

# Natural Conversation

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## Natural Conversation

This page focuses on the **Guided Conversation** part of the CSEC Spanish oral exam. This is the section where you answer spoken questions naturally, clearly, and with enough detail to show that you understand the question and can develop your answer.

### At a Glance

You will receive a total of **16 questions**:

- 4 questions from **Home and Family**
- 4 questions from **Shopping**
- 4 questions from **Daily Routine**
- 4 questions from **Travel**
- 4 questions from **Recreation**
- 4 questions from **School and Career**

The conversation is worth **45 marks** in total.

You are marked on:

- **1. Comprehension and Spontaneity** (20 marks) - understand the question and respond naturally and promptly
- **2. Expression and Fluency** (25 marks) - speak clearly, use a wide enough vocabulary, and connect ideas smoothly

### What Examiners Want

The examiner is not looking for memorised speeches. They want answers that are:

- relevant to the question
- complete enough to show understanding
- spoken confidently and at a natural pace
- supported with reasons, examples, or small details

Short answers are acceptable when the question is short, but you should avoid one-word replies unless the question really only needs that.

## How to Answer Well

Use this simple pattern whenever possible:

### Answer + reason + small detail

For example:

- Me gusta viajar porque es interesante. El año pasado fui a Kingston con mi familia.
- No suelo comprar ropa en línea porque prefiero probármela antes.
- Voy a la escuela temprano, así que me despierto a las seis todos los días.

If you need a quick mental structure, think:

- 1. Say the answer directly.
- 2. Add one reason.
- 3. Add one extra detail if you can.

## Main Question Topics

Questions usually come from everyday life topics, so prepare ideas for each one.

### Home and Family

Be ready to talk about:

- family members and relationships
- household responsibilities
- what you do at home
- your favourite room or activity
- how you help your parents or guardians

### Shopping

Be ready to talk about:

- where you shop
- what you like to buy
- buying online vs in a store

- paying, prices, and bargains
- shopping with friends or family

## Daily Routine

Be ready to talk about:

- what time you wake up and sleep
- what you do before and after school
- meals, homework, and chores
- the order of your daily activities
- weekdays vs weekends

## Travel

Be ready to talk about:

- how you travel to school or around your town
- your favourite place to visit
- holidays, trips, and transport
- why travel is useful or enjoyable
- whether you prefer local or international travel

## Recreation

Be ready to talk about:

- sports and hobbies
- how you relax
- what you do with friends
- music, film, reading, or games
- why recreation matters for health and balance

## School and Career

Be ready to talk about:

- your favourite and least favourite subjects
- teachers, homework, and exams
- school rules and daily school life
- future ambitions and career plans

- why studying Spanish matters to you

## Useful Answer Starters

Try not to begin every answer the same way. Mix these up:

- Me gusta...
- No me gusta...
- Normalmente...
- Generalmente...
- A veces...
- Prefiero...
- Pienso que...
- Creo que...
- Para mí...
- En mi opinión...

## Techniques That Raise Your Marks

### 1. Use dialogue fillers

These help you sound more natural and give you a second to think.

#### PRACTICE — DIALOGUE FILLERS

**Pues**

Well

**Bueno**

So

**Que yo sepa**

As far as I know

**Es decir**

I mean

**Es que**

The thing is

**Déjame pensar por favor**

Let me think please

## 2. Use idiomatic expressions

Idioms are useful when they fit naturally. Use one or two, not too many.

### PRACTICE — COMMON IDIOMATIC EXPRESSIONS

**Ni pensarlo**

No way

**Ser pan comido**

To be a piece of cake

**Estar en las nubes**

To be daydreaming

**Tener un humor de perros**

To be in a bad mood

**Estar como una cabra**

To be a little crazy

## 3. Use connectives and transitions

Connectors make your answers sound more fluent and organised.

### PRACTICE — CONNECTIVES

**Además**

Furthermore

**Sin embargo**

However

**Por otro lado**

On the other hand

**En cambio**

In contrast

**Por ejemplo**

For example

**Tal como**

Just like

**De hecho**

In fact

## 4. Know the question words

This helps you understand the examiner quickly and shape a relevant response.

### PRACTICE — PALABRAS INTERROGATIVAS

**¿Qué?**

What?

**¿Quién?**

Who?

**¿Cuándo?**

When?

**¿Dónde?**

Where?

**¿Por qué?**

Why?

**¿Cómo?**

How?

**¿A qué hora?**

At what time?

**¿Con quién?**

With whom?

**¿Hace cuánto tiempo?**

How long ago?

**¿Para qué?**

For what purpose?

**¿De quién?**

Whose?

**¿Cuál?**

Which?

**¿Cuánto/a/os/as?**

How much/many?

**¿De qué?**

Of what?

## 5. Use synonyms and varied adjectives

If you repeat the same words, your answers sound limited. Try to swap in alternatives.

### PRACTICE — USEFUL SYNONYMS

**interesante**

me intriga / intrigante / me parece muy bueno

**divertido**

gracioso / ameno / entretenido

**difícil**

complicado / duro / exigente

**importante**

esencial / necesario / fundamental

**rápido**

veloz / ágil / de prisa

**bonito**

hermoso / lindo / atractivo

## 6. Use time expressions

These are very useful for daily routine and narration.

### PRACTICE — TIME EXPRESSIONS

**por la mañana**

in the morning

**por la tarde**

in the afternoon

**por la noche**

at night

**todos los días**

every day

**de vez en cuando**

from time to time

**al principio**

at the beginning

**al final**

at the end

**primero**

first

**después**

after / then

**finalmente**

finally

## How to Build a Strong Response

When the examiner asks a question, keep your answer focused but not too short.

### Good response shape:

- 1. Answer the question directly.
- 2. Add one reason.
- 3. Add one extra detail, example, or opinion.
- 4. Use a connector if you can.

Example:

- ¿Te gusta ir de compras?

Sí, me gusta ir de compras porque puedo encontrar cosas útiles. Además, voy con mi madre los sábados y normalmente comparamos precios.

- ¿Cómo vas a la escuela?

Normalmente voy a la escuela en autobús porque es más rápido que caminar. Salgo de casa temprano y así llego a tiempo.

## What To Avoid

- Do not answer with only sí or no.
- Do not memorise one long speech for each topic and try to force it into every question.
- Do not panic if you forget a word. Use a simpler word or a filler phrase.
- Do not speak too fast if that makes you lose accuracy.

## Quick Revision Checklist

Before the oral exam, make sure you can:

- answer questions from all six topics
- explain your opinions with a reason
- use basic connectives naturally
- understand common question words quickly

- describe your daily routine in order
- talk about school, hobbies, shopping, travel, and family without stopping too much
- use a few idioms and synonyms appropriately

## Final Reminder

In the oral exam, the goal is not perfection. The goal is to communicate clearly, respond naturally, and show that you can keep the conversation going.

In total, the guided conversation is worth **45 marks**.

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