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Edexcel

Examiners' Report Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel International A Level Spanish
Unit 4: Research, understanding and written
response (WSP04_01)

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This paper is worth 90 marks. It is a mixed-skill unit which consists of three sections.

Section A - Listening (20 marks)

Students listen to four recorded extracts in Spanish. They retrieve and convey information given in the recordings by responding to questions of different types.

Question 1 - Alexa, la asistente virtual, llega a España

A multiple-choice question worth 4 marks. The question was accessible to most students. The mark most commonly missed was **1(c)**.

Question 2 - México busca la cura a la infelicidad

A multiple-choice question worth 4 marks. This question also proved accessible to the majority of students. The mark most commonly missed was **2(a)**.

Question 3 - La feria "Estudiar en España viaja a México"

A cloze text question worth 4 marks. Students had to choose the correct answers from a pool of 8 possible words. **3(c)** was the question most likely to be incorrectly answered.

Question 4 - El papel del padre moderno

Students listened to an interview and gave short answers in Spanish. This question is worth 8 marks.

For (a), some students correctly identified the idea that the father wanted to share responsibility, but widened the answer to include the whole family, rather than just sharing with his wife. (f) was the question which proved most challenging. Some students simply stated that there are more problems in a large company. They did not mention the idea of balancing family life with work.

Section B - Reading and Grammar (30 marks)

Students read texts written in Spanish. They retrieve and convey information in the texts by responding to questions in Spanish. Students also manipulate grammatical structures by re-writing a selection of phrases taken from the reading texts.

Question 5 - El fútbol femenino en América Latina

A multiple-choice question worth 5 marks. This question is the most accessible of the reading tasks and many students scored full marks. The mark which was most likely to be missed was 5(c).

Question 6 - Las bolas de plástico en los supermercados chilenos

A reading comprehension text worth five marks with short answer questions in Spanish.

Many students scored 4 or 5 marks for this question. In (a), a few students lost the mark by confusing "pagar" and "cobrar". In (c), answers which simply stated that Vanessa did not agree with the new law did not give enough information to score the mark. In (d), some answers lost the mark by saying that people could not afford the luxury of buying plastic bags.

Question 7 - Un nuevo sistema de transporte en Bogota

A longer reading comprehension text with short answer questions in Spanish worth 10 marks.

In (a), the few answers which did not score focused on the isolation of the town rather than the landscape. (b), answers which referred to the locality rather than the infrastructure did not score. Most students answered (f) correctly, although some simply mentioned high winds without explaining how the service was affected. For (g), students had to infer how passengers travelling in the cabins would feel during their journey and explain why, based on information in the text. Most were able to score two marks for this question.

Question 8 - Manipulation of grammatical structures

Students manipulated phrases from the reading comprehension texts in Questions 5, 6 and 7. They had to include the given structures in each question. They had to produce a correct phrase, without altering the meaning of the original.

- (a) "No tiene carencias" was the most common incorrect answer.
- (b) The most common mistake was the use of the present tense "entra", rather than the preterit or perfect tenses.
- (c) Few scored this mark. The most common incorrect answer was "yo tengo que pagar". Many students did not seem to be familiar with the "El tener que pagar..." construction.
- (d) "No he cambiado mis hábitos" and "no he cambiado de hábitos" were common incorrect answers.
- (e) Many students lost the mark because they substituted "se supone" for "se añade".
- (f) Common errors were to offer an incorrect pronoun, e.g. "lo" or "la" for "las", or "puede" instead of "pueden".
- (g) Most got this right although a few simply wrote "Ha crecido la preocupación".
- (h) There were various mistakes such as "no tanto de ocio", "no sino ocio", "sino como de ocio". Many students did not seem to be familiar with the "no solo... sino también..." construction.

- (i) Several alternatives were accepted as long as the meaning of the original phrase was preserved.
- (j) Almost all got this right, although a few changed "construido" to "construida".

Section C - Writing (40 marks)

Students write one essay on a topic chosen from the list prescribed in the Specification for the unit.

There were many well-organised essays with clear arguments. The majority of candidates were able to write fluently with few errors and scored full marks for Quality of Language. Students who had prepared well were able to provide factual evidence from their chosen topic, text or film to support their points of view. The best essays showed that the students knew their topic so well that they were able to give an insightful and informative response.

Many essays had clear introductions and conclusions. A number of essays began with clear introductions indicating out how the question would be tackled, but the argument did not then cover the points set out in the introduction. A number of essays did not have conclusions.

There were a very small number of essays which did not address either part of the question and could therefore only score very low marks.

In this small-entry series, some questions did not have any responses. The most popular choices were "Ocho Apellidos Vascos", "Yerma" and the history questions.

Question 10a

This was the most popular essay choice. Candidates examined the Second Republic of 1931 – 1936, the Civil War, Franco's dictatorship, and the reign of Isabel II.

Some essays were more thorough than others, for instance there would be mention of social and or political repression under Franco without giving specific examples. There was little precise information. Several candidates talked about the climate of fear arising from Franco's dictatorship but gave little in the way of specific facts.

Question 10b

There were fewer essays for this question. Successful topics were a study of Franco and Mola during the Civil War period and the rise of feminism during the Second Republic, looking at two of the key feminist campaigners.

Question 15a

There were some good essays which explored the character of Victor and the effect he has on Yerma. Most students went on to compare him with Juan and to describe how they differ. A few spent all the essay time on Victor and missed the second half of the question.

Question 15b

Successful essays gave a careful examination of Juan's behaviour towards Yerma and how this represents the attitudes of the time. The linking with Yerma's frustration was sometimes less well done.

Question 17a

Many candidates chose to describe the character of Koldo. Most gave specific information with reference to the film. The linking with the relationship with Amaia was generally well done, again with specific allusions. Occasionally there was story telling rather than analysis.

Question 17b

This was a popular choice and there were some good essays analysing the way in which the Basques were represented in the film and the use of stereotypes. Most candidates gave specific allusions to sequences in the film, although sometimes these turned into story telling.

Advice to students

Based on performance in this examination, students are offered the following advice:

- Plan the essay, ensuring that each point is relevant to the question.
- Write a clear introduction setting out how the essay will approach the question. Make sure the essay does what the introduction says it will.
- Make sure the essay addresses both parts of the question.
- Include a wide range of different types of relevant factual evidence to support points of view, for example:
 - History and Geography: specific examples, figures, dates, events for history and geography essays.
 - Film and literature: specific examples, quotations, director's or author's technique.
- End with a conclusion which summarises the arguments in the essay.
- Write clearly and legibly in all questions.

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