

GCE



**Chief Examiner's and
Principal Moderator's Report
Spanish**

Summer Series 2022



Foreword

This booklet outlines the performance of candidates in all aspects of this specification for the Summer 2022 series.

CCEA hopes that the Chief Examiner's and/or Principal Moderator's report(s) will be viewed as a helpful and constructive medium to further support teachers and the learning process.

This booklet forms part of the suite of support materials for the specification. Further materials are available from the specification's microsite on our website at www.ccea.org.uk.

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GCE Spanish

Chief Examiner's Report

Assessment Unit AS 1 Speaking

It was good to have a return to the speaking test. Candidates invariably perform well in this unit, and most would agree that it is a corner-stone unit of a language A Level. Examiners too were delighted to be back visiting schools and getting to see the candidates face to face.

Visiting arrangements

Examiners reported no major problems arranging dates. The priority is always the centre and the preferences of the students, but clearly given the need to take other centres into account, some accommodation to suit all must be made. Both centres and examiners are always amenable and flexible where possible.

All centres showed at least a minimum standard of hospitality and some really went the extra mile to make the examiner welcome. Covid protocols were adhered to in all centres.

While it can be difficult to find accommodation away from the hustle and bustle of school life, most centres made efforts to achieve this. However, some candidates had to perform with a high volume of background noise at break and lunchtime. The schedule, agreed in advance, in most cases allowed the examiner adequate time between candidates. The examiners' priority is to ensure that the candidates have the best experience possible, and to that end teachers made good efforts to liaise with the examiners in advance regarding any issues involved.

Overall standard

Many of the AS students were nervous for this element of the examination, possibly due to the lack of experience of GCSE orals. However, examiners found that candidates were well prepared and are to be congratulated for their efforts, as well as their teachers and language assistants who have worked with them during such difficult times and uncertainty. They were motivated and very keen to do well. The orals are a huge testament to their work ethic and resilience over these past two years.

Presentation

The remit of the task includes a presentation of 3 minutes based on an AS theme related to an aspect of a Spanish-speaking country or community. Once again, teachers had prepared candidates well and the timings were in almost all cases within tolerance. It was agreed at the Briefings that examiners would gently alert the candidate (for example, by pointing at their watch) if it looked as if they were running a risk of going over time and to allow them to move on to their conclusion. In most cases, this was not necessary but where it did happen, the candidates responded well to this gentle hint. There were few cases of overly short presentations but occasionally some were delivered at an unnaturally fast rate which interferes with comfortable assimilation by the examiner.

Presentations were reflective, interesting, and full of personal engagement and a variety of perspectives. These included:

- La historia de la Llorona
- Las Meninas de Velázquez
- Carlos Santana
- España es un país sin Dios
- Los cuentos de niños
- Las telenovelas en España
- El gobierno es tan tonto como don Quijote
- La influencia celta en el norte de España
- El colectivo LGTBIQ+ en España
- El silbo gomero
- El carnaval de la Vijanera
- La lotería de Navidad
- La gestión de la pandemia del Covid 19 en España
- El sistema de salud en Cuba
- El veganismo
- El volcán en La Palma.

The best candidates, rather than giving personal anecdotes, demonstrated detailed knowledge of their chosen topic and analysed the consequences of the information they were relating, to access Band 5.

Conversation

Most candidates were able to talk with ease about a variety of topics relevant to the AS course as well as their own lives and interests. Many candidates also tried to include idiomatic phrases, subjunctive and higher-level phrases into their general conversation in a natural way, thereby accessing the top bands.

One issue which continues to be a subject of debate is the topic of school in relation to the AS Conversation. This topic is no longer deemed appropriate to AS and is now considered an A2 topic. While examiners abide by this some feel uncomfortably constrained by the policy. 'La vida escolar' is a key part of the GCSE syllabus and school is mentioned in the Specification in relation to stresses and challenges of examinations and school-life. This did arise regularly in this year's orals and frequently students raised the topic themselves as is accepted. Students seemed well-versed and usually happy to talk about an issue which is very close to them. The AS Culture and Lifestyle factfile for Listening and Reading has a section on 'La vida escolar y la transición a la vida universitaria'. AS candidates should be able to talk about their experience of school as a very important, and basic, aspect of their daily life. This has nothing to do with the more abstract and objective discussion of education and the world of work that is expected at A2, as reflected in the A2 Listening and Reading fact-file for this area. It would seem useful if this matter could be clarified for future years for the benefit of examiners, teachers, and candidates alike.

Assessment Unit AS 2 Listening, Reading and Use of Language

This paper was well received by the 478 candidates who presented themselves for this examination and was successful in discriminating between candidates of different abilities. All three sections of the paper enabled students to access the full range of marks and the best candidates were able to score high marks. There were also questions which were very accessible to all candidates meaning that the less able could be credited for what they knew.

Section A Listening

There was a wide range of scores in this section, ranging from 1 to 25 out of 25. Several were able to score full marks. A small number of candidates infringed the rubric by answering in the wrong language. Teachers should remind students of the importance of adhering to the rubric to avoid losing all the marks in a question.

Q1 The question on the topic of 'La Siesta' was generally very well done.

Some vocabulary such as: 'el ser humano' 'disminuir' 'padecer' and 'doblaban' proved difficult.

In Part (e) the spelling of 'vigorosidad' and 'elasticidad' caused problems but the examiners were sympathetic as long as the word was recognisable. Many could not be awarded the second mark by writing 'delacara' as one word as this showed lack of comprehension.

Q2 The question on 'Me llamo Gennet' produced a wide variety of marks with some candidates being awarded full marks. However, some less able struggled to complete this question.

In Part (c) some could not be awarded the second mark as they failed to mention the fact that Carmen was working in Gennet's orphanage.

(f) Some wrote 'title' rather than degree and were unable to get the mark.

(i) 'afrentar la vida' was frequently misinterpreted as 'lead their life' rather than 'cope with life'.

Section B Reading

The reading comprehension on the topic of 'Jóvenes en busca de aventura' was very well answered. As marks are only being awarded for AO2 many candidates gained full marks with ease.

Q1 Some had trouble with Part (e) and Part (f) where they only provided one or two of the points rather than four. Students should be advised to check the number of marks available for each question as this is an indicator of the amount of information required.

Q2 Translation

The translation 'Las ventajas del deporte inclusivo' was by far the most challenging question. It was a testing piece, and many candidates did struggle. Occasionally the result was writing English which simply did not make sense. Translation is an exercise which tests the student's understanding of exactly what the passage means and their ability to then render it in the closest and most correct version of English. While one understands the pressure of time and examination nerves, students should be strongly persuaded of the benefits of time spent at the start reading the passage to grasp the overall sense. Literal translation should be avoided but so should overly free versions which can stray too far from the original. Candidates should try to factor in time for re-reading their final version to ensure it reads well and captures the true sense.

Phrases which proved difficult were:

- 'a sus padres se les pidió'
- 'este deporte en sí'
- 'no se arrepiente de'
- 'está encantada' (often rendered as 'she's in love')
- 'es una más'
- 'normalización en el trato'
- 'campo' was often wrongly translated as 'countryside'
- 'sensible' was frequently translated as 'sensible' rather than 'sensitive'
- 'lucha' was too often translated as 'fighting'

Section C Use of Language

There was a very wide variety of performances in this section. There was evidence that many students had been well prepared and had thoroughly studied the relevant grammar. However, some candidates showed a weak command of grammatical structures and struggled to even attempt some questions.

- Q1** The majority handled the change of tenses well. The main issue here was the use of accents.
- Q2** It was pleasing to see the number of candidates who successfully provided the correct form of the subjunctive. However, this question proved difficult for others.
- Q3** Genders were generally well known.
- Q4** In this question on adjectives there was a clear distinction between stronger and weaker candidates.
- Q5** The translation of five sentences from English to Spanish was a good discriminator and allowed some candidates to shine.

Structures which proved difficult were:

- 'acabar de + infinitive'
- 'me encanta + infinitive'
- 'tener frío' and 'estar cansado'
- 'jugar' was frequently used instead of 'tocar'
- Many candidates struggled to spell 'cuatrocientos'

The overall performance in this unit was good given the unusual circumstances schools had been facing and the reduced time which students have had with their teachers in the classroom.

Assessment Unit AS 3 Extended Writing

Overall, there were no issues with this paper. Candidates seemed to find it accommodating and offering a sufficient range of accessible questions that tested their knowledge of the texts. As usual, the popularity of the different texts varies though it must be said that all four texts have their devotees. *Solas* continues to be perhaps the most popular, closely followed by *El Bola*. The popularity of *La lengua de las mariposas* seems to be rising as teachers and students experience this rich, moving and beautifully crafted film. The novel *Como agua para chocolate* is the choice of many and proves to be amenable to good analyses that garner high marks.

This paper presents candidates with a considerable challenge, coming to terms with a sophisticated text, dissecting the question and producing an answer that is succinct and focused yet with sufficient detail to fully respond to the question, and all in the target language. Candidates arrive at the examination, in most cases, with a very detailed familiarity with the film or book and also a mental bank of prepared material on a wide variety of aspects of the work studied, and, with the help of both, must fashion a well-structured, well-written analysis of the question asked. No mean feat. This cohort of students with much less experience of formal examinations should be congratulated on their efforts and their overall success in coping with such a tall order.

The strategy required is the same as always. Good candidates will read the question carefully, rather than rush to a pre-prepared response. The bullet points provide a general scaffolding for the answer so, in the main, at AS it is rare to see poorly structured answers. Most candidates, too, are good at dealing evenly with each bullet point. Occasionally, a candidate might lose sight of the importance of answering the headline question, and instead focus too much on speaking to the bullet points themselves, with the result that the answer follows the bullet points but does not fully address the question. This was sometimes an issue with Question 1 Part (a) where candidates were able to address the bullet points but not always in the context of the theme of loneliness.

Candidates are now well versed in the importance of a good introduction and a good conclusion. The better candidates avoid the overly general introduction which bears no direct relation to the question. In some cases, examiners noticed a repetitiveness in some of these introductions which suggested that all candidates in that centre had been encouraged to preface their responses in this way. Teachers should avoid such strategies among their students. In such a time and word restricted assessment as this, relevance is vital and any material that is not contributing to a focused argument makes it harder for the candidate to access the highest bands.

Introductions and conclusions should never be perfunctory, a mere formality, something to get down prior to tackling the question. Rather they should provide an early statement and a focused resumé of the candidate's response to the question. For that reason, an introduction that merely rephrases the question is to be avoided. This can also apply to conclusions. So if a question asks: ¿Qué importancia tienen los profesores según la película?, rather than say simply that 'los profesores son muy importantes según la película' or an equally obvious statement of purpose, 'en este ensayo voy a demostrar lo importantes que son los profesores', a good introduction will be a brief statement of what the candidate thinks the question is implying, possibly highlighting how the film deals with this particular teacher's relationship to his pupil as an illustration of the broader issue of the importance of education during the Second Republic. Again, for a question like Question 3 Part (a), rather than say: 'En este ensayo voy a analizar cómo evoluciona el carácter de Pablo en la película', it might be better to start by saying something like: 'La película muestra cómo Pablo, un chico maltratado por su padre violento, consigue liberarse del abuso con la ayuda de su amigo Alfredo y el ejemplo de la familia de este'.

Finally, while the answers follow an essay format, the conditions of the examination mean that the candidate should not try to replicate the long format of a normal essay but rather go straight to the point and seek concision and focus.

Solas

Question 1 Part (a) was popular choice and deceptively testing. While the bullet points focused on the central character, María, and familiar areas of her experience dealt with by the film, the headline question asked not just about María's loneliness but how the film portrayed the theme. Many candidates were able to speak of the loneliness experienced by other characters as well as María, and how it could be observed through their situation and interaction with her. Weaker responses tended to give general information on the bullet point and either omit to mention loneliness or perhaps mention it in a perfunctory way. Thus, while candidates showed some knowledge of the film, they could not access the upper bands for which addressing the question, appropriate knowledge and focus are required.

Question 1 Part (b) was well done by many. Each of the male characters was reasonably well understood. Weaker responses tended to merely enumerate the characteristics of the men concerned. Better responses were able to build those more descriptive elements into a more coherent argument about male behaviour in contemporary Spain. The question deliberately did not mention don Emilio to encourage focus on other male representatives, but that did not preclude mention of him, and many good answers did manage to weave in nice references to him as a positive counterpoint to the abusive father.

La lengua de las mariposas

This film is becoming a firm favourite with many. Question 2 Part (a) was the more popular choice of question. This was not without its challenges. While the focus was on the last moments of the film, it gave scope for some reference to the context explaining those moments. Candidates, in the main, understood the state of confusion the arrest produced in the mind of Moncho and had a good understanding of the conflicting pressures on his young mind from the affection and admiration he had for his teacher and the loyalty and obedience to his mother. The last bullet point focused on Moncho's final words and actions and, here too, the candidates showed a good grasp of what happened. Interpretations of Moncho's use of don Gregorio's taught vocabulary and the insults urged by his desperate mother varied. The better candidates tended to see this as an external representation of the competing forces in a mind too young to fully comprehend, whereas weaker responses read less convincing messages such as this 'proved' that Moncho and don Gregorio 'were still good friends at the end'. As usual the better candidates had a more mature grasp of the historical context. This was important for question b. Knowledge of the historical context, heavily alluded to throughout the film, was needed for a response to access the higher bands. Weaker answers tended to focus on how important don Gregorio was to Moncho and recount the highlights of their relationship at a very basic descriptive level. Better candidates were able to set the role of don Gregorio as a representative of the enlightened values of the Republic in early twentieth-century Spain. Some candidates tended to see the message of education in too wide a sense and speak too generally of the film as emphasizing the importance of teachers. While this is an interpretation, we can all endorse and as teachers take comfort from, a greater attention to the specifics of the film would have been more beneficial to those candidates in terms of access to the higher bands.

El Bola

Question 3 Part (a) was the more popular choice and allowed candidates to show their strong grasp of the story of the film and how Pablo evolves. The better candidates ensured their story-telling was kept to a minimum, serving only to underpin an analysis of how Pablo's character develops.

Question 3 Part (b) was well understood by candidates who were well versed in the insidious nature of the abuse shown in the film, both physical and psychological. The third bullet point proved challenging to many students, even though a significant part of the film is the sensitive way it handles the difficulty, but also the vital importance, of revealing the problem and ensuring it is properly reported.

Como agua para chocolate

Question 4 Part (a) was still a popular choice in this section, though perhaps Part (b) because of its clear focus attracted more takers. In Part (a) some sense of the socio-historical context of the novel was necessary for access to the top bands. The novel is set during the Mexican Revolution in the 1910s and narrated from the perspective of a 'modern' woman of the 1990s. Many answers simply focused on the repressiveness of the environment in the La Garza household under Mamá Elena. Better candidates were able to see Tita's story in a wider context of a changing situation for women in a country transitioning. In this sense, Gertrudis' rebellion, Tita's more evolving attitude and Rosaura's entrenched attitudes take on a wider resonance.

Question 4 Part (b) was a popular question and most candidates showed their good grasp of the characteristics and evolving story of Mamá Elena, in particular her relationship with Tita. The better candidates were able to develop more fully and meaningfully the third bullet point.

Assessment Unit A2 1 Speaking

Visiting arrangements

Examiners found the centres to be welcoming, especially given the circumstances surrounding Covid.

As at AS level, it is to be acknowledged that centres can struggle to find accommodation away from the hustle and bustle of school life but quite a few candidates had to perform with a high volume of background noise at break and lunchtime. Schools should liaise with the examiner to ensure that the candidates have the best experience possible.

Discussion

It would seem timely to remind schools that the discussion should be on a general theme and should not focus on a single film, text or individual. Texts and films can be used to illustrate a cultural aspect, but the discussion must have a broader focus. For example, there were some very stimulating discussions on topics such as *El duende del flamenco y Lorca* or *Picasso y el Guernica*, where the candidates did manage to use particular works or figures, as a starting point to a wider cultural or socio-political/historical discussion.

In many cases, candidates seem to prefer topics connected to the culture, customs and traditions of Spain or Spanish speaking countries, for example *La Tomatina* or *Las Fallas*, although these topics can lend themselves better to the AS presentation than the A2 discussion. On the other hand, many candidates succeeded in lifting the level in these discussions, with a careful choice of bullet points.

Many other discussions were interesting and full of personal engagement and a variety of perspectives. These included:

- *El desembarco en la Bahía de Cochinos.*
- *El papel de la mujer bajo Franco*
- *El Camino de Santiago*

- *La revolución cubana*
- *La Residencia de Estudiantes en Madrid (Lorca, Dalí etc)*
- *El mar y las Islas Canarias*
- *El día de los Muertos*
- *La discriminación de las mujeres escritoras*
- *La influencia musulmana en la lengua y cultura españolas*
- *Los narcocorridos*
- *La movida madrileña*
- *Las mujeres y el deporte en España*
- *Racismo y desigualdad contra las mujeres en Chile*

The more complex topics often offered better chances of expressing insights. Stronger candidates demonstrated detailed knowledge of their chosen topic and analysed the information they were relating, to access Band 5. A note of caution would be that candidates should take care to answer the question they are being asked, rather than merely presenting a series of mini monologues.

Conversation

Here the conversations tend to focus initially on the candidate's life and interests with gradual progression to issues more suited to A2. The performance of candidates for this part of the examination showed very good comprehension skills and generally competent pronunciation in most candidates, although some examiners noted some issues with certain sounds, words with *h* in them and the pronunciation of the *v*. In general, candidates deployed a good range of advanced grammar and tenses, including colloquial expressions. It is also worth noting that candidates who have prepared and learned vocabulary and expressions to respond to more abstract topics such as 'the environment', 'politics' or 'social injustice' tend to feel more relaxed and in control when responding to the examiner's questions. They were also able to direct the conversation to those aspects they felt more confident talking about. Candidates were offered the opportunity to talk about the A2 topics if they did not introduce them themselves.

Overall standard

Examiners found that candidates were generally well prepared and are to be congratulated on the standard of their performance, given that they have done neither a GCSE nor an AS oral in the past two years. Teachers and language assistants also deserve credit for their role in preparing pupils, both in terms of content and fluency.

Assessment Unit A2 2 Listening and Reading

As has often been noted, in these questions there is no assessment of AO3 so while unthinking transcription of the original text, either a recording or a written text, is to be discouraged, there is nothing to be gained from paraphrasing if the original term (or its direct translation) works. Careful reading of the question is always advised as these are carefully crafted to direct attention to the correct information.

Listening

- Q1**
- (a)** Most candidates managed the description of the regulation. Some struggled with the spelling of 'niveles mínimos' but examiners were tolerant if the meaning was clear. Some candidates found more trouble with the criticism. There were problems for some with 'arruina' (e.g., 'ha ruina' etc.). 'Las grandes ventajas' led some to understand 'desventajas' which then led to misunderstanding. While aurally this is understandable, grammatical knowledge should kick in to show that 'las gran desventajas' is impossible. Some omitted the important detail of 'ausencia de ruidos' as one of the main advantages of electric cars.
 - (b)** This was reasonably easy for two points. Some struggled over 'ancianos' and 'discapacidad' in spelling, but examiners, once again, were generous where meaning was understood.
 - (c)** In this answer the numbers were the primary focus but also their clear meaning. For the first point the idea of range was important so 'entre' was needed with 'y': entre 56 y 75. We did allow the hyphenated '56-75' as it implied a range. Some wrote 'sesenta' and some 'setenta y seis'. For the second point it was important to understand the date in full, including the year. This posed no problem to the vast majority. Some idea of it applying to all new electric cars from that date was needed or all electric cars sold from that date. Those who simply said 'afecta a todos los vehículos' lost the point.
 - (d)** This did not produce too many problems. Most got the idea that it disadvantaged a large group in order to protect a relatively small group. A few made the mistake of saying 'un colectivo de personas relativamente pequeñas' which, in addition to being slightly comical, was wrong.
 - (e)** In this answer it was important to get the idea of reduction and private vehicles for one point and increasing the area for pedestrians and/or cyclists for the second point. The examiners were generous with misspelled versions of 'ampliar' if the context made it clear.
- Q2** This question was more challenging. The difficulty for some was understanding who was being talked about and from whose perspective points were made. Thus, while candidates tend to simply transcribe sections from the recording, care was needed to ensure that the actual question was correctly addressed. With the weaker candidates there were signs of not fully understanding some sections of the recording.
- (a)** The points sought here were indignation and apathy. Indignation occasionally presented problems, and some confused it with indignity. Apathy was more easily rendered. A minority said that politicians were apathetic.
 - (b)** Most candidates got this one, but a sizeable number were confused by 'manifiestan', 'pertenecer' and even 'partido político'. Some said political club, some forces. It may be a problem in some cases of candidates, often the stronger ones, thinking they should rephrase. Most got something close to the idea of no longer being interested in voting.

- (c) The first point of doing their work honestly was captured by most without difficulty. Examiners were forgiving with 'honestidad' allowing 'honourably' or 'with honour' but versions like 'take their job seriously' were not accepted. The second point of wishing the politicians take account of what young people think and what they will not accept was difficult for a minority and a range of inaccurate responses were offered.
- (d) This and the following were probably the most challenging and discriminating questions. It was important to understand, for the first point, that it was politicians benefiting businesses when they were in power. Many misunderstood this as benefiting from businesses (which would have been 'beneficiarse de') and then the second point was for the idea that these businesses return the favours to the politicians (in the form of ...) once the (politicians) have left politics/given up their political jobs/careers.
- (e) This was testing too though a pleasingly high number of candidates got it. For the first point it was necessary to say that it refers to someone who is elected/ by the people and (for the second point) then uses that position to find jobs for their friends. Some students added in words like nepotism and cronyism which was impressive, albeit not required.
- (f) This section was tricky but yielded easy points as two out of three. The question asked what the blogger says about the qualifications that politicians have. Therefore, it was not enough to say that politicians should be better qualified but rather that a) since there was an expectation that young people be really well qualified therefore if anything politicians need to be more so and b) that it was terrible that they were not able to speak a foreign language or c) that they were not technologically competent. The vast majority found it straightforward to get the latter two points.
- (g) This question was relatively easy for most candidates. The idea of unkept promises was given in a variety of forms that were accepted (unfulfilled promises, promises made but not followed through on, etc.). The second point was not as easy as it seemed but young people's belief in actions not words was handled well by most candidates. Examiners were generous where possible and even accepted words like 'facts' for 'hechos' which was not quite accurate but, as long as it was accompanied by the 'and not words', we felt it conveyed the sense.
- (h) This was a reasonably easy point, but two ideas were needed. The question asked about 'privileges' plural and most students understood to include official cars and pensions. The word official was insisted on as the idea was of a privilege that goes with the politician's job. A perk. So just saying 'fancy cars' or 'nice cars' was not enough.

Reading

Q1 The gap fill is always a deceptively difficult question, but many can and did score full marks. Part (a) was well answered. Most got the masculine form for Part (b). Part (c) confused some with the temptation to use *de hecho que* but *modo* was the word required. Part (d) did not present too many problems. The subjunctive after *hace que* steered most, correctly, towards *vean*, but a small number were distracted by the incorrect *vuelven*. Part (f) also was straightforward though some were tempted by *haciendo*, confusing the English use of *gerund* where Spanish uses the infinitive. So *confeccionar* was the word needed. Part (g) was done well by most, likewise Part (h) *corriente* and *en* (*tardar en* plus the infinitive) respectively. Part (i) required *dado* which most got. Finally, a pleasing majority got *clasifique* for Part (j).

- Q2** Most found this passage reasonably accessible. By now, most also have cottoned on to the fact that, in the absence of assessment of AO3, there is no penalty for transcription straight from the passage. This detracts from the requirement to be discriminating in the amount of information given but does mean that the answer must be scrutinised to ensure that the information is given in a way that logically and syntactically fits with the question asked. This can catch out the weaker student. It does mean that many examination scripts are presented with an excess of information, often untidily squeezed into the space available. While this is not penalised it does act as a very visible sign of a student who is not giving a carefully considered response to a specific question and it makes the task very arduous for the examiner who must decipher a lot of superfluous and frequently barely legible script. It is, therefore, even more impressive when a good candidate answers with precisely the information requested.
- (a) This question sought three points. For the first point examiners were looking for the three main characteristics of the protagonists, their youth and the high representation from secondary and university level. For point two demanding decisive action from politicians/government was required and for the final point, the idea of climate crisis.
 - (b) was well done but care was needed. The idea of the Summit happening in New York was necessary for the second point but for the first it was necessary to indicate that they were taking advantage of the Summit to draw attention to their cause. Some candidates said that it was the week of strikes that drew attention to their cause.
 - (c) was relatively easy, social media.
 - (d) This caused problems for some. The question asked specifically 'In which country' so it was not enough to say 'Greta Thunberg es una joven sueca'. Most students, however, understood this and knew the word for Sweden. Examiners were extremely generous with minor misspellings of Suecia if the sense was clear. For the age most were able to say 'tenía quince años' but some limited themselves to 'era quinceañera' which was accepted. However, saying 'tiene quince años' lost a mark as it showed misunderstanding of the question and the passage.
 - (e) was relatively straightforward but some confused *parlamento de su país/sueco* with *el parlamento europeo*. In terms of what she was seeking, the adjective *eficaces* was needed in addition to *medidas* as this was an important aspect of the sense.
 - (f) This was well answered.
 - (g) This too was well answered with most getting two of the three possible points.
- Q3** The summary is now quite well done by most students. The clear division in four paragraphs helps candidates to focus on the four salient points. These were:
- 1 the nature of the drug mules' role in a lucrative trade, essential, risky, poorly paid;
 - 2 the change in method from flights to transatlantic cruises, caused by greater checks at European destinations;
 - 3 the international collaboration between UK and Spain and new route; and
 - 4 the outcome, three arrests, amount, nature and value of drug haul and likely sentence.

Most candidates stayed within the word-limit. Most problems centred on those candidates who did not identify the change from flights to cruises. The UK Spain collaboration was not always clearly conveyed. The nature and number of the arrested suspects was confused. Relevant data about the haul was omitted (either amount, value, or type of drug). Occasionally, there was a difficulty judging value of information. Too much detail was given to the damage suffered by the mules by ingesting drugs at the expense of the nature of their overall role. Secondary data, such as the 'vuelos de la coca' reference, was provided while more important details were overlooked. Candidates should be advised to avoid repetition of words wherever possible. It is also important to judge what is less relevant in terms of information.

- Q4** The prose translation is always a discriminating task and an excellent test of manipulating the target language. Candidates coped well in general but there were areas that revealed weak points.
- (a)** The use of the verb *nacer* and the tense presented difficulty for some. Surprisingly the word for 'surname' led many to seek alternatives such as *nombre* or *nombre de familia*. Others tried with '*sobrenombre*' which was inventive but means something else. Many got '*común*' though sometimes misspelt.
 - (b)** 'As' (*como* or *ya que*) was sometimes rendered as '*Porque*' and 'was in danger' and 'had to leave' tested the need for the imperfect *estaba* and the preterite *tuvo que*, but examiners treated this as a minor error if the forms were correct. Morocco/Marruecos was not widely known but examiners were indulgent. Few got the subjunctive after *cualquier trabajo*.
 - (c)** Many found 'Consequently' difficult, and some slipped up slightly in spelling versions like '*como consecuencia*' or '*consequentemente*'. Few got the nice Spanish rendering of '*no le quedó más remedio que...*' for 'he had no alternative'. The most popular choice was a literal '*no tuvo otra alternativa*'. 'That is where ...' was translated by many literally: '*Eso es donde*', rather than '*es/fue allí donde*'. 'Meet' as often is translated as '*encontró*'. Some students knew the need for '*conocer*' but unfortunately struggled with the right form (saying things like '*conozcó*'). Most students managed the 'a' with '*conoció a mi madre*' but in general examiners noted a generalised weakness in knowledge of when to use the personal a. '*otra africana*' was straightforward but some are still tempted to use the article with '*otro*' and capitalise the adjective.
 - (d)** '*Admiro a mis padres*' was well done by most, spoiled only by those who forgot the 'a'. The structure '*lo mucho que han sufrido/sufrieron*' or '*cuánto han sufrido/sufrieron*'. Some used '*padecer*' for suffer which was impressive in one way but inappropriate here.
 - (e)** Many got the verb '*temer*' and knew the need for a present subjunctive or a future. But even some of these were let down by their grasp of the correct verb forms (as noted earlier with '*conocer*'). Candidates coped well with this sentence in terms of vocabulary and syntax with the weaker students maybe falling down in spelling or command of the pronominal form '*preocuparse*'.
 - (f)** '*Me veo*' was used by many, which was pleasing but many others struggled with this simple reflexive structure and produced ungrammatical versions such as '*veo a mí*'. 'Bridge' was not universally known and some who knew it confused the gender. Some ingenious alternatives were attempted such as '*vínculo*' and even slightly off versions such as '*la puerta*' or '*el puerto*' were valiant attempts and better than leaving gaps. Others tried variations on '*conexión*'. The seemingly simple '*dos culturas, la africana y la española*' led some to forget the feminine agreement and lower case in the geographical adjectives.

Examiners agreed that this was a challenging translation with many tests of grammar and syntax, but also with many relatively simple segments where marks could be picked up. For the challenging areas examiners as always made every effort to credit efforts to paraphrase intelligently words or structures that proved difficult and treated sympathetically errors that were the result of valiant attempts to render a difficult term or offer a close-but-not-quite synonym.

Assessment Unit A2 3 Extended Writing

This paper was favourably received and certainly students seemed to find it accessible. No question posed any significant issue for any candidate with a sound knowledge of the text. As was indicated for the same unit at AS, this paper presents a considerable challenge to candidates to grapple with a major work of fiction, write an essay in the foreign language and do so concisely. Candidates deserve credit given that it was their first experience of a formal examination and at a crucial and high level.

The overwhelming majority of candidates knew how to structure an essay-type answer, with attention paid to an introduction, an argument linking usually three or four main points and a short conclusion. Comments made about introductions and conclusions at AS level apply here too. Introductions and conclusions can enhance an essay, adding focus and showing how the candidate has understood and taken an opinion on the question. An unfocused, over-general, 'catch-all', pre-prepared introduction, sometimes incorporating a paraphrase of the question, not only contributes little to the answer but sends an early negative signal to the reader. In the context of a formal essay where you have time, it is often the case that a well-crafted introduction is written at the end when you know what you intend to write. Here that is not necessary nor is there time. The best introduction is a short analysis of what the question means and some idea of what you intend to say about it.

The examiners were, overall, impressed with the candidates' understanding of the texts, their grasp of detail and themes, and their ability to illustrate relevant ideas with illustrative and pertinent quotations.

In terms of popularity, Lorca continues to be the choice of the overwhelming majority of centres, followed by a healthy minority of takers for Sender, a very small number of followers of Neruda and, sadly, once again, Muñoz Molina struggles to establish a fan base.

La casa de Bernarda Alba

The two questions complemented each other, Part (a) focusing on a seemingly minor but key character and Part (b) addressing a much wider theme of the play that most students would have been expecting.

Those candidates who chose the question on María Josefa had a good knowledge of her role, her appearances and the symbolic import of her appearance and her words. Some candidates, while familiar with key points relating to the character, had difficulty showing an understanding of how her story fitted into the fabric of the play. Sometimes there is a tendency to make statements without fully explaining what is meant. In terms of name symbolism many suggested her name evoked Mary and Joseph, the parents of Christ, but without adding in what way this would make it significant. The better candidates were able to weave those details along with a good commentary on the significance of her appearances in the play and what she says. There was also among the better candidates a more rounded understanding of the central importance of María Josefa's madness, not only as a vehicle to allow harsh truths to be conveyed but perhaps more significantly as related to the broader theme of the fate of women, tying in with details of Adelaida's grandmother and Martirio's 'No habléis de locos' in Act II.

Candidates were well prepared for Part (b) and most produced good affirmative responses to the question asked. Occasionally, some candidates tried to shift the attention to other issues such as class inequality which they tried to justify as part of the same theme. This rarely worked and led to unhelpful digressions. Candidates should remember that keeping a tight focus on the specifics of the question will always work to their benefit.

Réquiem por un campesino español

A minority of centres choose this text and their enjoyment of the text shone through from many of their detailed and convincing responses. Part (a) was slightly more popular than Part (b). The wording of Part (a) lent itself to a chronological account but most candidates knew to do more than merely tell the story and there were signs of good understanding of key moments and stages of Paco's political evolution. The better candidates also paid attention to the wording which encouraged focus on both the process and the consequences. The question on religion was also well handled with the candidates able to treat the novel's representation of religion via its principal representative, Mosén Millán, as weak, hypocritical, and unable to provide strong moral and practical support to the community when faced with social problems and political threats.

Neruda: Veinte Poemas

Only a small number of candidates tackled the poetry. The questions focused on aspects of Neruda's poems that are quite well-known and the candidates showed a good understanding of what was required. One challenge of the poetry, however, is the even greater demand it makes on the candidate's ability to illustrate interpretation with references to the text. Within the collection, each poem presents a different scenario and, in most cases, a specific overall 'message'. Therefore, it is misleading to cite a series of isolated lines from different poems referring to, say, *crepúsculo*, without some sense of what that poem has to say overall. Treated thus in isolation, the analyses lacked real validity or, at times, lacked credibility without the context of the corresponding poem. The better answers came from those candidates who thoughtfully chose a couple of representative poems for various aspects of the issue.

Overall performance and use of language

The candidates in the main showed an admirable ability to craft an answer in the target language with good structures and command of vocabulary. On some occasions, the choice of register was ill-advised as when it was noted that 'a María Josefa le faltaba un tornillo' or that 'está como una cabra'. Such comments, though inappropriate and to be avoided, made the examiners smile, nonetheless. It is good to see students taking an interest in and learning slang and colloquialisms, but they should know not to use them in written examinations.

All considered, examiners were unanimous in their relief at seeing a return to normal examining arrangements but especially to see how well students had managed in extremely challenging circumstances to keep to a generally high standard and cope with the rigours of a return to formal assessment procedures.

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