

FIRST LANGUAGE SPANISH

Paper 8665/21
Reading and Writing

Key messages

- **Question 1:** seek a phrase in the text which matches perfectly the one in the question. Candidates should take care not to omit words or to include extra words.
- **Question 2:** rewrite the phrases to include the word(s) in brackets. A grammatical manipulation will be required, and care should be taken to ensure that the answer would fit back into the original text, retaining the same meaning.
- **Questions 3 and 4:** comprehension of texts. Candidates should attempt to answer in their own words. Direct copying of five or more words from the text will usually invalidate an answer.
- **Question 5(a):** summary of relevant details from both texts in answer to the question set. Introduction, conclusions and vague generalisations are not required. Specific, relevant details attract marks.
- **Question 5(b):** personal response. Candidates should give a point of view and, if possible, offer ideas which have not appeared in the texts.
- **Language:** when preparing for the exam, make sure to revise the basic agreements, tenses and verb endings.

General comments

The return to a relatively normal examining process after the pandemic was a rewarding experience for Examiners, as it should prove to be for most candidates.

The majority seemed quite well prepared in tackling most of the questions in the exam and many seemed to be of a native or near-native speaking standard. The two texts dealing with prejudice and stereotypes relating to women and ways of overcoming these were accessible to most candidates, and often led to some impassioned comments on machismo and women's roles and rights in **5b** – and even in answers to **Questions 3 and 4**, where candidates added more personal views rather than answering the question. The challenge of the exam was appropriate, and the spread of marks awarded reflected the varying levels of ability. Scripts were generally well presented, and there was hardly any evidence of difficulty with time management.

A small minority might have achieved higher marks if they had been better prepared for the exam in terms of examination technique. Some answered **Questions 1 and 2** by trying to re-word the phrases given using their own words, but then went on to do well in **Questions 3, 4 and 5**. In their answers to the comprehension questions most candidates attempted all questions and appeared to be aware that they should not copy more than four consecutive words of text. It was pleasing to note skilled attempts at paraphrase. On occasions, good candidates, who apparently had clearly understood the texts, did not pick up all the marks available when they answered too generally and omitted relevant details. Candidates should note the marks allocated to each question, as this is a good indication of the number of details being sought.

Some candidates still exceeded the 140 word limit in **Question 5**, thus reducing the number of marks they could score in **5(b)**. In **5(a)** a number of candidates wrote in general terms about women's rights and hardly included any examples from the two texts. However, on the whole, these summaries are improving as the message seems to be getting through that relevant, specific details taken from the texts score many more marks than vague generalisations.

Overall, candidates had a good communicative level of Spanish, with many coming from an environment where the language was commonly spoken. At the upper end of the ability range there were many excellent papers which were a pleasure to mark. The written language, although sometimes impaired by incorrect spelling and lack of accents, was generally well up to the required standard for this exam. Candidates across the range should be commended for their positive approach to the tasks.

Comments on specific questions

SECCIÓN PRIMERA

Question 1

As stated in the Key Message above, candidates should seek a phrase in the text which matches perfectly the one in the question. Regardless of candidates' language skills, rather than offering the wrong phrase altogether, the main errors consisted of adding or omitting extra words at the beginning or at the end, thus invalidating otherwise correct answers.

- (a) This was done well, although a few began incorrectly with *que*...
- (b) Most candidates answered correctly. Some missed the mark by beginning with *siempre*... A few chose the wrong phrase: *esclavizada en el hogar*.
- (c) Common errors were to begin with *para*... or omit ...*económicamente*. Quite a few opted erroneously for *la clave del éxito*...
- (d) Most answers were correct, although the initial (*algo*) *a*... was occasionally omitted.
- (e) A number of candidates omitted the initial *no*... and some gave the full sentence from *Estos huertos*... but most candidates were successful in this question

Question 2

In addition to constructing the language manipulations required in this question, it is important to check that answers will fit back into the original text and retain the same meaning. A line number reference is given for candidates to check quickly that this would be the case.

- (a) There were mixed results, with approximately half the candidates realising that *cuenta* needed to be followed by *con*. Many either omitted the preposition or attempted to use other manipulations with *cuenta* which were not appropriate here.
- (b) Many candidates showed awareness of the need for a subjunctive after *hace que*... Those who did not tended incorrectly to use an infinitive or the indicative.
- (c) This was mostly well answered. Pitfalls were in many instances spellings of the verb *haber* (*a pasado a ayudarla*). Some candidates despite identifying the use of *en vez de*, conveyed the opposite meaning with answers such as *su marido ha pasado a criticarla en vez de ayudarla*.
- (d) Only strong candidates identified *ya que* as a conjunction, which required a verb phrase rather than a noun phrase. Some unsuccessfully tried to include the prepositional phrase *debido a* in their answers. Some candidates did not use the correct preposition after *depender*. Others who used the adjective sometimes did not make the correct agreement e.g. *son dependiente*, or misspelled *dependiente* as *dependente*.
- (e) This question caused problems for many as they did not know how to use *servido*. Common errors were not to make the verb agree and misspellings of the auxiliary e.g. *sus cultivos a servido*. Elsewhere marks were missed for the omission of *como* or *de* after *servido*.

Question 3

The text about women getting away from their houses to work in an urban agricultural project in Quito was well understood and candidates who gave clear, detailed answers in their own words achieved good marks. A number of candidates lost marks when they copied five or more words directly from the text.

- (a) Most candidates were able to state how women were discouraged to participate in the agricultural project by saying that it was a waste of time, that they could not leave their husband unattended and that their job was to look after the house. However, there was a lot of lifting of *era una pérdida*

de tiempo and some made the verb plural, incorrectly implying that the women were a waste of time. Better answers included good re-wording such as *era un desperdicio de tiempo, no valía la pena* or *debían atender los quehaceres domésticos*.

- (b) Two, and more often, three were common scores for this four-mark question. Most referred to *Fabiola* no longer being trapped in the house, but fewer candidates also identified her husband's help as an important positive aspect. Another point well scored was the fact that women started to value themselves, and most also scored well by stating that women had formed a support group – if they avoided copying directly *un grupo de apoyo entre mujeres*.
- (c) A number of candidates seemed not to understand *viable económicamente*, either taking it to mean that their products were *económicos* or that their business was good for the economy. There was also some confusion of *productos* for *productores*. Better answers included paraphrases such as *para que vaya bien económicamente*. Most managed the mark for cooperation in transporting goods, although the importance of *juntos* for the point about finding solutions was sometimes overlooked.
- (d) Candidates usually managed to mention the \$300,000, (a currency being needed to achieve the point) and express the importance of the money staying in Quito, though there were many inadvertent lifts of *el dinero se quede en Quito*. The third point was often not fully understood. Although most candidates understood that sales had gone up to 20 per cent many referred to *el consumo local* as opposed to *el consumo de productos locales*. Better answers included paraphrases such as *lograron ganancias de, Quito se quedara con las ganancias* and *subieron el consumo de productos locales de 5 per cent a 20 per cent*.
- (e) This was a very accessible question, with candidates simply needing to convert verbs and pronouns in the text from the first to the third person. Most candidates were able to state that *Fabiola* was now earning her own money and did not depend on her husband. A small number of candidates misunderstood the expression *me gano el pan* and thought it meant she had money to buy her own bread/groceries.

SECCIÓN SEGUNDA

Question 4

In general candidates seemed to find this second text, concerning actions being taken in Segovia to counteract machismo and sexual stereotyping in advertisements, to be a little more challenging.

- (a) Most candidates mentioned that if women did not protest, no one would. However, many accidentally lifted *¿quién lo va a hacer?* The second point was sometimes confused. Some wrote that half of the population or all/most men did not respect women. Others missed the mark by writing that a minority did not respect the rest of the population. And many accidentally lifted five or more words such as *...que no respeta a la otra...* For the final point, most candidates mentioned that sexism was very common and that it was everywhere in the city, although Segovia was sometimes mistakenly expressed as *por todo el mundo*. A common lift was *el machismo está en todas partes*.
- (b) The most common outcome was two marks for the ideas of equality between men and women and respect for all, but not everyone managed to convey that the banning of inappropriate images of women in advertising in public places was being sought. There was often a reference to images in social media which was not mentioned in the text. Common lifts included *el respeto a la dignidad, la difusión de imágenes denigrantes* and *las mujeres y los hombres*.
- (c) This was a challenging question. The reference to public places or advertisements was often a missing essential detail. The phrase *Y no digo nada si son niños o adolescentes* was rarely understood in this context, with many candidates just rephrasing the sentence without conveying its meaning and some thinking that the teenagers were in the images. A good number of candidates understood that publicity encourages unrealistic ideas about what it is to be a woman and a man.
- (d) Most candidates scored at least two for this question. The first point about eliminating images where women are objectified was the most common correct detail noted. The majority of candidates stated that educational programmes on equality would be developed, although some miswrote that programmes on equal education would occur. The third point was usually missed

because not all candidates listed the people for whom the awareness programmes were designed, and some answers implied that the police and businessmen were leading these campaigns. The final point about the fact that citizens could report incidents of sexist advertising was generally well answered, although a common lift was *que no respeten el reglamento*.

- (e) Only better candidates realised that the lie mentioned in the text referred to the fact that advertising campaigns still use outdated sexist stereotypes, and many centred their answers around what the cliché ideas about men and women were. However, most saw that the effect was one of reducing women's status both professionally and socially. Common lifts were *la cosificación de las mujeres* and *les quita estatus profesional y social*.

Question 5

There were clear differences here in scores between those who had practised this summary question, and those who were not used to the demands of the test. Candidates who were unaware that higher marks would be scored by summaries containing specific details rather than generalisations, followed by personal responses with opinions and original ideas, rarely achieved outcomes which matched their level of Spanish.

A number of answers for **5a** were too long and prevented marks being given for **5b**. A few candidates, inadvisedly, began with a lengthy **5b** (marked out of 5), leaving very few words for **5a** (marked out of 10).

- (a) The following is a typical example of the sort of answer which, despite scoring well for quality of language (marked out of 5), will score next to nothing for content:

Los estereotipos nunca son buenos. En estos dos artículos se habla sobre las ideas que la sociedad está poniendo a las mujeres. En los dos artículos hay algo en común, el machismo. Muchas mujeres tienen que vivir con esto y no se lo merecen. Se puede luchar con haciendo protestas pasivas contra el gobierno o con haciendo lo que creen que no pueden hacer...

If the last few words are taken as a reference to the urban agricultural project there is a possibility of one mark being awarded. This is scant return for over one third of the words allowed for both (a) and (b).

By contrast, the first part of the following answer has already scored seven for content using far fewer words:

Algunos estereotipos dicen que la mujer debe trabajar en la casa, ✓ que si trabaja pierde tiempo ✓ o que no puede dejar tirado al marido. ✓ Se dice que a los hombres les gustan los carros ✓ y la mujer las lavadoras. ✓ El bricolaje para ellos ✓ y la cocina para ellas... ✓

Specific details not generalisations or opinions are what is required here.

- (b) Apart from a minority who had already exhausted their word allocation by the time they reached this point (and thereby scored zero), most candidates had something to say in response to the question. Candidates talked about women in politics, presidents and vice presidents, and women's roles in education and in medicine. The strongest candidates gave careful evaluation of how women combine their roles in the workplace with those at home in many instances, and how this has changed over time. A considerable number still considered that a woman's main role in life is being a mother. Some candidates drifted away from the question when they chose to discuss the women's fight for their rights in general, and a small number understood *papeles* as ID documents and tried to discuss that.

Quality of Language

In this cohort, there were few cases of very poor Spanish. Most seemed to have a native background in Spanish. As always, though, the lack of accents and misspelling of words (particularly v for b, or vice versa, y for ll, and c for s) as well as anglicisms was widespread. Unless they had been penalised for scoring zero in any of the comprehension questions, most candidates were awarded near maximum or maximum marks in all three quality of language assessments.

FIRST LANGUAGE SPANISH

Paper 8665/41
Texts

Key messages

There are two key points to emphasise in the preparation for this Paper. The first is to have a very thorough knowledge and understanding of the texts studied. The second is to read most carefully the questions set, to ensure that the response is directly focused on the question.

General comments

Candidates generally followed the rubrics as required. In **Sección 1**, they responded to the instructions by answering **parts (i)** and **(ii)** very briefly so that **(iii)** was answered as fully as possible.

Those candidates who were well prepared for the Paper were able to perform well. Examiners are aware of continuing disruption to learning across the world and congratulate centres and candidates who have managed to work through this.

Comments on specific questions

Sección 1

Question 1 – Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda: Sab

- (a) (i) In (i), some answers omitted the information that Sab had helped Enrique.
- (ii) **Part (ii)** only required the response that Sab did not respond as Carlota had expected him to.
- (iii) **Part (iii)** needed a detailed explanation as to why Sab could never be free. He had been offered his freedom from slavery before but refused this. Sab's enslavement to Carlota was a deep attachment, shown in many ways including saving Enrique's life and the lottery money incident. The best answers made reference to this as well as pointing out that Sab was not the stereotypical figure of a slave as he was educated as well as anyone, was given considerable responsibility at the ranch as well as for Carlota, and was highly intelligent and perceptive. His love for Carlota was beyond his control and his race and colour would always result in discrimination (e.g. Jorge Otway's reaction to him). Sab's reason for living was Carlota and her family. Reference to his death is highly relevant.
- (b) Fewer candidates chose this option. Most referred to the mutual support between Martina and Sab, but few recognised that Martina represents indigenous (Amerindian) people. A key scene to be analysed was the visit to her home where the differing attitudes of Enrique, Teresa, Don Carlos and Sab could be observed. Themes concerning society in general, slavery and the role of women also came into play.

Question 2 – Gabriel García Márquez: *El amor en los tiempos del cólera*

- (a) Candidates showed good knowledge of the text. Unfortunately, many responses did not address the question directly; **Part (iii)** clearly states "Hablando de esta pareja ...", referring to Juvenal and Fermina. Many candidates referred only to Fermina and Florentino in their answer. Those who answered correctly were able to analyse the relationship between husband and wife in some detail. It was acceptable to mention Florentino as a contrast, but he should not be central to the argument.

- (b) Hildebranda played an important role in the life of Fermina, offering support and refuge at key moments. They met when Fermina was sent away to forget Florentino and Hildebranda behaved like a sister. Hildebranda's enthusiastic personality was a positive influence on Fermina, and her advice saved the marriage after the Barbara Lynch episode. Ironically Hildebranda's own relationships were not successful as she was in love with a married man and then married someone she did not love. Some central themes of the novel were reflected in her life too.

Question 3 – Anónimo: *La vida de Lazarillo de Tormes*

- (a) **Parts (i) and (ii)** were answered well. In **part (iii)** the main theme identified was that of survival, followed by poverty. There was a common tendency to focus on only a few of Lazarillo's masters, notably the first three, rather than take a theme and consider its treatment in the novel as a whole. Some good answers analysed the theme of false impressions, linking Lazarillo's initial reactions to his stepfather to events later in the text, such as his experiences with the Escudero. This text was one which led many candidates to be tempted into narrative rather than analysis.
- (b) This question asked candidates to consider both how society and the individual within it are analysed. The nature of society informs the development of the individual. It is not relevant to compare society at the time of Lazarillo with that of the twenty-first century. Themes presented are largely perennial – divisions in society, hierarchies, exploitation of the weak, survival of the fittest, corruption, deception and self-deception. The best answers showed how Lazarillo's attitudes were shaped by his experiences from a range of encounters with individuals from different sectors of society, and why.

Question 4 – Pedro Calderón de la Barca: *El alcalde de Zalamea*

- (a) The difference between the responses to **parts (i) and (ii)** – birth status and reputation, is the central issue in **part (iii)**. Most candidates were able to differentiate between examples of inherited status and that gained by reputation, based on actions of the individual. Only the best essays analysed the subtleties of the tension between them, as seen in the scenes involving Pedro Crespo and Don Lope.
- (b) This option was less popular. The King does not appear until the end of the play but his influence is seen in the hierarchical nature of society, the fact that the soldiers are fighting on his behalf and the wider issues of loyalty and expectations. When the King arrives, society is in chaos as it appears the individuals have not kept to the accepted rules of behaviour. The King restores order and harmony to society as a whole, enabling all to move on, although in applying justice there are innocent victims. It is more important to restore stability than consider the fate of an individual.

Sección 2

Question 5 – Carmen María Gaité: *Las ataduras* (short story)

- (a) Most candidates were able to give an effective analysis of the narrative technique in this short story. Points made and explored included the use of flashbacks, beginning the narrative in the middle of the story, use of dialogue and a letter to enable the reader to hear the characters' own voices, introspection, metaphors and symbols, especially the river. Some good answers also showed how the techniques enhanced the psychological profiles seen in the text.
- (b) This was the more popular option. Essays generally displayed a good knowledge and sensitive reading of the text. A number of candidates muddled up the names of Alina's father and grandfather, which caused some confusion in the argument. Overall, most discussed Alina's upbringing as happy but influenced by the opposing views of her father and grandfather, and pointed out how this affected her ability to make her own decisions. The presence of Eloy provides a contrast – he is a boy, has family in the Americas and is able to live his life freely. Many missed the fact that Alina seemed to expect Eloy to ask her to go with him. Alina's disappointment and the death of Santiago and his encouragement of her to seek adventure cause her to lose confidence. Societal pressures in the village are clear. To what extent Alina chooses her life is a matter for discussion – some may say she moved from one prison to another. Either view is acceptable, provided the argument is supported from the text.

Question 6 – Federico García Lorca: *Bodas de sangre*

- (a) This text attracted the largest number of responses on the Paper, although this option was less popular than (b).

The essence of the question is to discuss to what extent Lorca's characters are recognisable as 'real' – of "huesos, sangre" and at the same time have "un traje de poesía", in that they express themselves through the language of poetry which takes their experience to a higher, lyrical and universal level. This can be seen in their own words, as the Novia compares the Novio and Leonardo – "un poquito de agua", "un río oscuro", in the "Nana del caballo grande" and the words of the supernatural characters in the final Act. Poetry is used to both heighten and temper the gruesome finale of the play as the victims are led to their fate and the action is off stage, avoiding the physical struggle of the fight. Destiny is at play. Some candidates interpreted the "huesos, sangre" references as a focus on the violence in the play and presence of knives. Many understood the role of the supernatural characters.

- (b) This was a very popular question. All essays referred to the fact that Leonardo was instrumental in the dénouement of the play and the most dynamic character overall. Few analysed the meaning of his name "león", "ardo", but most mentioned the importance of the horse. He is the one, who together with the Novia challenge accepted behaviour by following their feelings rather than the dictates of society and tradition. The background as to why their relationship in the past did not lead to marriage is relevant. The other point to be explored leads on from this; other characters in the play are known by their role in society, they follow the conventional route and are seen in those terms rather than as individuals. Candidates always show much interest in the text and are sensitive to the issues discussed. It is important to plan an answer and select references to make the best use of their knowledge of the play.

Question 7 – Gabriela Mistral: *Tala / Lagar*

- (a) This text attracted a relatively small number of entries so it is not appropriate to make detailed comments. There were some very good responses to this question. Candidates knew how to present a literary commentary and incorporate a personal response.
- (b) This was less popular but gave candidates a wide scope to choose the poems which they felt best addressed the question.

Question 8 – Isabel Allende: *La casa de los espíritus*

- (a) Many candidates chose this text.

This is the type of question when it is particularly beneficial to define the terms of discussion, in this case the meaning of "machismo". Most essays focused on Esteban Trueba, who displayed positive aspects in his fanatically hard work to improve his financial standing and bring prosperity to Las Tres Marías, to the benefit of all. He also swallowed his pride in seeking help to rescue Alba. There were many negative aspects to his behaviour, but as was stated by several candidates, his machismo was probably standard for the time, and necessary to succeed in politics. This was contrasted with Esteban García, who used his power in a malicious, innately evil way to avenge the wrongs done to his family by Trueba. Examples of positive machismo could be seen in Jaime, Severo and Pedro Tercero.

- (b) Most answers to this question tended to trace Tránsito's appearances in the novel and comment on them, rather than find a way of analysing her part within wider themes. She displayed unusual skills of entrepreneurship from a young age, turning her role as a prostitute to that of one supporting and protecting women in the same profession, thanks to a loan from Trueba. Tránsito survives and thrives, making contacts across society, behaving in a way which is unexpected and brave in a world dominated by men. We also have to recognise the fact that Trueba was prepared to support her and this friendship stood him in good stead in rescuing Alba. Consider how Tránsito was part of the unseen economy, but a powerful role model for female solidarity and success, without, as far as we know, a male partner.