**GENERAL GUIDELINES for Language IB AB Initio Exams**

IB Exams test communicative ability and often require higher-order thinking skills. You should feel comfortable with various verb conjugations and common vocabulary for the IB topics, but they are the foundation (mere building blocks) of the broader communication that is expected of you. Increase input (Spanish) and effort (practice), and you will increase output and accuracy. Keep in mind that you always comprehend (passively understand) more than you can produce (use the grammar and vocabulary correctly).

Practice and use the language in context:

 

 Communication Miscommunication

*The more you read and hear (listen to) a foreign language,*

*the more naturally/accurately you will produce the language,*

*both in oral and written form.*

**Papel 1 (P1): 30%** (reading comprehension with approximately 40 questions) (90 minutes)

**Texto A** (short, easier questions to begin)

**Textos B,** **C y D** (Multiple choice with more answer options than questions, T/F with justification, fill-in-the blank from context or from a word bank, open-ended questions, table to identify a pronoun, etc.)

**Papel 2 (P2): 25%** (written response) (60 minutes)

**Sección A** (Answer 1 of 2 questions, minimum 50 words)

**Sección B** (Answer 1 of 3 questions, minimum 100 words)

Rubric A: Language (use of grammar, vocabulary, transition words, expressions in Spanish)

Rubric B: Message (ideas: provide information to complete the question)

Rubric C: Format (appropriate format)

**Oral: 25%** (class time in early March) (9-10 minutes)

**Entrevista** (1-on-1 discussion with the teacher. Describe a drawing and answer questions)

Rubric A: Language production (grammar and vocabulary, as well as pronunciation)

Rubric B: Interaction and ability to maintain the conversation (flow of conversation – candidate understands with little or no prompting and answers are relevant)

**Writing Assignment: 20%** (intercultural understanding) (2 hours) (in class, January)

**Sección A** (Description of topic)

**Sección B** (Comparison of culture vs. native/home culture)

**Sección C** (Reflection about topic)

Rubric A: Describe topics with facts

Rubric B: Clarity of identifying cultural differences

Rubric C: Reflection answers three reflection questions showing intercultual understanding

Rubric D: Register (use of formal or informal language, as appropriate to the topic)

Rubric E: Language (language is effective and accurate) (word count within the boundaries)

Rubric F: Formal requirements (written in Spanish, bibliography, required signatures, etc)

Grammar: Review the tenses

If you often make careless errors with verb conjugations, set aside extra time to study and practice grammar tenses, especially the ones we learned in Year 1. If your grammar is fairly accurate, review is relevant, but work towards the “finesse” of communication through studying and practicing transitions (connecting words), Spanish and/or Latin American expressions, colloquial phrases, etc.

Vocabulary: Review course vocabulary and learn more (succinct list from IB documents)

Regardless of your knowledge, study vocabulary! There are *always* more words to learn, and I can guarantee you will see words you don’t know on the exam. Basic memorization by rote practice, such as the 6-column study guide, is still valuable for high-frequency words. However, it is **best** to build your “deductive reasoning” skills by recognizing patterns of word roots, understanding how words function in sentences to deduce more meaning from unknown words, learning words through “authentic” contexts, etc. Of course, the dictionary is still an important resource to be sure you “infer” meanings or learn new meanings correctly.

Practice suggestions

\*Open-ended Questions, Oral: Use the grammar notes, maybe make note-cards, to practice sample open-ended questions, and create new questions to use new vocabulary. Continue to practice weekly with a study buddy from class, min. of 10 - 20 minutes together. (The oral interview with me will be 9 minutes long)

\*Open-ended Questions, Written: Written responses can be practiced with any of the open-ended questions in any of the tenses. 1) It is best to practice elaborating your ideas using the Paper 2 formats (post card, informal letter, formal letter, etc.). 2) Next the work should be reviewed and edited by *you*. Self-correction is essential to catch careless errors during a timed test. Identify your common errors so your self-correction is more efficient. 3) Evaluate you work one-on-one with another Spanish-Speaker: tutor, writing center tutor, friend, or your teacher. Ask them to help you see your common errors and how you could improve your letter, adding in transitions, colloquial phrases, cultural references, etc.

\*Review/practice Vocabulary, Oral: It’s a good idea to describe drawings off of Google Images on vocabulary topics or describe pictures from children’s books (there are some in our library). Look up words in a dictionary for visual objects that relate to the themes we’ve covered.

\*Website with guided higher level practice: <http://www.ver-taal.com/index.htm>

\* “Authentic” Listening Input: Trailers, Reportajes (TV News) and Anuncios (Ads) on above website; YouTube songs with lyrics or clips of telenovelas (soap operas)

\* “Authentic” Reading Input: transcripts of the oral listening from the website, on-line popular magazines, on-line newspapers, a children’s pre-teen novel in Spanish (such as Harry Potter) if it *interests* you and helps you read more at one time. It is especially important to read topics from IB topics. For example: Q&A Interviews with famous people, readings on cultural food, environmental hot topics, tourist destinations in Spain or Latin America, university related topics, job searches for young people (internships or summer job), etc...

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