

**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 EXAMINATION**

**MAY/JUNE 2011**

**SPANISH**

**GENERAL PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION**

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## GENERAL COMMENTS

Candidates' overall performance in the 2011 examination was better than that of 2010. This was due mainly to an improvement in performance on Paper 02, especially in Section IV, Reading Comprehension. Performance on both Paper 01 and Paper 03 was comparable with what obtained in 2010.

## DETAILED COMMENTS

### Paper 01 — Multiple Choice

This paper, which comprised two sections, assessed candidates' ability to (i) listen to and understand a number of items in the target language and (ii) read and understand a number of written items. Both sections required candidates to have a mastery of essential grammar as prescribed in the CSEC syllabus and vocabulary appropriate to this level of competence. The good performance here was comparable with that of previous years.

### Paper 02 — Free Response

#### Section I — Directed Situations

In this section, candidates were presented with ten situations to which they were required to provide written responses in Spanish. The situations demanded that candidates recognize the function they were required to perform, using vocabulary and structures expected of candidates who have undergone five years of study. Candidates were assessed on the appropriateness of their responses and the quality of language used. Inappropriate responses were awarded no mark, even if the quality of language was perfect.

#### Situation 1

Your teacher has asked the students in your class to write one sentence indicating why they have chosen to study Spanish. Write your sentence. (Function: Providing information)

Suggested response: *Es fácil e interesante.*

This question posed little difficulty and most candidates provided an appropriate response. Errors in spelling were the most apparent. Many candidates misspelt *interesante* and failed to change *y* to *e* before *interesante*.

#### Situation 2

You have just received some sad news. Send an email to a friend sharing this information. (Function: Providing information)

Suggested response: *Mi amiga está en el hospital.*

Most candidates were able to respond appropriately, but with several grammatical errors. There was a clear indication that candidates had difficulty with the preterite of the verb *morir*. Many candidates also used the definite article *la* with *hospital*.

#### Situation 3

You have won a large sum of money as a prize. Send an email to your cousin telling her of two things that you plan to do with the money. (Function: Expressing intention)

Suggested response: *Voy a comprar una casa y viajaré a...*

*An asterisk (\*) indicates an incorrect form, spelling or structure. Two asterisks (\*\*) indicate an omission.*

Many candidates failed to obtain full marks for appropriateness on this question because they did not mention two things or did not use the verb in the correct tense to indicate 'intention'.

#### Situation 4

Your sister wants to go to the beach on the weekend but you don't. Send an email suggesting an alternative. (Function: Suggesting an alternative)

Suggested response: *Sería mejor ir al cine.*

Most candidates mentioned an activity, for example, *ir al cine*, or simply mentioned one verb in the infinitive, for example, *bailar*. These were considered partial responses as the function was not fully performed.

#### Situation 5

You have been assigned a roommate for your school trip but you are not happy about this arrangement. Write a short message to your teacher indicating why. (Function: Giving reason/Explaining)

Suggested response: *Esta persona es muy ruidosa/No quiero compartir mi cuarto.*

This question posed some difficulty for the majority of candidates. They lacked the vocabulary for 'roommate' and were unable to manipulate the language for a suitable substitute. Some candidates seemed confused by the word 'arrangement' and proceeded to explain the problems with the room rather than with the roommate. Some candidates seemed to have difficulty differentiating between *bien* and *bueno*. Some wrote *Ese muchacho no es bien\** or failed to make the noun-adjective agreement in the response *No es una persona bueno\**.

#### Situation 6

You are unable to attend a school outing next weekend and you are very disappointed. Write an email to your teacher making a special request. (Function: Making a request)

Suggested response: *Podríamos tener la salida/excursión otro día?*

Many candidates were not able to score full marks for appropriateness because their responses lacked the information that the function required. Several candidates offered an apology for not attending the outing, explained their absence from the trip and wished the teacher to have a good trip instead of making a request related to their being unable to go.

#### Situation 7

You wish to inform your Spanish teacher of something that happened in class during her absence. Write the note you leave on the teacher's desk. (Function: Reporting an incident)

Suggested response: *Los estudiantes no hicieron el trabajo.*

Although most candidates were able to mention an incident, there were several errors with regard to the tense used. The situation required an incident narrated in the past progressive or preterite tense. However, candidates showed a general weakness in the use and formation of tenses. There were also many instances where candidates used the familiar *tú* to address the teacher. When they attempted to use *usted*, the verb was conjugated incorrectly, for example, *cuando usted estuve ausente.\** Vocabulary was somewhat challenging for the weaker candidates who were unable to say *ausente* or *ausencia*. (*Profesora durante tu absence dos muchachos comer en la clase.\**)

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### Situation 8

Write a note of apology to your mother giving a reason for your misbehaviour.  
(Function: Apologizing + Reason)

Suggested response: *Lo siento mamá, estaba muy enfadado/a.*

Few candidates scored full marks for appropriateness on this question because their responses lacked the two elements which they were required to provide. They merely apologized and described the misbehaviour; for example, *mama lo siento por mi attitude mal.*\* Candidates tended to omit accents and were consequently penalized for incorrect spelling. The use of *lo siento* and *siento* continued to pose difficulty for many candidates.

### Situation 9

You are completing an application for a university and you are required to write one sentence indicating an activity in which you would like to participate. What do you write? (Function: Expressing desire)

Suggested response: *Me gustaría estar en el equipo de.../Deseo...*

For this situation there was an attempt by many candidates to express a desire to participate in something, almost all wanting to participate in a sporting activity. There were many candidates who wrote responses that were not extracurricular activities such as studying mathematics or physics. However, the responses lacked accuracy with respect to either grammar or vocabulary. It was disappointing to see vocabulary for well-known sports rendered incorrectly and that candidates were using *playa*\* for *jugar*. Simply mentioning an activity without the expression of desire was accepted as a partial response.

### Situation 10

You planned an activity with your friends but you had to cancel. Write the email you send informing them about it and explain the reason why. (Function: Providing information with a reason)

Suggested response: *Tengo que cancelar porque...*

All candidates were able to respond either fully or partially to this situation. Common errors were mainly related to the element of apology that some candidates offered, again highlighting difficulty with *lo siento* and *siento*. Also, some candidates were unaware of the difference in the use of *por qué*, *porque* and *a causa de*. It was obvious from some of the responses that candidates have not grasped the use of *ser* and *estar* and so used them interchangeably.

### **Further Comments and Recommendations**

The situations were well within the reach of the majority of candidates. However, many candidates did not focus on the functions inherent in the situations and provided responses that were appropriate but lacking in relevant content. Some of the situations brought out the imagination of the candidates and the better candidates displayed a mastery of vocabulary and content that was refreshing.

It must also be noted that some candidates are thinking too literally. Their word for word translation led to them using nouns and pronouns as verbs, illustrating their inability to differentiate between expressions from their dialect and Standard English, their lack of knowledge of parts of speech and the function of words in a sentence. Some of the weaker candidates produced structures that were incomprehensible to native speakers of Spanish, for example, *yo reloj\* la televisión*. Teachers are again reminded to ensure that students are familiar with all the functions outlined in the syllabus and to make extensive use of Spanish in the classroom.

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It must be noted that some responses reflected a lack of taste as to what is acceptable content for responses in an examination. The use of obscenities should be strictly forbidden as it shows absolute contempt for the examiners and the examination board.

## **Section II — Letter/Composition**

This section assessed candidates' ability to produce a piece of Spanish of about 130–150 words based on an outline given in English. Candidates had the choice of producing either a letter or a composition. The demands of this question were within the requirements laid out by the syllabus and in the range of ability expected for candidates at this level.

The more popular choice was the letter which seemed more manageable for the majority of candidates. The topics for both questions were familiar to the students and were ones with which they could easily relate. The questions demanded the use of more than one tense as well as the use of high frequency vocabulary items, thus testing the ability of candidates to be creative in their expression while using language which they would have practised over the years.

### Strengths of Candidates

The majority of candidates attempted the questions and interpreted the questions well. There were fewer limited or very limited responses this year than in previous years, as the weaker candidates made brave efforts to answer despite their limitations. They used the vocabulary and knowledge of grammar that they possessed to produce a response. Most candidates respected the rubric and format, and it was pleasing to observe an improvement in the opening and closing lines of the letter where the subjunctive was appropriately used. Generally, vocabulary and idioms were known and the more competent candidates produced excellent work with a language of coherence, clarity of expression and a wide range of vocabulary and idioms.

Some examples of good performance included:

- Appropriate use of vocabulary of current words: *hacer de canguro; teléfono celular; navegar la red; faena, echar de menos*
- Good use of tenses: *mis padres decidiero; me encargué de mis hermanos; como recompensa me van a dar; me habían dejado con*
- Subjunctive: *Espero que estés bien; si cuidara bien de mis hermanos me recompensarían; quiero que me escribas pronto.*

### Weaknesses of Candidates

Many candidates wrote the date for the letter in words — \**Cinco de mayo de dos mil once*. In addition, candidates failed to recognize that the word *el* is not required when writing the date in isolation.

### Vocabulary

Vocabulary errors continued to diminish the quality of work that candidates produced. Some common errors of vocabulary included the following:

- *salir* used instead of *dejar*
- *llavar* used instead of *lavar*
- *mirar* used instead of *cuidar*
- *que día* used instead of *ese día*
- *ustedes* used instead of *ellos*
- *por qué* used instead of *porque*
- *mejores* used instead of *menores*

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- *porque de* used instead of *a causa de*
- *bien* used instead of *bueno*
- *hospedarse* used instead of *quedarse*
- *parientes* used instead of *padres*
- *asistir* used instead of *ayudar*
- *tiempo* used instead of *rato* or *vez*

### Grammar

Several grammatical inaccuracies were noted. Some of these included

- The use of *Ser* and *Estar* (*Mi hermana es enferma*)
- Subject and verb agreement. (*Mis hermanos y yo fueron al cine, la gente deben ayudar*)
- Spelling of the preterite (*Mis padres fueron, Ellos dijeron*)
- Inappropriate use of the gerund (*Tuve que hacer tareas como fregando los platos*)
- Imperfect versus preterite (*Mis hermanos miraron la televisión mientras yo cociné*)
- The verb *gustar* (*Yo me gustaría, Mis hermanos les gustan jugar al fútbol*)
- Possession (*Mi mamá's cumpleaños*)
- Personal 'a' (*Fueron a visitar\* los abuelos*)
- Lack of the appropriate prepositions after the verb (*Les ayudé\* limpiar, Salieron\* la casa*)
- The inappropriate use of the reflexive verb (*Tuve que bañarse a los niños*)
- Unnecessary use of the preposition (*Miré después mis hermanos*)
- Position of object pronouns (*Mis padres dejaron me en casa*)
- Agreement of adjectives (*Los jóvenes no son revoltoso*)
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### **Further Comments and Recommendations**

While there was a general improvement in the number of candidates who attempted the question and who used all the cues, there is still concern about the quality of language.

Teachers are encouraged to dedicate time to stress the importance of grammatical accuracy in communication and to ensure that students develop competencies in that area. Focus on correction of frequent grammatical and vocabulary errors is recommended. Students must be encouraged to read over their work to avoid serious errors. Enough time is allotted in the examination for this.

Practice in letter/composition writing is essential for success. Students need to be reminded that when they are writing the date in isolation, the word *el* is not required. It is placed when giving the date in context. For example, *Mi cumpleaños es el 5 de mayo. Hoy es el 2 de agosto.*

Frequent exposure to the language through oral communication in the classroom, games, entertaining activities and appropriate websites should be encouraged.

### Section III — Contextual Announcement/Contextual Dialogue

This section required candidates to choose to complete either (i) a contextual announcement or (ii) a contextual dialogue. Cues were given in English for both options and candidates were to use between 80 and 100 words to complete their responses.

Both the contextual announcement and the contextual dialogue had similar levels of difficulty. However, the contextual announcement allowed candidates the freedom of expression whereas the contextual dialogue guided them to utilize certain vocabulary structures.

#### Contextual Announcement

Candidates who selected the contextual announcement once again showed creativity in their responses. There was a greater attempt by candidates this year to present the announcement as such and not like an advertisement as some candidates did in previous years. Those who performed well were able to write the verbs in the correct tense and form, express the time of the activity correctly and use the appropriate form of command/language/expression for the invitation. However, weaker candidates were severely hampered by their inability to use the language correctly. They encountered difficulty maintaining the correct register throughout the announcement and alternated between the familiar and polite forms. For example, \**Ven a nuestro restaurant*, \**llame(n) el número...* The weaker candidates also struggled with expressions such as *a las diez*, \**en la mañana*, and \**en lunes*.

While candidates generally made attempts to effectively communicate their ideas, the quality of expression was affected by spelling and other grammatical errors. The language was sometimes so distorted that it was difficult to comprehend. Some common errors included:

- *un grande fiesta/un grande restaurante*
- *porque* instead of *a causa de*
- *abriendo* instead of *apertura*
- *tiempo* instead of *hora*
- *yo no conoce* instead of *yo no sé*
- *libres* instead of *gratis*
- *de el* instead of *del*
- *con mi* instead of *conmigo*
- *atender* instead of *asistir*
- *bebes* instead of *bebidas*
- *todos en la munda* instead of *todo el mundo*

#### Contextual Dialogue

Candidates were able to respond well to the question since the level of vocabulary and expressions expected from the cues were well within their scope of experience.

The stronger candidates correctly interpreted all of the cues and provided appropriate responses using sound grammar and varied vocabulary. Many candidates managed to respond to the first four questions quite well, but misinterpreted the fifth, *¿Qué te dijo el Director ayer a su despacho?* They indicated what they said to the Principal. One such response was *Yo le dije que no me gustan las matemáticas*.

At times there was no agreement of adjectives and/or articles and general sentence structure. There was also incorrect positioning of *no* to make a sentence or phrase negative. For example, *el profesor* was referred to

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as *la profesora*, and there were phrases such as *el profesor es \*estricta*, *el director es \*no simpatico*, and *él \*hace no enseña nosotros bien*.

There was notable improvement in the use of idiomatic expressions and this contributed to the performances of the very good candidates. Some of the structures that were quite pleasing included:

- *poner las pilas*
- *me siento deprimido*
- *estar hasta el gorro*
- *sin más ni más*
- *¡Qué asco!*
- *estar hecho pedazos*
- *El profesor quiere que yo aprenda rápido como los demás*
- *sabía que podría contar contigo*

However, there were also instances of misspellings (*matematicas*, *professor*, *oficina*, *viente-uno*, *cuidad*), the incorrect use of *gustar* (*el profesor no le gusta me*), the omission of the reflexive pronoun (*siento mal*) and the wrong tense being used in some responses (*yo voy a la oficina del director ayer*). Enough care was not taken with accentuation even with simple words like *sí*, *también* and *más*.

Other errors included:

- *la problema*
- *no soy bien*
- *fayar* for *fallar*
- *fraciones* for *fracciones*
- *gracias para tu ayudar*
- *no problema*
- *no hace mi deber* for *no hice mi deber*
- *las matemáticas es difícil*

### **Further Comments and Recommendations**

While there were a few excellent scripts, a significant number of candidates performed poorly. Once again, the lack of accentuation or its overuse, the lack of punctuation marks and a lack of basic vocabulary structures and improper use of the language, continued to hinder candidates' performances. There is need to develop a facility with all tenses, but more strikingly here with the future tense (including the irregular forms for example, *habrá*). This would avoid errors like *no podré asistir a la graduación*, *que haré mejor*, *mis padres decirán*.

Candidates are urged to observe the rubric, especially as it relates to length. There are penalties for responses that are too long or too short.

### **Section IV — Reading Comprehension**

This section assessed candidates' ability to read and comprehend a short passage in Spanish and respond in English to ten questions set on the passage. The marks allocated ranged from one to three. The questions asked and the suggested responses are given below.

#### Question 1

Describe Marisa's personality.

Suggested response: She was a nice and happy woman. (Any synonym for nice and happy was accepted.)

Most candidates responded correctly. There were few candidates who described her physical appearance instead of personality.

#### Question 2

What did people admire about her?

Suggested response: Her figure/body.

The majority of candidates responded correctly. Some incorrect responses given were *her positivity, her face, her hair*.

#### Question 3

With whom did she go out?

Suggested response: A colleague/co-worker whom she liked.

Many candidates offered a partial response to this question, omitting that the colleague was someone that Marisa liked. Some others distorted the response by indicating that she went out with someone who liked her. The weaker candidates, who clearly had a difficulty with basic vocabulary, offered the response *She went out with Bebieron and Charlaron*.

#### Question 4

Describe Marisa's outfit.

Suggested response: She wore a brightly coloured swimsuit.

Some candidates responded correctly, but there were also a few incorrect responses, for example, *a colored vest; dress; beachwear and a vest; a black bath dress*.

#### Question 5

Mention three things that Marisa and her companion did on the beach.

Suggested response: They sat on the sand, chatted and drank juice.

While many candidates were able to obtain marks on this question, they failed to supply sufficient details to be awarded full marks. (This question was worth three marks, requiring three elements). There were many candidates who were not familiar with the word *arena* and thought that Marisa sat in the arena.

#### Question 6

Why did they decide to go for a swim?

Suggested response: The water looked inviting.

Many candidates responded correctly.

#### Question 7

What happened when Marisa dived into the water?

Suggested response: Something black was seen floating on the water./Her wig was floating.

A variety of responses were given here. Candidates thought that *Marisa saw something/she almost drowned/an article of clothing came off*.

### Question 8

What was her companion's immediate reaction?

Suggested response: He was surprised and told her that her wig/hair was floating.

Again, a wide range of responses was given. Many candidates did not seem to grasp the details relevant to this question. Incorrect responses given included: *Her companion tried to save her/ Her companion shouted Marisa look out, a shark, a black horse is floating./Her companion said OMG.*

### Question 9

How did Marisa react to her companion's comment?

Suggested response: She was embarrassed and ran out of the water.

Many candidates responded correctly, although some candidates missed the second part of the answer or thought that she left the beach.

### Question 10

Explain why she reacted in that way.

Suggested response: Her companion, whom she was trying to impress, found out that she was wearing a wig. (This question was worth three marks and required three relevant elements.)

Many candidates obtained full marks; others were awarded partial marks based on the relevant information that was supplied. Responses that were totally distorted were not awarded marks. For example, *She reacted this way because she had seen it in a movie; She reacted this way because she was naked.*

### **Further Comments and Recommendations**

On the whole, there was general improvement in the way candidates handled the comprehension question. There were more candidates who gained full marks, compared with previous years. However, too many candidates, being unsure of the meaning of words, either placed an additional word in brackets or an alternative word. Candidates should note that they should not give more than one meaning of a word.

Candidates must read the instructions clearly before attempting each section and they must be reminded that the responses in this section must be in standard English and not Spanish.

It is important that teachers teach comprehension skills, cognates, and that special attention be paid to words that are easily confused and the derivatives of words.

Class time should be dedicated to reading for comprehension purposes. This activity is vital to candidates' successful performance and therefore teachers are encouraged to allocate the time for this activity to take place.

### **Paper 03 — Oral Examination**

This paper assessed candidates' ability to (i) produce appropriate responses in Spanish to a number of situations requiring specific functions, (ii) read aloud a short passage in Spanish and (ii) converse in Spanish by responding to questions based on four out of six topics set out in the syllabus.

## Section I

### Responses to Situations/Instructions

This section required candidates to produce appropriate responses in Spanish to situations/instructions described in English in keeping with the function specific to the situation. Candidates presented a range of competencies in the way they handled the responses. Some candidates performed very well in this section, demonstrating a wide range of vocabulary, ample use of idioms, sound grammatical structures and the ability to respond without undue hesitation. These upper-end performers delivered their responses with confidence and a high degree of fluency.

At the other end of the performance scale, many candidates had great difficulty in producing responses which were appropriate and expressed with grammatical accuracy. Their responses were characterized by limited vocabulary, ignorance of rudimentary grammatical structures and little or no knowledge of idioms. Many candidates gave one-word responses and in several instances no response was given. The weaker candidates exhibited much hesitancy and lack of confidence in their oral delivery.

Among the more common grammatical errors were:

- Incorrect use of verb tenses  
*¿Por qué no va a la escuela hoy?* (when asking about a past action)
- Incorrect subject-verb agreement  
*Tú es muy estúpido.*
- Ser and Estar  
*¿Dónde es el dentista?*  
*Soy en el banco.*
- Incorrect adjective-noun agreement  
*La película es muy aburrido.*
- Inability to use Object Pronouns  
*Yo puedo ayudar tú*
- Incorrect use of *tú* and *usted*  
*Dónde quieres ir* (when speaking to a visitor)
- Inability to use the Imperative  
*Cambiar el vestido*

Vocabulary errors included:

*ticketos* instead of *entradas*

*promeso* instead of *prometo*

*llevar* instead of *lavar*

*regresar* instead of *devolver*

## Recommendations

The syllabus provides a list of functions which students are supposed to be able to use. The teacher should incorporate these functions in classroom activities and exercises. Lower forms need to be introduced very early to this type of question and constant practice helps tremendously to build students' confidence in responding orally to situations.

## Section II

### Reading Passage

This section assessed the ability of candidates to read a passage in Spanish (125–130 words), exhibiting correct pronunciation of discrete sounds, good intonation and fluency. Performance on this section ranged  
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from very good to extremely limited. Very good readers demonstrated a firm grasp of the Spanish sound system, showed familiarity with the rules of accentuation and stress and executed their delivery with fluency. Adequate preparation and constant practice in reading out loudly contributed to the outstanding performance of candidates who scored very well in this section.

For many other candidates, the reading component continued to prove itself a formidable and daunting exercise. These low-performing candidates barely understood the Spanish sound system and presented pronunciation which was faulty and very anglicized in many cases. Their production of the language was disjointed and there was little or no evidence that they understood what they were reading.

The following are some of the pronunciation problems which candidates encountered:

- Vocalization of the silent *h* in words such as *histórico, huele, hoteles, habilidad*.
- Mispronunciation of the Spanish vowels, particularly *e* and *i*. This was apparent when candidates read words like *recibimos, individuo, acontecimiento, insinuaciones, empobrecido*.
- The pronunciation of *g* continued to pose difficulties. Many candidates failed to differentiate between *g* before *a, o* and *u* and *g* before *e* and *i*. Consequently, words like *regional, nostalgia, gente, generalmente* were often mispronounced.
- Diphthongs were generally mispronounced: *ciudadano, seguir, dieta, incluir* were some examples.
- The anglicizing of cognates: *nacional, productos, formación, volumen*.
- Articulation of *ñ* in words such as *campaña, caribeña, dueño*.
- Ignorance of the placement of stress generally and particularly in the case of words with accents.

Words that were difficult for candidates included, *nostalgia, exigido, acontecimiento, apropiadamente, supervivencia, arraigada*.

### **Recommendations**

Students must be exposed to the practice of reading aloud on an extensive basis. It is highly unlikely that students will grasp the nuances of Spanish pronunciation and intonation without being exposed to authentic Spanish material. The teacher should constantly use Spanish in the classroom and introduce activities which would confront students with the written word and induce them to read in Spanish.

### **Section III**

#### **Guided Conversation**

This section of the oral examination assessed the ability of candidates to respond to a number of questions based on four topics. The topics examined were *Home and Family, School and Career, Shopping and Travel*. Candidates were asked four questions on each topic and were assessed using the criteria of comprehension and spontaneity, fluency and expression.

The Guided Conversation again proved to be the most challenging for candidates. Few candidates demonstrated the ability to respond to the questions with facility and accuracy. They were spontaneous in their answers and delivered them with extensive use of appropriate vocabulary and grammatical accuracy. The majority of candidates struggled with the section, handicapped by a limited vocabulary range and ignorance of basic grammatical structures. There was limited comprehension of the questions asked as evidenced by constant requests by candidates for questions to be repeated. In many instances, questions were completely misunderstood as candidates were only able to pick up one cue from the question asked and then proceeded to answer their own question.

The grammatical errors encountered in this section were much the same as those mentioned for Section I and included:

- Incorrect conjugation of verbs and a general weakness in using Spanish verbs
- Lack of agreement between noun/adjective and subject/verb
- Incorrect use of *ser/estar*, *por/para*
- Ignorance of the use of object pronouns

The following are some specific problems as they relate to some of the questions asked.

### Home and Family

- The word *nenes* was generally unknown. Many candidates responded by interpreting *nenes* as *personas* and provided answers such as *hay cinco*, *mis padres*, *mis dos hermanos y yo*.
- In response to the question *¿Por qué el domingo es diferente en tu familia?* many candidates described their activities on Sunday, not showing how Sunday is different.
- The question *¿Qué es lo que más te gusta de tu familia?* was often interpreted as who is the family member you like best.
- *Pariente* was taken for *parent*.

### School and Career

- *¿Cuál es la profesión que te parece más atractiva?* Some candidates proceeded to identify their most attractive teacher.
- Problems were encountered with the word *materias*. Candidates seemed to be more familiar with *asignaturas*.
- *¿Cuáles son las características de un buen estudiante?* Many responses dealt with the physical description of a schoolmate.

### Shopping

- *¿En qué temporada del año haces más compras y por qué?* Candidates were not familiar with the word *temporada*.
- *¿Cómo obtienes tu dinero para hacer compras?* Candidates were unable to use the word *obtengo*.

### Travel

- The word *embotellamientos* was generally not known.
- Many candidates were unfamiliar with the word *metro*.
- *Un país latinoamericano* was often given as *España*, *Miami*, *Canadá*, etc.

## **Recommendations**

Teachers need to adopt a more communicative approach to the teaching of Spanish. The language should be used as much as possible as the language of instruction, thus exposing students to sufficient Spanish in the classroom. Students would then become accustomed to hearing the spoken word and become comfortable with same. In the process, teachers are encouraged to expose students to a wide range of vocabulary, synonyms and various interrogative forms.

In the examination year in particular, teachers need to conduct mock oral examinations with students. It is very clear that for a large percentage of students, this CSEC examination was their first encounter with this type of one-on-one testing.

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