

FACTFILE: GCSE SPANISH

Reading 4

CONTEXT 1: IDENTITY, LIFESTYLE AND CULTURE



Culture, customs, festivals and celebrations



Introduction

Here are some key points to help you study this topic.

Learning Outcomes

You should be able to:

- understand and respond to different types of written language;
- understand details within texts using high frequency familiar language;
- identify the overall message, key points, details and opinions in a variety of written passages;
- deduce meaning from a variety of written texts (from a range of specified contexts including short narratives, authentic material and unfamiliar material);
- recognise and respond to key information, important themes and ideas in extended written text and authentic sources;

- demonstrate understanding by being able to scan for particular information, organise and present relevant details, draw conclusions in context and recognise implicit meaning where appropriate; and
- translate sentences from Spanish into English.

These lists are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

Skills

- Communication.
- Using ICT.
- Self-management.
- Working with others.
- Problem solving.
- Managing information.

Preparation

- Ensure you become familiar with the specification requirements, grade boundaries and with the assessment format of this component of the GCSE.
- Always read the whole text and the questions carefully and at least twice and ensure you understand what you are expected to answer.
- Look for word families related to the topic of Culture, customs, festivals and celebrations, e.g. celebrar, celebración, celebrant and consider the function of each word (i.e. is a verb?, a noun?, an adjective?).
- Careful with these questions in which you are required to change the person, e.g. “Celebro la Navidad con mi familia en la casa de mis abuelos” – ¿Donde celebra Juan la Navidad?

- Don't forget about punctuation, as it may change the meaning of a sentence.
- Do not become distracted or lose focus on what you are reading.
- Try to see what clues the title or pictures of the exercises can give you so that you can anticipate what topic you are going to read about.
- Look at the points allocated to each question in the exam paper. This may give you a clue of how much detail you have to include in your answer.
- Ensure you answer the questions in the specified language: If the questions are in English, answer in English. If they are in Spanish, answer in Spanish.
- In the exam, marks will not be awarded for answers in the wrong language even if the answers are correct.
- Become familiar with the type of questions posed in the exam.
- While reading, make a note of key words and phrases that might help you with your answer.
- Develop a good knowledge of vocabulary and structures related to the topic of Culture, customs, festivals and celebrations in Spain (eating habits/shopping habits/school habits/main festivals in Spain/birthday celebrations/Christmas, etc).

Practice

- To practice your reading skills use a variety of authentic resources where you can find information about Spanish culture, customs, festivals and celebrations (radio/TV programmes, films in the target language).
- Use websites which offer a good variety of reading exercises at GCSE level in the topics of Culture, customs, festivals and celebrations.
- Use as many reading past papers as possible.
- When reading information regarding the topic of Culture, customs, festivals and celebrations make note of key details (name of the festival/where it takes place/when/what happens, etc.)
- Read texts about culture and customs of Spanish people and do a variety of exercises such as tick the correct answer, complete gaps, answer in Spanish or English, find the meaning of different words, etc. This will help you to expand your vocabulary and knowledge on the topic.
- Translate short texts and sentences in Spanish related to the topic of Culture, customs, festivals and celebrations into English.

Revision

- Go over reading exercises related to the topic and past papers done in class.
- Revise your notes and ensure that you have a very good knowledge of vocabulary and structures related to the topic of Culture, customs, festivals and celebrations.
- Are you answering what the question requires? Avoid writing irrelevant information.
- Ensure you are answering in the language required.
- Check your spellings both in Spanish and in English.
- Ensure you are using the verb tense required in your answers.

