

CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE
CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION
MAY/JUNE 2007**

SPANISH

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CARIBBEAN ADVANCED PROFICIENCY EXAMINATION

MAY/JUNE 2007

DETAILED COMMENTS

UNIT 1

PAPER 01

Listening Comprehension

This paper required candidates to respond to a series of questions based on five short selections and one extended interview. These questions were set in English and candidates were required to respond in English. The topics were based on the Modules of the syllabus, as well as on candidates' experiences for this age range. Although candidates were able to respond well to some questions in the Listening component of the examination, there are still challenging areas that need urgent attention.

SECTION A

Selection 1

This question addressed the positive value of consuming peanuts.

Candidates performed only moderately well in this selection with the majority of the candidates scoring between four to six marks out of a possible 12 marks allocated.

Part (a) (i) – most of the answers in this section were correct.

Part (a) (ii) – most candidates had difficulty naming the other foods with which peanuts are compared. Instead of mentioning **strawberries, carrots and apples** for instance, quite a few highlighted *oranges, raisins, nuts, fruits and vegetables* as responses.

Part (b) (i) – although many candidates were able to name **antioxidants** as one of the correct enriching ingredients found in peanuts, many gave incorrect vocabulary such as *oxides, oxidants* and even *vitamins* in some instances. Some candidates highlighted saturated fats (instead of **monosaturated**). **Proteins** were also accepted as a reasonable response.

In part (b) (ii), there was often a lack of logical sequence made between some responses. In other instances, **helping to reduce cancer** was almost always given, but no mention was made of **protection of the organism against ailments associated with heart disease** or **the reduction of cholesterol** (based on the answer provided initially in part (b) (i)).

Part (c) – **marks were awarded in this question for responses that did not repeat information from the previous responses at part (b)**. Unfortunately, since some candidates included all of the information in part (b), there were incorrect answers such as: *“peanuts build bones”, “peanuts are good for the brain”,* or that *“they help with muscle development.”*

Selection 2

This extract dealt with the misuse of the Internet by spouses and its effect on marriages.

On the whole this selection was not well done. Generally, candidates simply made up their own responses and also stereotyped answers based on their preexisting knowledge of the problems that Internet abuse may pose.

Many candidates scored between zero and three marks out of a possible 12. There were three cases where candidates did not attempt the question at all. The more able students, however, tended to score between seven and nine marks.

Part (a) – many candidates scored only one mark of a possible two here simply because they stated the Internet as the cause of marital conflict instead of **the misuse of the internet**.

In part (b) some candidates failed to grasp the information heard and so, wrote plausible reasons pertaining to things that can in fact cause spouses to feel abandoned. However, these were NOT mentioned in the extract.

A few examples included: “*the other being too tired to listen*”, “*lack of communication*”, “*constantly works late*”, “*travels a lot*” as opposed to **their spouses spend too much time in front of the computer**.

In part (c), far too many candidates misinterpreted this question as: ‘List four activities in which they do things together as a couple!’ As a result, many incorrect and irrelevant responses were listed.

In part (d), many candidates correctly responded that the problem was growing but were unable to say why. In other instances, answers for parts (d) (i) and (d) (ii) were reversed.

Selection 3

This selection highlighted the plight of the South American bespectacled bear.

Generally, candidates did well in this section. The average score on this question was four marks of a possible six.

In part (a), a few candidates did not seem to hear the alternative name of the bespectacled bear: the **Andean bear**. Others heard “llamado” and translated it to mean *Jamal* – as one of the names! Other erroneous responses included those such as *the “Andino” bear*; *the Panda Bear* or even *The American bear*.

The responses for part (b) were often only satisfactory. Hardly anyone understood the fear about the bear as being **in danger of extinction**. Rather, the word fear was misinterpreted to mean “afraid of.” Students wrote therefore that *people were “afraid of” the bear because it could kill them; it could become easily annoyed*; or that “*the bear was dangerous.*”

Part (c) was managed quite well. **Forest farming, hunting or any other human activities** were considered acceptable answers.

The most common response about the bear's eating habits was that it eats *bamboo* instead of **wild fruits and vegetables**. The fact that it is **90 percent vegetarian** or **10 percent carnivore** were also responses deemed to be correct.

Selection 4

This selection emphasized the importance of The World Environmental Day Conference, which focused on saving the environment instead of destroying it.

Candidates seemed comfortable with this particular environmental question. The average scores out of a possible 10 marks were in the upper band of the five to seven range.

Candidates, who did not specify that **World Environment Day** was the event being celebrated, wrote responses such as: *World Day; Middle East Day; Memorial Day; day of peace; cricket tournament; a conference* to list a few examples.

Part (b) - many heard correctly that **San Francisco** was the venue of the event. However, some heard partial information such as Francisco. Others even heard France!

Part (c) - many candidates lost marks here, due to the fact that their responses were partial. Too many were content to write that the main topic of discussion was **saving the environment**. Little attempt was made to include though that **it should not be destroyed**.

Part (d) – candidates were not familiar with the Spanish word “alcaldes” as many failed to put the translated equivalent of **mayors** in their response here. Several answers also included *world leaders, sports personalities and celebrities* instead of **environmental activists** as part of the delegates who will be attending the event.

Part (e) - in some instances exercise was interpreted as related to a sport, with *cricket* being the most popular answer here instead of **the planting of trees!**

The correct answer for part (e) was often put in the reverse order here. **The cleaning of beaches** was interpreted by some candidates as the activity carried out in the Gaza Strip in part (f).

Selection 5

The last selection in Part A was about noise pollution especially in cities and towns.

Candidates performed well on this selection. Many candidates scored an average of six marks of a maximum of eight.

In part (a) the most common answer given as the problem identified in the selection was excessive noise. Incorrect answers included pollution as a response: *land or air*. Very incorrect answers included: *drinking, intoxication, poverty or crime*.

In part (b), **Spain** was the most common answer as to where the problem was most acute. Although **cities and towns** were the correct answers, some candidates replied “night time” hence confusing the word “where” with “when”.

Part (c) – in terms of how people were affected by this problem, many were specific by stating that it *affected hearing* instead of making a general reference to health. Others made mention too of sleep disorders here instead of talking about the **reduction in the quality of life** or the **negative consequences on health**.

Part (d) - far too many candidates did not include that **fundamental rights** were violated. **Personal and family intimacy**, along with **the sanctity of the home**, was also allowed. Others, in error, made mention of the *violation of noise or acoustic laws*.

Part (e), was accessible for most candidates.

SECTION B

Extended Interview

Selection 6

Interview with Drs. Mariana Martinez on the topic of alcoholism.

The candidates generally performed satisfactorily as the majority of the candidates scored between 5 and 11 of a possible 24 marks. Still, a fair number managed to score in the 12 to 19 marks range. Candidates scoring in the upper bands (20 to 24 marks) in this section continue to be disappointingly low. There was one candidate who gained a perfect score.

However, there was a marked increase of candidates this year who attempted to answer the questions in this section. This was a positive development. Every effort must be made for students to practice listening to extended selections on selected topics in order to improve this skill.

In Part 1 (a), some candidates used their own definition of who an alcoholic is in order to answer the question. Responses included “*a person who drinks a lot*” or “*all the time*” and “*by the amount the person drinks*”. While some candidates mentioned that the person experiences “negative effects”, they were not clear in specifying that **it was NOT the amount that they drank, but rather the fact that they continued drinking** even when these said effects were noticeable. Many candidates lost marks here due to the lack of clarity in expression.

For question (b), almost all candidates answered the question without difficulty.

Question (c) – there was some measure of misinterpretation. In their responses, some candidates stated who a social drinker is rather than indicating why such a person would not be considered a social drinker **if he constantly exceeds limits**.

Question (d) (i), previous knowledge of the topic was evident in many of the candidates’ responses. Many suggested that alcohol kills *brain* cells versus the fact that it was a poison that **affects all cells**.

Part (d) (ii), those who did not correctly mention **mental problems** as the effect of long term drinking wrote answers such as “death”, liver damage or brain and heart defects. Although these may be true, they were NOT discussed in the passage at the time.

Part 2 (e), many candidates answered this question with minimal challenges.

Part (f) (i) was fairly well answered. However, some did not quite express the quote correctly and so, said things such as “I/we will help you get through this”.

For reinforcement some candidates said that they could try to be an example to the person instead of **giving examples of how he/she is ruining his/her life** in part (ii).

Many answered parts (g) to (h) correctly. However, some used their own knowledge to answer some of the questions.

In part (h) (ii), many gave *35 years* instead of since **1935** as the length of time the programme had been in existence.

Teachers will have to continue to stress the importance of the Listening Skill in order for their students to master this area without significant challenges. Practice makes perfect!

PAPER 02

Reading and Writing.

Candidates’ performance on this paper was good. Many candidates showed a good level of skill in the area of comprehension and many showed good control of the language.

SECTION A

Reading Comprehension

In this section of Paper 02, candidates were presented with two passages, both in Spanish and were required to respond to questions based on the material. For Passage 1, candidates were asked to respond to the material in Spanish to questions asked in English and for Passage 2, candidates were asked to respond in Spanish.

Passage 1: *Los amigos ayudan a vivir más*

This was a compulsory question which tested the candidates’ ability to understand a passage in contemporary Spanish based on a topic of interest related to Module 1 of the syllabus. Questions a to f, for this passage, were asked in English and candidates were required to respond in English. Questions g to k required candidates to provide synonyms taken from the passage to the items given.

Overall the passage was well understood with close to 40 percent of candidates scoring in the 20 to 24 range and 80 percent in the 15 to 24 band. Less than 10 percent of candidates scored under 12 out of the possible 24 marks.

The expressions used in the passage were comfortably handled, evidenced by the responses given to the questions. There was almost universal success in the responses for question (a) which required candidates to identify three benefits of having friends. Candidates were able to identify the benefits quite easily and some candidates gave even more than the required “three” benefits.

There were some problems with question (b) which dealt with the findings of scientists regarding elderly people and friends. Many candidates failed to observe the mark allotment for the question and, therefore, did not provide sufficient details. Many candidates failed to make the link between “elderly people and friends” and focused on the relationships between the elderly and their family members. Question (c) was also a bit problematic with candidates failing to “explain the study” as the question required, giving only the findings of the study.

Question (d), relating the conclusion of the scientists ten years later was comfortably handled by most but some candidates had problems with the vocabulary items “*un bajo impacto*” translating this to mean, “a short impact” and “*supervivencia*” meaning “super-living”. There were also problems with the word “*psicológico*” translated as “physical” in some cases and “physiological” in others.

Question (e) asked why friends are so important to the elderly. According to the investigation this proved to be the most problematic question as quite a number of candidates repeated their answer for question (a) in their response to this question. Candidates must be encouraged to keep in mind that questions on a paper would require different information and while the response produced may have some meaning for a particular question, the required responses must be given in the correct context.

Question (f) asked for other factors mentioned in the last paragraph about having friends. This question was well done by most.

The section with the synonyms was well done with most candidates scoring the maximum of 5 marks and the only word that seemed to be problematic for students was the word “*índices*”.

Passage 2: *El clima amenaza a especies*

This was a compulsory question testing the candidates’ ability to understand the passage in the target language and to respond in Spanish to questions asked in Spanish. Overall this paper was a bit more problematic for candidates than was Passage 1. Less than 40 percent of candidates scored in the 15 to 24 range and almost 35 percent scored in the 0 to 12 range or less than 50 percent of the total marks. The most frequently occurring range was the 12 to 19 band with 55 percent of candidates scoring here. The loss of marks in this section resulted from candidates’ not adhering to the question requirements and therefore provided insufficient details for the questions.

There was a far greater attempt this year by candidates to respond to questions in their own words. This effort should be continued, however, it should be noted that in the effort to answer in their own words, many candidates had great difficulty producing correct language. There were many instances of poor grammar and use of many anglicisms. It should also be noted that grammar is not the focus for this section of the Reading and Writing paper. However, candidates will be penalized if comprehension is impeded because of poor grammar or vocabulary. There were a small number of candidates who answered the questions in English, rather than the stipulated Spanish. Candidates are asked to pay very special attention to the instructions that are given.

While the attempts to answer in one's own words were indeed laudable, there were some instances where responses were taken directly from the passage. Candidates are reminded that failure to observe the instruction of answering in one's own words is heavily penalized.

Question (a) asked for the results of the scientific study and was well answered with the majority of candidates giving sufficient details.

Question (b) asked who would be affected by climate change and several candidates spoke about "plants" and "animals" but failed to mention "humans". Many candidates who did mention humans, failed to identify that it would be those who are "dependent on nature for their survival". As a result, these candidates were not awarded full marks for this question. Candidates should be reminded that they need to be very specific in answering questions.

Questions (c) and (e) were well answered.

For question (e) (i), again many candidates did not describe the details of the study and only gave conclusions. There were some instances of candidates using prior knowledge to respond to this question rather than detailing what the passage contained.

Question (e) (ii) was an open question where candidates were asked to suggest ways of saving the planet. The phrase "*además de lo mencionado en el pasaje...*" was not understood by a great number of candidates and the responses given were taken directly from the passage. Responses to this question were repeats of what candidates responded for question (d). Candidates are reminded to analyze each question carefully before answering. The candidates who did understand what was required by the question gave quite a good range of responses to the problem and there were even some excellent attempts at detailing the actions that can be taken in the efforts to save the planet.

SECTION B

Essay

In this section candidates were required to write an essay in Spanish of 250 to 300 words on *one* of five topics. This section tested the candidates' ability to express themselves in Spanish in an analytical and logical manner related to the theme "**La Sociedad y Los Asuntos Sociales**" as outlined in Module 2 of the syllabus.

Examiners were looking for essays with the following:

- An introduction outlining the position taken by the candidate on the topic chosen;
- Three to five paragraphs focusing on the various angles of the topic;
- A brief conclusion summarizing the main points of the views expressed.

The candidates' performance was judged by the way in which they were able to show organization and coverage of the topic; relevance and inclusion of facts, ideas and opinions. Correctness of expression was measured by how well the candidates were able to use a wide range of vocabulary and idioms as well as the accuracy of grammatical structures.

The most frequently attempted question was **Question 3 "El comportamiento negativo de los jóvenes es causa directa de los programas que miran en la televisión. ¿Estás de acuerdo?"** Many of the essays were well written as this topic seemed to be one that was

thoroughly researched. The points were relevant, ideas and opinions interesting and well argued. Although the grammar presented a challenge for some candidates, this did not affect the meaning. The majority of the scores were within the 'Very Good' category.

Question 4. “Son los políticos los que fomentan los problemas raciales en la sociedad. Comenta”. This was not a very popular choice and those who attempted this question seemed to have difficulty in expressing the few points they presented.

Question 5. “Los deportes violentos han contribuido al aumento de la violencia en la sociedad. ¿Qué opinas?” The candidates who chose this topic did not make the distinction with respect to what sports were considered violent. As a result the essays degenerated into simple expressions of sports being good for people to be involved in so as to reduce violence in society.

Question 6. “Dado que a mujeres trabajan fuera de la casa, los maridos deberían compartir igualmente los quehaceres. ¿Estás de acuerdo?” The candidates who chose this topic performed very well with the points being relevant and well expressed. However, some essays only explored the idea of equality between men and women.

Question 7 “Una sociedad sin religión no puede tener éxito. ¿Qué opinas?” Some candidates made a brave attempt to deal with the requirements of this topic. Generally the responses were mainly a description of religion and its ills.

The overall performance of candidates in this section ranged from satisfactory to excellent with approximately 25 percent performing at a satisfactory level. Although there was some degree of misinterpretation, the candidates' inability to analyze in depth was more evident. This resulted in some essays being very short of the word limit set. Some essays were very long and as a result there was a repetition of the same points made earlier in the essay. Handwriting styles also made some scripts difficult to read and decipher in terms of the spelling of some words.

The inability to master basic grammar structures was a feature that is cause for great concern. The same errors were repeated from centre to centre and many scripts were filled with invented words. Some of the errors are noted below and should be addressed.

- Spelling and accent errors
- Incorrect placement of object pronouns
- Mirar a / buscar por
- Incorrect position of negatives e.g. Es no
- Acuerdo/ me acuerdo for estoy de acuerdo
- Subject / verb agreement
- Incorrect use of ser / estar
- Incorrect formation of the Past Participle
- Use of por qué / porque
- Use of que / cual / quien / lo que
- Confused use of mal / malo; solo / sólo
- No use of gerund after seguir, continuar
- Inappropriate use of vocabulary and creation of words.

The following are some of the expressions found in some of the essays:

- *Poner serán las personas

- *En el salvaje de muchas vidas
- *Los jóvenes no sèn de los peligros
- *Son preparando por viven, tienen no tiempo por t.v.
- *Hay no otra choisi pero un hombre
- *Son no totalmente aptitud

Every effort should be made to encourage students to read widely and to master the grammatical structures many of which are taught in the first year of instruction. At this level, students must also be guided on how to approach and manage different types of essays.

PAPER 03

SECTION A

Literary Analysis and Themes

This section required candidates to answer one question based on a literary extract taken from four passages based on texts studied - Felices días Tío Sergio, 17 narradoras latinoamericanas, Crónica de una muerte anunciada and La familia de Pascual Duarte. Candidates were required to read a literary extract and comment on character, plot, setting and simple literary techniques. This question was marked out of 16.

Popularity of questions

The most popular choice among candidates was question 1 (38 percent) which was closely followed by question 3 (31 percent). Only 17 percent of candidates opted to answer question 2 and the least popular question, number 4 was chosen by 14 percent of the candidates who wrote the exam.

Passage 1: *Mi habitación nueva (17 Narradoras Latinoamericanas)*

Marks awarded for this question were 13 percent scored between 13 to 16 marks; 39 percent scored between 9 to 12 marks; 32 percent scored between 5 to 8 marks and 16 percent scored between 0 to 4 marks.

1. Identifica y comenta el punto de vista narrativo empleado en el episodio.

Many candidates were unable to identify that it was the main character narrating in this extract. Performance in this question was poor although the text was popular. Many candidates were unaware of the meaning of narrative point of view. Spanish grammar used to answer the question was quite poor.

2. Describe con ejemplos, DOS de las emociones que experimenta la protagonista

This part was well done by most candidates who opted for this question. Students easily identified emotions and supported their views with examples from the extract.

3. ¿Cómo se caracteriza el papá de la protagonista?

Most candidates saw the Father as a dreamer or simply a bad man who misleads his daughter. Justifications used to support these views were generally apt. This part was well done.

* Indicates an incorrect grammatical form

4. *¿Qué revela la composición que piensa escribir la muchacha?*

Although most candidates responded appropriately to this part of the question, many did not score full marks because their focus was solely on the present circumstances of the family rather than the narrator's hopes for their new life. Some candidates simply retold the story in their attempt to answer the questions, thereby failing to focus on the specific section of the story that shows the protagonist writing a composition.

Passage 2: *La confesión (Felices Días Tío Sergio)*

Marks awarded for this question were as follows, seven percent scored between 13 to 16 marks; 24 percent scored between 9 to 12 marks; 35 percent scored between 5 to 8 marks and 38 percent scored between 0 to 4 marks.

1. *Describe la trama del episodio.*

Some candidates who opted to answer this question did not respond accurately to this part because they did not explain the plot of the extract. They included rather, many references to the rest of the text which were quite irrelevant.

2. *Explica el significado de estas palabras de Andrés: "yo soy hombre..."*

Even though candidates noted the differences between the sexes, responses did not reflect references to both sexes. Responses were too general and not well supported.

3. *¿Cómo se siente la narradora al fin del episodio? Da un ejemplo.*

Very few candidates identified the depression felt by the narrator.

4. *Identifica y explica el tema del episodio.*

Generally this part was well done. A few candidates did not mention a specific theme but went on to give examples from the extract.

Passage 3: *Ángela y Bayardo (Crónica de una muerte anunciada)*

Among those candidates who chose this question, one percent scored between 13 to 16 marks; 13 percent scored between 9 to 12 marks; 29 percent scored between 5 to 8 marks and 57 percent scored between 0 to 4 marks.

1. *Identifica y comenta el punto de vista narrativo de este episodio.*

Few candidates were able to identify the third person narration. Many candidates were unable to identify the third person narrator who was not an omniscient narrator.

2. *¿Qué se aprende de Ángela de lo que dice ella en el primer párrafo? Justifica tu respuesta.*

Though some candidates responded that Ángela was honest because she refused to deceive her husband, other candidates wrote that Ángela tricked Bayardo, which was untrue. Few candidates wrote that she was not a virgin, but these responses were poorly supported.

3. *¿Qué comunica las siguientes palabras... "estaba resuelta a morir"?*

Some candidates wrote that this quote referred to the fact that Santiago was going to be killed. Other candidates who earned partial marks did not mention Ángela's attitude of resignation to her situation.

4. *Da ejemplos de como siente Angela hacia Bayardo San Roman.*

Most candidates were able to identify that Angela fell in love with Bayardo but many didn't distinguish between her feelings at the beginning of the relationship and at the point of her return to her mother's home. Many candidates indicated that she felt pity towards Bayardo and supported their response with quotations from the text.

Passage 4: Reflexiones de un criminal (La Familia de Pascual Duarte)

Among those candidates who chose this question, 9 percent scored between 9 to 12 marks; 35 percent scored between 5 to 8 marks and 56 percent scored between 0 to 4 marks.

1. *Relata la trama del episodio.*

Instead of relating the plot of the extract, many candidates gave general information on the plot of the book. Many candidates did not grasp that, in Pascual's view, if he had spent more that the allotted three years in prison he would have come out a better person.

2. *¿Qué relación tienen las siguientes palabras, "Esa fatalidad, esa mala estrella..." al tema del relato?*

Most candidates were able to identify the role of destiny in Pascual's life. Some candidates explained the quote without identifying the specific theme.

3. *Explica los sentimientos que provocan en el lector, estas palabras "y yo – este pobre yo, este desgraciado derrotado que tan poca compasión en usted y en la sociedad es capaz de provocar".*

Most candidates were able to identify that the reader felt pity towards Pascual. This part of the question was well done with many candidates scoring full marks.

4. *¿Qué indican las palabras en la última línea del relato?*

Most candidates did not give a very clear explanation of the meaning of the last sentence. Many related it to destiny but did not mention Pascual's return to his bad ways.

SECTION B

Themes

Candidates were required to answer questions on two Themes; "La Juventud", for which the prescribed texts were "*Felices días, tío Sergio*", and three short stories from the collection "*17 Narradoras Latinoamericanas*"; as well as the theme of "El Individuo y la Sociedad", with prescribed texts "*Crónica de una muerte anunciada*" and "*La familia de Pascual Duarte*".

Candidates' performance on this section of the exam was generally satisfactory. Five percent of candidates scored between 24 to 32, or *75 percent* or more; 41.5 percent scored between 16 to 23, or *50 to 74 percent*; 48.5 percent scored between 8 to 15, or *25 percent to 49 percent*; and 5 percent scored between 0 to 7, or less than *25 percent*.

Overall candidate performance was considered satisfactory, although there seemed to be a number of candidates entered this year who were very weak and lacked interest in Spanish.

Question 5 was chosen by *15 percent* of students; question 6 was chosen by nine percent; question 7 was chosen by *61 percent* and question 8 was chosen by *15 percent*.

Examiners were looking for well-structured, balanced essays, generally consisting of a brief introduction, in which some comment might have been made about the geographical, historical, social or cultural context in which the novel was either written or set, followed by four to six brief points or paragraphs supported by either short quotations from the novel or references to particular scenes or incidents, and then brought to closure by a brief conclusion, which was not simply a repetition of the introduction. The best essays tended to follow this pattern with candidates well acquainted with the content, characters and events of the novel, focusing on the main points of the question or referring back to the question periodically, and showing not merely knowledge and comprehension, but the ability to apply same to the question through careful analysis, synthesis and their own evaluation or interpretation as it related to the question.

The best essays also followed the rubric of the question in terms of word limit, (as opposed to some extremely long essays which could not be read beyond about 10 percent of the stated word limit in the rubric, (450 words)), the language in which the answer was to be written,(English), and the use of quotations.

Questions 5 and 6 were chosen by 24 percent of students and the quality of answers was varied greatly. While some good answers were received most fell into the below 50 percent category. For Question 5, “Youth is a carefree period”, most candidates simply agreed outright with the proposition in the question, leaving out the utter dependence of the young on adults, some of whom are not really sensible and responsible themselves, the turmoil and confusion of adolescence, the search for self, for identity, the pressures of societal and familial expectations.

In their answers to questions 6, “Adults do not understand the concerns of the young”, some students strayed from the point by writing about what young people *were concerned with* instead of sticking to the question and commenting on whether adults *understand* the *concerns* of youths. Candidates had difficulty focusing on the question and on what was required.

The most popular question by far was question 7, “Man is a product of the society in which he lives. Do you agree?”

Most of the essays written on this topic fell into the good to very good category, so students appeared to have been well prepared for this topic. The book that would have seemed most appropriate for this question would have been *‘La familia de Pascual Duarte’*, with candidates commenting on Pascual’s family, community, the difference in Pascual when he is in a town or city or even prison. The word *product* can be used positively or negatively, but when candidates started to use the word *victim* they moved into the negative aspects of Pascual’s socialization, or lack thereof. Better candidates also made the point that while the effects of one’s upbringing and society can be very powerful, the outcome is not always carved in stone, that people have choices, (few in Pascual’s case), and that even some people with the worst possible start in life are still able to progress and improve their lot and themselves.

Some candidates made a fair attempt using *‘Crónica’*, in answering this question when concentrating on what the question was asking and not answering a question which they had prepared, and for which *‘Crónica’* might have been more appropriate.

Examiners thought that ‘*Cronica*’ would have been more appropriate for question 8, “Whatever a man sows he will reap”. ‘Discuss the validity of this statement in the context of the works you have studied’.

We cannot overstate the importance of candidates thinking carefully before they commit themselves to a particular question and start writing. In some cases, for example, the questions on the theme of ‘*La juventud*’, either text would have provided material for a good answer to either Questions 5 or 6, but this was not the case with questions 7 and 8.

‘*Cronica*’ describes a situation, in which there is a great variety of ‘sowing’ and ‘reaping’, with some characters getting what they deserve and others not. Even minor players cannot escape, for example, Page 98 Longman Edition ...*Hortensia Baute...cayó en una crisis de penitencia, y un día no pudo soprtarla más y se echó desnuda a la calle. Flora Miguel... se fugó por despecho con un teniente de fronteras que la prostituyó entre los caucheros de Vichada. Aura Villeros...sufrió un espasmo de la vejiga...Don Rogelio de la Flor... que era un prodigio de vitalidad a los 86 años, se levantó por última vez para ver como desguazaban a Santiago Nasar contra la puerta cerrada de su propia casa...* and these are minor characters who have hardly been mentioned previously. If it was not so tragic, it would be comical.

It is to be noted that candidates must use the relevant texts to answer their questions. There were cases where candidates of unit one used a text from unit two and vice versa. Most times the text was not relevant and candidates tried to force them into the theme. Candidates are warned that they will be penalized severely for not using the correct text. There were a few instances where candidates used texts that were no longer on the syllabus. Teachers are advised to be aware of requirements in the syllabus.

In the case of ‘*17 narradoras hispanoamericanas*’, teachers are advised that all three stories must be studied and not just one. When answering a question on this text reference must be made to the three stories.

UNIT 02

PAPER 01

Listening Comprehension

This paper required candidates to respond to a series of questions based on five short selections and one extended interview. These questions were set in English and candidates were required to respond in English. The topics were based on the Modules of the syllabus, as well as on candidates’ experiences in this age range. Although candidates were able to respond well to some questions in the Listening component of the examination, there are still challenging areas that need urgent attention.

SECTION A

Short selections

Selection 1

This extract dealt with the International Poetry Festival scheduled to take place in Bogotá Colombia.

The question was very well done with the majority of the candidates scoring on the higher end of the scale ranging from eight marks to the maximum of 12.

Part (a) - several candidates only gave partial responses. “*Policy*” was used instead of poetry or poem. Candidates giving “fuller” responses went on to incorrectly speak of a *police award ceremony* or *a meeting or conference to discuss policies affecting South America* instead of the correct response **International Poetry** or **Poem Festival**.

In part (b) many candidates indicated *Chile* as the venue and not **Bogotá, Colombia** as mentioned in the extract.

Parts (c) to (d) answers were sometimes interchanged.

Part (e) was answered well by candidates.

Part (f) - many were able to give at least two of the names mentioned (**Harold Alvarado Tenorio**) or at least they attempted to do so. Those who gave no name, generalized with items such as ‘an author’ or ‘a Colombian’.

Part (g) - many accurate responses were given, pertaining to two details about the person mentioned. However, a few candidates guessed information such as: ‘*smart*’, ‘*must be a good poet.*’

Selection 2

This passage emphasized the promotion of South American integration.

This selection was somewhat more challenging. The average score fell in the four to six range of a possible 12 marks.

There were a few good scores of candidates scoring in the seven to nine mark range.

Part (a) was generally well answered, correctly relating the Presidents arriving from Brazil and Peru.

In part (b) many candidates gave the incorrect country for the meeting place. Candidates made mention of locations such as: *South America, Canada and the Dominican Republic* instead of Peru.

For parts (c) to (d) responses were interchanged and information intertwined. Candidates tended to confuse their answers. In some instances, candidates made references to South

America and not to the two countries mentioned in the passage. Confusion was also noted between the terms 'developed', 'developing' and 'development' when answering part (d).

In part (e) 'Poverty' was almost always given in the candidates' response, as well as 'hunger'. Most, however, omitted 'misery.'

In part (f) many responded that the Brazilian president wanted South America to be known as great *or famous* instead of as a developed region as indicated in the extract.

Selection 3

This selection was about home businesses.

It was not well done. The general score in this area was two to four of a possible eight marks.

In part (a) some responses were not specific. For instance, some mentioned that it can *help economically, socially, personally*. Some said it could help you *learn English, use the internet, help with your housework*.

Part (b) - answers here were generally accurate as the simple figure of 25 years was the only response required to express how long this company had been in existence.

Part (c) - many candidates omitted the idea of wealth. Some stated that you could *go to the website and see the testimonies of some of the people*. Some stated too that it was *100 people* who benefited versus hundreds of persons.

In part (d) many were able to supply the answer here while some said *follow your dreams, do not give up, buy the system*.

Selection 4

The passage mentioned the future of natural gas reserves in Bolivia.

Once again, this question was unsatisfactorily answered. Many candidates scored only half of the marks to be awarded or less, in most instances. Overall, candidates seemed to have misunderstood this passage.

Very few candidates gained perfect scores of eight marks.

In part (a) candidates gave a partial response which included the future of natural gas. Not many though were able to give the complete response of the future of natural gas. Remote responses even included *the future of indigenous people*.

In part (b) *exploitation of gas reserves* was a popular response. Many did not mention that the reason for the furious reaction of the indigenous groups was due to the plan to export natural gas.

In part (c) some candidates gave more information than was needed for two results of protest by indigenous groups. For instance, *deaths which happened the previous year in the month of October; renouncement or denouncement of the President* while others stated *the death of the president*.

The complete answer was rarely given in part (d). When an answer was provided it was invariably incomplete. Many misinterpreted the question and spoke of *unfair treatment of the indigenous people, their marginalisation and / or the government taking away their land*.

Selection 5

This item addressed the United States continuing to face the fact that many Argentines were remaining illegally there.

A moderate performance overall. Candidates on average scored five marks of a possible eight.

In part (a), instead of mentioning that Argentines will now have to get a visa to visit the USA, many gave *extension of visa, illegal migration and taxes* as responses to the measure the USA was taking with respect to Argentines.

Part (b) - answers here were confused with the answers to be provided at part (c). Many responses were not specific regarding who was staying illegally.

In part (c) many responses were correct but did not include that the crisis was in Argentina. Many, for instance, thought that the crisis was actually in the USA.

In part (d) most candidates responded accurately here. Those who did not gave responses that indicated either that the *Argentines will be punished* or that *the authorities will arrest any illegal immigrants captured*.

SECTION B

Extended Interview

Part A - Selection 6

Interview with Father Juan Perez, a catholic priest, on the topic of cloning.

A disappointing performance generally. On the whole, candidates scored in the bottom range of the scale from seven marks or lower of a possible 24. There were a few cases of no responses.

There were instances of some very good candidates nonetheless who scored 15 marks or more but this was the exception rather than the norm this year.

Part 1

Question (a), most candidates scored well on this question. However, some tended to be incomplete in their response. For instance, many said that that *a bill was passed* and that *they included both types of cloning*.

In question (b) most candidates correctly responded that there is no difference in morality between the two types of cloning.

Far too many candidates did not explain in detail Father Perez's comments in question (c). Several candidates satisfied themselves for instance by stating that *therapeutic cloning destroys cells*.

In question (d), generally, candidates were unable to make the link that scientists believe that an embryo is not a human life but a set of cells.

Part 2

Question (e) was fairly well answered. Quite a few candidates were able to express satisfactorily that there was no difference between an embryo and a child, only in the level of development.

Question (f), many candidates only produced half a response here or no response at all.

In question (g), many candidates did not answer this question either. Answers such as using cells from adult tissue, umbilical cord or placenta were expected.

In question (h) (i), many candidates used their personal experience and said that therapeutic cloning was immoral as opposed to the fact that this, along with reproductive cloning was all a linguistic trap into which many were falling.

In question (h) (ii), many stated that it was immoral, or that there was no moral difference between the two types of cloning.

Greater care, attention and revision of relevant vocabulary must be emphasized at all times.

More practice with the extended interviews is also needed since this is a very important skill. Too many 'no responses' were noted, causing candidates to lose a significant number of marks.

PAPER 02

Reading and Writing

SECTION A - Reading Comprehension

In the reading and writing section of Paper 02, candidates are presented with two passages, both in Spanish and are required to respond to questions based on the material. For Passage 1, candidates are asked to respond to the material in Spanish to questions asked in English and for Passage 2, candidates were asked to respond in Spanish

Passage 1: *La necesidad de reformas sociales en Centroamérica*

This was a compulsory question testing the candidates' ability to understand a passage in Spanish on a topic of interest taken from Module 2 of the syllabus. Questions and answers were in English. The responses to the questions for this passage proved that there was a fair level of comprehension of the material. Over 70 percent of candidates scored in the 15 to 24 range with almost 30 percent scoring in the 20 to 24 range. Only 15 percent of candidates scored less than 12 out of the possible 24. The loss of marks was as a direct result of lapses in vocabulary.

Question (a) asked for the author's view on issues like terrorism and Human Rights and the reason for this. There were some problems with this question as many candidates did not know the vocabulary terms "*Un secuestro*", "*...una célula identificada...*" and "*los grupos subversivos*". Some candidates got around answering the question by stating that the writer was an "*object of a crime*" but went on to explain that he was targeted via "*a cell phone*" and that the people responsible belonged to a "*submissive*" group. Candidates need to be reminded that an extensive knowledge of vocabulary is needed for the Reading and Writing paper.

The other questions were fairly well-answered by the majority of candidates. There were some signs of a lack of comprehension of certain vocabulary items when candidates attempted to reuse some of the Spanish terms in their answers. For example, when asked "*which groups are accused of violating the Human rights of the masses*" (question (c) some candidates answered "*...and the respective oligarquias...*" and "*...the oligarquía who live in a plenitude of privileges*".

Candidates performed well in the section with the synonyms. There were a couple of instances where candidates took entire phrases and in some cases, an entire sentence as a synonym for the phrases provided. Candidates are requested to limit their responses to the phrases provided. Candidates are also asked to pay attention to the tense of the words that are given. There was a problem with the first synonym item: *para mí tiene una gran importancia...* Many candidates gave the synonym as *me afectó mucho*, when the response that was required was *me afecta mucho*.

Passage 2: *Intentan reactivar el turismo en el turismo en el sudeste asiático*

This was a compulsory question testing the candidates' ability to understand the passage in the target language based on the content of Module 3, and to respond in Spanish to questions asked in Spanish. Overall, the candidates performed fairly well in this section of the paper, with just under 50 percent of candidates scoring in the 15 to 19 range. There were not too many scores (under 10 percent of the total number of candidates) falling into the top range, that is, the 20 to 24 band. Only 20 percent of candidates scored under 12 marks out of a possible 24.

Both parts of question (a), asked about the great challenge faced by places affected by the tsunami and the reason why the situation is so critical for them. This question was very well answered with the majority of candidates correctly identifying the situation outlined. This was also the same for question (b), the repercussions in these areas. There were problems with question (c) part (i) about the situation in India. Many candidates spoke about India being negatively affected by the tsunami, clearly using their previous knowledge of the topic rather than using the information from the passage. It was clear too, that many candidates did not understand the term "*divisas extranjeras*".

Question (e) (i), asked how places like Hong Kong and Singapore have been affected, was very poorly handled by the majority of candidates. Very few candidates knew the term "*escalas*". The responses that were seen showed a clear misinterpretation of the paragraph. The responses produced for this question were, in many instances, direct quotations from the passage with no attempt to answer in one's own words. These answers could not be awarded any marks because they did not outline the problems that these countries are facing after the tsunami.

Question (e) (ii), requiring a personal contribution from candidates about possible effects of a natural disaster in their country, was answered very well by many candidates. Many candidates spoke about how their countries have already been affected by natural disasters and outlined the social and economic impacts that these have had in their respective countries.

In Unit 1, Passage 2, there was a greater effort this year for candidates to answer in their own words for this section of the paper. They used a fair range of vocabulary in their answers. It must be pointed out, however, that there were problems with grammar and vocabulary, in some of these responses. While in this section of Paper 02, grammar and vocabulary are not the main focus in allocating marks, responses that are unclear will be penalized. All candidates need to be reminded of the importance of answering in their own words and to ensure that they use the appropriate language in their responses.

SECTION B - Essay

In this section candidates were required to write an essay in Spanish of 250 to 300 words on *one* of five topics. This section tested candidates' ability to express themselves in Spanish in a balanced, coherent and analytical manner on a topic related to the theme of Module 2 – “**La Industria, el Comercio y Los Asuntos Económicos**” as outlined in the syllabus. As for Unit 1, examiners were looking for essays which focused on the topic with the expectation that there would be a more mature and concise approach in the way the issues were presented.

Candidates' performance was again judged by the **relevance** of the **content** to the specific topic, the **organization** and **coverage** of the facts, **ideas and opinions** including a **range of vocabulary and idioms** used, as well as **accuracy** of **grammatical structures** used.

This section of the paper presented quite a challenge for the candidates as many of the candidates displayed a lack of preparedness to cope with the topics. There was a general lack of mastery of basic grammatical structures and the use of relevant vocabulary. Although there were marked inaccuracies in the use of some vocabulary and grammar structures, the meaning was not usually affected. There were several very good essays but the candidates who performed at the lower end of the range did so because of misinterpretation or misunderstanding of the question. The candidates also encountered difficulty in making linkages and developing their ideas.

Question 3 “La edad informática ha fomentado lo flojera intelectual. ¿Cuál es tu opinión?” This was the least popular choice. Many candidates who attempted to write on this topic interpreted “**flojera intelectual**” as intellectual development and proceeded to write about the technological age and its development. “Flojera” was interpreted to mean strengthening. The word was even changed to “flujo” and the entire essay addressed globalization and its link to the information age. The majority of marks for this question fell in the 8 to 11 range.

Question 4 “La decisión de terminar la vida de los pacientes terminales es una decisión caritativa. Se pone fin a su sufrimiento. Estás de acuerdo?” Candidates who attempted this question argued and developed their points well, covering both the religious aspect as well as the human consideration needed for coverage. This was one of the few topics where candidates clearly took a stand and developed their essay accordingly and expressed their ideas in a coherent manner.

Question 5 “Los avances tecnológicos en el campo de la producción de alimentos hace inválido el término ‘comida saludable’. ¿Qué opinas?” This question was also a challenge for even those who seemed to know the topic. They were unable to structure their responses well and concluded by contradicting themselves.

Question 6 “A pesar de los avances tecnológicos, nunca eliminarán las enfermedades.” ¿Qué opinas?” This question was the second most popular choice. Many candidates displayed a wide knowledge of the topic but there were many inaccuracies in expression and grammar. The marks gained covered the full range from Poor to Excellent. Quite a few candidates wrote most of the essay detailing the advances in technology but failed to link it with the elimination of diseases or give reasons why they may not be eliminated despite technological advances.

Question 7 “Dado los riesgos asociados con el uso de teléfonos celulares, se debería prohibir su uso. ¿Estás de acuerdo?” This was the most popular question attempted. There were some essays where the ideas were clear and the points relevant. However, the majority of candidates misinterpreted the question and wrote on the advantages or disadvantages and uses of the cell phone. Many did not explore the risks associated with the use of cell phones nor did they indicate whether or not they supported a ban on its use. A few candidates made one point in an essay of 250 words and as a result the scores for the majority of the candidates ranged between 8 to 11 marks in the Satisfactory to Good category.

The most problematic aspects of the performance of the candidates in this section were the inaccuracies displayed in the manipulation of the basic language structures and the literal translation of ideas and expressions. The following are a few examples:

- *El teléfono puede sender y recibir no es unica texto pero pictura
- *Podemos video nuestro actividades diario y miran le
- *Hay no la cura
- *No expensivos
- *Podemos hablamos
- *Aceso a telaraña mundial
- *Para cada dia uso
- *Desportes
- *No acuerdo / no puedo ser de acuerdo
- *Enfermedades como el cancero
- *Para preventen la transmición de pornografía
- *Un vida es fin
- *Conduciendo
- *Maturan más rápido
- *Es derecho
- *Es un facto
- *La gente puede consumir cáncer
- *Un gas llamado radiation
- *Puede estar usó

Common grammatical errors were:

- Misuse of the past participle / incorrect formation e.g. descubrido
- Personal a
- Use of the definite article - la problema / tema / programa
- Por / para
- Relative pronouns
- Use of este and esta for abstract ideas
- Si and the subjunctive
- The use of the subjunctive generally
- Future of poder, salir, prevenir
- Subject / verb agreement
- Adjective / noun agreement
- Position of adjectives
- Realizar to express realize

The performance of the candidates of Unit 2 needs to be improved with respect to accuracy of expression and use of relevant vocabulary.

PAPER 03

Literary Analysis and Themes

SECTION A - Literary Analysis

This section required candidates to answer one question out of a possible four. Passages were taken from the texts: La lluvia amarilla, El llano en llamas, El coronel no tiene quien le escriba and, Chombo. Candidates were required to read a literary extract and comment on character, plot, setting and simple literary techniques.

Popularity of questions

The most popular choice among candidates was question 2 (63 percent) which was followed by question 4 (25 percent). Only nine percent of candidates opted to answer question 3 and the least popular question, Passage 1 was chosen by three percent of the candidates who wrote the exam.

Passage 1: *La situación panameña (Chombo)*

Among those candidates who chose this question, 4.6 percent scored between 13 to 16 marks; 10 percent scored between 9 to 12 marks; 59 percent scored between 5 to 8 marks and 26 percent scored between 0 to 4 marks.

1. Relata la trama del episodio.

Few candidates were able to narrow their explanation of the plot to the episode presented.

2. ¿Cuáles son dos adjetivos que se puede usar para describir a Litó? Justifica tu respuesta.

Generally this question was well answered with good justification.

* Indicates an incorrect grammatical structure

3. (i) *¿Para qué sirve el relato del incidente en el aeropuerto?*

Some candidates were unable to identify the value of the conversation at the airport. They had the tendency to write in general terms about social issues in the novel as a whole.

(ii) *¿Cómo está relacionado el incidente en el aeropuerto al tema general de la novela?*

Candidates identified poverty and social stratification and not racial discrimination as the theme in the novel.

4. *¿Qué vínculo hay entre el relato del incidente en el aeropuerto y el en la biblioteca de la Universidad?*

Most candidates misinterpreted this question. They did not make a link between the occurrences in the library and the airport. Analysis of the episode was lacking.

Passage 2: *Conversación con el médico (El coronel no tiene quien le escriba)*

Fourteen percent of the candidates who chose this question, scored between 13 to 16 marks; 42 percent scored between 9 to 12 marks; 33 percent scored between 5 to 8 marks and 10.2 percent scored between 0 to 4 marks.

1. *Relata la trama del episodio.*

Candidates encountered problems describing the plot. Many candidates narrated instead of highlighting the salient points of the excerpt. Some points that were not present in the extract under consideration were also included.

2. *Explica cómo la venta del gallo está relacionado al tema general de la novela.*

A variety of themes were highlighted but many candidates were unable to adequately link the sale of the rooster to a specific theme.

3. *Según el médico, ¿cómo es Don Sabas? Da ejemplos.*

Candidates were generally able to give apt descriptions of Don Sabas but encountered difficulties in justifying their responses.

4. *Explica el significado de estas palabras, “ese animal se alimenta de carne humana”.*

This was generally well handled with most candidates scoring full marks. A few candidates misinterpreted the questions and referred to Don Sabas as the animal instead of the rooster.

Passage 3: *La respiración misteriosa (La lluvia amarilla)*

Among those candidates who chose this question, 9 percent scored between 13 to 16 marks; 24 percent scored between 9 to 12 marks; 45 percent scored between 5 to 8 marks and 22 percent scored between 0 to 4 marks.

1. *Describe el punto de vista narrativo del episodio.*

Generally candidates performed well on this part. A few candidates were not aware of the meaning of narrative point of view and this was seen in their responses where they outlined the plot instead. Others did not identify the narrator as the protagonist of the text or that the narrator was subjective.

2. *Relata el incidente extraño que ocurre en el episodio.*

Most candidates were not able to identify the strange incident that occurred and link it to the theme of death.

3. *Identifica y comenta el uso de un tropo literario del segundo párrafo.*

Generally candidates were able to identify and comment on the literary device used in an effective manner.

4. *Comenta el tema del episodio en el contexto del resto de la obra.*

Some candidates were unable to identify death as the theme of the extract and related it to the novel. A popular theme which was used and for which some credit was given was 'Solitude'. It should be noted that even though solitude is one of the main themes of the novel, it is not the only theme and it was not seen as the best choice of theme for the extract under consideration.

Passage 4: Natalia y Tanilo (El llano en llamas)

Among those candidates who chose this question, 3 percent scored between 13 to 16 marks; 36 percent scored between 9 to 12 marks; 36 percent scored between 5 to 8 marks and 25 percent scored between 0 to 4 marks.

1. *Relata la trama del episodio y su relación con el tema general de la obra.*

Some candidates related the plot of the entire story rather than explore the plot of the extract. Others omitted some important details from the extract. Very few were able to identify the role of "blind faith" and link it to the episode.

2. *Explica la técnica narrativa empleada.*

A majority of candidates were not able to identify that both the first and third person narrator was present. They only identified one of the two.

3. *¿Cómo se caracteriza a Tanilo? Explica.*

Many candidates mentioned Tanilo's illness but only a minority addressed the role of blind faith in their responses.

4. *Identifica y explica el uso del símil en el segundo párrafo.*

There were two similes in the second paragraph and candidates were able to easily identify them both. However, attempts at explaining their use were very limited.

General Comments

- Many candidates allowed their knowledge of the text to interfere with their analysis of the extract and presented references from the text in inappropriate circumstances.
- Teachers are reminded to give students sufficient practice in literary analysis (including identification of literary devices, narrative technique, narrative point of view, characterization).
- Candidates should be able to justify their responses with references to the extract before them.
- These passages are **not** reading comprehension exercises and should not be approached as mere comprehension. Literary analysis of these extracts is a requirement.

- There is the tendency among candidates to identify all third person narrators as omniscient narrators, when this may not in fact be so. Candidates should be exposed to a variety of narrative technique over their course of study to better equip themselves with the skill in identifying these nuances in narration.
- Teachers are reminded that in Unit 2, at least one question will relate in some ways to the story or text as a whole.

SECTION B - Themes

Candidates were required to answer questions on two Themes: (1) “Conflictos políticos y sociales en Hispanoamérica”, for which the prescribed texts were ‘*El coronel no tiene quien le escriba*’ and ‘*Chombo*’; and (2) “La vida rural”, with prescribed texts ‘*La lluvia amarilla*’ and ‘*El llano en llamas*’.

Candidates’ performance on this section of the exam was considered satisfactory to good. Five percent of candidates scored between 24 to 32, or *75 percent* or more, 56 percent scored between 16 to 23, or *50 percent to 74 percent*, 36 percent scored between 8 to 15, or *25 percent to 49 percent* and 3 percent scored between 0 to 7 or less than *25 percent*.

Question 5 was chosen by *25 percent* of students; question 6 was chosen by seven percent; question 7 was chosen by *63 percent* and question 8 chosen by five percent.

For Unit 1, examiners were looking for well structured, balanced essays, generally consisting of a brief introduction, in which some comment might have made about the geographical, historical, social or cultural context in which the novel was either written or set, and possibly brief definitions of important terms in the question. This would be followed by four to six brief points or paragraphs, supported by either short quotations from the novel or references to particular scenes or incidents, and then the essay brought to closure by a brief conclusion, which was not simply a rehashing of the introduction.

The best essays tended to follow this pattern with candidates well acquainted with the content, characters and events of the novel, focusing on the main points of the question or referring back to the question periodically, and showing not merely knowledge and comprehension, but the ability to apply same to the question through careful analysis, synthesis and their own evaluation or interpretation as it related to the question. The best essays also followed the rubric of the question in terms of word limit (350 to 400 words).

Questions 5 and 6 were chosen by 34 percent of students and the quality of answers was generally good to very good. Question 5, “The ordinary citizen is always hurt by the decisions made by politicians. Discuss.” ‘Always’ would have been a key word to comment on, and the better candidates expanded on the various possible uses of *hurt*, that is, oppression; repression; exploitation; misinformation. They pointed out that since in the books studied politicians do not emerge from the ranks of the ‘ordinary citizens’ then we should not be too surprised if they attempt to further the interests of the social class from which they do come, rather than the interests of the ‘masses’. ‘*El coronel no tiene quien le escriba*’ provided candidates with enough material required to construct an adequate response. ‘*El coronel*’ was also used for answers to question 6.

“Discrimination is an integral part of Spanish American society. Do you agree?”

Question 6, this question was selected by only seven percent of candidates, and while six good to very good essays were received, the others struggled to cope with the issues involved in discrimination using this book. ‘*Chombo*’ would have been the more natural choice for this question, and since the author Carlos Guillermo Wilson has given permission for ‘*Chombo*’ to be used in photocopied form, it is hoped that next year, and thereafter more candidates will use this very interesting novel.

The most popular question by far was question 7: “Contrary to what is generally felt, life in rural areas is very difficult. What is your opinion?”

Most of the essays written on this topic fell into the good to very good category, so candidates appear to have been well prepared to deal with this topic. The book that seemed most appropriate for this question would have been ‘*El llano en llamas*’. While there are a few idyllic descriptions of natural phenomena in ‘*El llano*’, generally life in the country is very hard work, there is much lawlessness, violence, disorder, revenge killings, macho behaviour, one is constantly at the mercy of natural phenomena, and education is, to all intents and purposes, non-existent. Rulfo paints a gritty, harsh picture, and from the short stories emerge all the issues that are problem areas in Latin America today, although some attempts are now being made to redress some of them, for example, in Venezuela, Bolivia and a few other left leaning countries.

‘*La lluvia amarilla*’ was the more appropriate book for question 8 “Migration from rural areas has had a negative effect on Hispanic societies.” Discuss this view with reference to the *works* you have studied.

Only five percent of candidates attempted this question, even though the issue of internal migration is quite a straightforward issue and migration generally, from the time of Columbus’ ‘*Encuentro*’ with ‘*los indios*’ has had a draining effect on Hispanic societies in Europe and the Americas.

As for Unit 1, we cannot overstate the importance of candidates thinking carefully before they commit themselves to a particular question and start writing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Summarizing and story telling will not be rewarded. Examiners are already familiar with the texts and are looking for points that are relevant to the question and that show analysis and evaluation on the part of the candidate.
2. It was clear from some scripts that candidates had relied heavily on a translation of the set text. This was evident for instance, when candidates used translations of names of characters in their answers (“Stretch” instead of El Estirao). In some cases there was even the suspicion that this may have been the text that candidates had taken into the examination. This is not permitted. If candidates cannot cope with the text in the original Spanish then they should not enter the examination.
3. Candidates must adhere to the word limit (350 to 400 words). Some scripts were thousands of words long, and while they may have contained many valid and relevant points, the word limit must be observed 450 words.

4. Candidates should be concise, succinct and to the point.
5. Quotations should be short, relevant and complete. Candidates must avoid referring to the first three words and last three words of a quote, and citing page and edition. Also accuracy of quotes is vital. All a candidate has to do is copy from his/her text, so there is no excuse for inaccurate or mistake riddled quotes.
6. A few candidates wrote compositions, making no reference to a text at all. This will not gain any marks in this examination paper.
7. Some candidates used up scarce 'word-space' by referring to movies, books and incidents in their countries. Again this is not required and will only result in a lower mark than if they had closely followed the rubric and the question.

PAPER 04

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

UNITS 1 AND 2

Prepared Topic

Generally, the topics chosen by candidates for the Unit 1 were related and appropriate to their level. In Unit 2, candidates seemed to have made the decision to carry forward their Unit 1 topics instead of researching a new topic based on the Unit 2 syllabus.

The candidates for Unit 1 seemed to be well organized and prepared and were quite *au courant* with their topics, whereas the candidates for Unit 2 (even though most appeared to be repeat students) still did not seem too comfortable with their topics. Their presentations were disjointed, lacked clear and relevant ideas and information and there was marked hesitancy in their delivery.

There were, however, quite a number of outstanding Unit 1 candidates.

Topic and General Conversation

Candidates generally performed well in this section, especially in terms of their comprehension. Most candidates lost marks for their correctness of expression and their lack of use of a wide and varied range of vocabulary and idiomatic expressions. Some candidates were outstanding in their pronunciation, intonation and fluency while few were quite distorted with long pauses in their responses. The main problem appeared to be a lack of accuracy in grammatical structures and correctness of expression.

General Comments

- Please adhere to the revised SBA sample guidelines and submit only five samples as requested.

- Ideally, candidates should be recorded on separate cassettes, or at least on different sides of the same cassette. It is extremely time-consuming to search a tape for different candidates.
- Please set (rewind) the cassettes to the start of each candidate, and not to the end.
- Sometimes teachers are not very fluent and lack accuracy.
- Be careful with calculating the module scores. It is very simple to calculate but a high number of teachers make errors in calculations or simply omit them.
- Some cassettes are recorded too low and as a consequence cannot be moderated.
- Please introduce each candidate before their presentations either by name, student id number, or both.
- Half marks are not permitted. Mark allocation will reflect this.
- Please double check CD's or tapes to ensure that they have actually been recorded and that they are sufficiently audible.
- Candidates' total score should be arranged in descending order.
- Please do not send micro-cassettes (smaller than standard size) for moderation.

Common Mistakes

- Subject-verb agreement
 - *Muchos personas
 - *Un estudiante van
 - *Mi madre puedo
 - *Yo me gustaría
 - *La gente creen
 - *Las personas puedo
- Adjective-noun agreement and position
 - *Románticas novelas
 - *Otras países
 - *Algunos iglesias
 - *Lugares públicas
- Inappropriate verb tense
 - *Para mi tema hablando del crimen
 - *Es creciendo
 - *Me gusta a visitar
 - *Queers estudio
 - *No están reconocieron

*Indicates a structure that is grammatically incorrect.

- Literal translations
 - *Porque de criminalidad
 - *Mi madre puedo digame cuando ella quiera me volver a tu casa
 - *Cada a otro
 - *Justicia es no igualdad
 - *Estudio la Caribe
 - *Es recomiendo que
 - *Pagar atención
 - *En la otra mano

Others

- Mucho/muy – *estoy mucho nerviosa,
- Tiempos/veces
- Bien/bueno –* mi escuela es bien
- Asistir/atender
- Omission of a/de – *ayudan la gente, *salen la casa
- Omission of que – *tengo estudiar
- *Son afectas
- * Serioso
- *Igualdad
- *Es necesita
- *Yo me gusta/se gusta
- *Es no grande

Pronunciation, Intonation and Stress

Some candidates had difficulty pronouncing certain words:

decada
 industria
 dolares
 farmacia
 tecnologia

These are just a few samples of the errors made by candidates, amongst many others. Teachers need to give more guidance to students in the preparation of their prepared topic. Also topics chosen must be relevant to the Unit studied. A Unit 1 student should not present a topic based on the content of Unit 2 or vice versa.

*Indicates a structure that is grammatically incorrect.