



**CARIBBEAN  
EXAMINATIONS  
COUNCIL**

**CSEC® SPANISH**



Equipaje  
Equipaje de mano  
Equipo de música  
Error  
Escaparate  
Escobilla  
Escribir  
Escritor, a

**Subject Report  
with  
Exemplars**

*May/June 2023*



**CARIBBEAN EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL**

**REPORT ON CANDIDATES' WORK IN THE  
CARIBBEAN SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE<sup>®</sup>  
EXAMINATION**

**MAY/JUNE 2023**

**SPANISH  
GENERAL PROFICIENCY**

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## INTRODUCTION

This guide has been compiled using candidates' responses to the 2023 May/June examination in CSEC Spanish.

In May/June 2023, approximately 10 587 candidates sat the Spanish General Proficiency examination. Approximately 54 per cent of candidates achieved Grades I–III compared with 54.68 per cent in 2022 and 58.94 per cent in 2020.

There was an improvement in performance on Profile 1 (Listening) when compared with 2022. Performance in 2023 was consistent with that in 2021. Performance on Profile 2 (Reading) and Profile 3 (Speaking) was consistent with performance in 2022. There was a decline in performance on Profile 4 (Writing) when compared with previous years.

## PAPER 01 — MULTIPLE CHOICE

This paper, which comprised two sections, assessed candidates' ability to listen to and understand a number of aural items in the target language, and to read and understand a number of written items. Both sections required candidates to have sufficient mastery of essential grammar and vocabulary. Performance in 2023 improved when compared with performance in 2022.

## **Question 1**

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This question required that candidates provide appropriate written responses in Spanish to each of ten situations described in English.

Candidates' knowledge of Spanish vocabulary (inclusive of idiomatic expressions), Spanish grammar rules and structure were key elements by which their competencies in tackling this question were assessed. Marks were awarded if a response included all details in the situation and adequately communicated meaning. Responses were categorized as appropriate or partially appropriate and were awarded marks accordingly, with penalties for errors which affected the quality of the language. Inappropriate responses were awarded no marks even if the language of expression was perfect.

### **Candidates' Performance**

Overall, candidates performed in the range satisfactory to good. Some candidates were able to respond correctly to each situation while there were a few who clearly lacked the vocabulary to express themselves competently. There were some exceptional responses where candidates demonstrated a commendable level of creativity, sound command of accurate grammar and wide vocabulary. Most candidates understood/recognized the function which needed to be addressed and attempted to provide appropriate responses.

### **Candidates' Strengths**

Candidates generally observed the rubric, responding with precision and using accurate language. The quality of responses revealed that some candidates were well prepared for the exam. These candidates demonstrated an understanding of the requirements of the question, applied the lessons they had learnt to each situation and showed great ingenuity in answering questions that called for more than a straightforward answer. The range of vocabulary used was impressive.

### **Candidates' Weaknesses**

In responding to the given situations, candidates seemed to have difficulty with the use of correct/appropriate vocabulary. There were many candidates who would have earned better scores if they had not made careless errors, especially with regard to spelling (in particular with the placing of accents). An area of challenge for many candidates was converting what would be an appropriate answer in English to Spanish. In the process, general grammar and vocabulary errors were noted.

Additionally, there were candidates who misinterpreted what they were expected to do with the information in the situation described and who therefore neglected to include all the elements required for a full response. There were also some candidates who unnecessarily complicated their responses, writing extended pieces where a shorter answer would have sufficed, resulting in them being penalized for writing more than one sentence. *Candidates need to understand that the more they write the more mistakes they are likely to make, so they should keep sentences short and to the point.* Some of the errors made by candidates are as follows.

#### Grammatical Errors

- Inability to correctly form commands both familiar and formal.
- Inappropriate uses of *ser* and *estar*
- Lack of gender agreement regarding articles and adjectives
- Inappropriate use of *por* and *para*
- Difficulty constructing phrases with *porque* and *a causa de*
- Incorrect use of the reflexive (in particular)

#### **Candidates' Responses to Parts (a) to (j)**

##### Part (a)

Your football coach has cancelled today's practice. Write the text message that he sends to the team saying why practice was cancelled and suggesting another meeting time.

Function: Explaining and suggesting

Full response: *Vamos a practicar mañana porque hace mal tiempo hoy.*

Most candidates were able to give a full response to this situation although there were some grammatical inaccuracies.

#### Common Errors

- Inability to use the phrase *Hace mal tiempo* correctly (for example, *Es mal tiempo.*)
- Incorrect conjugation of *poder* (for example, *puedemos*)
- Use of *porque de* instead of *A causa de* (for example, *No temenos practica porque de la lluvia.*)
- Incorrect use of *ser* and *estar* (for example, *Soy enfermo.*)
- Unfamiliarity with the use of the subjunctive after a verb of suggesting (for example, *Sugiero que practicamos ...*)

**Candidate's Response to Part (a) — Sample 1**

- (a) Your football coach has cancelled today's practice. Write the text message that he sends to the team saying why practice was cancelled and suggesting another meeting time.

~~Yo he cancelado la reunion de hoy.~~  
Yo he cancelado el practico hoy porque mi novia está enferma,  
~~podemos tener el practico mañana a las dos de~~  
~~la tarde.~~ (3 marks)

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate earned full marks because all the necessary elements were included. The candidate used simple vocabulary and generally correct grammar. The few errors identified did not prohibit the candidate from being awarded full marks.

**Candidate's Response to Part (a) — Sample 2**

- (a) Your football coach has cancelled today's practice. Write the text message that he sends to the team saying why practice was cancelled and suggesting another meeting time.

Lo siento muchachos pero mi mamá es enferma.  
¿Podemos encontrar líneas por la tarde?  
P (3 marks)

**Examiner's Comments**

The script is a good example of a response. The candidate used excellent grammar and vocabulary but scored partial marks because the response was written as more than one sentence. Only the first sentence could be considered since it was so lengthy. As a result, it was deemed that the candidate did not respond to the second part of the situation, thus gaining partial marks. Candidates are advised to read the instructions carefully, to avoid being penalized for not adhering to the rubric.

Part (b)

Your best friend is about to enter an important competition and wants your advice on your choice of clothing. Write the text message you send to him/her insisting on how he/she should dress.

Function: Insisting

Full response: *Debes llevar un vestido rojo.*

Most candidates had very long sentences, including why they should wear the item of clothing when, in fact, the situation did not ask for that.

Common Errors

- Incorrect placement of adjectives and incorrect agreement of adjectives (for example, *Un rojo/roja vestido.*)
- Omission of verb of insisting or any verb that would indicate insistence (for example, *Un vestido rojo.*)
- Use of *ropas* instead of *ropa*.
- Use of formal register instead of familiar with a friend (for example, *Usted debe ...*)

**Candidate's Response to Part (b)**

- (b) Your best friend is about to enter an important competition and wants your advice on choice of clothing. Write the text message you send to him/her insisting on how he/she should dress.

Tú debes llevar <sup>formal</sup> ropa ~~como~~ como una blusa blanca y  
una falda negra ~~o~~ o un ~~vestido~~ vestido rojo.

(3 marks)

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate earned full marks for the response, which contained all the necessary elements. Simple vocabulary and generally correct grammar were used. The few errors identified did not cause the candidate to lose any marks.

Part (c)

Your aunt from abroad is visiting soon. Write the message she sends to your father saying how she is feeling about visiting and why.

Function: Expressing feeling with a reason

Full response: *Estoy emocionada — quiero ver a tu familia.*

The major issue here was one of vocabulary and an inability to recognize that it was the aunt speaking and not the father.

Common Errors

- Inability to distinguish between excited and exciting (for example, *Estoy emocionante* instead of *emocionada*.)
- No agreement of adjective to indicate that the person was female (for example, *Estoy excitado* ...)
- The omission of the personal *a* after *visitar* and *ver* (for example, *Quiero ver tus hijos*.)
- The use of *ser* instead of *estar* for adjectives of feeling (for example, *Soy emocionada*.)

**Candidate's Response to Part (c)**

(c) Your aunt from abroad is visiting soon. Write the message she sends to your father saying how she is feeling about visiting and why.

Estoy muy emocionada porque ~~es~~ visitante porque ~~me~~  
no te he visto en tres años.

(3 marks)

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate earned full marks as all the necessary elements were included in the response. The candidate used simple vocabulary and generally correct grammar. The few errors identified did not prohibit the candidate from gaining full marks.

Part (d)

Your community is having a variety concert and asks participants to send an email saying what they will be doing and how much time they will need. Write the email that you send.

Function: Providing information

Full response: *Voy a cantar y necesito 5 minutos.*

Most candidates responded well to this situation. However, a few candidates became a little confused and wrote an email from the point of view of the organizers. Others saw the question as a request to state how they would work behind the scenes.

Common Errors

- *Jugar vs tocar* with reference to musical instruments (for example, *Voy a jugar el piano.*)
- *Por vs para* with reference to the amount of time to be spent on an activity (for example, *Quiero cantar para 5 minutos.*)
- The spelling of *necesito* with double 's' (for example, *Necessitaré cinco minutos.*)

**Candidate's Response to Part (d)**

(d) Your community is having a variety concert and asks participants to send an email saying what they will be doing and how much time they will need. Write the email that you send.

*No cantaré una canción y necesitareé tres minutos.*  
*No cantaré una canción por lo tanto necesitareé tres minutos.*

**(3 marks)**

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate earned full marks for the response, which contained all the necessary elements. Simple vocabulary and generally correct grammar were used. Overall, the few errors identified did not affect the candidate being awarded full marks.

Part (e)

You have to wake up early tomorrow morning. Write the message you leave on your brother’s bed requesting a wake-up call, giving the reason.

Function: Request with a reason

Full response: *Favor de despertarme a las 5 porque tengo que estudiar.*

Most candidates were able to respond at least partially to the situation. They lost marks because of errors in their vocabulary, grammar and spelling.

Common Errors

- The use of *levantarme* instead of *despertarme*.
- Those who knew the correct verb had spelling errors — *despiertarme* — or the incorrect reflexive pronoun — *despertarse*.
- Incorrect placement of the *tilde* in *mañana* (for example, *manaña*).
- Separation of the reflexive pronoun from the verb in the command form (for example, *Despierta me*).

**Candidate’s Response to Part (e) — Sample 1**

(e) You have to wake up early tomorrow morning. Write the message you leave on your brother’s bed requesting a wake-up call giving the reason.

Puedes despertarme temprano mañana <sup>porque</sup> tengo un examen.   
 Puedes despertarme temprano mañana porque tengo un examen?

(3 marks)

**Examiner’s Comments**

The candidate earned full marks as all the necessary elements were included in the response. The candidate used simple vocabulary and generally correct grammar. The few errors identified did not prohibit the candidate from gaining full marks.

### Candidate's Response to Part (e) — Sample 2

- (e) You have to wake up early tomorrow morning. Write the message you leave on your brother's bed requesting a wake-up call giving the reason.

Tengo que levantarme a las seis de la mañana.....  
porque tengo que estudiar para mi examen.....  
de español.....

P

(3 marks)

#### Examiner's Comments

The candidate received a partial mark because two necessary elements were not included: a request to wake the brother up with a reason. Only the reason was given. Had both elements been included, the candidate would have gained the full three marks since both the vocabulary and grammar were very good.

#### Part (f)

Your mother sends a text message to her doctor asking what she should do to ease her headache. Write the doctor's response advising her on two things she can do.

Function: Advising

Full response: *Debes beber agua y dormir.*

Most candidates were able to gain at least two marks for this question. However, some candidates responded as if the doctor was giving advice on what the mother's child should do instead of what the mother should do.

#### Common Errors

- The use of *o* instead of *y* when there were two pieces of advice to be given (for example, *Bebe agua o duerme.*)
- The use of *mucho agua* instead of *mucha agua*
- Unfamiliarity with the use of imperatives (for example, *Bebes mucha agua/Descansas.*)
- Unfamiliarity with the use of the subjunctive after *querer que* (for example, *Quiero que bebes mucha agua.*)

**Candidate's Response to Part (f) — Sample 1**

- (f) Your mother sends a text message to her doctor asking what she should do to ease her headache. Write the doctor's response advising her on TWO things she can do.

~~Señor que usted yo quisiera que~~  
Usted puede dormir mucho y tomar dos aspirinas  
cada día.

(3 marks)

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate earned full marks for the response, which contained all the necessary elements. Simple vocabulary and generally correct grammar were used. The few errors identified did not affect the candidate gaining full marks overall.

**Candidate's Response to Part (f) — Sample 2**

- (f) Your mother sends a text message to her doctor asking what she should do to ease her headache. Write the doctor's response advising her on TWO things she can do.

Quedo en cama y bebe mucho agua.

(3 marks)

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate received partial marks for the response because an important element needed to gain full marks was omitted. The candidate was therefore awarded a partial mark even though the grammar and vocabulary used were perfect. Candidates need to read the situation carefully, identifying the two elements needed for a full response.

Part (g)

Your school is having a fundraiser and each student is supposed to contribute an item. Write the note that your teacher sends to your mother stating what item you need to contribute and its due date.

Function: Giving information

Full response: *Su hija tiene que traer 100 platos para el lunes.*

This proved to be one of the situations that candidates found difficult. Most candidates had difficulty deciding who should be 'speaking'. There were also many who did not express the due date.

Common Errors

- Addressing the parent using the familiar *tú* form instead of *usted*
- The use of *por* rather than *para* (for example, *Necesita contribuir una torta por el 4 de junio.*)
- Inability to express dates correctly in Spanish
- Inability to express the word *on* with a day of the week (for example, *En lunes.*)

**Candidate's Response to Part (g)**

(g) Your school is having a fundraiser and each student is supposed to contribute an item. Write the note that your teacher sends to your mother stating what item you need to contribute and its due date.

Sarah debe contribuir ~~los~~ los platos y ella debe  
llevarlos el dos de ~~mayo~~ mayo. (3 marks)

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate earned full marks as the response had all the necessary elements. The candidate used simple vocabulary and generally correct grammar. The few errors identified did not prohibit the candidate from being awarded full marks.

Part (h)

Your neighbour asks you to buy him/her an item from the grocery store but forgot to give you details about this item. Write the text message that you get from your neighbour with the two details.

Function: Giving details.

Full response: *Es grande y rojo.*

Generally, candidates incorrectly wrote the names or one detail for each of two items instead of two details for one item.

Common Errors

- Inappropriate use of *estar* for description (for example, *Está grande y rojo.*)
- Incorrect placement of adjectives where the items were mentioned (for example, *Una roja manzana.*)

**Candidate's Response to Part (h)**

- (h) Your neighbour asks you to buy him/her an item from the grocery store but forgot to give you details about this item. Write the text message that you get from your neighbour with the TWO details.

Se vende en la sección de verduras y es verde.

(3 marks)

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate earned full marks for the response, which contained all the necessary elements. Simple vocabulary and generally correct grammar were used. The few errors identified did not cause the candidate to lose any marks.

Part (i)

Your cousin has just returned from a trip abroad. Write the Instagram message he/she sends you saying what he/she liked most and least about the trip.

Function: Expressing likes and dislikes

Full response: *Me gustó la gente, pero no me gustó el clima.*

Most candidates were able to respond appropriately to this situation albeit with grammar and spelling inaccuracies. Additionally, many candidates did not realize that the preterite tense *must* be used in the response and that they had to say what was liked most and least about the trip.

Common Errors

- There was confusion regarding the use of the impersonal verb structure — *me gustó/me gustaron* in the preterite tense.
- *Vacaciones* written with an accent on the *o*.
- The use of *gustar* and *encantar* in the present tense instead of the preterite (for example, *me gusta* rather than *me gustó*; *me gustan* rather than *me gustaron*).
- *Mas* written without the accent (*más*).

**Candidate’s Response to Part (i)**

- (i) Your cousin has just returned from a trip abroad. Write the Instagram message he/she sends you saying what he/she liked most and least about the trip.

Me gustaba más la comida y menos me gustaba  
menos el tiempo. ~~en mi viaje.~~ REP

(3 marks)

**Examiner’s Comments**

The candidate earned full marks as the response had all the necessary elements. The candidate used simple vocabulary and generally correct grammar. The few errors identified did not prohibit the candidate from being awarded full marks.

Part (j)

During the pandemic, persons are instructed to do specific things while inside the airport. Write the sign that you see on entering the airport with two of these specific instructions.

Function: Instructing

Full response: *Lávese/Lávense/Lavarse las manos y lleve/lleven/llevar una mascarilla.*

This situation proved to be one of the most problematic ones in that many candidates either ignored or did not read the part that spoke about signs during the pandemic. As a result, in many cases, general instructions were given such as having passports ready etc. A few candidates wrote their responses in English.

Common Errors

- The use of the familiar form and not the formal register (for example, *Lávate las manos.*).
- The use of the possessive adjective *tus/tu* instead of the definite article *las* before *manos*.
- Use of the definite article (for example, *los manos* instead of *las manos*).
- There were many instances of the use of *lavar* instead of *lavarse*.
- Unfamiliarity with the Spanish word for *mask*. Candidates used the English word, used French (*masque*), resulting in the loss of marks.
- Use of *llavar/llavarse* instead of *lavar/lavarse* for washing a part of the body (for example, *Llavar los manos y use un mask.*).
- Providing responses totally unrelated to the pandemic (for example, *Tenga el pasaporte y siga la línea.*).

**Candidate’s Response to Part (j)**

- (j) During the pandemic persons are instructed to do specific things while inside the airport. Write the sign that you see on entering the airport with TWO of these specific instructions.

Siempre lleven las máscaras y siempre laven las  
 manos



(3 marks)

**Examiner’s Comments**

The candidate earned full marks for the response, which contained all the necessary elements. Simple vocabulary and generally correct grammar were used. The few errors identified did not cause the candidate to lose any marks.

## Recommendations

### For Teachers

- It is recommended that teachers do directed situation exercises with their CSEC final year students at least once per week to give the required practice and to hone students' skill at writing appropriate responses.
- Teachers can use scaffolding exercises to help students develop their skills.
- Teachers may use clippings and pictures from online Hispanic newspapers, as well as videos and other sources.
- Teachers should encourage students to identify the one or two pieces of information required by the situation, so that students are reminded to keep their responses brief and to the point.
- Teachers should expose students to the relevant functions and vocabulary that are covered in the syllabus, to better equip them for the examination. These items could be tested in games, quizzes, oral presentations, role play and so on.
- The use of technology in the teaching and learning process could also enhance students' acquisition of necessary vocabulary and situation-writing skills.
- Teachers may give frequent written vocabulary and spelling exercises.
- Teachers should identify at least three directed situation responses per lesson. They should ask students to pinpoint the requisite function and how many elements are required. Teachers should let students state what grammar points they need to pay attention to and why. Students should be allowed the opportunity to respond to these situations in writing. They could do the first exercise together as a class and the other two individually. They could then take turns writing their responses on the board. The class would then decide how accurate the responses are.

### For Candidates

Candidates should

- take the time to practise, on their own, the skill of identifying what piece or pieces of information are required by the situation, providing no more information than is required
- remember that the instructions ask for one sentence only
- expand their Spanish vocabulary using subtopics associated with the six main topics for the oral examination, as set out in the Spanish syllabus
- make a list of words associated with each topic/created subtopic
- be aware of current happenings and practise writing about them
- learn idiomatic expressions and Spanish grammar rules and structure
- practise thinking in Spanish and avoid translating the situations from English to Spanish
- identify the functions that are being asked for in each situation and the elements of the language that would be needed for the functions identified.

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## Question 2 — Letter

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Candidates were required to write a letter, using 130–150 words, based on four given cues. They were assessed on use of language, accuracy, coherence and clarity of expression. The question demanded the use of a wide range of tenses which included the present, the preterite, Imperfect, and future.

### Letter

You have just returned from eating at a new restaurant. Write a letter to your Guatemalan friend, Enrique, about your experience. Be sure to include

- (i) why, when and with whom you went to the restaurant
- (ii) details about the restaurant and what you ordered
- (iii) something interesting that happened and your reaction
- (iv) plans to return to that restaurant with Enrique when he visits.

### **Candidates' Performance**

This year there was an improvement in the quality of candidates' presentations. There was evidence that they clearly understood the task at hand. The word limit guidelines were adhered to, for the most part, and there were fewer candidates who offered no response to the question. However, there were still too many candidates who found themselves in the limited to moderate category. It is commendable though that there were many more responses that fell in the very good to excellent range.

### **Candidates' Strengths**

Most candidates structured their letters well and used the correct format, that is, date, salutation, body and ending. Many candidates had a good introductory paragraph, utilizing good grammatical constructions, correct usage of the subjunctive and appropriate vocabulary including the occasional incorporation of idioms. Some examples of such responses are as follows.

- *Espero que estes vivo y coleando.*
- *Ha pasado tanto tiempo desde nuestro ultimo contacto.*
- *Te escribo para hacerte saber ...*
- *Ojalá que todos estén bien.*

Several candidates showed mastery with respect to the use of tenses: preterite, imperfect, future and pluperfect. Some examples of such responses are as follows.

- *Cuando el camarero se dio cuenta que era el cumpleaños de Camila, le llevó un pastel.*
- *Te quedarás tan fascibado como yo ya que comeremos lo que queramos.*

- *Nunca había visto un lugar tan maravilloso.*

Many candidates were able to reference a wide range of Spanish foods and drinks thereby showing their awareness of the cultural aspect of the language. These foods included empanada, tortilla, arepa, paella y flan. The subjunctive was used well by many candidates throughout the letter. Some examples of such responses are as follows.

- *Ojalá que tu y tu familia estén bien.*
- *Iremos al restaurante nuevo para que probemos la deliciosa comida.*
- *Sin duda voy a llevarte al restaurante cuando visites.*
- *Espero que hayas comprado un regalo.*
- *Si hubiera Sabido ...*

Candidates used very good idiomatic expressions to embellish their presentations. Some examples of such responses are as follows.

- *No pude dar crédito a mis ojos.*
- *Me quedé encantada con los trucos de estos cocineros.*
- *Me daba sensaciones ricas en la boca.*
- *Vamos al grano.*
- *Favor de escribirme cuanto antes.*

### **Candidates' Weaknesses**

There was an abundance of grammatical errors, incorrect vocabulary, improper accentuation or absence of accents, and incorrect spelling. Too many candidates continue to struggle with the format. Many candidates cannot correctly render the date, salutation and ending of a letter. It is important to note that in rendering the date, *only* the month of the year is spelled and with a small letter, for example, 20 de mayo de 2023. The salutation *querido/a* was often misspelled. *Sinceramente* and *atentamente* are *not* appropriate in a friendly letter. Some easy and acceptable endings are as follows.

- *Un fuerte abrazo*
- *Cariñosamente*
- *Con cariño*

The following highlights some other common errors.

- The conjugation of verbs, particularly irregular verbs, continues to be a major hurdle for weaker candidates, for example, *Yo fue* y *nosotros fuemos*.
- Absence of agreements between nouns and adjectives, for example, *Una comida deliciosa, un restaurante nuevo*.
- Omission of written accents.
- Spelling errors, for example, *delicoso, resturante, diferente, querido*.
- Unfamiliarity with the use of the following: *muy* and *mucho*, *bien* and *bueno*, *preguntar* and *pedir*, *mientras* and *durante*, *tiempo* and *vez*, *nuevo* and *nueve*.

Candidate's Response to Question 2 — Sample 1

Write your answer to Question 2 here.

Calle Delpino, #203

Fuku, Puna

22 de Mayo del 2023

¡Que ri!o. E!n que

Cómo has estado, hacía mucho tiempo que no nos escribíamos. Que tal tu familia? y tu madre? Bueno, te conté que ayer estuve en un restaurante maravilloso. Fui a ese lugar y a que ~~me~~ uno de mis amigos me lo recomendó. Mi madre me acompañó, fue durante la noche. El restaurante está muy bien decorado, y un lugar muy tranquilo. Yo ordené una pasta Alfredo, una de mis comidas favoritas. Algo que me sorprendió, e impresión del restaurante, es que puedes ver a las cocineras haciendo la comida, un completo espectáculo para mis ojos. Estaba pensando que como piensas venir aquí en tu cumpleaños, te voy a llevar a ese restaurante ~~también~~ también, para que vivas la misma experiencia que yo, además, se que te lo vas a pasar muy bien, después de todo, te conozco bien y se lo que te gusta con cariño.

Abanda

**Examiner's Comments**

The response provided by the candidate was excellent. The ideas were well organized and logically developed, with all points clearly expressed. The candidate wrote fluently, using correct grammar, a range of idioms, vocabulary and structures. The response was coherent and there was clarity of expression, with occasional inaccuracies. The errors noted were largely related to spelling. The candidate showed mastery of the tenses along with the subjunctive.

Candidate's Response to Question 2 — Sample 2

Write your answer to Question 2 here.

#563, ~~Melano street~~ Calle Melano

Curcuma, Caracas

23 de marzo, 2014

Querido Enrique,

Hola Enrique, soy Felix, espero que te encuentres muy bien, queria hablarte de la experiencia que tube hoy en <sup>S</sup> un nuevo restaurante de comida <sup>S</sup> guatemalteca que ~~X~~ <sup>S</sup> abrio hace poco en mi ciudad.

Hoy fue el aniversario de casados de mis padres asi que decidimos probar la autentica <sup>S</sup> comida <sup>S</sup> guatemalteca de la que tanto me has hablado.

El restaurante estaba muy bellamente decorado con banderas y piezas de <sup>tradicional</sup> vestimenta guatemalteca. Mis papas ordenaron una sopa de fies y bagre hotneado y yo ordene cachapas y <sup>S</sup> lasagna de betenjena.

Me sorprendi bastante porque mientras

Write your answer to Question 2 here.

Comencamos un grupo musical empecé a tocar  
y también trabajé con ellas a unos escape-  
juegos.

Espero que cuando visites Caracas de nuevo  
volvamos todos juntos al restaurante así nos  
recomiendas los mejores platos.

Con cariño, Felix

#### Examiner's Comments

The candidate could easily have scored within the excellent range. However, the many spelling errors resulted in the response falling within the very good range. The candidate included all the relevant points required, presenting ideas that were well organized and logically developed. The candidate wrote fluently, using a wide range of idioms, vocabulary and structure.

Write your answer to Question 2 here.

15 de Junio del 2023

S



Querido Enrique

Acabo de llegar de un restaurante con mis familiares. Fuimos a celebrar el cumpleaños de mi primo Wilmer nos la pasamos increíble fue una noche inolvidable. El restaurante era blanco y grande cuando llego la hora de pedir la comida yo ordene un espagueti con mucha leche y queso y de postre ordene un flan, todo sabia rico!

Lo mejor del restaurante era que tenia un espacio de baile despues de cenar fuimos a bailar bachata y regueton. No vas a creer lo que paso cuando todos estabamos bailando mi tia talmin se cayo de espalda fue muy gracioso hasta ella se rio de la caida yo no me podia parar de reirme cuando eso paso.

Write your answer to **Question 2** here.

Espero que cuando ~~te~~ vengas de  
vacaciones con tus familiares. Nosotros  
tambien ~~te~~ <sup>s</sup>vayemos <sup>s</sup>juntos <sup>s</sup>para el  
restaurante. Para que veas lo lindo  
que es.

Con mucho amor

Atentamente



Wisbeiry Santos

#### Examiner's Comments

In the response, the candidate fulfilled all the criteria. The ideas were well organized and developed. A wide range of vocabulary and correct grammar were also used. However, the response fell within the very good range because of the numerous accents that were missing from words. Candidates need to note that accents and spelling are important in the overall assessment of their work.

## Recommendations

### For Teachers

- The strengths and weaknesses presented in the report indicate what is required for a letter that falls within the good to excellent category. In preparing students for the examination, teachers should find ways to ensure that they provide the guidance and support required for students to achieve mastery of all the issues raised in the report.
- Teachers are encouraged to keep up to date with the language as most languages are subject to change and development.
- Teachers should ensure that Spanish grammar is taught and well understood, and that students engage in exercises that help them to apply what is learned. Students' vocabulary expands by having dialogue/conversations in class, by reading well selected passages and by writing on a variety of topics which may fall within the ambit of the CSEC syllabus. The use of idioms must also be encouraged.
- Teachers should provide opportunities for students to regularly practise letter writing and acquiring a pool of idiomatic expressions which will enhance the quality of students' production.
- There must be greater emphasis on having students be competent in the use of verbs, particularly irregular verbs. Certain verbs are almost sure to be needed in any Spanish exam. These include *tener, ir, decir, hacer, ver*.
- Teachers should work together across schools to discover best practices. These best practices may assist in yielding greater proficiency for teachers and students alike.

### For Candidates

Candidates need to observe the following.

- Read the question carefully and make sure that all required points are addressed in their letter.
- Ensure that their letter includes the date, a salutation, opening and closing lines, and a farewell.
- Ensure that they respect the word limit. Too many competent candidates are penalized for writing too much.
- Double check their work, looking for spelling, accent and grammatical errors.

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## Question 3 — Contextual Dialogue

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This section required candidates to complete a contextual dialogue based on cues given in English. The contextual dialogue was in keeping with the information outlined in the syllabus and therefore within the scope of candidates' ability.

### Contextual Dialogue

Your friend's mother, Mrs Marcano, wants to plan a surprise birthday party for your friend and asks for your help. Write the dialogue between you and Mrs Marcano, giving your responses.

- (i) Discussion on venue and time of the party
- (ii) Who will be invited
- (iii) Activities at the party
- (iv) How your friend will be surprised
- (v) Enquiry about birthday cake and refreshments

Along with the cues provided, candidates were expected to use the utterances made by the second person in the dialogue as a guide as to what they were expected to say/write.

### **Candidates' Performance**

Generally, performance was moderate. Most responses showed understanding of the prompts given; however, grammatical competency was severely lacking, which resulted in moderate scores. A few candidates did not attempt the question. With respect to the responses submitted, the following are the trends that were noted.

### **Candidates' Strengths**

A few outstanding scripts showed the development and expression of sound and creative ideas. Some candidates were able to use the present subjunctive appropriately. Responses to the prompts were generally satisfactory, with most candidates correctly asking when and where the party would take place. Many candidates were able to respond appropriately by stating their preference to have the party at the beach.

### **Candidates' Weaknesses**

It was quite obvious in many instances that candidates were not instructed adequately on how this question should be approached. They gave responses that were disjointed, having no relation to the utterances that came before and after. They did not check to ensure that all points were covered, thus losing marks for an incomplete response. Although most candidates were able to satisfactorily state who should be invited to the party, some responses lacked details, for example, the games and the music that would be played. Some candidates were

unable to state appropriately how they should surprise Ana. Many of them left out aspects of shopping or failed to give a comprehensible response when required. Some candidates mentioned food and drink but did not enquire about a cake.

### Common Errors

- Missing accents in many words — *Sí, dónde, cuándo, qué, también, más, fútbol, cumpleaños*.
- Misuse of interrogative words, for example, *cuándo* for *dónde* and *cómo* for *qué*.
- Use of *La día* instead of *El día*.
- Applying the stem change in the *nosotros* form of *poder* and *jugar* — *puedemos, jugamos*.
- Conjugating *gustar* incorrectly, for example, *Yo gusto*, and omission of the object pronoun with *gustar*.
- Not using the infinitive after *poder, preferer*, for example, *Prefiere va ...*
- Using the gerund where infinitives should be used, for example, *Le gusta comprando en el centro commercial*.
- The use of the conjugated verb after *gustar*, for example, *Le gusta va a la playa*.
- The use of apostrophes, for example, *Ana's fiesta*.
- Omission of the personal *a*, for example, *Podemos llevar Ana al centro comercial*.
- The use of *por vs para*.
- The use of *ser vs estar*.
- Incorrect conjugation/use of *opinar*.
- The use of *saber vs conocer*.
- General adjectival agreement.
- Word order, for example, *chocolate torta*.

### Vocabulary

- The use of *tiempo* instead of *hora*, for example, *¿A qué tiempo es la fiesta?*
- Using *Bienvenido* for “You are welcome” instead of *De nada*.
- Misuse of *bien* and *bueno*, for example, *Es una bien idea*.
- The use of *jugar* instead of *tocar*, for example, *Podemos jugar musica*.
- The use of *ella* instead of *su*, for example, *Para ella fiesta ...*
- Confusion between *mucho* and *muy*, for example, *Podemos inviter a muy amigos de ella*.
- The use of *asistir* for *ayudar*, for example, *Puedo asistir con la torta*.
- The use of *consigo* instead of *con ella*, for example, *Voy a la paya consigo*.

**Candidate's Response to Question 3 — Sample 1**

3. In the blank spaces provided, complete the dialogue between you and your friend's mother. Give your responses in SPANISH, using between 80 and 100 words.

Your friend's mother, Mrs Marcano, wants to plan a surprise birthday party for your friend and asks for your help. Write the dialogue between you and Mrs Marcano, giving your responses.

**Responses to ALL of the cues listed below MUST be included in the completed dialogue.**

- (i) Discussion on venue and time of the party
- (ii) Who will be invited
- (iii) Activities at the party
- (iv) How your friend will be surprised
- (v) Enquiry about birthday cake and refreshments

**Complete the dialogue below.**

**Sra. Marcano:** Ana va a cumplir dieciséis años y quiero darle una fiesta de sorpresa. ¿Qué opinas?

**Tú:** Me parece genial.  
 ¿Dónde sería y como a que hora?

**Sra. Marcano:** Buenó, estaba pensando en este sábado aquí en casa a eso de las seis de la tarde.

**Tú:** Podríamos hacerlo en la playa, me parece que sería más bonito.

**Sra. Marcano:** Yo lo sé, pero será más difícil organizarla en la playa. Tal vez podemos tenerla en el club de la comunidad porque allí hay una piscina. Pero, no sé a quién invitar.

**Tú:** ..Sí, eso me parece ~~es~~ asombroso, y.....  
podemos invitar a sus amigos y a su  
~~el~~ profesora favorita.....

**Sra. Marcano:** Bueno, tú te encargas de invitar a los amigos y a esta profesora de quien hablaste y yo invitaré a los parientes. ¿Y, qué actividades podemos tener que puedan interesar a todos?

**Tú:** Podríamos hacer juegos como el limbo,  
digalo con mímica e incluso el juego  
5 de las sillas.....

**Sra. Marcano:** ¡Son excelentes ideas! ¿Me puedes ayudar a escoger la música y los juegos? No conozco estos juegos. Pero ¿cómo vamos a sorprender a Ana?

**Tú:** Yo puedo decirle que vayamos de compras  
y que después tenemos una reunión  
en la piscina.....

**Sra. Marcano:** ¡Excelente! Le encanta ir de compras contigo y estoy segura de que querrá/encontrarse con sus amigos allá en la piscina después.

**Tú:** Bien entonces la llevo de compras  
¿Y la torta de cumpleaños?

**Sra. Marcano:** ¡Ay de mí! Se me olvidó. ¿Me puedes ayudar con esto? Tú sabrás qué tipo de torta a Ana le gustará.

**Tú:** Si Señora, yo le puedo comprar una torta tres leches.  
¿Necesita ayuda con algo más?

**Sra. Marcano:** Gracias mi amor, pero yo prepararé la comida y compraré las bebidas.

**Tú:** Está bien, si se acuerda de algo más me llama.

**Sra. Marcano:** Gracias por tu ayuda querida. Mañana te llamo para hablar más de la fiesta.

**Total 20 marks**

#### Examiner's Comments

This is an example of a response that fell within the very good to excellent range. All cues were used well. Ideas were clearly expressed and the language flowed naturally, showing coherence and clarity of expression. There was good use of the personal *a*, the subjunctive and object pronouns.

**Candidate's Response to Question 3 — Sample 2**

3. In the blank spaces provided, complete the dialogue between you and your friend's mother. **Give your responses in SPANISH, using between 80 and 100 words.**

Your friend's mother, Mrs Marcano, wants to plan a surprise birthday party for your friend and asks for your help. Write the dialogue between you and Mrs Marcano, giving your responses.

**Responses to ALL of the cues listed below MUST be included in the completed dialogue.**

- (i) Discussion on venue and time of the party
- (ii) Who will be invited
- (iii) Activities at the party
- (iv) How your friend will be surprised
- (v) Enquiry about birthday cake and refreshments

**Complete the dialogue below.**

**Sra. Marcano:** Ana va a cumplir dieciséis años y quiero darle una fiesta de sorpresa. ¿Qué opinas? ¡Que Alegría!

**Tú:** <sup>es</sup> Esto es una <sup>S</sup> buenisísima idea. Le ~~es~~ encantará. <sup>S</sup>  
 ¿Cuándo y dónde <sup>S</sup> tendrá lugar la fiesta.....  
 .....?

**Sra. Marcano:** Bueno, estaba pensando en este sábado aquí en casa a eso de las seis de la tarde.

**Tú:** ~~Pues <sup>me gusta</sup> <sup>mucho</sup> ~~me gusta desde la playa así que~~~~  
~~podemos~~ Pues ~~na~~ le gusta el agua y nadar ~~así que~~  
 así que <sup>la</sup> podemos tener en la playa.....

Sra. Marcano: Yo lo sé, pero será más difícil organizarla en la playa. Tal vez podemos tenerla en el club de la comunidad porque allí hay una piscina. Pero, no sé a quién invitar.

Tú: ~~Señora,~~ Vale. Yo veo <sup>piscina</sup> una ~~piscina~~ es bastante bien también. ~~Señora,~~ Puede invitar a sus amigos, su profesora favorita. S REP

~~Señora~~ Señora Luz y sus parientes. S REP

Sra. Marcano: Bueno, tú te encargas de invitar a los amigos y a esta profesora de quien hablaste y yo invitaré a los parientes. ¿Y, qué actividades podemos tener que puedan interesar a todos?

Tú: Sí, Señora. Yo les invitaré. Ana le gusta cantar y escuchar música por lo tanto podemos jugar Karaoke y (song association) <sup>Así que, debemos</sup> ~~llevar~~ llevar música. S REP

Sra. Marcano: ¡Son excelentes ideas! ¿Me puedes ayudar a escoger la música y los juegos? No conozco estos juegos. Pero ¿cómo vamos a sorprender a Ana?

Tú: Gracias señora. Estos juegos son populares entre <sup>los</sup> jóvenes. Pues, ~~le~~ ~~le~~ le puedo invitar a ir de compras conmigo y ~~encontraremos~~ ~~después~~ ~~después~~ S REP con nuestros amigos donde ~~la~~ la fiesta estará en la piscina.

Sra. Marcano: ¡Excelente! Le encanta ir de compras contigo y estoy segura de que querrá encontrarse con sus amigos allá en la piscina después.

Tú: Señora, Ana le ~~gustan~~ <sup>dulces y</sup> ~~gustan~~ ~~postre~~ <sup>postre</sup> también. REP  
¿Qué tipo de torta comerá? S  
.....?

Sra. Marcano: ¡Ay de mí! Se me olvidó. ¿Me puedes ayudar con esto? Tú sabrás qué tipo de torta a Ana le gustará.

Tú: Sí, le gusta <sup>tortas de</sup> chocolate y ~~pero~~ fresa ~~le gusta~~.....

¿Puedo llevar la ~~comida~~ <sup>comida</sup> más tortas de queso. Ella le gusta comida mucho también.

Y las bebidas si usted querría? ~~¿Puedo llevar más de bebidas más la comida y las bebidas?~~  
¿Puedo llevar ~~comida~~ la comida? <sup>y las bebidas</sup> si usted querría?

Sra. Marcano: Gracias mi amor, pero yo prepararé la comida y compraré las bebidas. Vale, señora no hay problema

Tú: ~~¡Vale! El gusto es mío, señora! Estoy feliz para~~.....

~~ayudarte.~~ Favor de llamarme ~~este~~ para decirme

más sobre la fiesta mañana.....

Sra. Marcano: Gracias por tu ayuda querida. Mañana te llamo para hablar más de la fiesta.

Total 20 marks

#### Examiner's Comments

This is an example of a response for which the candidate could have scored within the very good to excellent range. However, the response was marked down because the candidate wrote too much and therefore exceeded the stipulated word limit. A slash was placed at the point at which the word limit was reached, and nothing was read beyond that. Consequently, the candidate was awarded a mark within the good range for not having covered all the points needed in the dialogue. This is a poignant reminder to candidates that if they go beyond the word limit, they can easily be penalized for not having fulfilled all the requirements of the question. Had this candidate not written so much, he/she would have covered all the points and since the few errors that were noted mostly involved spelling, he/she could easily have received a score within the very good range.

Candidate's Response to Question 3 — Sample 3

3. In the blank spaces provided, complete the dialogue between you and your friend's mother. Give your responses in SPANISH, using between 80 and 100 words.

Your friend's mother, Mrs Marcano, wants to plan a surprise birthday party for your friend and asks for your help. Write the dialogue between you and Mrs Marcano, giving your responses.

Responses to ALL of the cues listed below MUST be included in the completed dialogue.

- (i) Discussion on venue and time of the party
- (ii) Who will be invited
- (iii) Activities at the party
- (iv) How your friend will be surprised
- (v) Enquiry about birthday cake and refreshments

Complete the dialogue below.

Sra. Marcano: Ana va a cumplir dieciséis años y quiero darle una fiesta de sorpresa. ¿Qué opinas?

Tú: *Creo que le encantará*  
*¿Cuándo, dónde y a qué hora es esta fiesta?*  
.....?

Sra. Marcano: Bueno, estaba pensando en este sábado aquí en casa a eso de las seis de la tarde.

Tú: *✗ Ella le gusta nadar. ¿Por que no vamos a la*  
*playa?*

**Sra. Marcano:** Yo lo sé, pero será más difícil organizarla en la playa. Tal vez podemos tenerla en el club de la comunidad porque allí hay una piscina. Pero, no sé a quién invitar.

**Tú:** Podemos invitar a sus amigos, ~~su profesora~~ favorita y ~~parientes~~.

**Sra. Marcano:** Bueno, tú te encargas de invitar a los amigos y a esta profesora de quien hablaste y yo invitaré a los parientes. ¿Y, qué actividades podemos tener que puedan interesar a todos?

**Tú:** Podemos tener ~~corros~~ de natación, un concurso de natación y ~~taq~~. Necesitamos la música también.

**Sra. Marcano:** ¡Son excelentes ideas! ¿Me puedes ayudar a escoger la música y los juegos? No conozco estos juegos. Pero ¿cómo vamos a sorprender a Ana?

**Tú:** Sí, ~~no~~ problema. ~~Debes decir a Ana que~~ <sup>quieres</sup> ~~ir~~ de ~~compras~~. Iré a la ciudad con Ana para ir de ~~compras~~.

**Sra. Marcano:** ¡Excelente! Le encanta ir de compras contigo y estoy segura de que querrá encontrarse con sus amigos allá en la piscina después.

**Tú:** Bueno.  
¿Has comprado una torta para Ana?  
.....?

**Sra. Marcano:** ¡Ay de mí! Se me olvidó. ¿Me puedes ayudar con esto? Tú sabrás qué tipo de torta a Ana le gustará.

**Tú:** Sí, Ana le gusta las tortas de vainilla y chocolate. 5

¿Necesitas ayuda con la comida o bebidas?

**Sra. Marcano:** Gracias mi amor, pero yo prepararé la comida y compraré las bebidas.

**Tú:** Bueno, si necesitas más ayuda, puedes llamarme.

**Sra. Marcano:** Gracias por tu ayuda querida. Mañana te llamo para hablar más de la fiesta.

**Total 20 marks**

#### Examiner's Comments

In the response, the candidate fulfilled all the requirements and scored in the very good range. However, the candidate did not use a wide variety of idioms nor was he/she proficient in using them. The candidate used very simple vocabulary; however, overall, the grammar was accurate and there was good use of vocabulary.

## Recommendations

- Candidates are encouraged to read the dialogue before inserting their responses, to allow for the natural flow of conversation. Furthermore, they should note that the order of the cues does not necessarily mean that the dialogue is written in the same order.
- In preparing for the dialogue, teachers should guide students in order to ensure that all the information required by the cues is provided, including intricate details that are required for each prompt.
- This year, the standard of candidates' response with respect to grammar was below satisfactory. Candidates need to build and strengthen their vocabulary, expose themselves to and learn idioms, synonyms and antonyms in the target language, to incorporate in their writing.
- Students should be taught how to manage questions with word limits. In addition, teachers need to encourage students to review and reread their work. Teachers can plan and structure review time into each lesson to help students get into the habit of looking over their work before submission.
- Candidates are encouraged to avoid writing in English and then translating, when writing in and out of the classroom.

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## Question 4 — Reading Comprehension

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This question tested candidates' ability to read a passage in Spanish and then demonstrate comprehension skills by responding in English to questions posed in English.

### Candidates' Performance

On the whole, candidates performed well. There were some instances where a lack of vocabulary influenced the kind of responses offered. There were several instances where candidates seemed not to have understood the latter half of the passage, resulting in them being unable to answer the last three questions. There were a few candidates who gained full marks. However, most candidates earned between 10 and 18 marks.

### Candidates' Strengths

Most candidates understood the information required to answer these questions and responded appropriately. Instructions were adhered to quite well. Where questions were awarded more than one mark, many candidates managed to gain at least two out of three or one out of two marks. Most candidates provided reasonable responses to Part (j).

### Candidates' Weaknesses

The major weakness this year tended to involve vocabulary items such as *castillos de arena*, *subir*, *pariente* and *extranjero*. A lack of knowledge of these items of vocabulary led to candidates not gaining full marks. As was the case in 2022, candidates seemed to have a problem with structuring their responses. This indicates a weakness in reading.

### Candidate's Response to Part (a)

- (a) State TWO activities which the narrator enjoyed doing with his family on the annual trip.

The narrator enjoyed swimming in the beach and building  
sandcastles with his family.

(2 marks)

### Examiner's Comments

The candidate scored full marks for the response. The question was answered fully and correctly. The candidate read the question carefully and included all the elements needed to score full marks.

**Candidate's Response to Part (b)**

(b) What did the narrator's father recently read in the newspaper?

The narrator's father recently read about some burglars in the area where the narrator and his family normally stay in the newspapers.....  
(2 marks)

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate earned full marks as he/she answered the question fully and correctly, providing all the elements needed to score full marks.

**Candidate's Response to Part (c)**

(c) How did the narrator's mother respond to what the father read?

The narrator's mother assured that they would be fine.....  
(1 mark)

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate earned full marks. The question was answered fully and correctly.

**Candidate's Response to Part (d)**

(d) Give TWO details about the man that the children saw.

The man that the children saw was well dressed and was looking through the wind looked suspicious.....  
(2 marks)

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate earned full marks as the candidate included all the required details.

**Candidate's Response to Part (e)**

(e) What was the man doing?

The man was looking through the window into the house.....

.....

.....

(2 marks)

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate scored full marks. All the required elements were included in the response.

**Candidate's Response to Part (f)**

(f) How did Paco react?

Paco shouted at the man and took up something to attack.....

and attack the man with.....

(2 marks)

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate earned full marks. He/she read the question carefully and included all the elements needed to score full marks.

**Candidate's Response to Part (g)**

(g) What was the man's response?

The man shouted that he was not here to rob the family but  
he was here to look for his grandfather.

(1 mark)

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate scored full marks for the response. The question was answered fully and correctly.

**Candidate's Response to Part (h)**

(h) What explanation did the man give for being there?

The man explained that he <sup>was</sup> visiting from away and came to  
look for his grandfather <sup>who</sup> <sup>owns</sup> <sup>this</sup> property here.

(2 marks)

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate scored full marks for the response. The question was answered fully and correctly, and included all the necessary elements.

**Candidate's Response to Part (i)**

(i) What did the father realize when he exited the house?

The father realize that the man was not a robber but a <sup>relative</sup> relative  
to him.

(2 marks)

**Examiner's Comments**

The candidate earned full marks. All the necessary elements were included in the response.

## Candidate's Response to Part (j)

- (j) Explain whether you think Paco's initial reaction towards the man was justified.

...s, I think Paco's ~~int~~ initial reaction towards the man was justified because he did not know the man so the man could have been a robber. The father also stated the robbers <sup>in the area</sup> so Paco could have been on edge. (3 marks)

**Total 20 marks**

### Examiner's Comments

The candidate earned full marks. He/she read the question carefully and included all the elements needed to score full marks.

## Recommendations

- Candidates are to be commended for adhering to the rubric. However, answering in a complete sentence does not mean that candidates should supply answers that are not in the passage. Neither should they provide answers that are required for other questions (for example, "looking for his grandfather" was a response given for Part (i) rather than for Part (g) and Part (h)).
- When practising the reading comprehension, teachers ought to encourage students to be as precise and concise as possible in their responses, especially where only one mark is awarded. It is hoped that teachers and future candidates will take note of the following recommendations.
  - Vocabulary is important for comprehension. Candidates ought to keep revising vocabulary items using revision techniques that work for them. It should be noted that the topic *La familia* is dealt with from Form 1 and repeated up to Form 5. Therefore, words such as *pariente* should be very familiar to candidates.
  - Grammar is also critical in understanding the passage. Much practice is required, especially for the preterite and imperfect tenses.
  - Candidates ought to read the passage at least three times in order to understand the story.
  - Practise, practise, practise. Past papers are easily available on the CXC website and in other places. As part of this practice, candidates need to spend some time learning how to express answers in their own words, so that they do not repeat the words of the question.
  - Reading books, newspapers and magazines written in Spanish and in English would be helpful, especially when it comes to noting sentence construction.
- Teachers and candidates may find the following websites helpful.
  - [www.spanish4teachers.org](http://www.spanish4teachers.org)
  - [www.fluentu.com](http://www.fluentu.com)
  - [www.takelessons.com](http://www.takelessons.com)
  - [www.123teachme.com](http://www.123teachme.com)

## PAPER 03 – ORAL EXAMINATION

The CSEC Spanish oral examination tested candidates' ability to produce appropriate responses in Spanish to a number of situations testing specific functions, to read aloud a short passage in Spanish and to carry on a conversation in the target language by responding to questions based on four out of six topics set out in the syllabus: School and Career, Shopping, Daily Routine, Travel.

### Section I — Responses to Situations/Instructions

This section required that candidates produce appropriate oral responses in Spanish to situations/instructions described in English in keeping with the function specific to the situation. As a result of a modification in the examination format, *this section of the examination was not assessed for the examination period June 2023.*

## Section II — Reading Passages

This section assessed candidates' ability to read a passage in Spanish (125–145 words) demonstrating correct pronunciation of discrete sounds, good intonation and fluency. Several excellent readers exhibited a solid knowledge of the Spanish sound system and appeared well acquainted with the rules of stress and accentuation. Their competence in reading aloud highlighted their fluency, intonation and preparedness for the examination and, as such, they performed well.

Many candidates, however, continue to be challenged by the reading component of the oral examination which is a cause for concern, as after being exposed to the language for several years, the fundamentals of the Spanish sound system are often ignored. Pronunciation was faulty and production was anglicized. Many candidates showed little knowledge of the importance of intonation and often started and ended their reading passage in the same tone. Decoding words was often a challenge, which suggested a lack of practice. Phrasing was on occasions problematic, so meaning was lost. Punctuation was not consistently observed. Little or no knowledge was displayed of the rules of accentuation and stress.

The following are some of the weaknesses identified in candidates' performance.

- Placing stress on the wrong syllable in words such as *leen*, *proven*, *seleccionar*, *mayoría*
- Anglicizing words such as *idea*, *estado*, *espectacular*
- Pronunciation of the *h* sound in words where the *h* is silent, for example, *hábito*, *historia*, *hijo*, *había*, *hacía*, *hacienda*, *hay*
- Pronunciation of the Spanish *e* like an English *e* in words such as *depende*, *crear*, *apreciar*, *television*, *preocupar*, *emocionalmente*, *reunion*, *materías*, *antemano*
- Pronunciation of the Spanish *g*, for example, *eligiendo*, *imaginación*, *imaginar*, *tecnología*, *gigantes*, *tecnológicas*
- Pronunciation of the Spanish *u*, for example, *productos*, *adultos*, *resultado*, *culturas*, *estructura*, *espectacular*
- Mispronunciation of *ll* sounds as in *silla*, *belleza*, *maravilloso*, *desarrollo*
- Severe distortion of diphthongs as in *autosuficiente*, *riesgos*, *experiencia*, *prefiere*, *videojuegos*

## Recommendations

Challenges in decoding, fluency and intonation in reading aloud typically stem from inadequate preparation and practice. Teachers must ensure that the sound system of the language is understood from very early in the learning process. Syllabification and stress are major pitfalls which must be addressed overtly. Spanish must be consistently used in the classroom and opportunities should be created for students to produce the language as often as possible. There is a great need for exposure to authentic listening activities in the target language, to allow students the opportunity to model native Spanish.

## Section III — Guided Conversation

This section of the oral examination tested the ability of candidates to respond to a number of questions based on four topics. This year the topics on which candidates were tested included School and Career, Shopping, Daily Routine, Travel. Candidates were asked four questions on each of the topics and were assessed on comprehension and spontaneity, fluency and expression.

Performance in this section ranged from unsatisfactory to very good. A few very competent candidates managed to converse easily and with great accuracy. Their answers to the questions were spontaneous and tended to be extended, demonstrating a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical correctness. However, weaker candidates experienced challenges in answering many questions. They were unable to handle the questions posed to them and struggled with this section, with limited vocabulary and poor knowledge of grammatical structures. There was limited comprehension of the questions asked, as seen through their constant requests for questions to be repeated. Those who managed to respond often did so using very short sentences or by stating with *Yo no sé*. Weaker candidates struggled in particular with questions requiring them to describe or provide an extended response, giving very short answers. In these cases, the word *explica* or *dime mas* were futile. Questions that posed the greatest challenge were those requiring an explanation or the use of the preterite or future tense. For these responses, candidates tended to respond in the present tense.

### Common Errors

- Unfamiliarity with interrogative words, in particular *cómo qué and cuál*.
- Incorrect agreement between nouns and their articles, for example, *La cine, la museo*.
- Subject–verb agreement — *Yo hace, mi mamá trabajo*.
- No use of reflexive pronouns with reflexive verbs, for example, *Yo despierto/acuesto*.
- Unfamiliarity with the conjugation of *hacer*, for example, *Yo hace*.
- Incorrect use of *ser* and *estar*, for example, *Está muy difícil viajar*.
- Incorrect use of *bien* and *bueno*, for example, *Mis profesores son bien. La comida es muy bien*.
- Use of the infinitive when a conjugated verb was needed — *Yo estudiar, yo mirar la televisión*.
- Unfamiliarity with stem-changing verbs, for example, *Dormo* for *duermo* and *jugo* for *juego*.
- Unfamiliarity with the use of *gustar* and misuse of *gusta* and *gustaria*, for example, *Gusto ser profesor en el futuro. Me gusta ir a la Universidad en el futuro*.
- Not using the infinitive in the second verb when two verbs come together, for example, *Quiero voy a la universidad*.
- Not using *de* after words like *antes* and *despues*, for example, *Despues los estudios en la escuela ...*
- Misuse of *muy* and *mucho*.
- Comprehension issues with words such as *asignatuiras* and *quehaceres*.
- Use of *tener* instead of *tomar*, for example, *Para el desayuno yo tengo un sandwich*.

Some requests for repetition indicated a lack of comprehension of questions and fluency as candidates used the repeated questions to formulate their responses in the target language.

## Recommendations

Teachers should expose students to consistent use of the target language in the classroom — through radio stations and podcasts, online oral and aural activities. Exposure to native speakers will also assist in providing an authentic language experience for students. Extensive use of Spanish in the classroom will not only strengthen students' listening and speaking skills but will also increase their confidence when conversing in Spanish. Students must be encouraged to pay attention to the details which are required in the questions and to *listen carefully* to the demands of the question before responding.