

SPANISH LITERATURE

Paper 8673/41
Texts

Key messages

- 1 Read the question carefully. Plan your answer and keep referring back to the question to ensure that the essay remains focused.
- 2 Justify the argument presented with references to the text which illustrate the points being made.
- 3 The essay should be entirely focused on the question, avoiding references to the author's background, life or other works.
- 4 Examiners are seeking evidence of analytical skills and understanding. A detailed narrative account of the text is not required.
- 5 Check the instructions regarding choice of questions from Sections 1 and 2. Candidates must choose one question from each section and a third from either section. If all answers are from one section only, the lowest mark will be removed from the total.
- 6 Write legibly. Examiners can only mark essays if they can read them.

General comments

Candidates generally showed detailed study and knowledge of the texts. The majority of answers were based on texts from the most popular authors (García Lorca, Esquivel, Sender).

It was encouraging to note that many candidates had adopted the pattern of 'point, example, explanation, link', using their knowledge of the text to justify the argument, analysing the point and giving coherence to the answer by linking one paragraph to another in the construction of the response. A number of answers began well but candidates were distracted by recounting the narrative and lost the thread of the argument. A good conclusion contributes significantly to the impact of a well-argued essay.

Some candidates have been tempted to interpret texts as purely reflections of reality rather than works of fiction. This made it difficult for them to present an appropriate response as there was a tendency to speculate and extrapolate beyond the text itself.

It is important that candidates have a clear understanding of specific historical events when these are an intrinsic part of the narrative and theme. For example, in the Sender text, references are made to events leading up to the Spanish Civil War of 1936–39. The nature of the conflict is reflected in the text, and candidates need to understand this without having to study the course of the war in detail.

The majority of candidates followed the instructions correctly and answered 3 questions covering both sections of the question paper. Those who chose 3 questions from the same section were credited with the two highest scores only. The same principle was applied to candidates who answered both options on the same text; the higher mark was carried forward.

Comments on specific questions

Sección 1

Question 1 Emilia Pardo Bazán: *Los Pazos de Ulloa*

- (a) (i) Giving wine to Perucho
- (ii) Bribing / encouraging Perucho to drink even more.
- (iii) The disagreement between Julián and Primitivo / the Marquis / the abbot is seen clearly in the extract, in this case over the treatment of Perucho. Most candidates enlarged on this, showing how fundamental clash of attitudes regarding the child's upbringing represented a wider issue. Julián brought a more sensitive and moral judgement to the household, more typical of urban life. The Marquis and his companions display disinterest; their actions in the episode quoted reflect their disdain for others and a dissolute, lawless and violent way of behaviour. The best essays then showed how this fundamental conflict developed, damaging Nucha and her daughter as Julián's attempt to civilise the household through the marriage of the Marquis and Nucha failed. An analysis of the final chapter of the novel was well used to draw the thematic threads together.
- (b) This was the less popular option on the text. Candidates tended to focus too much on the contrast between town and country rather than the presentation of rural life. The author included many details in portraying the harshness of the rural experience. Violence, cruelty, ignorance and excess were seen in many forms. The fact that Nucha came to the household as someone brought up in a town, with a more strict moral code, was a useful device. The political and social structures and traditions were shown in action and readers left to interpret the author's intention in the way she used both description and dialogue in particular in her assessment of society.

Question 2 Lope de Vega: *El caballero de Olmedo*

- (a) (i) Leonor and Inés
- (ii) This was the effect of his love for Inés.
- (iii) Most candidates were aware of the portents referring to the death of Alonso. They also mentioned how love was often presented as a destructive force in the play. The best essays linked these ideas and analysed how three individuals in the play died for love – Alonso, Rodrigo and Fernando. Love made Alonso reckless and he dismissed warnings; it made Rodrigo violent and behave in a way unbecoming a nobleman. The double meaning of phrases such as 'en la capilla' were discussed – it could be taken as an indication of a wedding or a funeral.
- (b) This question requires an analysis of the play as a tragicomedy, examining both elements. Many essays dealt well with the tragedy, including reference to the irony of the situation in that Alonso was killed by the man whose life he had saved and all the artifice of the Latin lessons was unnecessary as Pedro was happy for Inés to marry him. The comic elements tended to focus on Fabia, forgetting Tello's involvement in escapades. The best answers showed how the two elements worked together to enhance one another as both explored the same themes in a different way. The comic episodes served as respite to the audience from dramatic tension as the tragedy became inevitable.

Question 3 Laura Esquivel: *Como agua para chocolate*

- (a) (i) The agreement between Pedro, Tita and Rosaura to protect her reputation.
- (ii) To protect Rosaura's dignity and give the pretence of a normal family for Esperanza.
- (iii) Many candidates answered this question. The effect on all three characters of living a lie for such a long time was immense. No-one was happy – except possibly for Pedro? He did not take responsibility for his actions and lacked empathy. The best essays identified the central issue – often identified as the need for personal freedom and control and then showed how individuals suffered when forced to behave against their instincts but according to external rules. Rosaura was physically and emotionally ill; Tita was saved by John Brown and lived her life at the behest of

others, finally finding fulfilment when she dismissed her mother's spirit and influence and became free. Many used Gertrudis as a point of contrast.

- (b) There were very many answers to this question, including some excellent essays. The fire was dramatic and symbolic, reflecting the main themes of the novel. It was the pinnacle of Tita's happiness as she enjoyed Pedro's love freely then chose to move with him to her death. It was an expression of passion; it cleansed the past by destroying the ranch and all it stood for, making way for new life and allowing the family to move forward on a different path. Tita prepared the way for Esperanza and her recipe book, discovered in the ashes, was a positive legacy of the past and the basis for the novel. The circle was completed. The force of love was apparent in that Tita had been told about the matches by John Brown – his love for her helped her at that moment. Many also analysed the role of magical realism.

Question 4 Rodolfo Usigli: *El gesticulador*

- (a) (i) Rubio had lost his job in the city so the family had no money.
- (ii) They were bored and resentful at leaving their former lives behind.
- (iii) Candidates were asked to consider how the whole family dealt with their new life in the country. Many concentrated solely on César, thus not addressing the question fully. It was helpful to find a structure for the essay to avoid repetition and imbalance in the answer. This could be done by taking the issue of personal responsibility, for example, and analyse how each member of the family demonstrated this. César felt responsible for the move and was spurred by the desire to show his family he could be successful by becoming César Rubio the revolutionary and setting events in motion. Miguel's education had been disrupted, he was disgruntled and bored. However he found it difficult to support César's decision on principle and reacted to it. Julia did not have her brother's scruples. Her ambition was to be wealthy and important so Cesar's political success would become her success as she would gain status as his daughter. Elena saw her responsibility as supporting her husband even when she did not agree with him. To some extent they all became 'gesticuladores' in order to survive. Better essays also analysed how attitudes changed over the course of the play.
- (b) This was a very popular option. Most believed that virtually all characters in the play practised a form of deception in some aspect of their life. Navarro was seen as particularly guilty for disguising his 'malas intenciones' in a pretence of benevolence. The best essays did not simply list examples but analysed the author's intention in exploring that theme and assessed the effects of each individual's behaviour.

Sección 2

Question 5 Ramón J Sender: *Requíem por un campesino español*

- (a) This was the less popular option on the text but still attracted a number of answers. Some candidates incorrectly interpreted 'realismo' as magic realism, possibly from their study of Laura Esquivel. This made it difficult to address the question adequately. Most answers gave good examples of realism, referring to some of the devices used by the author such as the apparently objective accounts of Paco's baptism by Mosén, introduced by 'recordaba'. Sender made it easier for the reader to identify with both characters and society in the novel. At the same time, he introduced the concept of myth. The best essays explored this also in terms of the main themes.
- (b) Very many answers were submitted to this question. Candidates understood Paco's role in the text as both a typical Spanish worker and his almost mythical qualities as a Christ-like figure. He embodied all the positive key personal characteristics and had a certain charisma. His fate, in being oppressed by the ruling classes and betrayed by the Church, was that of the peasant classes of the time, and of course, was one of the issues behind events prior to and during the Spanish Civil War.

Question 6 Federico García Lorca: *Yerma*

- (a) Virtually all candidates answered on this text, with both options attracting many responses.

This question required an analysis of the importance of the setting of the play. This meant the place rather than the historical period. There were some very detailed answers and sensitive appreciation of the play. Some of the best noted the movement of the action from the private space of the house to the public spaces of the washing place and the 'romería', and how the themes were developed. Candidates also referred to the importance of descriptions and references to the natural world, and how these contrasted with the sterility of Yerma and her relationship. Those essays which recognised the power of the language used and were able to appreciate the work as a play to be watched rather than a text to be read were particularly effective.

- (b) This question focused on the themes of marriage and personal fulfilment. A sensitive interpretation analysed the concept of 'necesidad'. How was this defined and by whom? Society's view of marriage and the roles of husband and wife or Nature's? Some candidates concentrated on the idea that Juan was deliberately refusing to give Yerma a child; this argument did not lead to a convincing conclusion. Most essays included comparisons of the views of the Vieja and the Muchacha 2 with those of the Lavanderas and of Yerma herself, and discussed the concept of 'honra / honor'. In all cases, the best answers dealt with the text itself and did not attempt to extrapolate what happened next.

Question 7 Brotherston (ed): *Spanish American Modernista Poets: A Critical Anthology*

- (a) Candidates attempting this question must show understanding of the use of form as well as theme. In this case, themes which may be explored include patriotism, presentation of landscape, tradition, religion and a sense of belonging. The best essays showed a personal reaction to the poem as well as a structured analysis.
- (b) Candidates were at liberty to agree or to contest the premise in the question. It was essential to begin by defining 'exótico', which is not simply 'foreign'. Poets which lent themselves to analysis were José Martí, Gutiérrez Nájera and Rubén Darío. Examiners accepted any choice of poems and poets provided they offered appropriate examples. The best essays limited the number of poems to enable a more in-depth study, and allow a structured argument with a conclusion.

Question 8 Horacio Quiroga: *Cuentos escogidos*

- (a) There were some very good answers on this question. Stories such as 'La insolación', 'Anaconda', 'Yaguaí' were popular choices for analysis. Most successfully addressed the issue of Quiroga writing about animals without sentimentality. Candidates understood how animals were adapted to the natural world whereas Man was attempting to change it – and usually failed. Sensitive and detailed essays showed how animals have different powers to Man. When humans attempt to control animals, they suffer and react against it; Quiroga does not seem to approve of humans making use of animals for their own purposes.
- (b) The fact that there are very few women in the stories was a valid point for discussion in itself. Effective essays considered why this was the case, then studied those female characters and the roles they played. These covered Mamá in 'Nuestro primer cigarro', La mujer in 'En la noche' and Madame Bibikoff in 'La voluntad'. Clearly the setting of the story played a part and a comparison of Mamá with one of the other two characters was a good basis from which to explore this.

SPANISH LITERATURE

Paper 8673/42
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- 6 Write legibly. Examiners can only mark essays if they can read them. There are many more scripts which are extremely difficult to decipher. It is in the candidate's own interests to ensure that the work submitted can be read easily by an Examiner who is not familiar with the handwriting of any individual.

General comments

Candidates generally showed detailed study and knowledge of the texts. As in previous sessions, the majority of answers were based on texts from the most popular authors (García Lorca, Esquivel, Sender).

It was encouraging to note that many candidates had adopted the pattern of 'point, example, explanation, link', using their knowledge of the text to justify the argument, analysing the point and giving coherence to the answer by linking one paragraph to another in the construction of the response. A number of answers began well but candidates were distracted by recounting the narrative and lost the thread of the argument. A good conclusion contributes significantly to the impact of a well-argued essay.

Some candidates have been tempted to interpret texts as purely reflections of reality rather than works of fiction. This made it difficult for them to present an appropriate response as there was a tendency to speculate and extrapolate beyond the text itself.

It is important that candidates have a clear understanding of specific historical events when these are an intrinsic part of the narrative and theme. For example, in the Sender text, references are made to events leading up to the Spanish Civil War of 1936–39. The nature of the conflict is reflected in the text, and candidates need to understand this without having to study the course of the war in detail.

The majority of candidates followed the instructions correctly and answered 3 questions covering both Sections of the question paper. Those who chose 3 questions from the same Section were credited with the two highest scores only. The same principle was applied to candidates who answered both options on the same text; the higher mark was carried forward.

Comments on specific questions

Sección 1

Question 1 Emilia Pardo Bazán: *Los Pazos de Ulloa*

- (a) (i) Reference to dawn not always mentioned.
- (ii) Julián was in a state of extreme anxiety, verging on hysteria over concern for Nucha in labour.
- (iii) Most referred to Julián's involvement in introducing Nucha to her husband, and his influence on the Marquis' decision. Julián and Nucha brought sensitivity and moral standards to Los Pazos. They supported one another emotionally, but were in conflict with the prevailing attitudes and way of life. Both suffered.
- (b) Most essays argued that the prevailing atmosphere was one of pessimism. Candidates were able to refer to a range of examples, often contrasting town and country. The violent and heartless treatment of Perucho, the manipulation of Primitivo, the chaotic state of the whole estate reflected the corrupt and dissolute way of life. Julián tried to improve matters by tackling the finances, intervening in the treatment of Perucho and influencing the Marquis' marriage but all attempts failed. His return to Los Pazos at the end of the novel to find Nucha dead and her daughter neglected underlined this.

Question 2 Lope de Vega: *El caballero de Olmedo*

- (a) (i) Inés' tears showed the sincerity of her feelings.
- (ii) Alonso was cowardly in using Fabia.
- (iii) Candidates were able to refer to a number of instances and quotations which pointed to a tragic end for Alonso. Many analysed Lope's poetic presentation of the relationship between love and death. Alonso made some poor decisions, such as his employment of Fabia, collusion in lying to Inés' father and ignoring clear warnings – some of which would presuppose punishment. At the same time he had many admirable qualities and was always led by feelings of love towards Inés and his parents and respect for another nobleman.
- (b) The best answers to this question recognised the King's role as the arbiter of justice, a moral example and in addition, the only individual who can stabilise society and restore order to chaos.

The King's favour was bestowed on Alonso, increasing his standing in society. Rodrigo's accident took place in the presence of the King, making his embarrassment and humiliation greater. The King is seen to be fair and acts decisively. The monarch's role in the play influenced the plot and the themes.

Question 3 Laura Esquivel: *Como agua para chocolate*

- (a) (i) Pedro was burned when a flame (caused by the ghost of Mamá Elena) caused an oil lamp to shatter.
- (ii) Pedro questioned Tita's affection for him, behaves like a spoiled child.
- (iii) Some very good answers showed Pedro's lack of sensitivity, selfishness and cowardice. He condemned both Tita and Rosaura to unhappiness by agreeing to marry Rosaura. He did not stand up to Mamá Elena, preferring to watch Gertrudis escape and being complicit in the death of his son by agreeing to go to Texas when Roberto depended on Tita. Candidates compared Pedro's behaviour with that of John Brown. The doctor displayed selfless love, only wanting Tita to be happy and caring for her with no sense of personal gratification. However Tita chose Pedro, which gave rise to analysis of the meaning of love and how anyone could be seen to deserve affection.
- (b) This question tended to attract a fairly limited treatment. The concept of change was presented in many aspects of the novel, both personal and national; few candidates dealt with both in detail. All mentioned Gertrudis as a woman choosing her own path, but not all understood what the Mexican Revolution was about. Some analysed Mamá Elena's attitude as a political statement showing how

her control affected members of her family causing unhappiness and even death in the case of Roberto. Her reaction to Gertrudis and Tita was hypocritical in that she had been denied love when young. Tita also changed in that she became more confident and finally challenged her mother's spirit and banished her malign influence for ever. Change and hope for the future was seen in the fire which destroyed the past, cleansing the area and allowing new growth. Esperanza's name and the legacy of Tita's recipes symbolise a new age, with the best from the previous generation. Other elements mentioned included the influence of the USA.

Question 4 Rodolfo Usigli: *El gesticulador*

- (a) (i) Navarro may expose Rubio as a fraud.
- (ii) Ridiculous comments.
- (iii) The audience is kept at a distance from the characters, laughing at and with them. There were relatively few answers to this question and candidates tended to list some examples without being able to analyse how the author portrayed characters' gullibility or the tragi-comic elements.
- (b) Most answers identified that the Mexican Revolution had lost its objectives, with no effective leader. Politics were mired in corruption, as exemplified by Navarro. The murder of Rubio ended any new hope of change. However this was flawed in essence as the whole premise of Rubio leading the people into a new future was based on a lie and hope of personal advancement. So he mirrored the intentions of the political class presented in the play. Essays included analysis of the theme of deception and abuse of power with the normal citizens helpless to achieve any change.

Sección 2

Question 5 Ramón J Sender: *Requíem por un campesino español*

- (a) The essence of this question was to show how although the novel is set in an unspecified village in Spain during the lead up to the Civil War of 1936–39, many of the issues and themes are universal. These cover questions such as the role of religion or the Church, family, community, society, class, violence and equality. Most answers concentrated on the theme of war and violence and showed good knowledge of the text, analysing loyalty and allegiance in particular but focused only on the Spanish experience. The best essays went beyond this to show how exploitation of the working classes, 'peasants', and the suffering of the most vulnerable in society, is both timeless and universally experienced in any unjust system.
- (b) This question attracted a large number of responses, as did (a). Most essays dealt with the key relationships where communication broke down – Paco and Mosén Millán, Paco and Don Valeriano. The best essays took the Mass as the centre of the argument and showed how the divisions in society, caused by lack of communication and the inability to see another point of view led to the personal tragedy of Paco and the national tragedy of Spain.

Question 6 Federico García Lorca: *Yerma*

- (a) Virtually every candidate answered on this text, with both options attracting many responses.

This question went to the heart of Yerma's dilemma – honra – and required an analysis of how the protagonist was torn because she was determined to live according to her ideals and be true to herself, but circumstances worked against her. In particular, the concept of 'honor', maintaining a reputation in the eyes of society. Yerma's response to the old woman who offers her son as a substitute for Juan '*¿Te figuras que puedo conocer otro hombre? ¿Dónde pones mi honra?*' and Juan's exclamation '*No quiero que la gente me señale. Por eso quiero ver cerrada esa puerta y cada persona en su casa*' show the gulf between the couple. Yerma is unable to be herself. Juan's focus is his work and his reputation. Yerma maintains her 'honra'. Both are unhappy because the marriage was not based on love but convenience. Neither can fulfil the other's needs. Yerma's murder of Juan was not to enable her to have a better life with another partner – this misinterpretation of the play is becoming more frequent – but to rid herself of the torture of uncertainty. Analysis of the forces driving characters, the poetic language and the commentary on society gave greater depth to essays. All work must be based on the text itself and not adaptations or extrapolations.

- (b) This question asked for analysis of the play which, according to García Lorca himself, has no plot. If this is the case, what gives momentum to the work? The most successful essays argued that the title was the key – the plight of a childless woman. Her despair increases as the play progresses and the other characters in the play contribute information about Juan, his family and the attitude of society at large to explain why Yerma's situation has no solution. The use of symbols, verse and prose to highlight aspects of the themes was also effective.

Question 7 Brotherston, (ed): *Spanish American Modernista Poets: A Critical Anthology*

- (a) This question required candidates to present a critical analysis of the poem 'En país extraño' by Manuel González Prada. The main themes of the natural world, the senses and universality were explored in terms of the ideas and poetic interpretation. Candidates who have been prepared for this specific type of question tend to attain a good result as they are aware of the need to pay close attention to detail and to present a focused analysis.
- (b) This question presented the view that some of the poets in the anthology seemed to be particularly influenced by ideas from other countries and took pride in reflecting these in their own work. It is difficult to give a general comment on possible responses to this question as candidates are free to choose the poets and poems which illustrate this, or challenge the premise. All valid arguments were accepted. Perhaps the best answers included examples for and against the argument posed.

Question 8 Horacio Quiroga: *Cuentos escogidos*

- (a) This question was focused on one story 'El Simún'. Quiroga puts psychological verisimilitude before sentiment in his stories, possibly creating a harsh note, but this is reflected in his economical and intense style. Essentially, Man cannot triumph over Nature. In this story, he shows how even lifelong friendships can be destroyed by experiencing extreme conditions. There are many references in the text to illustrate how Quiroga achieves such tension and drama in a crisis.
- (b) There were some interesting responses to this question, where candidates had detailed knowledge of several stories and justified the argument effectively. The dramatic nature of the stories was studied and the role of animals in showing that Man cannot dominate Nature and force human ways on to an existing system without suffering himself or causing suffering. Essays were generally well planned and showed understanding of the themes.

SPANISH LITERATURE

Paper 8673/43
Texts

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- (a) (i) Leonor and Inés
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- (iii) Most candidates were aware of the portents referring to the death of Alonso. They also mentioned how love was often presented as a destructive force in the play. The best essays linked these ideas and analysed how three individuals in the play died for love – Alonso, Rodrigo and Fernando. Love made Alonso reckless and he dismissed warnings; it made Rodrigo violent and behave in a way unbecoming a nobleman. The double meaning of phrases such as 'en la capilla' were discussed – it could be taken as an indication of a wedding or a funeral.
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Question 3 Laura Esquivel: *Como agua para chocolate*

- (a) (i) The agreement between Pedro, Tita and Rosaura to protect her reputation.
- (ii) To protect Rosaura's dignity and give the pretence of a normal family for Esperanza.
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others, finally finding fulfilment when she dismissed her mother's spirit and influence and became free. Many used Gertrudis as a point of contrast.

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- (ii) They were bored and resentful at leaving their former lives behind.
- (iii) Candidates were asked to consider how the whole family dealt with their new life in the country. Many concentrated solely on César, thus not addressing the question fully. It was helpful to find a structure for the essay to avoid repetition and imbalance in the answer. This could be done by taking the issue of personal responsibility, for example, and analysing how each member of the family demonstrated this. César felt responsible for the move and was spurred by the desire to show his family he could be successful by becoming César Rubio the revolutionary and setting events in motion. Miguel's education had been disrupted, he was disgruntled and bored. However he found it difficult to support César's decision on principle and reacted to it. Julia did not have her brother's scruples. Her ambition was to be wealthy and important so Cesar's political success would become her success as she would gain status as his daughter. Elena saw her responsibility as supporting her husband even when she did not agree with him. To some extent they all became 'gesticuladores' in order to survive. Better essays also analysed how attitudes changed over the course of the play.
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Sección 2

Question 5 Ramón J Sender: *Requíem por un campesino español*

- (a) This was the less popular option on the text but still attracted a number of answers. Some candidates incorrectly interpreted 'realismo' as magic realism, possibly from their study of Laura Esquivel. This made it difficult to address the question adequately. Most answers gave good examples of realism, referring to some of the devices used by the author such as the apparently objective accounts of Paco's baptism by Mosén, introduced by 'recordaba'. Sender made it easier for the reader to identify with both characters and society in the novel. At the same time, he introduced the concept of myth. The best essays explored this also in terms of the main themes.
- (b) Very many answers were submitted to this question. Candidates understood Paco's role in the text as both a typical Spanish worker and his almost mythical qualities as a Christ-like figure. He embodied all the positive key personal characteristics and had a certain charisma. His fate, in being oppressed by the ruling classes and betrayed by the Church, was that of the peasant classes of the time, and of course, was one of the issues behind events prior to and during the Spanish Civil War.

Question 6 Federico García Lorca: *Yerma*

- (a) Virtually all candidates answered on this text, with both options attracting many responses.

This question required an analysis of the importance of the setting of the play. This meant the place rather than the historical period. There were some very detailed answers and sensitive appreciation of the play. Some of the best noted the movement of the action from the private space of the house to the public spaces of the washing place and the 'romería', and how the themes were developed. Candidates also referred to the importance of descriptions and references to the natural world, and how these contrasted with the sterility of Yerma and her relationship. Those essays which recognised the power of the language used and were able to appreciate the work as a play to be watched rather than a text to be read were particularly effective.

- (b) This question focused on the themes of marriage and personal fulfilment. A sensitive interpretation analysed the concept of 'necesidad'. How was this defined and by whom? Society's view of marriage and the roles of husband and wife or Nature's? Some candidates concentrated on the idea that Juan was deliberately refusing to give Yerma a child; this argument did not lead to a convincing conclusion. Most essays included comparisons of the views of the Vieja and the Muchacha 2 with those of the Lavanderas and of Yerma herself, and discussed the concept of 'honra / honor'. In all cases, the best answers dealt with the text itself and did not attempt to extrapolate what happened next.

Question 7 Brotherston (ed): *Spanish American Modernista Poets: A Critical Anthology*

- (a) Candidates attempting this question must show understanding of the use of form as well as theme. In this case, themes which may be explored include patriotism, presentation of landscape, tradition, religion and a sense of belonging. The best essays showed a personal reaction to the poem as well as a structured analysis.
- (b) Candidates were at liberty to agree or to contest the premise in the question. It was essential to begin by defining 'exótico', which is not simply 'foreign'. Poets which lent themselves to analysis were José Martí, Gutiérrez Nájera and Rubén Darío. Examiners accepted any choice of poems and poets provided they offered appropriate examples. The best essays limited the number of poems to enable a more in-depth study, and allow a structured argument with a conclusion.

Question 8 Horacio Quiroga: *Cuentos escogidos*

- (a) There were some very good answers on this question. Stories such as 'La insolación', 'Anaconda', 'Yaguaí' were popular choices for analysis. Most successfully addressed the issue of Quiroga writing about animals without sentimentality. Candidates understood how animals were adapted to the natural world whereas Man was attempting to change it – and usually failed. Sensitive and detailed essays showed how animals have different powers to Man. When humans attempt to control animals, they suffer and react against it; Quiroga does not seem to approve of humans making use of animals for their own purposes.
- (b) The fact that there are very few women in the stories was a valid point for discussion in itself. Effective essays considered why this was the case, then studied those female characters and the roles they played. These covered Mamá in 'Nuestro primer cigarro', La mujer in 'En la noche' and Madame Bibikoff in 'La voluntad'. Clearly the setting of the story played a part and a comparison of Mamá with one of the other two characters was a good basis from which to explore this.