
AP[®] Spanish Language and Culture

Sample Student Responses and Scoring Commentary

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Task 4—Cultural Comparison

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Question 4: Cultural Comparison

5 points

General Scoring Note

When applying the scoring guidelines, the response does not need to meet every single criterion in a column. You should award the score according to the preponderance of evidence.

1 Poor	2 Weak	3 Fair	4 Good	5 Strong
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost no treatment of topic within the context of the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsuitable treatment of topic within the context of the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitable treatment of topic within the context of the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally effective treatment of topic within the context of the task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective treatment of topic within the context of the task
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents information only about the target culture or only about the student’s own or another community, and may not include examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents information about the target culture and the student’s own or another community, but may not compare them; consists mostly of statements with no development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compares the target culture with the student’s own or another community, including a few supporting details and examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compares the target culture with the student’s own or another community, including some supporting details and mostly relevant examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly compares the target culture with the student’s own or another community, including supporting details and relevant examples
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates minimal understanding of the target culture; generally inaccurate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a limited understanding of the target culture; may include several inaccuracies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a basic understanding of the target culture, despite inaccuracies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates some understanding of the target culture, despite minor inaccuracies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates understanding of the target culture, despite a few minor inaccuracies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little or no organization; absence of transitional elements and cohesive devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited organization; ineffective use of transitional elements or cohesive devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some organization; limited use of transitional elements or cohesive devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized presentation; some effective use of transitional elements or cohesive devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organized presentation; effective use of transitional elements or cohesive devices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barely understandable, with frequent or significant errors that impede comprehensibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partially understandable, with errors that force interpretation and cause confusion for the listener 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally understandable, with errors that may impede comprehensibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully understandable, with some errors that do not impede comprehensibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully understandable, with ease and clarity of expression; occasional errors do not impede comprehensibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very few vocabulary resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited vocabulary and idiomatic language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate but basic vocabulary and idiomatic language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied and generally appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied and appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little or no control of grammar, syntax, and usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited control of grammar, syntax, and usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some control of grammar, syntax, and usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General control of grammar, syntax, and usage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accuracy and variety in grammar, syntax, and usage, with few errors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal or no attention to register 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of register is generally inappropriate for the presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of register may be inappropriate for the presentation with several shifts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally consistent use of register appropriate for the presentation, except for occasional shifts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly consistent use of register appropriate for the presentation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response difficult to comprehend; errors impede comprehensibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response difficult to comprehend at times; errors impede comprehensibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response generally comprehensible; errors occasionally impede comprehensibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response mostly comprehensible; errors do not impede comprehensibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response comprehensible; errors do not impede comprehensibility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification or self-correction (if present) does not improve comprehensibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification or self-correction (if present) usually does not improve comprehensibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification or self-correction (if present) sometimes improves comprehensibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification or self-correction (if present) usually improves comprehensibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification or self-correction (if present) improves comprehensibility

Score of 0: UNACCEPTABLE

- Mere restatement of language from the prompt
- Clearly does not respond to the prompt; completely irrelevant to the topic
- “I don’t know,” “I don’t understand,” or equivalent in any language
- Clearly responds to the prompt in English

NR (No Response): BLANK (no response although recording equipment is functioning)

Clarification Notes:

- The term “community” can refer to something as large as a continent or as small as a family unit.
 - The phrase “target culture” can refer to any community, large or small, associated with the target language.
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Question 4

Note: Students’ responses are quoted verbatim and may contain spelling and grammatical errors. In the transcripts of students’ speech quoted in the commentaries, a three-dot ellipsis indicates that the sample has been excerpted. Two dots indicate that the student paused while speaking.

Overview

This task assessed speaking in the presentational communicative mode by having the student make a comparative oral presentation on a cultural topic. Students were allotted 4 minutes to read the topic and prepare the presentation and then 2 minutes to deliver the presentation. The presentation had to compare an area of the Spanish-speaking world to the students’ own or another community of their choice, demonstrating understanding of cultural features of the Spanish-speaking world. Furthermore, the presentation had to be organized clearly. The response received a single holistic score based on how well it accomplished the assigned task.

The course theme for the cultural comparison task was “Contemporary Life.” The prompt asked the student to elaborate on the practice of going out with friends—going for coffee, going to the movies, going out for dinner—and compare its importance in their own (or other) community and in the lives of people in a cultural community where the target language is spoken. Students could base their responses on what they had experienced, studied, or observed.

Sample: 4A

Score: 4

Transcription of Student’s Response(s)

Hoy en día las salidas con amigos . . eh . . um . . son actividades importantes que muchas personas olvidan porque . . um . . hay un tiempo para descansar . . descansar y proveer un . . uh . . tiempo para las personas a aprender sobre la cultura y historia de los países. En ambas comunidades de Katie y las regiones urbanas de Madrid . . um . . ambas comunidades son centros de trabajo y transportación; entonces . . um . . salidas . . las salidas con amigos son importante para la salud mental y física y para . . um . . las personas y es importante para las personas . . um . . tomen un descanso. Eh . . en Houston, la cultura, la diversidad cultural de los EE.UU. es eh de los EE. UU. y los . . eh . . ciudades de Houston . . uh . . em . . causar a muchas personas a ir a una variedad de restaurantes para aprender y experimentar los diferentes culturas y, em, comidas de todo el mundo. Sin embargo . . eh. Por otro lado, en las regiones urbanas de Madrid, muchas personas visitan a sitios arqueológicos y arquitectura del país porque España y Madrid tiene una historia cultural muy rica. Um . . También, en Madrid . . um . . las salidas con amigos . . um . . son . . um . . tiempos para pasar . . eh . . son un momento . . momentos . . momentos . . momentos para pasar tiempo afuera de la familia porque en Madrid muchas personas viven con sus abuelos sus padres y las salidas con amigos son una manera en que las personas pueden tener tiempo para . .

Commentary

This response represents a good performance in Presentational Speaking. There is a generally effective treatment of the topic, within the context of the task. The presentation compares the importance of going out with friends in a community in Texas and in Madrid. The comparison includes some supporting details and relevant examples to show the importance of going out with friends in both communities (“*en Houston, la cultura, la diversidad cultural de los EE.UU. es eh de los*

Question 4 (continued)

EE. UU. y los . . eh . . ciudades de Houston . . uh . . em . . causar a muchas personas a ir a una variedad de restaurantes para aprender y experimentar los diferentes culturas y, em, comidas de todo el mundo. Sin embargo . . eh. Por otro lado, en las regiones urbanas de Madrid, muchas personas visitan a sitios arqueológicos y arquitectura del país porque España y Madrid tiene una historia cultural muy rica.”). The presentation demonstrates some understanding of the target culture (“*en Madrid . . um . . las salidos con amigos . . um . . son . . um . . tiempos para pasar . . eh . . son un momento . . momentos . . momentos . . momentos para pasar tiempo afuera de la familia porque en Madrid muchas personas viven con sus abuelos sus padres y las salidas con amigos son una manera en que las personas pueden tener tiempo*”). The observation that both Houston and Madrid have in common that they are major urban centers (“*son centros de trabajo y transportación*”) is contrasted with a cultural difference. The response is organized with cohesive devices, such as “*en ambos,*” “*sin embargo,*” and “*por otro lado,*” that structure the presentation. The response is fully understandable; although there are errors, these do not impede comprehensibility (“*hay un tiempo para descansar, descansar y proveer*”; “*la salud mental y física*”; “*ambos comunidades.*”). There is general control of grammar, syntax, and usage. The pronunciation, intonation, and pacing make the response mostly comprehensible. The pauses and hesitations (“*eh*”; “*em*”) do not interfere with the over-all pacing of the response.

Sample: 4B**Score: 3****Transcription of Student’s Response(s)**

La importancia de las salidas con amigos es muy importante en todo partes en el mundo, claro, pero específicamente . . em . . en un lugar como, un país como Venezuela. Uh . . es diferente en diferente maneras de aquí, en mi comunidad, California. Más obviamente es . . eh . . economía . . uh . . son más pobre en Venezuela y cuando . . cuando niños tenen la oportunidad para pasar tiempo con amigos es . . es más especial de aquí porque niños ahí necesitan trabajar . . uh . . por sus familias. Uh . . Claro . . er . . tenemos el mismo aquí pero por lo general . . eh . . los niños aquí . . uh . . y los tiempos ellos . . uh . . pasar con amigos aquí es diferente y más artificial aquí . . uh . . como los redes sociales y ellos pasar tiempo con personas y amigos para mala razones como estética or ser más suave . . uh . . y en Venezuela es un necesidad para llegar a través tiempos difíciles.

Commentary

This response represents a fair performance in Presentational Speaking. This response reflects suitable treatment of the topic, the importance of going out with friends, within the context of the task. The response includes a comparison of the importance of going out with friends in two communities, Venezuela and California. The presentation includes a few supporting details to show the similarities between the two communities (“*tenemos el mismo aquí*”) and also to contrast the two communities (“*pasar con amigos aquí es diferente y más artificial aquí . . uh . . como los redes sociales y ellos pasar tiempo con personas y amigos para mala razones como estética or ser más suave*”). The response demonstrates a basic understanding of the target culture, despite inaccuracies (“*economía . . uh . . son más pobre en Venezuela y cuando . . cuando niños tenen la oportunidad para pasar tiempo con amigos es . . es más especial de aquí porque niños ahí necesitan trabajar . . uh . . por sus familias.*”). There is some organization in this presentation, which opens with an introductory sentence (“*La importancia de, las salidas con amigos es em muy importante en todo partes en el mundo, claro, pero específicamente . . em . . en un lugar como, un país como Venezuela*”), and there is limited use cohesive

Question 4 (continued)

elements (“*Más obviamente*”). The response is generally understandable; there are errors that may impede comprehensibility (“*ellos . . uh . . pasar con amigos aquí es diferente y más artificial aquí . . uh . . como los redes sociales y ellos pasar tiempo con personas y amigos para mala razones como estética or ser más suave*”). The vocabulary is appropriate but basic. There is some control of grammar, syntax, and usage (“*tenemos el mismo aquí pero por lo general . . eh . . los niños aquí . . uh . . y los tiempos ellos . . uh . . pasar con amigos aquí es diferente y más artificial aquí.*”). The pronunciation and intonation make the response comprehensible. Hesitation and pauses in the pacing occasionally impede comprehensibility.

Sample: 4C**Score: 2****Transcription of Student’s Response(s)**

No cabe duda que es muy importante que las personas vayan con tus amigos en ambos, mi comunidad y los comunidades países hispanohablantes. Para empezar, en mi comunidad tenemos muchas actividades tales como la cinema y ir de compras. Em . . em . . Este iverito es a mundo . . em . . hacer con amigos y . . em mismo intereses. Siguiendo adelante, en el mundo hispanohablantes, también . . er . . tenemos . . er . . tienen . . em . . este eventos tales como como las fiestas y celebraciones y muchas más . . eh . . durante este fiestas y celebraciones . . em . . celebran em . . su, em . . cultura y eventos muy importante . . em . . para ellos. Eh . . En resumidas cuentas, hay semejanzas y diferencias entre mi comunidad y comunidades hispanohablantes em . . también . . em . . algo que, estamos similar . . em . . tenemos diferencias también, em . .

Commentary

This response represents a weak performance in Presentational Speaking. The response addresses only part of the prompt, consisting primarily of a list of similarities and differences in types of going-out activities. Although the response includes a comparison (“*No cabe duda que es muy importante que las personas vayan con tus amigos en ambos, mi comunidad y los comunidades países hispanohablantes.*”), it consists mostly of statements with no development. The response has limited organization, and the use of transitional elements is ineffective (“*Siguiendo adelante,*”). There is limited vocabulary and idiomatic language in the response. The language of the sample is partially understandable with errors that force interpretation (“*Este iverito es a mundo . . em . . hacer con amigos y . . em mismo intereses.*”). Pronunciation, intonation, and pacing, with frequent hesitation and errors, impede comprehension. There is evidence of attempts to self-correct, but this does not improve comprehensibility (“*Siguiendo adelante, en mundo hispanohablantes, también . . er . . tenemos . . er . . tienen . . em . . este eventos tales*”).