

2007 AP® SPANISH LANGUAGE EXAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What does the AP® *Spanish Language Course Description* mean by “informal writing”?

This task measures the AP Spanish Language students’ ability to:

- Communicate via formal and informal written correspondence.
- Recognize cultural elements implicit in written texts.
- Interpret linguistic cues to infer social relationships.
- Use language that is semantically and grammatically accurate according to a given context.

The use of the terms “formal and informal” in the first bullet and the “accuracy” required by the fourth bullet imply that the “informal” nature of the task is not so much related to language use, as to the assumption that this is an interpersonal communicative task, which presupposes an interlocutor to whom a message is written.

The task elicits interpersonal written communication, which also presupposes appropriate language usage in terms of vocabulary, spelling, grammatical rules, organization, etc. and, according to the setting and the interlocutor, the register can be formal or informal.

2. Does informal writing indicate that the students will be able to use abbreviations?

Abbreviations that are commonly used in standard Spanish are accepted. The expectation will be that the students use language and orthography appropriate to the context in which the communication is taking place. The *Real Academia Española* defines abbreviations as follows: *Tipo de abreviación que consiste en la representación gráfica reducida de una palabra mediante la supresión de letras finales o centrales, y que suele cerrarse con punto; p. ej., afmo. por afectísimo; Dir.^a por directora; íd. por ídem; SS. MM. por Sus Majestades; D. por don.*

3. What does the AP® *Spanish Language Course Description* mean by “informal speaking”?

This task measures the AP Spanish Language students’ ability to:

- Initiate, maintain, and close a conversation on a familiar topic.
- Formulate questions to seek clarification or additional information.
- Recognize cultural elements implicit in written texts.
- Interpret linguistic cues to infer social relationships.
- Use language that is semantically and grammatically accurate according to a given context.

The task elicits interpersonal oral communication, which also presupposes appropriate language usage in terms of vocabulary, pronunciation, grammatical rules, organization,

etc., and, according to the setting and the interlocutor, the register can be formal or informal.

4. What does the AP® Spanish Language Course Description mean by “cite” the sources in the formal writing task?

The Course Description states: “You should refer to *all* of the sources. As you refer to the sources, cite them appropriately.” By “cite appropriately”, it is meant that the students are expected to clearly identify the sources to which they refer. This does not necessarily mean a technical citation from the sources. That is to say, specific formats, such as MLA, APA, are not required, but acceptable. Possibilities are: (*Fuente #1*), “*Según el locutor,*”, “*En el texto*”, etc.

5. Will the students have an opportunity to view the questions while they listen to the long selections in the multiple-choice section?

Yes. They will be given two minutes to preview the questions and responses prior to listening to each stimulus and then they will have two minutes after the end of each listening selection to complete the questions. There will be space provided for them to take notes during the audio selections as well. However, they will not be graded on their notes.

6. In the formal essay (presentational writing), can students look at the written sources while writing?

Yes. However, it is also important to note that, although students will have the written sources in front of them, they should take notes during the listening of the audio source, since they will hear it only once. Students will not be graded on their notes.

7. How will strong reading skills help my students in the exam?

With the emphasis on integration of skills, reading is the foundation of several exam sections, such as reading comprehension, paragraph completion, presentational writing, and interpersonal as well as presentational speaking.

8. Are students expected to know the culture of all the Spanish-speaking countries in order to be able to answer questions with rich cultural content?

No. The questions related to culture will be based on the selections and passages listened to, or read, within the exam. Students are not expected to answer questions with knowledge that cannot be found, or inferred from the content included in the oral and written sources given to them. However, exposure to a variety of Spanish and Latin American cultural topics should be a part of any Spanish language course so that students get familiar with the perspectives, practices and products of the different countries of the Spanish-speaking world.

9. Can students use a highlighter on the exam?

No. But, students may write in the test book and underline or take notes. However, their notes are not considered when evaluating their responses.

10. What can students see when they are doing the free-response section?

Students will have the printed texts in front of them while they are answering the presentational writing and presentational speaking tasks. They can also see their notes of the listening selections. In addition, for the interpersonal speaking part, students will have an outline in front of them while doing the simulated conversation.

11. If a listening selection appears in the multiple choice (dialogues & narratives), can it reappear later on the exam as a listening source for another test question? Can a reading text be used more than once in the same exam?

No. All of the listening and reading prompts will be different throughout the exam. In the pilot test, some of the same selections were re-used. However, on the actual exam, listening and reading stimuli will only be used once during the exam.