

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS
JUNE 2004**

SPANISH

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**SPANISH
GENERAL AND BASIC PROFICIENCY EXAMINATIONS
JUNE 2004**

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.

Candidates performed well in Part A, Listening Comprehension, in this year's examination. All of the items were well within the competence of the majority of candidates.

Part B – The majority of candidates responded correctly to Sections I, III and IV where vocabulary and general reading comprehension are tested. However, Section II, where grammatical correctness is tested, has continued to be more challenging for candidates.

Paper 2 – Free Response

General Proficiency

Section I

Directed Situations (Writing)

In this section candidates were assessed on their ability to produce written responses to a series of real-life situations. The responses to 10 questions were assessed for appropriateness and accuracy of expression and were given 25 marks.

1. *Write the note which you leave for your parents reminding them of your brother's arrival time at the airport.*

Generally well done. Most responses made mention of the airport and specified a time of arrival. Some candidates tended to confuse the use of **recordar** and **olvidar** and several variations to the spelling of **aeropuerto** were encountered. Several candidates could not differentiate between **las (dos)** and **son las (dos) / de la tarde** and **por la tarde** with a stated time.

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

Formation of the future tense and use of the appropriate person caused some problems. When **padres** was used to address parents the plural form was not used in many cases.

2. *A police officer visited your class and gave a talk on road safety. Your teacher has asked you to write an important instruction that he gave you. What does the instruction say?*

Sometimes the instructions had nothing to do with road safety. Sometimes instructions were implied rather than clearly stated, for example, **no beber** or **recuerde mirar a la izquierda y a la derecha**. Candidates used **abajo y arriba** instead of **ambos lados / en ambas direcciones / a la izquierda y a la derecha** / when giving directions for crossing the street. The **a** before **la derecha** and **la izquierda** was often left out after **mirar**.

Some candidates were able to use the negative command correctly – **No cruces, no cruce** for the verb **cruzar**. Good response(s): **Siempre use un paso de peatones cuando está yendo al otro lado de la calle.**

Many candidates gave instructions or made statements that made no reference to road safety, for example, **tenga / ten cuidado**. A few candidates used **despues de** instead of **antes de**. Some also used the gerund after these prepositions rather than the infinitive or the subjunctive where appropriate.

For example:

- ***antes de andando**
- ***antes de que cruzando**
- ***favor de no caminar en un grupo pero en una fila**

While others wrote:

- se prohíbe correr en la calle**
- no tome y conduzca**
- no uses el teléfono celular cuando manejes**

3. *You are participating in a competition on the internet and one question is asking you to state what impresses you most about your favourite teacher. Write your response.*

Most candidates were able to provide appropriate responses. However the use of the definite article when speaking about the specific person, noun-adjective concord, and **lo que** in the structure **lo que me impresiona ...** was absent.

Most responses describe a physical attribute or an aspect of the teacher's personality. Few made mention of an action. In most cases the teacher was **simpático/a**.

4. *You are staying in a guest house in Mexico and require clean clothes. Write the note you leave for the housekeeper with a request regarding your laundry.*

Some candidates made a statement rather than a specific request concerning the laundry. Again, structures for giving instructions were not capably handled.

Vocabulary posed problems. For example:

- ***llavar / llevar** for **lavar**
- ***levantarse** for **coger / levantar**
- ***la lavandería** for **el lavado**
- ***porfavor** for **por favor**

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

5. *Your parents want you to help more often with the household chores. Write the note in which you promise to do a particular chore everyday.*

Most responses did not include all three elements of 'making a promise' in conjunction with the future tense, identifying a specific household task and mentioning the time span given. The Present Tense was inappropriately used and for several candidates ***todo día, todo el día** served as alternatives for **todos los días** and **cada día**.

6. *While your little brother is out, you inspect two projects on which he is working. Write the note which you leave for him, comparing the two projects.*

Many candidates ignored the need for making an actual comparison of the two projects and merely provided a flat opinion about the quality of the products. **Bien** was often used for **bueno**; **mejor** was given a feminine form; ***más bien / bueno** for **mejor** and ***project** for **proyecto**. Candidates' inability to make comparisons gave cause for concern.

Many candidates did not know the correct spelling of **proyecto** and used ***projecto, *projeto** among others. Some candidates did not make any comparison.

This item posed serious difficulty although a few candidates gave very good responses.

Problems: Candidates often used ***el primero uno** rather than **el primero**, ***más bueno** rather than **mejor**. Many candidates did not know the vocabulary for projects and coined ***projecto**.

Good Responses: **El primero es excelente pero el segundo necesita más información. ¡Qué pena! El primero es demasiado grande que el segundo.**

7. *You discover that there is a problem with the elevator at your apartment building. Write the note which you place on the door to advise other users of the problem.*

Many candidates were unfamiliar with the Spanish for elevator. Many used ***El elevator** or avoided it totally. Distinction between **trabajar** and **funcionar** seemed unknown as many candidates used **no trabaja**. The incorrect position of **no** and use of **es** with the present participle was prevalent.

For example, ***es no trabajando / es no funciona / funcionar**. This was one of the more challenging situations and one of the few omitted.

The main error here was the use of the verb **trabajar** as opposed to **funcionar** as well as the use of the word elevator for **elevador** and **ascensor**.

Other problems were:

***Hay una problema con lo**
***Se prohíbe entrar el ascensor no funciona**
***No funcionaer el ascensor**

8. *You and your sister are invited to a birthday celebration but you decide not to attend. Write the brief apology you send with your sister.*

Most candidates provided fully appropriate responses. Explanations lacked originality and sense, as usual **mi mama está enferma / yo estoy enfermo/a** were overworked.

Problems arose when candidates attempted to merge the apology with the supporting clause and did not recognize the need for the omission of the **lo** and the inclusion of **que** + subjunctive. The use of **ser** for **estar** was widespread.

This was done fairly well but some candidates left off the apology and only stated why they could not attend the party. Many candidates did not use the preposition **a** after **asistir**. Many candidates also had problems with the use of **lo siento** and **siento que**.

9. *While you are at the bus stop you find a diary. The owner has written a note in it with information on how to contact him/her, if it is found. What does the note say?*

Several candidates brought real-life experiences to the response and simply made reference to the name and telephone number that would normally be stated on the front page. They did not see the need for rewriting that information in their responses.

10. *Your friend is ill at home and you send him an e-mail. Write the message you send to cheer him up.*

Most candidates sent messages that expressed good wishes. There were a few who sent messages of ill will. Many candidates used the subjunctive quite well in expressing their wishes.

For example, **Espero que te sientas mejor con mi correo – electrónico, recuerda que Dios no nos permite sufrir ...**

General Comments

Candidates need to be reminded constantly that the key to success in this section is brevity. Too many marks are lost to clumsy, long-winded constructions that can be easily replaced with simple expressions that are learnt very early in the candidates' acquisition of Spanish.

Too often, candidates who possessed a good command of Spanish but made simple mistakes in spelling or agreement of adjectives and nouns received fewer marks for a question than very weak candidates.

Candidates should also be given practice in the art of reading the situations presented and detecting the elements requested. Even though some candidates understood what was required, they were unable to formulate responses that were grammatically accurate with the imperative, for example, questions 1, 2, 4, 7. In question 1, candidates who addressed both parents, often wrote **recuerda, recuerde**. In questions 2 and 7, the negative imperative was often written incorrectly ***No usa el elevador, no entra, no cruza**.

In number 6, the comparison requested posed problems. Some responses given were ***es más bueno que, es más mayor que, es más bien como**. There were also problems with giving an apology. There were many errors with **lo siento que** and **siento que + no subjunctive**.

Question 10 seemed to be the most open situation, as candidates' responses to this situation were most varied and far-fetched (often bordering on the ridiculous) but they were awarded marks whenever the expression was adequate.

- The first problem was the wide interpretation by candidates of certain situations – there is the need to read questions carefully to provide the response required.
- Candidates showed a general weakness with respect to basic vocabulary. For example, the verb to wash was rendered as ***llavar / llevar / levantar** by many candidates and clothes as ***las ropas**.
- Conjugation of verbs was a source of difficulty also, for candidates who were unable to render correctly the future tense or the command form – on many occasions the first person was used for the third person.
- Spelling of basic vocabulary was a problem for some candidates, for instance – the tilde **ñ** was missing in **señor**, as well as frequently left out or misplaced in **mañana**.
- Use of the infinitive after **antes de / despues de** seemed unknown to candidates as well as the correct use of the present participle, as in ***cuando cruzando / mirando antes tu cruces la calle**.

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

- Use of literal translation – for example, nouns used as verbs – ***yo necesidad / yo testamento / agua las plantas; reloj** for watch was used as a verb.
- Vocabulary – word for project – ***proyecto – izquierda** was frequently spelt wrong; the word for elevator was rendered as ***el elevator**.
- Spelling for numbers also caused some difficulty, for example, ***sies / viente**
- Use of double s especially in ***professor/a necessites**
- Use of e instead of y before **interesante / inteligente** seemed unknown to many
- Incorrect spelling of **inteligente, interesante, favorito, simpático, limpiar, preocupes**
- Agreement between nouns and adjectives – ***profesora -favorito / simpatico**
- Incorrect position of adjectives – ***mi favorito professor** but ***el proyecto primero**
- Inability to render *everyday* correctly written as ***todo el día** not to mention agreement problems – ***todas las días**
- Surprising inability to render name/address in Spanish – ***mi llamo es / vivo a**
- Use of **nombre** for **numero**
- Use of ***mirar por** – look out for
- Use of ***peder para – preguntar por**
- Candidates were unable to render comparisons correctly – **es – que / tan – como**
- Incorrect use of **bien / mal** as adjectives instead of **bueno / malo** accompanied by incorrect usage of **ser / estar**.

Section II

Letter, Dialogue, Composition

In this section the candidates' ability to produce written language demonstrating mastery of relevant vocabulary, idiom and language structure was tested, as well as the ability to express ideas clearly. The three options were the letter, the dialogue and the composition, each of which was marked out of 30.

There was an even distribution of responses to the letter / dialogue / composition – all items were equally popular, indicating a fair selection of questions offered to candidates. The majority of candidates who chose to do the letter were unfamiliar with the letter format. They disregarded the instruction given: Do NOT write your real name and address. Some misinterpreted this instruction and included a lengthy address. Most candidates continue to misspell **querida** as ***quierdo / quierido**. There was, however, an improvement this year in the appropriate expressions and language used in the opening sentences of the letter with many candidates writing correctly **deseo que / espero que** plus the subjunctive.

Many candidates who opted for the dialogue tended not to demonstrate mastery of language and wrote a series of responses to the situations presented.

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

A high number of candidates demonstrated grammatical inaccuracy – particularly in the misuse of verbs (Preterite tense) thereby only producing fairly good or moderate responses. Some candidates were more comfortable using the imperfect tense accurately but inappropriately. Disagreement, particularly noun/adjective continues to plague their responses. The word **la gente** was frequently used with an inappropriate verb form. Too many candidates used ***las gentes** for (the people). Those who used **la gente** failed to remember to use the singular verb and failed also to make the appropriate agreement between noun and adjective used.

There were numerous examples of ***la gente son amables, agradables, interesantes, simpáticos, amistosos**. Also, very few candidates used the correct **e** (and) before **interesante, inteligente**.

It is disturbing that so many candidates still fail to make the correct agreement between subject and verb. There were numerous examples of: ***Yo fue, Yo come, Yo bebe**.

Orthographic errors in expressing in Spanish ‘tourist attractions’ were frequent. Very often it was ***tourista** and ***atracciones**.

Many candidates made no effort to use Spanish words (where possible) for some of the meals and drinks of the countries visited. The verb **ocurrir** was hardly spelt correctly. There was the constant misuse of the verb **gusta**. Many candidates did not know the Spanish for *singer, concert*.

Other grammatical errors observed included:

- i. Missing accents from the preterite: ***visite** for **visité**
- ii. Plural verbs used with collective nouns: ***la gente son**
- iii. **Querer** used with **a** and the infinitive: ***quiero a venir**
- iv. ***Porque de** for because of instead of: **a causa de**
- v. The pluralization of **ropa**: ***las nuevas ropas**
- vi. The use of **estar** for nationality: ***estoy Trinidadian**
- vii. **Y** instead of **e** before words beginning with **i**: ***y inteligente**
- viii. Adjective lacking agreement with nouns
- ix. Confusion in using appropriately **ser** and **estar**
- x. The anglicization of words in spelling: ***atracción** for **atracción**
- xi. ***Ir en** instead of **ir de**
- xii. Not enough familiarity with regular preterite forms ***bebe** for **bebí**; ***comé** for **comí**
- xiii. Lack of use of the subjunctive after verbs expressing emotion ***estoy contento que**; after verbs of wishing or wanting ***quiero tú venir** and with command forms both familiar and formal
- xiv. Switching between the use of the familiar and polite forms at will, especially in the dialogues; not understanding the appropriate use of the formal form
- xv. Lack of use of the personal **a**
- xvi. **Tener que** + infinitive: to have to
- xvii. **En** instead of **de** after superlatives
- xviii. Lack of familiarity with common irregular preterites in: ***fuemos**

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

The candidates experienced difficulty moving logically from one element to the next. As a result, the letters and compositions at times appeared unbalanced. There was good use, however, of several descriptive adjectives.

Vocabulary seems to be a problem, even with some of the better candidates there was incorrect vocabulary usage. Some problem words were:

- ***veajo** for **viaje**
- ***bebe** for **bebida**
- ***llama** for **nombre**
- ***comido** for **comida**
- ***juego** for **jugo**
- ***sito** for **sitios**
- ***hermana** for **hija**
- ***tiempo** for **vez**
- ***campo** for **pais**
- ***pago** for **pasar**
- ***tu** for 'to'
- ***hueso** for **huevo**

Generally names of places and foods rendered in English accounted for a large part of the essay and sometimes did not leave scope for the language to flow.

Other errors were:

- ***Muy demasiado ...**
- ***Muy lindísima ...**
- ***Alli son ...**
- ***Ustedes son** for **hay**
- ***Las ropas**
- ***Y inteligente**

Use of adjectives – these were placed before nouns where they should not have been. Indefinite article **a** was often rendered in English.

Some candidates were unable to correctly use the Perfect Tense – ***Yo visitabo, nosotros comido. Tener** was used rather than **Haber** in some instances.

Too many candidates did not know the Spanish for *singer*. Their choice of words included ***contenta, canta, cantara, cantaría, canción**.

Candidates were quite creative in the manipulation of the Spanish they knew and produced items such as: ***A autobús con niños ¡cataplan! Con carro con la familia de ... Mexicano es interesante pupil, mucho cine y Mercado y playa; *Encendía esta muy bella mujer quien; *fui vando a Martinique; *Yo, soy porfavor, mi amo, es Candra Villanueva**. In response to the question, there were answers such as: ***Come te amo, hay esta un accidente quien ocurre en Colombia mi amiga esta canta nexto esta busto esta nada – este día en Colombia**.

Some words such as **interesante** were overused. Candidates need to be encouraged to widen their vocabulary and so make their work more interesting.

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

Below are some misused words and phrases seen:

- ***Concierto libre**
- ***Juego de naranja**
- ***Muy mucho**
- ***El país es muy belleza**
- ***La familia sacan me a la playa**
- ***La gente son simpaticos**
- ***Ellos hace bebes y comes**
- ***Comerimos pollo**
- ***Excribro esta letra**
- ***Gracias para**
- ***Arena vs harina**
- ***Y ellos gustan ...**
- ***Frutas gustar naranja**
- ***Ahorra una familia (salvar)**
- ***Está muy multitud** for It was very crowded

Section III

Reading Comprehension

This question was intended to assess the candidates' ability to read and understand a continuous piece of writing in Spanish. Candidates were asked to respond in English to questions in English. This section was marked out of 15.

The passage in this section was found to be quite straightforward and the vocabulary items should have presented little difficulty for candidates at the General Proficiency level. The questions in English should have provided an adequate guide to the vocabulary to assist comprehension. Nevertheless many candidates did not capitalize on this. While English was not being evaluated here, the communication of ideas or responses needed to be more effective. Generally the candidates' performance ranged from fair to good with the best candidates scoring in the 13 - 15 range.

Question 1

This answer referred to the adjectives **mimada** and **egoísta** and the fact that Marisela had a lack of respect for others and expected that others would respect her. Differences in the regional dialects posed some degree of difficulty in the assessment, but responses were accepted if they conveyed the required ideas, for example, answers like *crude* and *out of order* were accepted.

Question 2

This question required reference to Marisela's lack of respect for others as well as her expectation that others respect her. Some candidates used other adjectives that were more relevant to Question 1 and failed to focus on the concept of respect. Most candidates gave only partial answers referring only to Marisela's lack of respect.

Question 3

This answer referred to the adjectives **entristecidos** and **preocupados**. Certain candidates interpreted **preocupados** as preoccupied with other things. The item **discutir** was not fully understood in the context used and few candidates understood that **entristecidos** and **se entristecieron** conveyed sadness.

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

Question 4

This question required *her own monkey* as the answer. Many candidates did not understand the word **propio** in the context. Some interpreted the word as *proper* and *clean*. Answers regarding **mono** ranged from gorillas to apes and some candidates misinterpreted the word for **mano** (hand) and **dinero** (money). Others used general terms such as *animal* or *pet*. In addition some candidates thought Marisela wanted *to see, to buy* or *to visit* a monkey instead of to own one.

Question 5

This question required the concept of a *good lesson*. Many candidates responded with a partially correct answer to *teach her a lesson* – they did not qualify the lesson with the adjective. Others included the adjective *good* or gave an explanation of the lesson that implied the value of the lesson.

Question 6

This question required reference to the delivery of a gorilla to the house. Many candidates either failed to score on this item or only scored partial marks. Quite a number of candidates simply focused on the sentence: **Su papá hizo los arreglos con los guardianes del zoológico**; and ignored other details of the plan. Also they failed to include the idea of scaring Marisela. Many candidates misunderstood the entire plan and some thought Marisela would be placed in a gorilla's cage. Few candidates realized that the gorilla was to be delivered at home.

Question 7

This question required reference to Marisela's fright, the cause of her fright – the gorilla (instead of a monkey) and an opinion accompanied by a justification. Overall the majority of the candidates recognized Marisela's reaction but many did not explain it or justify their opinions.

The following are recommendations for teachers.

1. Teachers need to stress the importance of observing the instructions for this section, that is, responses should be in English.
2. Reading comprehension skills such as extracting relevant details, providing complete answers and the need for precision must be stressed.
3. Vocabulary in the target language should also be taught in the context of reading passages.
4. Teachers should remind candidates about the requirements of interrogatives, for example, *how* and *what*.
5. Teachers need to focus on the structure and language of responses. English grammar and spelling errors are **too** frequent, and improper use of the language can lead to distorted meanings. Students should also be dissuaded from using dialect and slang. English vocabulary is therefore also an area of concern.
6. The last question of this exercise requires candidates to interpret the information in the passage and make their own inferences. This usually carries three marks.

Section IV

Expanded Paragraph

This question, which was marked out of 20, tested the candidates' ability to write a continuous paragraph, using ten cues given in a logical, coherent, creative and accurate manner.

Responses this year were much better than in previous years. There were fewer 'No response' scripts and candidates were more confident about attempting the question.

Some candidates were able to produce paragraphs of an extremely high standard, replete with appropriate idiomatic expressions. In some cases, candidates disregarded the word limit and produced paragraphs over or under the limit. The scripts marked ranged from poor to fair, good and outstanding and it helped to re-emphasize the fact that more practice should be given to the candidates with regard to this section, in order for them to be able to produce paragraphs of an acceptable standard.

Many scripts however, were placed in the 0 – 8 score range indicating very clearly that those candidates' scripts lacked coherence and clarity. Cues were either used ineffectively or inappropriately, punctuated by poor or limited use of idioms, structures and vocabulary. The following comments and examples were indicative of this level of performance by candidates.

Grammar

- i. Inaccurate use of **por** and **para**
For example, ***Alfredo compró un traje por la graduación.**
***Dio los gracias para la ayuda.**
- ii. Omission of the Personal 'a', for example, ***La policía capturó el ladrón.**
***Invitó su amigo.**
- iii. Omission of preposition **en** after the verb **entrar** when the verb is followed by a noun.
For example, ***Entraron la tienda de departamentos.**
Omission of preposition **a** after verbs of motion, for example, ***Fue la graduación.**
***Vinieron mi casa.**
- iv. Failure to use the infinitive after prepositions such as **después de**, **antes de**, **al**
For example, ***Después de comió ...**
***Al entrando ...**
By extension, failure to use the infinitive after a common construction such as **tener que**.
For example, ***Así tuvo que va a la tienda de departamentos.**
- v. Inaccurate use of verb tenses demonstrated most frequently in the Imperfect and Preterite tenses, for example, ***Veía a un ladrón.**
***Mientras habló con su mama.**
- vi. Inaccurate use of adjectival phrases such as **día de graduación** and **traje de graduación** as candidates wrote ***graduación día** and ***graduación traje**.
- vii. By extension some candidates failed to produce accurate expressions of possession. For example, *Alfredo's graduation day* was rendered as ***Alfredo's graduación día**.

Another example that was rendered inaccurately was *Alfredo's mother* – ***Alfredo's mama**. Candidates wrote the apostrophe 's' to denote possession.
- viii. Inaccurate use of **ser** and **estar**, for example, ***estaba un ladrón** and ***era caminando**. Some scripts reflected the inability by candidates to use **fue/fueron** plus the past participle. For example, *the thieves were captured* was rendered as ***los ladrones estaban capturan**.

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

Many candidates failed to produce the Imperfect tense of **estar** plus a past participle to indicate a state resulting from an action.

For example, *the suit was damaged* was written as ***el traje era destrozado**.

Some candidates failed to use the Preterite tense of **ser** plus a past participle to indicate that an action was performed by an agent.

For example, *the suit was destroyed by the dog* was written as ***el traje fue destrozado por el perro**.

The lack of this knowledge resulted in the indiscriminate use of **ser** and **estar**.

- ix. Spelling and accentuation were identified as areas of weakness in most scripts. Inaccurate spelling of words and inaccurate use or omissions of accents were dominant errors in even the more proficient scripts. In many instances, one word contained both types of error. For example, ***graducion**, ***landron**.
- x. Subject-verb agreement
Many candidates used a plural verb with the subject **la policía**, **todo el mundo**
For example, ***la policía capturaron**.

Vocabulary

In many cases, candidates lacked knowledge of words contained in the cues such as **destrozado**, **robo anteayer** and as a result produced inappropriate statements such as:

***Alfredo fue a comprar un traje destrozado**

***La policía capturó al robo**

***Anteayer y Alfredo fueron a comprar ...**

***Alfredo quería comprar un robo para la graduación.**

Traje was inappropriately used as a verb.

For example, ***Traje comida a la graduación**.

Use of Idioms

A few scripts by the more competent candidates contained idioms such as:

En un abrir y cerrar de ojos

En un dos por tres

With respect to the rubrics for the expanded paragraph it should be stated clearly that:

1. Candidates should NOT underline the cues in their scripts. This creates difficulty for the marker when underlining errors to obtain a clear visible assessment. It becomes even more difficult when candidates underline the cues in pencil.
2. Cues can be used in any order.
3. Candidates can change the order of cues so as to facilitate flexibility in the use of grammatical structures.

Sample Script

This script was excellent. It gained full marks of 10.

Viernes, el 17 de junio, 2003

Queridísimos papá y mamá:

Por fin tengo un oportunidad de escribirles. ¡Va sin decir que les extraño mucho! ¡Ojalá que pudieron venir conmigo a Trinidad! Desde el primer día, me sentí a gusto aquí las gente sumamente cordial. Es fácil trabar amistad con todo el mundo.

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

Hasta ahora, visité muchos sitios turísticos incluso el pantano Caroni, el volcán de lado a Devil's Woodyard y la playa Maracas. Trinidad es un país encantador - ¡parece ser un pedacito de Paraíso! Mañana, vamos a visitar la casaca Maracas - ¡no puedo contenerme!

Como saben, soy muy tiquismiquis en cuanto a la comida. Probé muchas comidas locales pero lo que más me gustaron fueron el pollo condimentado con cari. Aquí ¡la comida es para chuparse los dedos! Probé muchos platos condimentados con cari, y algo que se llama "pelais". También tomé una bebida local "sorrel" ¡Qué exótica!

Muchas días ... me di cuenta de que no había traído mi dinero. ¡Qué impedimenta! Pues, necesito salir. Salúdenme a todo el mundo.

Abrazo y besa de

The following script was also very good but was penalised for being too long. This scored 9+.

Por una competencia

Las vacaciones del verano habían llegado ya. Por toda la aldea se oían los rumores de la gran competencia de baloncesto. Mis amigos y yo habíamos salido a practicar mucho las últimas semanas y así se había demostrado en la cancha. Fuimos las ganadoras de la competencia y además de un crucero por el Caribe. Todas nos pusimos muy contentas y enseguida fuimos a casa a empacar porque esa misma tarde partía el bote. Me aseguré de nada me faltara. Mi cepillo dental, almohadas, ropa, y sobre todo, la foto de mis papás. No sabiendo que nos esperaba, me bañé y mis papas le llevaron al muelle donde partiría el bote.

Allí, me encontré con mis amigos, me despedí de mis papás, y me subí felizmente. Cuando entramos al salón principal, vimos a todos los jugadores de los Lakers de Norte América y brincamos de alegría. Ellos jugaron y jugaron aquella noche con nosotras. Hasta que la última gota de energía se consumió de nuestros cuerpos, fuimos a darnos el caliente y a la cama.

Paper 3 – Oral Examination

General Proficiency

Section I

Reading Aloud

A significant number of candidates performed exceptionally well on this section, pronouncing vowels, vowel combinations and consonants correctly. Among other candidates the performance ranged from good to weak. Except for the very weak candidates, in general, it was evident that there was comprehension of the passages based on the phrasing and grouping of words and observation of punctuation and the level of fluency with which candidates read. The main difficulties encountered with pronunciation were in the following areas:

- i. Incorrect stress on words such as: **geográfica, mediodía, Táchira, cultivó, además, region**
- ii. **g** before **i** and **e**
- iii. Vowel diphthongs such as **ciu**, in **ciudad** rendered as **cuídad**, **ae** in **aeropuerto**, **au** in **fauna**
- iv. **i** sound rendered as **e** in some cases
- v. The omission of syllables in long words such as **panamericana** rendered as ***paramérica**
- vi. **Ll** as in **cordillera**
- vii. **cc** in **occidental, sección**, incorrectly pronounced

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

Section II

There was some outstanding candidate performance in this section. The performance of others ranged from good to weak. Many candidates were creative in their use of the vocabulary to answer questions. In the case of weaker candidates their performance was affected by limited vocabulary. Some candidates were content with responding with **sí** or **no** which was not adequate.

Section III

Many candidates readily understood the questions and provided good responses, showing creativity, spontaneity and accuracy. However, there were those candidates who experienced difficulty responding to questions that required them to give their opinions. The topic Daily Routine is a basic one and candidates at this level should have less difficulty responding to these questions than is indicated.

In some cases, responses were appropriate but lacked fluency and at times vocabulary was limited. The main areas that presented challenges were:

Daily Routine

Question 4

Public Facilities

Question 8

1. The question **¿Qué le gusta comprar a tu papá?** was also misinterpreted.
2. **¿Pertenece a un club?** was also challenging.

Points to Watch:

1. Candidates should be trained to provide additional information after stating **sí** or **no**.
2. Vocabulary items like **pertenecer, almacén, equipo, barrio, tipo, sitio, lugar, sellas**, should not be treated as low frequency words.
3. Candidates must be taught an extensive list of idioms and words which fall under the topic.
4. Candidates should be given practice in listening to authentic Spanish to improve their intonation and fluency.

Basic Proficiency

Paper 2 – Free Response

Section I

Directed Situations

The objective of this section of the paper is to test candidates' ability to produce short, written responses to a series of 10 real-life situations. The responses are assessed for appropriateness and correct linguistic expression and are awarded a total of 15 marks. This section parallels Section I of the General Proficiency paper and there are 5 situations in common – Questions 1 - 5 on the General Proficiency and Questions 6 - 10 on the Basic Proficiency.

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

Situation 1

Write the congratulatory note you send to your older sister who has just had a baby.

Many candidates could not express 'congratulations' in Spanish and some of those who knew an appropriate word, spelled it incorrectly. Some candidates wrote: **Enhorabuena** as three separate words. Several candidates used ***con** after **felicitaciones / felicidades**.

Situation 2

Your aunt sends you a very special gift on your birthday. Write the note in which you enthusiastically thank her.

Some candidates missed the aspect of 'enthusiastically' and merely wrote **gracias** instead of **muchas / mil gracias**. Frequently ***para** was used instead of **por** to express thanking someone for something, for example, **Gracias tía *para el regalo**.

Situation 3

You receive an e-mail from your new pen-pal who plans to visit you, requesting information about the weather conditions in your country. Write your brief reply.

The majority of candidates did not use an expression with **hacer**. Some who did, used ***muy** instead of **mucho** to qualify the weather condition, for example, **hace *muy frío**. A very popular incorrect response was: **Es muy caliente**. It was evident that candidates had problems using **llover** correctly.

Situation 4

Your pen-pal from Argentina is coming to visit you but is worried that he/she may not recognise you. Write the e-mail message you send to your pen-pal describing what you will be wearing to the airport.

Almost all candidates understood that the question required a description of clothing but there were several grammatical errors in the responses. Only a few gave physical descriptions of themselves. The verb **llevar** was frequently omitted completely, or **tener** used instead by some candidates. Position and agreement of adjective-noun were the cause of most errors, for example, ***verde pantalones, *rojo zapatos**. Some candidates resorted to English when they were unable to express their ideas in the target language or anglicised the spelling, for example, ***blousa** for **blusa**. Following is an example of a very good response:

Yo llevaré una blusa roja, una mini-falda negra y zapatos negros.

Situation 5

You will not be attending music class. Send a brief note to the music teacher explaining the reason for your absence.

Those candidates who tried to express 'music class' had difficulty and did not use the construction with **'de'**. The question was, in general, well done, but the **ser / estar** problem was evident as some candidates wrote, for example, ***soy enferma** or **mi mamá *es enferma**. Another common error was ***atender/ *atender/*attendir** for **asistir a**.

Situation 6

Write the note which you leave for your parents reminding them of your brother's arrival time at the airport.

Candidates had difficulty using the verb **llegar**, and incorrect forms such as ***es llegando** were seen. Those who did not know **llegar**, used the English verb 'to arrive'. The preposition **'a'** was frequently replaced with the incorrect ***en** after **llegar** so: ***Felipe es llegando en el aeropuerto**. Difficulty in expressing time was also evident in the use of ***en la mañana** instead of **de la mañana**. Instead of **a las tres**, several candidates wrote ***son las tres**, to express the time at which the brother was arriving.

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

Situation 7

A police officer visited your class and gave a talk on road safety. Your teacher has asked you to write an important instruction that he gave you. What does the instruction say?

There was a wide variety of responses for this situation. However, many candidates had difficulty when they tried to use the command form of the verb. Some used the infinitive instead, which was accepted. Some candidates expressed something they thought should not be done in general, but did not link it to a traffic / road situation, for example, ***no fumar, no toma, no beber**.

Situation 8

You are participating in a competition on the Internet and one question is asking you to state what impresses you most about your favourite teacher. Write your response.

Noun-adjective agreement and the position of the descriptive adjective were the most prevalent errors, for example, **Mi profesor es *simpática, mi *favorito profesora**. Spelling also created problems and there were several instances of **ss** and **ll** when there should have been a single consonant, for example, ***profesora** and ***intelligente**. There were some inappropriate responses from candidates who tried to express their ideas literally, for example, ***Ella es siempre mirando bien** (She is always looking good).

Situation 9

You are staying at a guesthouse in Mexico and require clean clothes. Write the note you leave for the housekeeper with a request regarding your laundry.

Here again, expressing a command / request proved challenging for candidates. Some used the infinitive. There was obvious confusion between **lavar** and ***llevar**, some candidates even using ***llevarse**. **Ropa** was often used in the plural form, which was penalised. Some candidates used the adjective ***nueva** instead of **limpia** to express clean clothes. A good response was: **Puedes lavar mi ropa, por favor**.

Situation 10

Your parents want you to help more often with the household chores. Write the note in which you promise to do a particular chore every day.

There was a wide variety of responses to this situation but many candidates failed to include the requirement of every day. ***Llavar** for **lavar** (to wash) was frequently seen. An example of a good answer was: **Yo prometo limpiar mi cuarto cada día**.

It is recommended that candidates avoid writing unnecessarily lengthy responses as there is the risk of making more errors.

Section II

Questionnaire

This section has as its objective to test candidates' comprehension by having them complete a multiple-choice questionnaire in Spanish, after reading information in English based on a practical situation. This section is worth 10 marks.

Most candidates performed well on this section, in particular on questions 1, 3, 7 and 10. Questions 2 and 9 proved most challenging for candidates, possibly because they had to produce numbers. Candidates seemed not to know **pescado** (fish) and selected **pollo** (chicken) instead.

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

Section III

Gapped Passage

This section requires candidates to complete gaps in a passage of continuous prose in Spanish with items which require a knowledge of vocabulary and/or grammar. This section is worth 10 marks.

Item #1

Very few candidates wrote the correct form, **caribeñas**, which had to agree with **islas**. There was a variety of versions both in English and Spanish.

Item #2

Here again many candidates did not address the form of the word required, for example, there was no agreement between subject and verb.

Item #3

Few candidates supplied the correct form **nadan**. Many opted for the infinitive or used a completely different incorrect verb.

Item #4

Students were very creative in producing variations that do not exist, of the verb **ir**, for example, ***iraba**, ***vayaba**, ***irgo**.

Item #5

The majority of candidates used **saber**, which was correct, only few used ***conocer**. However, they had difficulty with the imperfect tense of the verb and wrote several unacceptable variations of different tenses.

Item #6

The majority of candidates had the correct answer but some spelled the word with ‘**rr**’, so they produced the word “dog” instead of “but”. **Sino** appeared occasionally.

Item #7

Most candidates had the correct answer for this item, but some used the masculine form ***mucho** which did not agree with the feminine noun **agua**. Others used ***mucho de** or ***muy de**.

Item #8

There was obviously confusion for the candidates between **desde** and **de**, with several using ***desde**. Some of those who used **de**, detracted from their response by adding the definite article so there were responses such as ***del** / ***de la** / ***de los**.

Item #9

Very few candidates wrote **los** or **nuestros**. The majority used the incorrect part of speech, in particular a subject or object pronoun such as **nosotros** or **nos**.

Item #10

This was well done in general except for spelling errors. Frequently, **g** was written for **j**, so we saw ***narangas** instead of **naranjas**.

Section IV

Reading Comprehension

This section had 2 parts, A and B, based on different advertisements. Candidates performed very well in general on both sections, but there were instances of responses in Spanish rather than in English, contrary to the instructions. There are 10 marks for this section.

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

Section A

Question 1

Instituto was taken to mean Institution instead of Institute. Some candidates reversed the position of the adjective in English, applying the Spanish rule, and wrote ***Institute Modern**.

Question 2

Candidates had problems writing intermediate and provided a variety of answers.

Question 3

This posed no problem for candidates.

Questions 4, 5

Many candidates gave the range of hours / days instead of the number of hours / days required by the questions. For Question 5, ***jueves** was incorrectly interpreted to be *Friday*.

Question 6

Most candidates knew the correct answer, but some put that **Sr. Málaga** could be contacted at his website, rather than at his e-mail address.

Section B

Questions 1, 2

In general these posed no problems for candidates. However, for Question 1, a few candidates thought the apartments were for sale, not rent.

Question 3

Candidates could easily identify the amount of money for rental charges, but some assumed that there was a special offer just for the month of September.

Question 4

The vast majority of candidates answered this question correctly. A small number thought interested persons should visit the office, rather than phone.

Basic Proficiency

Paper 3

Section I

Reading Aloud

There were some outstanding performances, but generally the reading ranged from good to weak. In general, candidates showed a knowledge of the sound system, but there were some errors in pronunciation and stress.

* An asterisk indicates an incorrect item.

i and e sounds were confused in the following words:

	viene
lee	aíre
siesta	apellidos
palmaditas	sierra

The stress was incorrectly placed on words such as **orígenes, físico, símbolo**. Several cognates were anglicised such as **arquitectura, diferentes, mayor profesionales, hispanos, título, prestigio, sociedad**.

Some consonants presented problems for some candidates – **c, h, z, j, ll**

Section II

Responses to Situations

Candidates' performance ranged from being fair to satisfactory with a few exceptionally good ones. For the most part, responses were accurate but there were instances of grammatical inaccuracies.

Section 3

Guided Conversation

Performance in this section varied. There were some cases of candidates who demonstrated fluency, while the majority fell in the fair to weak range.

There was some difficulty with guided comprehension, for example:

Vocabulary for **aeropuerto, deportes, fin de semana, talla, almacén, equipo**.

Pronunciation

Most vowels correctly pronounced

orígenes	problematic
viajado	correctly pronounced

h in **hispanicas** varied and not always silent

Intonation

Anglicised cognates and poor intonation for the following words:

Arquitectura diferetes mayor profesionales hispanos

Some candidates understood questions well and responded readily while others struggled as a result of limited grammar and vocabulary which affected comprehension. Questions which included **¿cuál?** and **¿cuáles?** proved difficult for many candidates. A number of candidates responded only with **sí** or **no** without providing additional information.

Points to Watch:

1. Candidates should be trained to provide additional information after stating **sí** or **no**.
2. Candidates must be taught an extensive list of idioms and words which fall under the topic.
3. Candidates should be given practice in listening to authentic Spanish to improve their intonation and fluency.

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