

Assessment Report

Scholarship, 2008

Spanish

Commentary

Candidates demonstrated their ability to both read a Spanish text, extracting accurate information from it, and listen to and understand a dialogue in Spanish, responding to the questions related to it. Throughout the examination they had the opportunity to express themselves in Spanish, both written and oral, conveying their own ideas and thoughts. Candidates were encouraged to present opinions that reflected their knowledge and command of the Spanish language and to not be, or feel, constrained by the information presented.

The best-performing candidates most commonly demonstrated the following skills and/or knowledge:

- thorough understanding of language from curriculum levels 1 to 8
- ability to understand the examination questions and their requirements
- ability to structure responses in an organised and coherent manner, using complex lexical and syntax structures, together with varied vocabulary – e.g. “Finalmente, preguntaría al gobierno si pudiera crear una “publicidad” para crear conciencia en una escala global. No sería fácil pero si somos unidos, podremos lograr todo.”
- accurate use of appropriate tenses and grammatical structures integrated into their writing – e.g. “Las medidas individuales serían que cada uno como ser humano que posee valores y moral cultural, aprenda a respetar el trabajo de los artistas, que aprendamos a valorar la cultura y darnos cuenta de lo ilegal y dañino que es la piratería”
- ability to use their own language, adding their own personal experiences and knowledge in a logical and flowing sequence – e.g. “Hoy en día la piratería se ve como algo ‘normal’ y no ilegal y ese es el mayor problema y reto para erradicar la piratería, eliminar ese pensamiento y enseñar a valorar la cultura y sus artistas” or “Imagínate ¿Qué harías tú si tu sueldo bajase por la crisis actual?”
- ability to present information in a coherent manner, with a well-argued personal point of view – e.g. “Podría afirmar que la piratería es un problema netamente económico, pero estaría evadiendo una gran verdad, y es que hoy en día la piratería va más allá del simple consumidor que no tiene los recursos suficientes como para comprar ‘originales’ y por ende recurre a la compra ilegal”
- varied use of appropriate vocabulary, both generated by the text and their own personal knowledge, integrated into written and oral responses – e.g. “... la moralidad se va degenerando más y más.... Y es que en esta sociedad nuestros valores van en descenso y simplemente no hay conciencia del mal que se ocasiona..., no tan solo a los artistas pero también a la sociedad y su integridad”
- ability to effectively use idiomatic expressions – e.g. “La otra cara de la moneda” or “Pedir peras al olmo” or “En conclusión” or “En otras palabras” “Aunque/incluso/ya que”
- ability to succinctly explain a complex idea without “lifting” it from the text – e.g. “Hoy en día la piratería ha incrementado notablemente. Los vendedores ‘top-manta’ han crecido en un número significativo y en consecuencia también los compradores”
- confident, accurate, and convincing speaking delivery; candidates used proper intonation inflections in questions and exclamations, adequate intonation and pauses, and did not repeat ideas; they held the listener’s interest, and their speaking was fluent.

Candidates who did NOT achieve scholarship lacked some or all of the skills and knowledge above and in addition they:

- produced written and/or spoken responses that lacked control and cohesion; they did not present a fluid argument

- simply transcribed text or copied vocabulary and grammar structures from the written text and aural passage
- began their oral responses by repeating the questions to be answered
- included personal information when not needed
- used short sentences, which lacked accurate punctuation or provided unnecessarily lengthy answers that resulted in tedious essays or speeches
- used artificial and inappropriate curriculum level 8 structures with special emphasis on the subjunctive mode
- often lacked written accents
- lacked correct intonation and modulation when speaking; their delivery sounded artificial and their speech lacked content
- did not always provide evidence to the depth of thought required when answering the question
- frequently added object pronouns in the wrong place
- confused the verbs “ser” and “estar”
- showed strong influence of English in the construction of sentences, usage of idioms and pronunciation
- did not pay enough attention to a question and its requirement and hence made mistakes with the tenses used.