject and verb agreement in many instances
- **Empezar** and **comenzar** were not followed by a in most cases, and these verbs were badly conjugated in the Preterite with the **e** to **ie** stem change skill used.
- **De** and **el**, as well as **a** and **el** were seen in sentences instead of the contractions **del** and **al**.
- Because **bolsa** was in two cues it was often incorrectly used if the candidate was unfamiliar with it; although in most cases they were uncertain as to the use of **devuelta** and **robada**

- **Mirar** was used instead of **parecer**
- The passive voice was either incorrectly used or not used at all.
- **Robo** was substituted for **ladrón**
- **Gritar por - para** was often used
- **Mirar por, Buscar por** were interchanged often.
- Omission of definite article when speaking about a person
- **Realizar** as opposed to **darse cuenta de**
- **Socorro** vs **ayudar - Yo Socorro** - I help
- **Venir** was badly used - incorrectly conjugated in both Present, Preterite and Imperfect Tenses
- The verb **ser** was confused with **ir** in the preterite.
- **Tocar** vs **Tomar** or **robar** - ***el tocó la bolsa.**

Irregular Preterites that were inappropriately / incorrectly used:

oir	decir	conseguir	oir
tener	obtener	perseguir	decir
andar	ver		
estar	hacer (*hació seen)		
traer	seguir (*sigió seen)		

Use of ***estar miedo** instead of **tener miedo**

Compound Tenses badly used

- 1) Perfect
- 2) Pluperfect

The Gerund also badly used - **Ir** --- 'iendo' instead of **yendo**

- Confusion with **ser** and **estar** and **por** and **para**
- **Tener Que** + Infinitive - not used - most candidates used **tener** and next verb without the **que**.
- Badly used prepositions - **de** was not used simply ***delante**
- ***a lado de**
- Candidates did not use **volver** or **devolver** correctly but made the present tense stem change in the Preterite.
- **La estación de policia** instead of **la comisaría**
- **Vestirse - e - i** change in preterite hardly seen
- Agreement with articles and objects - E.g. ***el bolsa**
- ***Decir gracias, *la vieja gracias**
- **Llegar** and **llevar** confused for to arrive
- ***Su chica amigo** - girlfriend
- ***Comprar para** - to shop for
- **Alegría** was badly used for example. **Era / fue muy alegría**
***Ella alegría**
- French was also used: ***Super maché**
- **Decidir - *ellos decidido**
- **Decir** - and **dar** interchanged for 'to give'
***Yo dice** - I said
***Dígame** - Told me

Candidates' performance in Question 4 (Expanded paragraph) revealed the following:

1. Students' lack of knowledge of vocabulary of some of the cues such as **anciana ciega, esquina, mendigo sospechoso**. As a result candidates were unable to produce a logical sequential storyline.
2. The weaker candidates demonstrated an inability to use the personal "a". This was very prevalent in most scripts.
3. Areas of weaknesses in grammar included inaccurate use of Preterite and Imperfect tenses, **ser** and **estar**, agreement of nouns and adjectives, agreement of subject and verb, verbs that are followed by infinitives and those that require a preposition with the infinitive.
4. Candidates demonstrated weaknesses in spelling and vocabulary.
5. There was also inaccurate use of verbs, such as **volver, regresar** for **devolver, pedir** for **preguntar, salir** for **dejar**.
6. Candidates produced errors in the use of **por** and **para** and **fue/fueron** plus the past participle such as **la bolsa era devuelta**. There was also the misuse of **había** whereby candidates wrote **habían** or **hubo**.
7. Many candidates were unable to use **alegría** accurately. They used the verb **estaba** with **alegría**.

In order to facilitate the marking of scripts, the following recommendations with respect to this question are made.

1. Candidates should NOT underline the cues as this may interfere with the visual impact of producing judgement on the marking.
2. Candidates should write the number of words used in the production of the paragraph.

It was noted that generally scripts lacked very good use of idioms, structures and vocabulary. However, the more competent candidates used very good idioms such as **en un abrir y cerrar de ojos**.

Some examples of good work done by candidates are as follows:

1. Ayer al atardecer, la señora Rodríguez, una anciana ciega, acababa de visitar a su sobrino cuando pasó un incidente raro. En una esquina camino de su casa, estaba sentado un mendigo sospechoso. De repente arrebató su bolsa y se fue corriendo. Al descubrir que su bolsa fue robada, soltó unos gritos estrepitosos.
- ¡Socorro! - gritó ella.
Un detective, alertó por el griterío, cazó al mendigo. Más tarde regresó sin aliento con el ladrón y la bolsa. Luego, la señora Rodríguez golpeó al mendigo con la bolsa devuelta y se puso en marcha, llena de alegría.

2. Ayer al atardecer había una anciana ciega. Iba al mercado para comprar legumbres. Cuando llegó a la esquina la anciana esperó a una persona simpática para ayudarla cruzar la calle. A la esquina había un mendigo sospechoso también. De repente el mendigo robó el bolso de la anciana. Corrió rápidamente con la bolsa robada. La anciana gritó - Después de muchos gritos de socorro un detective alerta llegó. Rápidamente, encontró el mendigo y la dio a la anciana la bolsa devuelta. La anciana estaba muy alegría y le dio al detective una recompensa de mil pesetas.

* Fairly good despite a few errors

Paper 3 – Oral Examination

General Proficiency

Section I

Reading Aloud

There was a marked difference between candidates who were well prepared and those who were not so well prepared. In the case of the more able students general fluency was good and also the intonation patterns. The main difficulty appeared with the cluster “gui” as in “guiso” and in a few cases overstressing the word “de”. By contrast the weaker candidates exhibited the more common problems like mispronunciation of “ge” as in “generalmente”, “o” pronounced as “a” so that “camino” would be rendered as “caminas” and the stress of “además” falling on the second vowel. In extreme cases the reading was done very slowly and inappropriate pauses were made.

Accentuation seemed to be a major problem. Examples include ***véndiendo** for **vendiendo**; ***salén** for **salen**; ***económia** for **economía** - Passage 1

***jóyera** for **joyería** - Passage 2

***próductos** for **productos**

Some candidates called words totally differently from what was written such as Passage 2’s ***entretenido** pronounced as ***entretinido**. Passage 3’s ***agradable** pronounced ***agraydible**. Some candidates struggled through, which made for a boring time for the examiner.

The following pronunciation errors were evident:

- Candidates encountered difficulty with multi-syllabic words: **predominantemente, imaginativas, antioqueña, emprendedor, sobrellevar.**
- The letters “z”, “u”, “e” and “i” were sometimes given an English pronunciation in words such as ***pulseras, verduras, desempleo, ir, especializados.**
- Some diphthongs were poorly pronounced - **aire, baile, países, restaurante**
- Letter **qu** was rendered as “k”
- Letter “h” was sometimes pronounced - e.g. hoy
- Incorrect stress was seen on words such as **verdad, coctel**

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

Section II

Responses to Situations

Generally candidates' performance ranged from outstanding to unsatisfactory. For the most part, the responses were relevant and appropriate to the given situation. Nonetheless, there were instances of grammatical inaccuracies in a few of the responses, for example, the wrong use of the definite and indefinite articles, the omission of the preposition after verbs such as **ayudar** and **ir**. The range of vocabulary for this section of the examination was of an acceptable standard.

The well prepared candidates generally exhibited full comprehension of the situations and gave appropriate answers but complicated structures were generally avoided. The majority of the other candidates often understood the questions but did not always produce clear answers. There were also problems with grammatical agreement and sentence structure. In a few cases, sentences such as ***yo muy sientto**, ***lo encanto** or ***yo compro** were offered.

Section III

Guided conversation

The majority of candidates comprehended most of the questions but some encountered grammatical problems. Pronunciation, intonation and fluency were fair but were not of the same standard as displayed in the reading. The less able candidates produced structures like: ***Mi mamá no gusta mío** or ***yo gusta mira**. There were also the usual problems with items like **ser** and **estar**. This resulted in structures like: ***soy bien** or even ***me gusta estudiando**. The latter illustrates confusion between the use of the infinitive and present participle. Nonetheless, the most important point is that most candidates tried their best to communicate their thoughts.

- Some candidates found a number of the questions difficult. Among the questions that were difficult are:
 - a. **¿Qué haces en tus ratos libres?** and **¿Cómo llegas a tu escuela?**
 - b. **Se comparten, modos de viajar, se encuentra** also proved difficult for some candidates.

Some candidates interpreted **¿Cuántas horas estudias cada día?** As how many hours they have classes for each day. Other problems included:

- i. ***En domingo / *por los domingos**
- ii. ***Puedo** used for **sé** (I can - I know how to)
- iii. ***Prefiero a mirar television.**

Section 2

Responses to Situations

Performance in this section was generally fair. Some candidates attempted to respond appropriately to all of the situations presented. Responses were however very disjointed, indicating a significantly limited range of vocabulary with several grammatical errors. Grammatical inaccuracies included: incorrect tense, lack of agreement (subject/verb; noun/adjective; lack of mastery of command forms).

Many candidates found it difficult to produce an appropriate and accurate response. In the event that an attempt was made, it lacked creativity or relevant vocabulary.

There were candidates who responded enthusiastically without heeding certain rules of grammar (e.g. failure to conjugate verbs, poor use of **ser** and **estar**, incorrect use and treatment of **gustar**). Candidates seemed to be lacking sufficient vocabulary and grammar to make effective responses.

Section 3

Guided Conversation

Many candidates found this section challenging. They experienced tremendous difficulty in comprehending many questions, and struggled to produce even average/semi-correct responses.

There was evidence of many major problems such as: comprehension, spontaneity and fluency of expression. The reality of limited vocabulary was a serious one and it rendered most of the candidates unable to give correct responses.

Responses were stilted with frequent requests for repetition of questions. Some errors observed included:

- Lack of mastery of interrogatives and other phrases such as **¿con quién?**, **¿cuál es?**, **¿qué opinas?**

Specific words that posed difficulty for candidates were: **regresas**, **despiertas**, **llegas**, **ratos libres**, **lugar**, **país**.

Many candidates responded to a word cue without having understood the full question. For example **¿Cuándo es mejor visitar a tus amigos?**

- **Tengo seis amigos.**

Difficulties seemed to stem from an inadequate vocabulary base in most cases. Candidates at Basic Proficiency must be encouraged to widen their vocabulary, while striving to master basic grammatical structure.

Basic Proficiency

Paper 2 – Free Response

Section I

Directed Situations

The questions in this section tested a range of language skills and gave candidates an opportunity to use the written form of the language. While some demonstrated their ability to adequately express themselves in Spanish, other candidates failed to demonstrate even a minimal level of acquaintance with the language evidenced by the number of candidates who failed to offer any response to the ten (10) items. An overview of the responses attempted and observations are offered below.

Situation 1

Many candidates failed to capture the essence of ‘Danger’ as stated and gave unsatisfactory responses to the questions posed. Some even displayed a high level of creativity and used the danger sign on roadways to assist them in conveying meaning. On the other hand, many offered long-winded responses and made several grammatical errors.

Situation 2

It was noted that many candidates were not aware of the vocabulary item for ‘Sale’ and none of the candidates offered **liquidación** as a response. ‘Sale’ was simply interpreted as *‘**barato**’, ‘**vende**’ among others. A few candidates used the equivalent **ganga** in their responses.

Situation 3

Several candidates misunderstood the requirements and simply offered ¿‘**qué tiempo hace?**’ Or ‘**hace calor**’, ‘**hace sol**’ as their responses. They did not realize that they needed to respond about the weather condition as it related to winter in Canada.

Situation 4

This question revealed that many candidates struggled with vocabulary (birthday) as well as the imperative forms of verbs. Some candidates even mixed Spanish with English in their responses. *‘‘**Mi cumpleaños es** coming up’’

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

Situation 5

Surprisingly, many candidates failed to capture the appropriate response '**Lo siento (mucho)**' and offered long winded responses that were marred with grammatical errors.

Situation 6

This question posed difficulty for many candidates and they showed a lack of understanding of the requirements of the question. Many failed to request an item and simply asked "**Dónde Está ...?** Or **Tiene (s) ...?** instead of '**Deseo ...**' or '**quiero ...**' an item. They often named items that were not necessary sports items. Spelling was also a challenge for many candidates.

Situation 7

This question was also a challenge for many candidates. Many simply offered a time for a meeting with no mention made of a venue. There were also many who failed to use a preposition in relation to the venue named.

Situation 8

The range of responses varied from good to ridiculous. Many offered *'**No Trabaja**', '**No en servicio**', '**No en orden**' as their responses. One classic response was *'**Lo siento malo uno**' in relation to the elevator.

Situation 9

Most candidates were able to manipulate this question effectively and comfortably. There were those however, who simply offered the English word 'congratulations'.

Situation 10

This response revealed that many candidates were not able to use the object pronouns very well, neither did they understand which was required. They failed to capture the essence of 'admiration for a classmate' and focused on wishing happy valentines day. Some responses were *'**Mi amor tu**', '**Tu es mi vida y mi calor**' as well as '**Te quiero**' and '**Te amo**'.

Section II

Questionnaire

On the whole candidates handled this question well with many attempting it. Some candidates though, failed to read the passage carefully and so confused the answers. Number 2 for example, because the passage said that Ana Garcia works in the United States occasionally, many candidates opted for choice A thinking that Ana was American. Number 6 also posed some difficulty. There are some vegetarians who eat fish and option A was chosen by many candidates.

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

Section III

Gapped Passage

This section proved the most challenging for the candidates with many failing to attempt this question.

The use of the preterite tense seemed too difficult for some. Many confused the use of **ser/ estar** and even in cases where their uses were clearly understood, the first and third persons were confused.

Knowledge of vocabulary also posed problems. It seemed as if many either did not comprehend the passage or did not bother at all.

Problems with regard to the uses of **por** and **para** were also noted.

Section IV

Reading Comprehension

Candidates generally performed well in this section. There were a few who thought that it was basically about sports due to the use of the word “**deporte**” and as a result the questions were answered accordingly.

- For Question 1, some were unable to identify ‘**colegio**’ as being college or school, so course was used instead. For those who thought that it was an advertisement on sports, the response to number 1 was a sports club.
- Most candidates gave the correct answer for numbers 2 and 3.
- Question 4 was quite problematic as the majority of the candidates were unable to link ‘**ocho niveles diferentes de principiantes a avanzados**’ to the range of courses offered. Few candidates were able to see the link, but due to a lack of vocabulary, the answer was given in Spanish. There were also a few who were able to give the answer in English (basic/beginners to advanced) and scored full marks. Some candidates mentioned the business subjects. It could be assumed that because the question contained the word ‘courses’ and the word ‘**cursos**’ was also in the advertisement, many candidates linked the two, and as a result gave ‘10 types of courses’ as the answer to Question 4.
- The majority of candidates scored full marks for Questions 5, 9, and 10.
- Question 6 was generally handled well. It must be noted however, that there were a few candidates who gave the items under “**Programa de Actividades**” as the answer to this question.
- A lack of vocabulary impeded the answering of Question 7 as there were some who translated ‘**residencia propia**’ as residential property or proper residence. The majority were able to score at least one out of two marks for giving apartment as the answer without specifying whether it was single or double.

- Question 8 was generally answered well although a few candidates said that girls or women would attract athletes to this place. There were a few candidates who answered this question in Spanish or combination of Spanish and English. In the latter case, the sentence began in English and the part with the key word was in Spanish.

Basic Proficiency

Paper 3

Section I

Reading Aloud

There were a few outstanding performances on this section. Generally, candidates' ability ranged from moderate to good. While some candidates showed some control of the sound system and relative comprehension, a significant number demonstrated weaknesses in punctuation, intonation and stress. Also, inappropriate grouping of words and the tendency to break the sense of the passage suggested an inadequate comprehension of the text. Common errors made by candidates are outlined below:

- Some candidates were challenged by sounds such as g before i and e, **gue, gui** and ll.
- Problems existed in pronunciation of the stressed syllable in the word; stress was frequently misplaced, even when accentuated.
- Long words with more than two syllables were indifferently dismissed.
- Vowel sounds were not distinct and 'e' was repeatedly pronounced as 'i' in words like **fue, que, equipo, cebolla, leche**.
- Anglicization of the words was very common, as was a strong evidence of the influence of the candidates' native tongue. This was apparent in the pronunciation of the following words.

región	hispanos
béisbol	objetos
variación	equipo
popular	

The following words seemed to have been problematic for several candidates, and yielded many versions.

esqui	millonario	ejemplo
juegan	pollo	ciegos
aun	apellido	país
premio	paella	aficionados
propios	churrasco	

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

Responses to Situations

In general, students struggled to fulfill the functions in each situation. In some cases the fluency was satisfactory, but for the most part, it was barely average. There were also several grammatical errors.

- More attention needs to be paid to the preparation of Basic Proficiency candidates.

Guided conversation

The majority of the questions were comprehended. There was moderate use of vocabulary. Fluency was satisfactory in some cases but there were several grammatical errors involving subject and verb agreement, use of tenses and agreement of adjectives with nouns.

- Much practice in speaking, pronunciation and intonation.

General Comments

While there were many candidates whose performance was good, there were still many others who were either weak or whose performance was mediocre. A major area of weakness among both Basic and General Proficiencies, is limited vocabulary. Every effort should be made to help candidates to improve their vocabulary. The Preterite and Imperfect tenses, prepositions and adjectives also require much work. Students should be made to study vocabulary in context, listen to radio programmes, watch television programmes and have oral sessions with native speakers, so as to improve their general fluency in the language. Schools should aim to have a Spanish room in which dictionaries, glossaries, magazines, newspapers and other relia are provided for candidates access. The teaching/learning of Spanish should be made to relate to students everyday activities as much as possible.