

SPANISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Paper 9844/11
Reading

Question Number	Key						
1	D	11	A	21	C	31	A
2	D	12	B	22	D	32	C
3	C	13	D	23	A	33	B
4	C	14	B	24	B	34	C
5	A	15	A	25	D	35	B
6	B	16	C	26	B	36	C
7	G	17	B	27	C	37	D
8	F	18	B	28	B	38	C
9	D	19	D	29	D	39	A
10	H	20	C	30	D	40	B

Key messages

Candidates are assessed on their ability to:

- understand ideas, arguments and conclusions in complex texts
- identify emotions, attitudes and stated or implied opinions
- recognise rhetorical organisation and discourse features, including cohesion, coherence and text structure
- demonstrate a strong understanding of a wide range of vocabulary and complex language structures.

General comments

This was the first June series in which the Reading test was multiple-choice. Overall, performance was satisfactory, with the majority of candidates scoring more than half the allocated marks. Performance was comparable over the five tasks. Candidates attempted all questions.

Candidates need to recognise key ideas in each question and look for details in the text that correspond with those ideas. They should look for synonyms or rephrasing of the ideas in the questions.

The following comments attempt to give guidance on those questions which candidates appear to have found more challenging.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1–6

Candidates are asked to look for key information, detail or implicit meaning in a text.

Performance in this exercise was generally very good, with most candidates answering the majority of questions correctly and showing good comprehension of the information contained in the text. Where mistakes occurred, this was in **Question 3** where many candidates chose option **D**, with information not mentioned in the text (*usar los medios sociales para seguir la moda*) rather than option **C** (the correct answer) that was linked to *los jóvenes quieren presumir de una forma de vestir determinada*. In **Question 2** a number of candidates chose **option B**, when the text explained that customers' choice of clothes followed their preferences rather than their needs. In **Question 5** over a third of the candidates gave option **C** in error, which was a fact mentioned but did not reflect Araceli Heredia's opinion on what hiring clothes responds to. This is why it is essential that candidates look closely at the options and identify the key phrases in the texts.

Question 7–12

Candidates are asked to identify the phrase/sentence that fits each gap in the text. Two extra options serve as distractors.

Most candidates did well in this task. They were particularly successful with **Questions 9 and 11**. It was only in **Question 12** where nearly a quarter of candidates chose incorrectly option **E** and over 10 per cent option **F**. The correct answer (**B**) mentions the international market as a way of saving the craft of handwoven jumpers and rugs as it is not appreciated nationally. The reason for this can be found in the sentences that follow 'Aquí nadie quiere que una prenda le dure diez años' and 'se valora mucho por otras tierras'. In order to successfully complete this type of task candidates are encouraged to identify the main idea in each paragraph to choose the phrase or sentence that fits in with that particular paragraph. In **Question 8** a number of candidates chose option **B** over the correct option **F**. In this instance the option does not complete the sentence after the conjunction 'ya que'.

Question 13–20

A matching exercise, where candidates identify statements with one of four shorter texts.

This task was attempted with considerable success, overall. A high percentage of candidates answered **Questions 13, 14 and 15** right, matching the statements with the expected texts. **Question 17** was the one that proved slightly more of a challenge with the most common error being selecting option **D**; '(la novela) no defrauda' does not refer to *no se puede dejar de leer* in the question, whereas 'una novela devorable de una vez' (option **B**) does. A small number of candidates selected option **A** or **C**. In **Question 18** some candidate chose incorrectly option **A**, where no reference to 'densidad de datos' can be found. It is mentioned that the book is not easy to read but it is not due to data density. There might have been some guessing, though not successfully, in choosing option **C**.

Question 21–32

Candidates choose from four options to fill the gaps in the text.

This exercise was done well with some high scores recorded. **Questions 21, 29 and 30** produced very few cases of inaccuracy. **Question 24** proved to be the most challenging. Slightly less than 10 per cent chose option **B**, *envergadura*, option **D** being the answer that half the candidates chose, while many other chose **C** and **A**. **Questions 22, 23, 26 and 28** were answered correctly by half the candidates, which tested grammar and lexis. **Question 31** required candidates to understand the information mentioned before and after the gap in order to chose the appropriate linking word.

Question 33–40

A longer text from which candidates are required to answer 4-option multiple choice questions.

Performance was strong. There were only two questions where less than 40 per cent of the candidates answered correctly. The correct answer for **Question 37**, **D**, can be found in the fourth paragraph which highlights that the school particularly benefits those children that should have been receiving an education from the age of four. Incorrect answers were options **A**, with information not mentioned in the text, and **B**.

Candidates are encouraged to read closely for detail in this type of questions. **Question 39** targets the last paragraph with the correct answer **A** to be found where the texts mentions that Pilumbo continues accepting new students. Option **B**, the most popular incorrect answer, chosen by half the candidates, is not mentioned in the text.

SPANISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Paper 9844/12

Reading

Question Number	Key
1	A
2	C
3	A
4	B
5	D
6	D
7	E
8	H
9	A
10	C

Question Number	Key
11	D
12	G
13	B
14	C
15	B
16	A
17	A
18	C
19	B
20	D

Question Number	Key
21	C
22	D
23	B
24	C
25	D
26	A
27	C
28	B
29	D
30	C

Question Number	Key
31	D
32	B
33	B
34	C
35	B
36	D
37	A
38	B
39	A
40	D

Key messages

Candidates are assessed on their ability to:

- understand ideas, arguments and conclusions in complex texts
- identify emotions, attitudes and stated or implied opinions
- recognise rhetorical organisation and discourse features, including cohesion, coherence and text structure
- demonstrate a strong understanding of a wide range of vocabulary and complex language structures.

General comments

This was the first June series in which the Reading test was multiple-choice. Overall, performance was satisfactory, with the majority of candidates scoring more than half the allocated marks. Performance was comparable over the five tasks. Candidates attempted all questions.

Candidates need to recognise key ideas in each question and look for details in the text that correspond with those ideas. They should be encouraged to look for synonyms or rephrasing of the ideas in the questions.

The following comments attempt to give guidance on those questions which candidates appear to have found more challenging.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1–6

Candidates are asked to look for key information, detail or implicit meaning in a text.

Performance in this exercise was extremely good, with most candidates answering the majority of questions correctly. Only in **Question 3** did some candidates select distractor **B**, the chance for the main characters to meet up, or distractor **D**, the actors cast to play the role of the children that had become adults, when the text stated it was the brilliant work done in choosing the children rather than the adults. Here reading for detail was of paramount importance. In **Question 5** some candidates incorrectly chose **B**, over **D**, the correct answer. Even though choreography is mentioned in the text, it is not linked to the film location.

Question 7–12

Candidates are asked to identify the phrase/sentence that fits each gap in the text. Two extra options serve as distractors.

Once again the candidates responded to the task extremely well. Most questions proved to be relatively accessible. In Question 7 a tenth of the candidates chose incorrectly option **B**, over the correct answer **E**. A similar percentage was observed in **Question 11**, where answer **D**, *salir al extranjero*, was linked to 'allí' in the text, rather than **B** and in Question 12. Here the text requires finishing the phrase 'authorities argue that'. The following sentence starts with the adversative '*Sin embargo*' and the idea that there are 36 million supporters for women football in Mexico. Therefore, the correct answer is **G**, women football competition is not taking hold, despite the number of supporters.

Question 13–20

A matching exercise, where candidates identify statements with one of four shorter texts. Two extra options serve as distractors.

Out of the eight questions, **Question 15** proved to be the most challenging with half the candidates selecting the incorrect option **D**, over the correct answer **B**: fairy tales with witches help children understand what they cannot understand, 'lo que les parece misterioso'; whereas text **D** states that fairy tales provide children with the necessary tools to develop their imagination. In **Question 19 ambivalencia**, prompted answer **B**, 'múltiples facetas...', with just under half of candidates answering correctly. The rest of the answers were spread over the other three options, which contained no reference to contrasting feelings or emotions.

Question 21–32

Candidates choose from four options to fill the gaps in the text.

This exercise was done extremely well with some high scores recorded. **Questions 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29** and **31** produced very few cases of inaccuracy. **Question 21** proved to be the most challenging; only a third of candidates chose the correct answer **C integrar**, with the rest of the answers being spread over the other options. In this type of question candidates need to show understanding of the information contained in the text in order to select the appropriate vocabulary. In **Question 21** there is no reference to the Academy needing strengthening (*afianzar*); *componer* and *complementar* are not appropriate choices here either. Candidates chose incorrect options in **Questions 24** and **32** for the same reason. In **Question 30** the only correct grammatical choice was **C**, *Tener*, which was chosen by half the candidates, whereas a third incorrectly chose **B**, *Teniendo*.

Question 33–40

A longer text from which candidates are required to answer 4-option multiple choice questions.

Performance was equally strong. There was only one question where about just above a third of candidates correctly chose **B**, **Question 38**, taking their answer from 'las mujeres ya han superado la edad fértil'. Many candidates chose option **D**, *los padres establecen sus carreras antes de tener hijos*, when the text states adverse labour market conditions as an adverse element.

SPANISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Paper 9844/13
Reading

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.

SPANISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Paper 9844/21

Writing

Key messages

In order to perform well in this paper, candidates should:

- Respond to the title in **Section A** and then select the title with which they feel most comfortable with in **Section B**.
- Write responses that are clearly relevant, well-illustrated, coherently structured and well-informed.
- Use Spanish which is accurate and of a suitably advanced nature, as well as demonstrate a good use of idiom and appropriate vocabulary.
- Use sentence patterns which show some evidence of complexity in a style which is easy to follow.

General comments

In general terms, candidates responded positively to this new writing paper. There was plenty of evidence to suggest that both centres and candidates had understood and fully embraced the new demands of this paper and that there is an awareness of the differences in style of each of the essay titles presented on the paper itself. In many essays in both sections of the paper the reader's interest was consistently maintained and the quality of thinking was expressed so articulately that the end result was often very convincingly structured pieces of writing in Spanish that scored well on the mark scheme both for quality of written communication and for content.

As one would expect, the importance of responding to the actual titles on the paper cannot be overstated, especially in **Section A** (an argumentative/discursive title) where candidates are expected to offer their opinions of the issues raised in the title, either discursively or argumentatively. A few candidates opted to write an essay in which they offered some very general thoughts on the issue of tourism without any reference to the potential for incompatibility in the relationship between tourism and ecology. Paying little or no attention to the details of the title in this way is likely to mean that the marks for content are restricted to the lower levels.

Nevertheless, most candidates responded genuinely and enthusiastically to both of the tasks in front of them on the paper. Many essays in which there was a clear focus on the actual title set and where candidates thought methodically about the issues raised by that title were able to access marks at the higher end of the mark scheme. It was also noticeable that such candidates appreciated the need to structure their thinking effectively by the use of appropriate paragraphing and, given that it is actually referred to in the mark scheme, this is a technique to be highly recommended.

There were occasional problems relating to the word count (300 – 400 words in both sections) where marks for content tended to suffer as a consequence of the candidate not saying enough in response to the title. Inevitably, marks for language were also adversely affected by essays that fell short of the minimum 300 words whilst, at the same time, essays that were well in excess of the maximum 400 words also were inclined to lose their focus in terms of both language and content. Despite these observations, the vast majority of candidates managed to produce two pieces of writing that abided by the rubric.

The impression also given by the majority of essays written by candidates was that the need to have a clear understanding of the actual wording of the mark scheme is always going to be an advantage. This new mark scheme is more detailed than in the previous syllabus and so knowing how each piece is going to be assessed by Examiners is a very handy starting point when planning and then writing an essay under examination conditions. In simple terms, candidates who have a full understanding of the mark scheme are

far more likely to produce more accomplished essays than candidates who have little or no understanding of the mark scheme.

As for the overall quality of the language used by candidates, many were keen to show evidence of their ability to organise ideas into coherent text by using a range of cohesive devices and delivering plenty of linguistic range coupled with a high degree of grammatical accuracy. Such essays attracted marks in the higher levels of the mark scheme for linguistic range and organisation and language accuracy. Equally, there were essays written in both sections of the paper where the language was not well organised and tended to lack coherence and clarity with candidates often repeating themselves and restricting themselves to the use of mostly simple linguistic structures. Such essays never progressed beyond level one on the mark scheme for quality of written communication. Inevitably, the marks for content for such essays also suffered given that the points that candidates were trying to make were often unclear or very pedestrian in terms of analytical thinking.

One striking feature of many essays produced by candidates in this session was the lack of understanding shown of the importance of correct accentuation in Spanish. Even some of the most elegantly argued essays or essays that were very well written in either a descriptive or narrative style occasionally showed a complete disregard for accents. This point needs making clearly to candidates as it is always the case that marks for the quality of written communication will be affected adversely by the lack of appropriate Spanish accents. If candidates understand that accents in Spanish can often alter the meaning of words then this may help them to grasp the significance of correct use of accents in their essay writing.

There were a number of widespread language errors to report and Examiners feel it is always worth highlighting the most frequent errors so that candidates can be made aware of common pitfalls that are best avoided. A really common language error on this paper was the use of plural verbs (and, indeed, plural adjectives) with '*la gente*'. Statements such as '*...la gente prefieren pasar sus vacaciones en la costa*' (sic) and '*habían mucha gente extranjeras en el aeropuerto...*' (sic) were often seen by Examiners. Incorrectly spelt auxiliary verbs were also often used by candidates with examples such as '*...mis amigos y yo abíamos decidido buscar un nuevo trabajo...*' (sic) and '*...es difícil entender lo que a pasado...*' (sic) being amongst the most commonly used. A number of candidates fell foul of some basic spelling errors with examples such as '*...una desición complicada...*' (sic), '*...los turistas alludan a la gente local ...*' (sic) and, surprisingly perhaps, '*...el turismo siempre será importante para la economía...*' (sic) given that the correct spelling was given to candidates in the title of **Question one**.

The correct use the verb '*gustar*' in some fairly basic sentences also caused problems for some candidates. Examples such as '*muchos amigos míos no gustan sus trabajos...*' (sic) and '*...hablando personalmente a mí no gusto despertarme temprano en casa...*' (sic) were common and tended to spoil the overall impression given to Examiners as they read the essays. Every Spanish teacher knows only too well that this particular construction is quite a complicated one and so candidates would be well advised to grapple with it until at least some understanding is achieved. The verb '*desarrollar*' also proved to be a common stumbling block with versions such as '*desarollar*', '*desarroyar*' and even '*disaroyar*' being used frequently, albeit inaccurately. Some other basic vocabulary items that caused problems were '*exsepciones*' (sic), '*dificile*' (sic), '*cientistas*' (sic), '*problemo*' (sic) and '*ecolójico*' featuring quite regularly in essays.

One final but very important issue that was apparent in a good number of essays was the poor use of basic punctuation in order to make the essay flow more smoothly. It is perfectly fair to expect candidates at this level to be able to use capital letters at the beginning of sentences and full stops at the end. Sadly, this was not always the case and the structure of such essays suffered as a consequence of this disregard for punctuation.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

'El turismo y la ecología son incompatibles.' Argumenta tu opinión a favor o en contra.

There was a variety of different approaches to this title. Some candidates looked at both sides of the issue and then came to their own conclusions whilst others argued completely against or completely in favour of the statement in the title from the very beginning of their essays. Provided the information presented was relevant to the title and ideas were expressed with a range of supporting evidence, justifications and/or

examples then candidates managed to achieve a degree of success in terms of the content of the essay. Some candidates felt quite strongly that tourism and ecological issues are indeed totally incompatible whilst others felt that more education and thereby more awareness of the issues would be desirable as a starting point to make people understand the damage that tourism, especially mass tourism, can do to a tourist destination. The popularity of ecotourism was also mentioned by many candidates as a way of suggesting that a compromise can indeed be reached if all parties are willing to compromise and see the bigger picture. A few candidates misunderstood the word 'ecología' and, surprisingly perhaps, interpreted it as 'economía'. There were no shortages of strong opinions in favour of more sanctions for tourists who show no respect for the environment when on holiday or for those tourists who misbehave as a consequence of excessive alcohol intake and who then go on to display antisocial behaviour near popular tourist attractions such as monuments or historically important buildings. Most acknowledged the importance of tourism to the local economy but also argued that tourists have a responsibility to be more culturally aware and respectful of their surroundings whilst on holiday.

Section B

Question 2

Describe tu primer día en un nuevo trabajo.

Many essays were written on the basis of personal experience of a new job, part-time or otherwise. There were also, undoubtedly, some essays where candidates were imagining how it would be on the first day of a new job. Either way, those essays that managed to convey a clear description of events, feelings, experiences and sensory details tended to be more successful in terms of marks scored for content. Some essays missed opportunities to go into more detail with descriptive language and opted to keep things very simple. Whilst understandable perhaps, this approach is unlikely to attract marks at the top end of the mark scheme. Nevertheless, there were some wonderfully evocative essays written in an assured and natural style appropriate to the task that were a joy to read.

Question 3

Escribe una narración que empiece con la frase: Se despertaron de repente.

This was a less popular choice for candidates. Nevertheless, many of the essays that were written in response to this title were imaginative and made a genuine and much appreciated attempt to tell a story in a convincing way. There was often very detailed character description and development of plot lines that were rather compelling. There were essays that evolved around dream sequences with characters waking up but only in their dreams and there was also a noticeable injection of various macabre elements in quite a few of the essays presented. Scare tactics were a common feature of a good number of essays with characters ending up as victims but eventually triumphing over the forces of evil. There really was no limit to the imagination on display in many of these essays. The majority of the essays narrated imaginary events although some did opt to write about real events with features appropriate to the task

SPANISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Paper 9844/22

Writing

Key messages

In order to perform well in this paper, candidates should:

- Respond to the title in **Section A** and then select the title with which they feel most comfortable with in **Section B**.
- Write responses that are clearly relevant, well-illustrated, coherently structured and well-informed.
- Use Spanish which is accurate and of a suitably advanced nature, as well as demonstrate a good use of idiom and appropriate vocabulary.
- Use sentence patterns which show some evidence of complexity in a style which is easy to follow.

General comments

In general terms, candidates responded positively to this new writing paper. There was plenty of evidence to suggest that both centres and candidates had understood and fully embraced the new demands of this paper and that there is an awareness of the differences in style of each of the essay titles presented on the paper itself. In many essays in both sections of the paper the reader's interest was consistently maintained and the quality of thinking was expressed so articulately that the end result was often very convincingly structured pieces of writing in Spanish that scored well on the mark scheme both for quality of written communication and for content.

As one would expect, the importance of responding to the actual titles on the paper cannot be overstated, especially in **Section A** (an argumentative/discursive title) where candidates are expected to offer their opinions of the issues raised in the title, either discursively or argumentatively. A few candidates opted to write an essay in which they offered some very general thoughts on the issue of the Arts and Science without any reference to the potential for hierarchy in the relationship between them in secondary education. Paying little or no attention to the details of the title in this way is likely to mean that the marks for content are restricted to the lower levels.

Nevertheless, most candidates responded genuinely and enthusiastically to both of the tasks in front of them on the paper. Many essays in which there was a clear focus on the actual title set and where candidates thought methodically about the issues raised by that title were able to access marks at the higher end of the mark scheme. It was also noticeable that such candidates appreciated the need to structure their thinking effectively by the use of appropriate paragraphing and, given that it is actually referred to in the mark scheme, this is a technique to be highly recommended.

There were occasional problems relating to the word count (300 – 400 words in both sections) where marks for content tended to suffer as a consequence of the candidate not saying enough in response to the title. Inevitably, marks for language were also adversely affected by essays that fell short of the minimum 300 words whilst, at the same time, essays that were well in excess of the maximum 400 words also were inclined to lose their focus in terms of both language and content. Despite these observations, the vast majority of candidates managed to produce two pieces of writing that abided by the rubric.

The impression also given by the majority of essays written by candidates was that the need to have a clear understanding of the actual wording of the mark scheme is always going to be an advantage. This new mark scheme is more detailed than in the previous syllabus and so knowing how each piece is going to be assessed by Examiners is a very handy starting point when planning and then writing an essay under examination conditions. In simple terms, candidates who have a full understanding of the mark scheme are far more likely to produce more accomplished essays than candidates who have little or no understanding of the mark scheme.

As for the overall quality of the language used by candidates, many were keen to show evidence of their ability to organise ideas into coherent text by using a range of cohesive devices and delivering plenty of linguistic range coupled with a high degree of grammatical accuracy. Such essays attracted marks in the higher levels of the mark scheme for linguistic range and organisation and language accuracy. Equally, there were essays written in both sections of the paper where the language was not well organised and tended to lack coherence and clarity with candidates often repeating themselves and restricting themselves to the use of mostly simple linguistic structures. Such essays never progressed beyond level one on the mark scheme for quality of written communication. Inevitably, the marks for content for such essays also suffered given that the points that candidates were trying to make were often unclear or very pedestrian in terms of analytical thinking.

One striking feature of many essays produced by candidates in this session was the lack of understanding shown of the importance of correct accentuation in Spanish. Even some of the most elegantly argued essays or essays that were very well written in either a descriptive or narrative style occasionally showed a complete disregard for accents. This point needs making clearly to candidates as it is always the case that marks for the quality of written communication will be affected adversely by the lack of appropriate Spanish accents. If candidates understand that accents in Spanish can often alter the meaning of words then this may help them to grasp the significance of correct use of accents in their essay writing.

There were a number of widespread language errors to report and Examiners feel it is always worth highlighting the most frequent errors so that candidates can be made aware of common pitfalls that are best avoided. A really common language error on this paper was the use of plural verbs (and, indeed, plural adjectives) with '*la gente*'. Statements such as '*...la gente prefieren ver la tele en casa que ir al teatro*' (sic) and '*habían mucha gente extranjera esperando para entrar al teatro...*' (sic) were often seen by Examiners. Incorrectly spelt auxiliary verbs were also often used by candidates with examples such as '*...mis amigos y yo abíamos decidido viajar al extranjero...*' and '*(sic)...es difícil entender lo que a pasado...*' (sic) being amongst the most commonly used. A number of candidates fell foul of some basic spelling errors with examples such as '*...una desición complicada...*' (sic), '*...los turistas culturales alludan a la gente local ...*' (sic) and, surprisingly perhaps, '*...las ciencias siempre serán más importantes que las artes...*'(sic) given that the correct spelling was given to candidates in the title of **Question one**.

The correct use the verb '*gustar*' in some fairly basic sentences also caused problems for some candidates. Examples such as '*muchos amigos míos no gustan viajar en avión...*' (sic) and '*...hablando personalmente a mí no gusto despertarme temprano en casa...*' (sic) were common and tended to spoil the overall impression given to Examiners as they read the essays. Every Spanish teacher knows only too well that this particular construction is quite a complicated one and so candidates would be well advised to grapple with it until at least some understanding is achieved. The verb '*desarrollar*' also proved to be a common stumbling block with versions such as '*desarollar*', '*desarroya*' and even '*disaroyer*' being used frequently, albeit inaccurately. Some other basic vocabulary items that caused problems were '*exsepsiones*' (sic), '*dificile*' (sic), '*sientistas*' (sic), '*problemo*' (sic) and '*ecolójico*' featuring quite regularly in essays.

One final but very important issue that was apparent in a good number of essays was the poor use of basic punctuation in order to make the essay flow more smoothly. It is perfectly fair to expect candidates at this level to be able to use capital letters at the beginning of sentences and full stops at the end. Sadly, this was not always the case and the structure of such essays suffered as a consequence of this disregard for punctuation.

Comments on specific questions

Section A

Question 1

¿Crees que las artes como el teatro, la música y el dibujo deberían tener la misma importancia en la educación secundaria que las ciencias?

There was a variety of different approaches to this title. Some candidates looked at both sides of the issue and then came to their own conclusions whilst others argued completely against or completely in favour of the statement in the title from the very beginning of their essays. Provided the information presented was

relevant to the title and ideas were expressed with a range of supporting evidence, justifications and/or examples then candidates managed to achieve a degree of success in terms of the content of the essay.

Some candidates felt quite strongly that the importance of science in education cannot be overstated whilst others felt that there should be no difference in terms of importance between subjects such as drama or dance and sciences. The career opportunities angle was also a vital element in the argument for many candidates. Their view was that there would appear to be far more careers out there that require a grounding in science subjects than in arts subjects and, as such, more curriculum time should be devoted to the study of science. Many candidates argued that the study of drama, for example, has the added bonus of giving individuals more self-confidence and the ability to overcome their own fears when it comes to performing in front of an audience. A good number of candidates expressed the view that all subjects in the curriculum have equal importance and that schools should be offering their candidates a very broad and balanced diet in terms of the variety of subjects to be studied. Many felt that the Arts and Sciences can and should live side by side on any school timetable.

Section B

Question 2

Describe *la experiencia de un viaje largo a un destino lejano*.

Many essays were written on the basis of personal experience of an extended trip or holiday. There were also, undoubtedly, some essays where candidates were imagining how things would be on a trip to a distant destination. Either way, those essays that managed to convey a clear description of events, feelings, experiences and sensory details tended to be more successful in terms of marks scored for content. Some essays missed opportunities to go into more detail with descriptive language and opted to keep things very simple. Whilst understandable perhaps, this approach is unlikely to attract marks at the top end of the mark scheme. Nevertheless, there were some wonderfully evocative essays written in an assured and natural style appropriate to the task that were a joy to read and that really did capture the excitement and the anticipation of a long trip.

Question 3

Escribe una narración incluyendo la frase: *No sabía que alguien pudiera ser tan generoso*.

This was a less popular choice for candidates. Nevertheless, many of the essays that were written in response to this title were imaginative and made a genuine and much appreciated attempt to tell a story in a convincing way. There was often very detailed character description and development of plot lines that were rather compelling. There really was no limit to the imagination on display in many of these essays. The majority of the essays narrated imaginary events although some did opt to write about seemingly real events with a range of narrative features appropriate to the task. There were many heart-warming tales of human generosity and of hope in the face of adversity. Candidates who responded to this title, it would appear, made a genuine attempt to enter into the spirit of storytelling and this was very much to their credit.

SPANISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Paper 9844/23

Writing

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.

SPANISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Paper 9844/31

Literature

Key messages

This has been the first session of the new syllabus and candidates are to be congratulated on their preparation for this examination.

Examiners would like to emphasise three points in particular which candidates and teachers may find helpful.

- 1 The word count is **recommended** only. This means that candidates may write **more** than 500 words without penalty. Candidates do **not** need to count words. Examiners do not check the length of an answer. However candidates are advised to manage their time carefully and to plan their response before starting to write.
- 2 The new mark scheme includes requirements for candidates to address the use of language and technique in each answer and to give a personal response to the text. The personal response does not mean an original interpretation of the text, but rather an individual reaction to it, expressing why and in what way the themes/characters/use of language impressed the candidate or was thought-provoking.
- 3 In **Sección A**, the question addresses both the extract given **and** the text as a whole. Candidates must respond to the question and the issues it raises and show detailed knowledge and understanding of the text beyond the printed extract.

A final Key Message is to candidates to read the question carefully and construct the answer in such a way that you make sure you answer it **exactly as is written** and support your argument with examples from the text. Many of you will be familiar with the Point-Example-Explain-Link (PEEL) technique of approaching and organising an argument, which gives structure to each paragraph and flow and coherence to the discussion. It is a good starting point for those who find it a challenge to plan a response.

General comments

The new syllabus requires the study of **two** texts, one from each section. The vast majority of candidates followed the rubric correctly. It is always necessary to have studied the text in detail and to analyse the issues and themes raised. This is the starting point and foundation for being able to respond in a critical and informed way to the questions set. Candidates should not narrate the text, rather use examples from it to support the argument.

Candidates showed a marked preference for **Question 1** and **Question 4/Question 5**. The number of responses on these texts was very much higher than others on the Paper.

Comments on specific questions

Sección A

Question 1

Federico García Lorca: La casa de Bernarda Alba

¿Qué impresión nos da este extracto de la posibilidad de un matrimonio feliz? ¿Hasta qué punto se mantiene esta impresión la lo largo de la obra entera? Justifica tu respuesta.

The extract presented is from the third Act of the play, and consists of a conversation between Bernarda and *Angustias*, who expresses her concerns about her feelings towards Pepe (her *fiancé*). Bernarda's advice is

to accept the fact that men have their own business to attend to and a wife's duty is to keep silent and not express any signs of weakness.

It is good practice to define your terms at the beginning of the essay – in this case '*un matrimonio feliz*'. What is it in the context of the times and society in which the play is set and is there more than one interpretation of it in the play? If so, by whom and what does it tell us about those characters, or possibly Lorca's intentions?

This was by far the most popular question on the Paper. Without exception, responses agreed that the possibility of a happy marriage for *Angustias* and Pepe was virtually non-existent in the light of the doubts and suspicions of *Angustias* revealed in the extract. The most successful answers considered examples of marriages in the play – Bernarda, La Poncia, Adelaida. The basis of the relationship is false as Pepe only approached *Angustias* as she had money. He is already deceiving her with Adela, just as Bernarda's late husband did with the Criada. Perhaps the most successful marriage seen is that of La Poncia, where she is not cowed by her husband but rather, they seem to have established a mutually agreeable functional relationship. Happiness is a contentious issue. A contrasting view is presented by Adela and María Josefa. They seek to escape the restrictions represented by Bernarda's home, to be happy with someone they love and to be free. Does this represent an impossible ideal and if so, why? What is Lorca questioning and criticising?

Many responses limited their response to the extract with little or no reference to the text beyond this. This is bound to limit the marks available as candidates do not show detailed knowledge and understanding of the text as a whole. The best answers achieved the balance and approached the issue in its broadest sense, with a sensitivity to the use of language.

Question 2

Patricia García and Teresa López-Pellisa (eds): *Fantastic short stories by women authors from Spain and Latin America*

El típico cuento de fantasmas se concentra en la experiencia de los personajes vivos. ¿Es este el caso en La resucitada? Justifica tu respuesta.

The responses to this question all agreed that this was not the typical ghost story. The story is short and the narrative is clearly expressed. This gives candidates the opportunity to use detail and analysis to the full. The form of the story is worthy of note as it is not a first-person narrative, but events are seen through Dorotea's eyes. Whilst giving a measure of distance, the writer is able to give details of Dorotea's appearance and clothing, helping the reader to identify with her. At the same time, the reactions of her family and servants are also conveyed by means of Dorotea's reflections. The most successful responses mentioned these points and analysed the use of language and the way the author created such an effective sense of horror.

The other aspect to the story is the underlying message. Most presented this as a feminist protest – or at least an expression of the sense of isolation and lack of appreciation felt by women who were not valued as they should have been by their family. In this case the woman takes the decision to remove herself from the situation rather than continue that painful experience. Responses to this question were generally more aware of the need to move from the extract to the text as a whole.

Question 3

Carmen Laforet: *Nada*

Analiza el motivo de las emociones que Andrea expresa en esta escena. Explora lo que se revela de la amistad entre Andrea y Ena a lo largo de la novela entera. Justifica tu respuesta, refiriéndote a la obra entera.

This question also led many candidates to narrate events in the printed extract without placing it within the course of the narrative. Recognising how specific events act as catalysts for future actions or give a different perspective on characters shows a critical reading as well as detailed understanding of the text. More successful answers considered Román's role in helping the reader to understand Ena's interest in Andrea; indeed this scene could be interpreted as prompting the reader to question Ena's motives in befriending Andrea as well as the initial doubts regarding Román. It is the first time the two worlds of Andrea – her family and her friend Ena – collide, which merits discussion too. Thorough essays mentioned the events which came immediately before this scene, where Andrea had an unsatisfactory encounter with Gerardo. This

could open up analysis of Andrea's relationship with others and question to what extent she was able to read other people's views and to express her own feelings, here and throughout the text.

Sección B

Gabriel García Márquez: *El coronel no tiene quien le escriba*

Question 4

La persona que más merece nuestra admiración en esta obra es la mujer del coronel. ¿Hasta qué punto estás de acuerdo? Justifica tu respuesta.

This question attracted many responses. The wording of the question is focused on the coronel's wife. This means that she must at least be considered in the response; it does not invite the candidate to ignore her and to nominate another character as the most admirable.

Those who felt that the coronel's wife was most deserving of the title emphasised her unfailing loyalty to her husband, even when she did not agree with him or challenged his lack of judgement. The coronel's wife remained by her husband's side and stoically managed in the face of hunger, illness and frustration. The coronel would be criticised as idealistic and unable to face up to the reality of their situation as well as arrogant and too proud to accept help.

If the coronel himself was seen to be most admirable, his characteristics of optimism, honesty, love for his wife, dignity, commitment to his beliefs and humour were frequently mentioned. The coronel did not complain and represented hope for a better future. His wife would then be criticised for complaining and pressurising the coronel.

Responses which compared the two characters worked well as did those which gave a balanced, critical assessment of the coronel's wife. It was not a correct interpretation of the question to begin the essay by saying that the coronel's wife was not the most admirable character and write only about the coronel or any other character.

The wider context of the novel was not often examined.

Question 5

El pueblo del coronel no lleva nombre porque representa a todos los que viven en una sociedad sin democracia. Da tu opinión, justificando tu respuesta.

This option was less popular than **Question 4**, but still attracted many candidates. One of the most compelling points made was that it is fitting for a town with no voice to have no name. All responses stated that the town reflected the situation of many others, where the lack of democracy gave rise to corruption, repression and violence. However the underlying issues were often not analysed in depth and needed more reference to the text to support the argument. The most effective responses included analysis of the cockerel and the role of cock fights – the only opportunity for the people in the town to gather together, exchange clandestine information (a dangerous behaviour as seen in murder of Agustín) and somehow take control. The physical isolation of the town is significant also. Candidates always show much empathy for the coronel and admire his courage, humour and determination but need to analyse rather than describe as well as pay attention to Márquez's use of language.

Carmen Conde: *Mientras los hombres mueren*

Question 6

*Según estos poemas, en una guerra, la muerte de niños es lo más horroroso e injustificable de todo. ¿Hasta qué punto aceptas este análisis de los poemas? Justifica tu respuesta refiriéndote a **cinco poemas** de la colección como mínimo.*

Question 7

*Analiza lo que representa la figura de la Madre en los poemas de Carmen Conde. Justifica tu respuesta con referencias detalladas a **cinco poemas** de la colección como mínimo.*

The comments on this text will cover both questions set. The collection of poems attracted fewer responses however candidates showed good understanding of the poems and their themes.

In both questions candidates adhered to the rubrics and selected at least five poems – obviously this covered a large number overall. Responses showed that the loss of children was horrific, but constituted only one element of the dreadful experience of the Civil War. Some answers dealt with the question more specifically by focusing more on the fate of children, which was also appropriate. The figure of the Madre was interpreted as 'la Patria' as well as the usual meaning. One of the most effective points made was poet's plea that women should not have children during the war itself, in that they would not become mothers.

The approach taken by candidates showed that they were able to select appropriate poems and could explain the points being made. The best answers also analysed how the language was used, not only to express the author's feelings but also to create an impact on the reader. Analysis of language, the form of the poems, the use of linguistic technique, for example, at the simplest level, imagery, repetition, rhythm, choice of vocabulary, are essential.

Isabel Allende: La casa de los espíritus

Question 8

'No es cuestión de ricos y pobres, sino de fuertes y débiles'. (Esteban Trueba)

Analiza la importancia de esta declaración para ayudarnos a comprender a Esteban. Justifica tu respuesta.

The statement made by Esteban Trueba is key to the analysis in responding to the question. This is an expression of his philosophy of life – that individuals are responsible for his or her own success or failure and must take action as needed. There is little compassion or empathy. Candidates showed knowledge of the text and the best answers used this to support their argument rather than narrate Esteban's life story. His was a success story, as he forged his way out of poverty and vulnerability to achieve wealth and power. This was done at any cost without compassion for those who suffered as a result of his behaviour. He despised those who opposed him and dealt harshly with members of his own family who would not agree to his demands or meet his standards, sadly including his own sons and daughter. Some responses which looked at the novel in its entirety suggested that Esteban's true strength is not revealed until the end of the novel where he shows himself to be strong enough to acknowledge the limits of his own powers and seeks the help of a woman in the form of Tránsito Soto. Esteban had to give way to the next generation. Other characters such as Tránsito and Alba also succeeded in a different way and could offer a contrast in the argument.

Question 9

Las mujeres en esta novela son activistas pero no se declaran a favor de un partido político específico. ¿Es esto importante para el tema de la novela? Da tu opinión y justifica tu respuesta.

Answers to this question tended to describe rather than analyse. The question refers to the theme of the novel so this should be the starting point. What is it? The political failures of a country or the trauma of a particular family – or does one reflect the other? Candidates are advised to note the women to be discussed and consider the motivation for their activism. This began with Nívea who had a specific aim – to achieve the vote for women. But why did Clara work so hard to help the workers at *Tres Marías*? How did Blanca help Pedro Tercero García? What spurred Alba on in supporting Miguel? The female characters are motivated by personal relationships and an instinct to nurture and protect. They could be seen as transcending politics and displaying more altruistic motivation such as kindness and solidarity. Tránsito Soto is another excellent example. She succeeded by remaining neutral and having alliances with everyone irrespective of their political views.

SPANISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Paper 9844/32

Literature

Key messages

This has been the first session of the new syllabus and candidates are to be congratulated on their preparation for this examination.

Examiners would like to emphasise three points in particular which candidates and teachers may find helpful.

1. The word count is **recommended** only. This means that candidates may write **more** than 500 words without penalty. Candidates do **not** need to count words. Examiners do not check the length of an answer. However candidates are advised to manage their time carefully and to plan their response before starting to write.
2. The new mark scheme includes requirements for candidates to address the use of language and technique in each answer and to give a personal response to the text. The personal response does not mean an original interpretation of the text, but rather an individual reaction to it, expressing why and in what way the themes/characters/use of language impressed the candidate or was thought-provoking.
3. In **Sección A**, the question addresses both the extract given **and** the text as a whole. Candidates must respond to the question and the issues it raises and show detailed knowledge and understanding of the text beyond the printed extract.

A final Key Message is to candidates to read the question carefully and construct the answer in such a way that you make sure you answer it **exactly as is written** and support your argument with examples from the text. Many of you will be familiar with the Point-Example-Explain-Link (PEEL) technique of approaching and organising an argument, which gives structure to each paragraph and flow and coherence to the discussion. It is a good starting point for those who find it a challenge to plan a response.

General comments

The new syllabus requires the study of **two** texts, one from each section. The vast majority of candidates followed the rubric correctly. It is always necessary to have studied the text in detail and to analyse the issues and themes raised. This is the starting point and foundation for being able to respond in a critical and informed way to the questions set. Candidates should not narrate the text, rather use examples from it to support the argument.

Candidates showed a marked preference for **Question 1** and **Question 4/Question 5**. The number of responses on these texts was very much higher than others on the Paper.

Comments on specific questions

Sección A

Federico García Lorca: La casa de Bernarda Alba

Question 1

¿Por qué se pelean Martirio y Adela? Analiza la importancia de esta escena para ayudarnos a comprender el desenlace de la obra. Justifica tu respuesta, refiriéndose a la obra entera.

This was by far the most answered question on the Paper. Candidates discussed the oppressive atmosphere in the house, caused by Bernarda's imposition of strict mourning and controlling approach to her daughters.

The tension between the sisters in the extract is almost palpable, with implied threats from Martirio and heartfelt pleading by Adela, begging her sister to let her follow Pepe. The most effective answers explained the reasons behind Martirio's bitterness, jealousy and need for revenge as Bernarda intervened to thwart a possible marriage with Enrique Humanas and Martirio's lack of a dowry. Candidates then went on to focus on the language of the extract and premonition of a death.

Many responses did not progress beyond the discussion of the extract to relate it to the outcome of the play (as required in the question). This would include the fact that Martirio was responsible for revealing the whereabouts of Pepe and Adela and that her false report of Pepe's death (*Se acabó Pepe*) led directly to Adela's suicide.

The key message here is to ensure that all elements of the question are addressed. Candidates who aspire to achieving the highest standards will accomplish this and convey how the author draws the audience into the drama through the structure and form of the play, effective characterisation and presentation of themes with use of language, which offers many contrasts and should be analysed in exploring the effect it has on the audience. Lorca's use of poetry or poetic language is integral to this.

Patricia García and Teresa López-Pellisa (eds): *Fantastic short stories by women authors from Spain and Latin America*

Question 2

Según la autora, Amparo Dávila, en este cuento 'hay dos historias en una sola'. Analiza lo que aprendemos de esta familia en el extracto, y luego en el cuento entero, para intentar demostrar lo que dice la autora. Da tu opinión y justifica tu respuesta.

This question attracted fewer responses. Candidates agreed that there were two stories within one. The linear narrative was that of the unhappy wife's increasing discomfort at the presence and behaviour of the guest faced with the incomprehension of her husband, who had brought the guest to their home, and the way she resolved this. The more abstract deeper story comprised a feminist reading of the narrative, in which the monstrous guest represents the unacceptable form of masculinity presented by the arrogant, unfeeling husband. This is defeated by women supporting one another and gaining strength from this to defeat the monster. The best answers would consider how the author evoked the sense of menace in both the guest and the husband and how this affected the characters in the story and in the reader. There would also be an analysis of the wife's situation and societal norms – '*Mi vida...se convirtió en un infierno*'

Carmen Laforet: Nada

Question 3

¿Hasta qué punto fue la fiesta de Pons una revelación para Andrea? Analiza esta experiencia en el momento, en la casa de Pons y también cómo impactó a Andrea más tarde. Justifica tu respuesta refiriéndote a la obra entera.

Responses to this question showed empathy with Andrea's feelings of discomfort and alienation in the rarified atmosphere of Pons' family home. There were some good observations about the stratified nature of class in post-Civil War Spanish society which underlined the vulnerability of Andrea's family's situation – a stark contrast. Andrea was not impressed by these people and revealed disgust on overhearing conversations about profiting from the Second World War. There were powerful devices in the narrative, for example the use of mirrors and details such as Andrea's shoes to emphasise her feelings. These all relate to the 'now' in the question. Candidates also need to show how this episode had a wider effect on Andrea. Andrea's friendship with Pons was seen as potentially crucial in helping her to move forward as her most important relationship, with Ena, had currently stalled. The experience was disastrous for Andrea's self-confidence, a meaningful friendship or even romance and the plans to spend the summer with Pons' family on the Costa Brava. The best responses included analysis of the use of language to evoke the atmosphere of the party, the guests and the effect on Andrea and in the reader.

Sección B

Gabriel García Márquez: *El coronel no tiene quien le escribe*

Question 4

En El coronel no tiene quien le escribe, García Márquez no ofrece una solución pero a pesar de esto es una obra positiva. ¿Hasta qué punto estás de acuerdo? Justifica tu respuesta.

There were responses which agreed with the statement and also those which challenged it. The best answers set out their position at the beginning and then worked through the justification with reference to the text. Some essays seemed to present one view but at the end of the answer suddenly suggested that this may not be quite so clear cut. A focused coherent argument, which may consider opposing points of view from the start is the better plan.

In general, responses weighed up whether the incredible optimism and perseverance of the colonel or the state of abject poverty and misery in which the couple lived was most compelling. Those who opted for the positive view also cited the colonel's humour and the degree of humanity seen in the community, exemplified by the kindness of Agustín's friends and the doctor and the loving relationship between the colonel and his wife. Some contrasted the nature of this marriage with that of Sabas and his wife, who had money, but did not seem to be in a supportive relationship. Several thoughtful answers argued that the author had deliberately presented two different ways of looking at the world, optimistic in the case of the colonel and realistic or even fatalistic in the case of his wife. This was so finely balanced in the novel that it was up to the individual reader to judge the story as negative or positive, with the result revealing more about the reader than the text. Reference to the use of language and imagery employed by the author gave further depth to the argument.

Question 5

Analiza el papel del médico en la novela. Justifica tu respuesta.

Although not as popular as the previous question on this text, many responses were submitted. All mentioned the kindness of the doctor towards the colonel and his wife regarding medical treatment and friendship. The doctor succeeded in getting the couple to accept his help with humour and respect towards them. Fewer responses registered the doctor's importance in helping the reader acquire a fuller picture of the colonel. The shared political and social views of the colonel with this educated outward looking younger man serve to validate his position in society in spite of his economic circumstances. Some even suggested that the doctor represented a replacement son figure for the colonel, and emphasised his bravery in subscribing to the clandestine newsletters in view of his profession and the fate of Agustín. Analysis of language would include Márquez's skill in delivering dialogue, comparison of this figure with the lawyer, the only other professional individual in the text, and the doctor's astute observations on the general state of political affairs and helping the colonel avoid being cheated by Sabas.

Carmen Conde: *Mientras los hombres mueren*

Question 6

*Haz un análisis detallado de los dos poemas *Ha terminado la guerra* y *Poema XXI de la sección A los niños Muertos por la guerra* con énfasis particular en el tema de la paz. Puedes referirte a otros poemas más de la colección siquieres.*

There were a small number of responses to this question. The themes explored were the contrasting situations as the remaining republican supporters flee Valencia after the sudden end to hostilities and the plea for the return of children evacuated from Spain. What will the future hold? Analysis of the use of language could include the images of suffering and defeat and the sense that peace is not positive – 'plomo' like a bullet.

The children will offer hope to Spain and they are needed by their parents. Consider a different form of suffering – separation.

The choice of other poems to substantiate the argument is open to the candidate but not required and would follow the main flow of the analysis, emphasising suffering, loss and fear for the future, for example.

Question 7

*Carmen Conde nos hace comprender que la experiencia de observar una guerra es tan horrorosa como luchar en ella. ¿Hasta qué punto estás de acuerdo con esta declaración? Justifica tu respuesta con referencia a **cinco poemas** como mínimo.*

Again, there were a small number of responses. The answers were very individual depending on the choice of poems. This gives candidates the opportunity to present a personal view which is supported by close analysis of the poems selected. This must include close study of the use of language in its fullest sense and interpretation of the theme. The unique immediacy of the collection which was written during the conflict itself may also be considered.

Isabel Allende: La casa de los espíritus

Question 8

Analiza la importancia de los dos hogares de la familia Trueba (La gran casa de la esquina y Las Tres Marías) y lo que representan en la novela. Justifica tu respuesta.

This was the more popular option for the novel. Most answers defined the properties as representative of Clara and Esteban. *Tres Marías* was the power house of Esteban, where he had established himself, had created wealth and generated political power, but also where the most brutal and negative traits of his character are revealed through his violation of women and oppression of the workforce. In contrast, *La casa de la esquina* represented the spiritual and nurturing qualities of Clara's character and served as a refuge and safe haven for several members of the family and other characters in need of shelter. A thoughtful comment was that the more reflective and civilised version of Esteban chose to make his home here at the end of his life, to be closer to Clara's memory.

Question 9

*En una entrevista, Isabel Allende decía 'Yo soy un cuentacuentos'. Analiza la técnica narrativa de *La casa de los espíritus* a la luz de este comentario. Justifica tu respuesta.*

There were relatively few responses to this question. Most had an understanding of the issues to analyse and the aspects of writing most representative of storytelling included the theme of a family saga, rapidly developing narrative, strong characterisation, inclusion of exotic characters such as Jean de Santigny and elements of magical realism. What held the reader's attention and compelled them to keep reading? The temptation to retell the story must be resisted.

SPANISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Paper 9844/33
Literature

There were too few candidates for a meaningful report to be produced.