

PRINCIPAL COURSE SPANISH

Paper 9781/01

Speaking

Key messages

In the best presentations and discussions candidates:

- presented their introduction naturally, even if pre-learnt
- demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the topic
- provided evidence of research
- showed interest in and personal engagement with the topic
- supported opinions with evidence
- avoided sweeping statements.

Candidates should be prepared to:

- be interrupted
- be asked to support statements
- be asked unexpected questions
- be asked about the sub-headings in a different order to the one they submitted
- give examples
- be stretched linguistically to give of their best.

General comments

The general level of spoken Spanish this year was high. The majority of candidates were able to maintain a conversation in fairly accurate and fluent language. There were some recurring mistakes which are listed below.

Before the first part of the test (discussion of an article and related themes), candidates used their preparation time well, considering the issue in question and other issues that might arise in conversation. Most candidates were able to sustain an interesting discussion and use the language of argument well. Candidates were asked to express opinions and to substantiate, elaborate, clarify or qualify them. There were some excellent performances and many were highly satisfactory.

Most candidates had prepared their topics very thoroughly for the second part of the test (prepared topic discussion). The best candidates demonstrated a high quality of detailed research using a variety of sources. Detailed and extensive factual knowledge was combined with clear analysis and well-founded opinion. There were a very small number of under-prepared presentations, in which candidates had only a vague knowledge of some crucial aspects of their topic.

The discussions mostly flowed naturally, without an excessive use of recited, pre-learnt material. Candidates responded readily to the questions asked with suitable replies. The strongest performances were characterised by the ability to tackle unexpected questions with great aplomb and honesty and to engage in spontaneous conversation.

Most candidates also displayed an excellent ability to keep calm and collected and did not allow nerves to interfere with their performance.

Comments on specific questions

Part I: Newspaper article and related themes

Candidates are required to choose one of four unseen newspaper articles and take twenty minutes to prepare. Candidates will read through the article, making a note of their responses and opinions about it,

and think about which issues might arise from the topic presented in the article. They should also consider the general heading on the card and give some thought to possible areas of discussion.

Candidates present an overview of the article for one minute followed by a discussion lasting up to 3 minutes talking about their opinions on the text and the issues arising from it. The discussion then broadens according to the general heading on the card. The themes this year were: Human relationships (*Proponen matrimonios temporales en México*), Scientific and technological innovation (*¿Está justificada la experimentación con animales?*), Education (*Protestas estudiantiles en Chile*) and War and peace (*Argentina denunciará ante la ONU la militarización de las Islas Malvinas*). The second and third themes, Science and Education, were the most popular choices, with candidates writing extensively on each and ably supporting their views. Candidates who chose the first theme expressed strong views on the subject. Candidates who chose the fourth theme performed well with some expressing a personal interest or connection with The Falklands.

Some candidates were rather nervous during this part of the test, but this did not affect their performance. In many cases, candidates rose admirably to the challenge and relaxed into a spontaneous and natural discussion. Other candidates found it more difficult to improvise well.

The majority of performances showed good discussion skills and considerable resourcefulness. The very best candidates played an active role in the discussion and introduced new topics themselves. Weaker candidates were unable to support their views with arguments after an initial yes or no answer, and found why? and how? questions difficult. They tended to use simple statements and repeat ideas.

Part II: Prepared oral topic

Most topics were well-suited to a discussion of about 8 minutes, being neither too broad nor too narrow. Some wide-ranging topics were approached in an intelligent and selective way, for example, one candidate who chose a lengthy historical period, concentrated on particular aspects of that period, whilst touching more lightly on other points which worked well.

The majority of topics fell under one of two broad categories: history and politics, and culture and the arts. Many presentations explored issues of current interest, for example the growing movement for independence in Catalonia, doping in Spanish cycling, and unemployment in Spain. Some of the more familiar topics, for example, Picasso, Almodóvar, the Cuban Revolution and drugs in Latin America were approached in an original or personal way.

Less popular topics chosen were sport, social problems such as drugs and alcohol, the economy, science (including health, medicine and the environment) and religion and philosophy. There were some unique topics, for example, a philosophical text, Valencian porcelain Lladró, a Hispanic-Arab doctor, and some lesser-known artists and musicians (Tàrraga, Manu Chao, Tàpies).

The best candidates went beyond the purely descriptive and provided analysis or a personal view and supported their insights convincingly. Many presentations produced excellent discussions when an element of controversy or debate was brought into them. The contentious aspect could be implicit in the title, or introduced under one of the headings.

Quality of language

Pronunciation

Pronunciation was good overall and did not impair communication. Candidates could improve their pronunciation by avoiding the most frequent errors which were:

- Pronunciation of *u* in words like *ataque, conquista guerra*.
- Anglicized initial vowels in words like *unidad, Europa, usar*.
- Soft *g* in words like *religión, ideología, legislar*.
- Voiced *s* in words like *decisión, desastre, represión*.
- Stressing the wrong syllable or vowel: *democracia, economia, pais, bombardeos*.
- Aspirated *h*: *hombre, hablar, ahorro*.

Candidates should learn the pronunciation of words and names directly related to the topic they are presenting.

Grammar

Candidates could improve their grammar by attending to the following mistakes:

- Failure to conform to gender and number agreements between noun and adjective.
- Wrong gender, for example, *problema, tema, país, situación and solución*.
- Confusion between *ser/estar/haber*.
- Conjugation errors: missed subjunctives, preterite for imperfect, wrong person ending, radical changes in wrong tense (*empezó*).
- Incorrect use of *gustar*.
- Inability to distinguish between certain pairs of words: *nada/ningún, este/esto, bueno/bien, para/por, pero/sino, muerte/muerto*.
- Omission of s in the hundreds: **noveciento, *cuatrociento*.
- Use of cardinal instead of ordinal for kings and queens: *Carlos *tres, Fernando *ocho* instead of *tercero, octavo*.
- Wrong adjective endings: *violente, ridiculoso*.

Less common mistakes were the (very rare) unconjugated infinitives and some invented participles: **hacido, *ponido, *vido*.

Vocabulary

The very best candidates demonstrated a wide ranging vocabulary which was sophisticated, accurate and specific. Weaker candidates tended to use more general and common words, for example *llevar a cabo/realizar actividades nocivas/perjudiciales* rather than *hacer cosas malas*. The following pairs of words were often confused:

- *Policía/política*
- *Tiempo/hora*
- *Derecho/derecha*
- *Nombre/número*

Invented words, modelled on English, were also used: *resultado, demostraciones, involucados*.

Las personas was often heard in place of the more idiomatic *la gente*.

PRINCIPAL COURSE SPANISH

Paper 9781/02

Reading and Listening

Key messages

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- focus on the required information and communicate it precisely in their answers
- convey the required information in unambiguous language.

General comments

This is a mixed-skills paper which allows candidates to show their Spanish-language skills in Reading and Listening. Candidates have 2 hours 15 minutes to complete the paper. They are advised to spend 1 hour 15 minutes on the Reading exercises and 1 hour on the Listening exercises. They may choose the order in which they prefer to tackle the exercises. Some very good responses were seen in both parts. On the whole a good level of understanding was expressed in relevant responses. Many candidates demonstrated a wide-ranging, accurate use of vocabulary and an ability to use complex sentence structures.

Comments on specific questions

Part I: Reading

There are two passages with a combined limit of 600 words. The first one has reading comprehension questions in Spanish requiring answers in Spanish. Although these answers are not assessed for quality of language, candidates must not “lift” phrases from the passage. The second passage has questions in English that require answers in English. The third exercise is a re-translation from English into Spanish of a paragraph of about 75 words based on the stimulus of the second reading passage.

Reading Text 1 was a passage about the number of young Spanish graduates who unsuccessfully seek work in Spain and try their luck in Latin America instead. The test is marked positively and the objective is to communicate the correct response in the candidates' own words. Full sentences are not required in the answers but the correct information must be clearly conveyed. Marks are only lost for accent errors if they affect meaning; slight spelling errors are accepted if the word is recognisable, but not if the spelling error produces another word.

The majority of candidates displayed a good understanding of the Spanish material and were able to write their answers with an appropriate standard of Spanish language. For **Question 1** candidates needed to explain the situation of the present generation of young qualified Spaniards. Most candidates identified the correct information regarding the lack of jobs. Some candidates answered **Question 2** incorrectly. Candidates were required to explain when the Spanish economy is expected to improve. Correct answers included reference to *cada vez más tarde* or *en un futuro cada vez más lejano*. Weaker candidates simply said “in the future” and others copied out material from the text without answering the question, such as *recuperar la actividad* or *reducir el paro*. For **Question 3** most candidates understood the reference to the switch from analogue to digital technology. Some candidates did not explain the effect this would have on Angel's work. Other candidates copied the expression *una vocación temporal*, without explaining what it meant. In response to **Question 4**, stronger candidates explained that most migrants intended to stay for only a short time. For **Question 5** candidates needed to use their own words to explain the phrase *la burocracia te aplasta*. **Question 6** required candidates to understand the effect that the long distances and lack of safety might have on the number of Spaniards going to Latin America. Most candidates succeeded in identifying *pobreza* or *hambre* in **Question 7**. Many candidates did not give all the information required to explain *beneficio mutuo* and gain the two marks available for **Question 8**.

Reading Text 2 was an article discussing what happens in Barcelona when the local football team is playing an important match. The material was generally understood by the candidates. There were some excellent responses to the English questions which showed fluency and eloquence. Most candidates gained the two marks available for **Question 9**. Some candidates did not understand what the figure of 60% referred to in **Question 10**. Some candidates did not understand the essential vocabulary needed to answer **Question 11**, thinking that *atascos* meant “attacks” or “muggings” and that *bocina* was a “car bonnet” or a “musical instrument”. Weak English expression led some candidates to lose marks in **Question 12**, by referring to *duplica* as “duplicate” rather than “double”, which is the correct meaning in this context. Others confused *seis* and *siete*. Many candidates answered **Question 13** correctly. Some candidates did not know the football expression *lleva la delantera en el marcador*; even if this is not known, the answer could be deduced from the word *delante*, rather than saying “when the team is losing”.

Reading Text 3 was a paragraph in English based on the material in **Reading Text 2**. Candidates had to translate this into Spanish. The previous text contained words and phrases that could help them, but generally some manipulation of language was required.

Most candidates performed well in this exercise and there were some very good translations. Some common errors included: incorrect use of the perfect tense (*siempre he dicho*); producing a full negative sentence (*¡No encontrarían ninguna resistencia en absoluto!*); missed subjunctives (*esté, sea, se televisé*); necessary articles (*La contaminación* and *unas estadísticas*) and a present participle not known (*conduciendo*). Some candidates did not know the difference between transitive and intransitive verbs (*reduce* and *se reduce*), and others did not find the exact adverb for “tremendously”. *Mucho* is not enough, a stronger adverb such as *tremendamente*, *muchísimo* or *enormemente* is needed to convey the meaning. Candidates should check through their translation to make sure that every word has been covered; a few candidates missed whole phrases or sentences.

Part II: Listening

There are three passages with a combined limit of 700 to 800 words. The first has listening comprehension questions in Spanish requiring answers in Spanish, questions for the second passage are in English and require answers in English. Answers in the target language are not assessed for quality of language. Candidates then listen to a third recording of about 250 words and summarise it in English using bullet points for guidance (maximum of 100 words).

The extract for **Listening Text 1** was an interview with the Galician film director Sandra Sánchez. The test is marked positively and the objective is to communicate the correct response in candidates' own words. Vocabulary items need to be understood but they should be conveyed in an answer that is a logical response to the question. Full sentences are not required but all the correct information must be conveyed. Marks are only lost for accent errors if they affect meaning and slight spelling errors are accepted if the word is recognisable, but not if the spelling error makes another word. Candidates understood the material well and produced sound responses. Many candidates performed very well in this exercise and no specific question caused any particular difficulty.

In **Listening Text 2** candidates heard a report about nuclear power in Europe. Candidates understand the material well and produced some good, thoughtful answers. Some candidates did not convey the information clearly enough in English to show their comprehension of the Spanish material. Most candidates gave the correct information for **Question 22**. Some candidates mistakenly understood *averías* to refer to “birds”. Similarly, **Question 23** was generally answered well, except for a few candidates who did not understand the meaning of *la tercera vez en lo que va de mes* and wrote “the third time in a matter of months”. **Question 24** was generally answered well. Some candidates did not gain the mark for **Question 25** because they omitted the fact about “E.U. countries”. The remaining two questions were mostly understood and answered correctly.

Listening Text 3 involved an interview with a Spanish scientist. The test required a summary of his views in no more than 100 words in English. There were four bullet points of information to be covered. The full gist of the passage needs to be understood, detail is required and it needs to be well selected. The material should be expressed concisely, read well and be informative. Length is important; a summary with fewer than 80 words is likely to be self-penalising, as all the above criteria are unlikely to be met. On the other hand, summaries that exceed the word limit cannot achieve maximum marks for the task. Many candidates wrote excellent summaries and appeared to be familiar with the vocabulary and concepts in the extract. The best candidates produced summaries that demonstrated understanding of the gist and detail of the original Spanish extract, were able to infer ideas and showed an ability to select key facts and communicate this information concisely. Some candidates performed less well on this task than on **Listening Texts 1** and **2**.

A number of these candidates found some of the concepts in the text difficult and others were let down by weak English expression. Some wrote “inversion” rather than “investment” for the Spanish *inversión*, “university careers” rather than “university courses” for the Spanish *carreras universitarias*, and “investigation” rather than “research” for the Spanish *investigación*. Candidates need to know these “false friends” and give the appropriate English version. Very weak candidates wrote a list of isolated phrases that they heard in the text without attempting to make sense of them in coherent statements. Although continuous English prose is not required and bullet point answers are acceptable, they must contain enough information, have logical links and be coherent.

Advice and Guidance to candidates

Listening and Reading Comprehension

What comprehension skills are required?

- The material for the texts may come from any of the Topic areas in the syllabus;
- the material could be factual or abstract;
- inference – you have to work out the answers;
- manipulation - you are expected to manipulate the language;
- explanation – you will need to explain;
- synthesis – you may need to combine points of information;
- full information is always required – answers may be long;
- a high level of quality of language is expected.

Answering Spanish questions set on the texts

- Full sentences are not required. However, the full information asked for must be given;
- highlight the question words (¿quién?, ¿cómo?, ¿cuándo?, etc.), so that it is clear what information is needed;
- note how many marks are awarded for each question, so that no essential information is omitted;
- try to use your own words and do not reproduce the language of the texts word for word;
- practise building a wide Spanish vocabulary, so that you are at ease using synonyms for words in the texts;
- your Spanish answers must clearly make sense.

Answering English questions set on the texts

- Write your answers clearly in English and check your spelling;
- beware of “false friends” (words that look alike in Spanish and English but have different meanings);
- realise that some Spanish words can often have two meanings; choose the correct one;
- find the appropriate English word, not necessarily one that looks similar to the Spanish word;
- make your whole answer make sense to someone reading it;
- make sure that you give all the information required; do not omit any essential information.

Re-translation for Reading Task 3

- Study the Spanish stimulus passage in Reading Task 2 carefully: it gives vocabulary and structures to be used and re-worked;
- read the English passage and understand what is required;
- study the setting, context and tone of the extracts;
- use sensible and intelligent guesses where vocabulary is not known;
- never leave gaps;
- think carefully about the grammar of the sentence being translated; tenses are often translated incorrectly, notice adjectival agreements and link pronouns with the nouns to which they refer;
- beware of literal translation and poor/meaningless Spanish;
- beware paraphrasing – do not stray too far away from the original;
- do not be afraid to change word order, parts of speech, etc;
- remember that accuracy is more important than creativity.

Summary skills for Listening Text 3

What are summary skills?

- all the bullet points have been covered
- the gist of the passage has been understood
- there is detail and it is well selected
- the material is expressed concisely
- the material reads well and is informative
- there is no incorrect information

Advice on summary skills

Writing a good summary is a matter of regular practice and also of acquiring the correct technique. An unsuccessful attempt at a summary may be due to lack of understanding of the original text, but usually it is the way the exercise has been tackled that causes problems.

- Listen to the passage until you have a good idea of what the whole text is about;
- do not start summarising (or even translating) every sentence; you will not be discarding the less significant details and you will quickly run out of words;
- make rough notes on the question paper; you are not likely to have time to write out a full version of the summary and then write out a clean copy;
- it is often not necessary to know the meaning of every word – do not panic if you do not understand something;
- remember this is a summary – be selective – you cannot include every bit of information;
- make sure that you cover all the bullet points;
- spread the words: it is a common error to say too much about the first half of a passage and too little (or nothing at all) about the last parts;
- “prune” written summaries, removing unnecessary words without deleting the main points that you wish to convey;
- absolutely stay within the word limit – do not exceed 100 words;
- check the accuracy of everything you have written.

The quality of your Spanish language

- Essential Spanish grammar knowledge is required; you should aim to respond in accurate language;
- be able to use all Spanish tenses, in particular the present, preterite, imperfect and conditional, both regular and irregular;
- be able to use tenses with all persons, not just the first person;
- be able to switch between the first and third persons, as this is often required in comprehension passages;
- use pronouns correctly, in particular *le* and *se*, and be able to switch from first person to third person pronouns and adjectives with ease (e.g. *mi* to *su* and *mío* to *suyo*, etc.);
- use *gustar* and similar verbs properly in all tenses;
- apply the correct articles and adjectival endings (e.g. *un problema*, *cinco rosas rojas*, etc.);
- know when accents are important (e.g. *trabajo* or *trabajó*? *esta*, *esta* or *ésta*?);
- be familiar with the subjunctive mood: know when and how to use it successfully;

PRINCIPAL COURSE SPANISH

Paper 9781/03

Writing and Usage

Key messages

There were a number of superb performances at the very top of the range and overall performance was very good. Candidates must ensure that their writing is legible as credit can only be given for material which can be read.

General comments

The majority of candidates were well prepared for the examination and the overall standard of work was comparable to previous sessions. A system of positive marking is used, rewarding both accuracy and ambition.

Comments on specific questions

Part I: Discursive essay

Question 1

Candidates are given a choice of five essay titles and have to write a response of 350–450 words in Spanish. The essay is marked for accuracy, linguistic range and the development and organisation of ideas.

The general standard of essays was high. The very best responses used a wide range of vocabulary and structures to convey ideas and arguments which were effectively organised and illustrated with relevant examples. Many candidates showed a good sense of idiom. Weaker candidates chose an essay title which they could say something about in English, but they did not have the relevant topic vocabulary necessary to do so in Spanish. Some candidates gave introductions that were too long which altered the effectiveness of the argument they presented. Candidates need to indicate the question they are attempting to answer preferably at the beginning of their essay.

- (a) This was a popular choice. Candidates showed good knowledge of the topic in a variety of interpretations of the question. Some considered the pressure young people are under; others focused more closely on their own experiences or the experience of people they know.
- (b) Fewer candidates chose this option. The best answers gave a considered account of the investment needed and the excellent results achieved by the Games, with some discussion as to how much it has contributed to the development of East London and to what extent the legacy would benefit generations to come.
- (c) A few candidates were able to do justice to this question, they wrote convincingly on the subject and developed their ideas well. Weaker candidates wrote about progress but needed to analyse how it could be integrated with the environment.
- (d) The best answers gave a considered account of how society is in need of heroes and the causes for this, with some discussion as to what extent society is tainted by the hypocrisy of people doing anything for fame, yet being glad when “famous” people are disgraced.
- (e) This was a very popular question and generally well answered. The best answers explored the meaning of freedom and then brought in technology to make their point. Some candidates

expressed a certain ambiguity with regard to the concept of what it is to be free. Some candidates wrote about advantages and disadvantages instead, without really addressing the core of the question.

Part II: Usage

Exercise 1 Questions 2 – 6

This initial exercise tested candidates' verbal knowledge. Candidates had to fill the gaps, with the verbs which needed to be manipulated offered in brackets; a wide range of tenses and moods was tested. The majority of candidates answered **Question 3** correctly. Many candidates missed accents on the preterite and conditional and missed reflexive pronouns, in particular in **Question 4** (where few candidates realised that *almorzar* is an orthographically changing verb) and **Question 6**.

Exercise 2 Questions 7 – 11

Candidates on the whole performed better in this exercise than the previous one and seemed well prepared for it. Few candidates answered **Question 8** correctly; some candidates used *hacer*, but it needed to be put into the imperfect tense. Few candidates answered **Question 10** correctly which was an indirect speech exercise requiring a negative imperfect subjunctive as an answer.

Exercise 3 Questions 12 – 31

This exercise included a short article about the influence and future of the new generation: *Jóvenes, inquietos e indignados*. Candidates had to choose the right answer from a choice of four options. All the options provided are correct Spanish, as this exercise is testing the candidates' passive grammatical knowledge. This exercise was quite well accomplished by many candidates. Where mistakes were made, they usually occurred in **Questions 15, 17, 20, 22 and 31**.

PRINCIPAL COURSE SPANISH

Paper 9781/04

Topics and Texts

Key messages

To achieve high marks for content a focused, wholly relevant and analytical response to the question is required. Essays should keep to the recommended length of 350 – 500 words for **Part I** and 450 – 600 for **Part II**.

General comments

Overall the standard of responses this year was very good. A number of candidates showed impressive originality in their approach to the questions. The very best essays gave a focused and analytical response to the question, describing not just how but why authors/directors develop the themes/features under consideration. Weaker candidates did not focus on the terms of the question, but rather dwelt on issues with which they felt comfortable, generating text that may have been familiar to them from practice essays but which strayed into irrelevance or narrative in the context of the essay question.

The most focussed, relevant essays stayed within the recommended length for the particular essay. Many of the responses were beyond the recommended length which is not to the candidates' advantage. In **Part I** a high proportion of the language the candidates used was good; with adequate vocabulary which was accurate in simple structures but with variable success in more complex language. Nearly all answers were comprehensible throughout. Only a few candidates included bulky pre-learned essay phrases. Some typical language errors included the use of '*ambos y'* rather than '*tanto como'*', and confusion between *audiencia / público* and *empatizar / simpatizar*. Most candidates had a sound grasp of historical issues, with the incidence of errors (e.g. 'Lorca wrote under the Franco regime...') lower than in previous years.

Candidates answered on four of the topics in **Part I** and four of the texts in **Part II**, with Topic 1 and Text 12 the most popular choices. Most candidates used conclusions appropriately to sum up their argument. Introductory paragraphs in both sections were commonly used to restate the question and announce the candidate's intention to answer it rather than to make more significant headway in addressing the issues. Examples from the texts/films were invaluable, particularly when the candidate demonstrated that s/he understood how they related to the question.

Comments on specific questions

Part I: Cultural Topics

Question 1

- A** The best responses looked at both sides of the question before identifying how the style of presentation helped the authors/director to achieve their desired effect. The term *ingenuas* was given to the candidates as 'naïve', however some interpreted it as 'unrealistic', 'one-sided' or 'exaggerated'. This led to occasional omission of the way in which the authors'/director's treatment of the subject matter generates perceptive insights into the nature of the historical conflict. In particular, the way in which the 'naivety' of *Réquiem* contributes to the universal dimension of its '*esquema de toda la guerra*' was not recognised as fully as it might have been.
- B** Candidates identified the fear caused by the war as a common psychological factor in all these works. The most fruitful case studies generally involved Natalia from *La plaza del Diamante*, the relationship between Carmela and Paulino from *¡Ay!, Carmela*, and Mosén Millán's sense of guilt in *Réquiem*. Some answers on *Réquiem* dwelt on Paco's childhood, although this needed careful

treatment to bring it within the remit of the question. Mosén Millán's commitment to the social status quo, and thus his ulterior motivation in helping the *señoritos* to eliminate Paco, was an insight offered in some of the best answers. The stylistic features of *La plaza del Diamante*'s first-person narrative were pertinent to this question, but were not fully explored in most responses.

Question 3

- A** The Almodóvar topic gives candidates scope to explore the film-maker's aesthetic and to evaluate how this links to his portrayal of contemporary Spain. A number of responses displayed an impressive grasp of these concepts. Others were less successful in locating empathy in the Almodóvar universe, either shying away from defining the term or misinterpreting it. Only a few candidates interpreted *normal* as a term of approval when describing Almodóvar characters. Responses included some well chosen references to critical writing on the films, with '*su dolorosa humanidad*' a particularly favoured quotation.
- B** There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

Question 4

- A** Most candidates managed to cite language barriers, '*falta de voz*', isolation or attitudes to the land as factors contributing to the plight of the *indígenas*. A few candidates constructed a good detailed analysis in terms of content. In most cases the Rigoberta Menchú text was more successfully analysed than *Los ríos profundos*.
- B** The relatively few candidates who attempted this question produced a good analysis in terms of content. Answers would have benefitted from focussing more on consciousness rather than on attitudes and influences.

Question 5

- A** There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.
- B** There was general consensus that Lorca's play showed little faith in the likelihood of change, whereas Esquivel's work was more optimistic. The term *anticipan* was well understood. The *machista* reference in the second half of the question proved a distraction for some candidates, who wrote more generally about *machismo* rather than answering the question as stated.

Part II: Literary Texts

Question 6

- A** Candidates who attempted this question managed to identify the extract's relevance in the context of the play. The scene was described as a turning-point in the plot where the theme of honour becomes a key element. Candidates picked up on the universality of honour in the scene, personified in Frondoso, contrasting it to Fernán's abusive behaviour. The best answers included comments on Lope's style.
- B** Candidates had some forthright views on how morality compared to honour or even entertainment as the main element of the play. Answers were generally varied as there was a wide range of themes put into contrast. Depth of analysis was mixed; some candidates discussed Lope's treatment of this theme with regard to the audience's reaction and their most likely interpretation given the context.
- C** There were too few answers to make comment appropriate.

Question 8

- A** This question was well answered, with about half of the candidates identifying the poem from which the extract was taken. Responses typically worked through the text, analysing each couplet using an impressive range of literary terms. A few candidates wrote at such length that they appeared to put themselves under time pressure. The question did not require references to other poems in the collection, though many were given, mostly accurately. Although the first couplet was well understood, many interpreted *carne* in line 1 as equivalent to 'meat' in English (others found 'flesh')

a more plausible equivalent). There were also references – not always substantiated – to the poet's 'violence and aggression'. Many candidates successfully remarked on the significance of the verb tenses used in the extract. There was often confusion over the subject of the repeated 'Era...' in the third and fourth couplets, with consequent difficulties in interpreting these lines. Likewise, in the sixth stanza, the adjectives were sometimes taken to refer to the poet or his lover, rather than 'mi deseo'. Nonetheless, the eroticism of the eighth and ninth couplets was well described, as was the final couplet, whose *naufragio* prompted pertinent references to other uses of the term in the collection.

B and C Candidates who chose these options, displayed an excellent knowledge of the text in relation to the question.

Question 10

- A** Candidates used the context passage to produce detailed analysis of Castel's psyche. There were few references to the comedy which is the dominant tone of this extract, although some answers picked up on the irony that runs through the passage.
- B** Candidates who attempted this question seemed to find it thought-provoking, and produced generally strong analyses of Castel's psychology and motivation. Most answers would have benefited from a clearer statement of Castel's desire to control María Iribarne and deny her an independent existence.
- C** The term 'credible character' proved a challenge to candidates who attempted this question. It was generally taken to mean 'reliable narrator', and answers therefore ranged over such issues as the credibility of the text or the novel as a whole. Where the credibility of Castel's characterisation was considered, some good points were made.

Question 12

Candidates generally found themselves on firm ground in tackling questions on *Crónica de una muerte anunciada*. Most knew the text well and had plenty to say in response to **Questions B and C**, albeit with varying degrees of relevance. Several referred to Santiago Nasar's alleged deflowering of Angela Vicario as a 'crime', demonstrating their empathy with the values of the novel's society.

- A** Candidates generally displayed a good understanding of the extract's relevance in the novel. There were various readings of the relationship between Pura and Ángela, not all substantiated. More emphasis might have been laid on how this extract is the inspiration for Ángela to gain control of her own destiny. More successful answers referred to aspects of García Márquez's style illustrated in this passage.
- B** There were many observant answers from candidates who had a good understanding of the relationship between Santiago Nasar, the narrator and the author. At times there was an inconsistent quality of response in dealing with the two parts of the question. Some candidates found it hard to differentiate between the true story on which the text is based and the fictitious nature of the novel. Some candidates saw the question mainly as an invitation to debate the true identity of Ángela's lover.
- C** Almost all candidates were able to comment on the use of cyclical time, with some giving explanations about why the text was structured in this way. Some astutely commented on the way that the flow of time in the novel speeds up the closer the action gets to Santiago Nasar's death. The very best answers also referred to the key role of predestination in the text. Less successful responses made rather self-evident references to time's passing allowing events to occur, or claimed that García Márquez used time to 'confuse' his readers.