
The exam consists of **THREE** mandatory parts.

In the first part, listening comprehension is assessed through 8 multiple choice questions. It is worth 3 points.

In the second part, reading comprehension is assessed through 6 open-ended questions. It is worth 3 points.

In the third part, written expression is assessed. Here, you may choose **ONE** of the two given options. It is worth 4 points.

Part 1: Listening comprehension

THE WORLD OF CENOTES

In this podcast you are going to hear some new words. Read and listen to them. Make sure you know what they mean.

limestone: pedra calcària / piedra caliza

coral reef: escull de coral / arrecife de coral

Ready?

Now read the questions on the following page. Read them carefully before listening to the podcast.

[Now listen to the interview.]



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QUESTIONS

Choose the best answer according to the recording. Only ONE answer is correct.

[3 points: 0.375 points for each correct answer. Wrong answers will be penalized by deducting 0.125 points. There is no penalty for unanswered questions.]

		Espai per a la correcció		
		Correcta	Incorrecta	No contestada
1.	How does Alison Zicari explain the natural event that gives rise to a cenote? ☐ A river slowly dries up over time. ☐ A cave ceiling collapses and reveals hidden water. ☐ Rainfall digs a hole directly into the ground. ☐ Earthquakes open giant cracks in the soil.	☐	☐	☐
2.	Why does the Yucatán Peninsula contain such a high concentration of cenotes? ☐ It was once part of a flat desert that eroded quickly over time. ☐ It is built of giant old volcanic rocks. ☐ It used to be a coral formation that became exposed. ☐ It receives more rain than any other area in Mexico.	☐	☐	☐
3.	According to Alison Zicari, the underground rivers below the Yucatán Peninsula are formed by ☐ rapidly melting ice. ☐ water travelling through rock beneath the surface. ☐ lakes draining into deep reservoirs. ☐ ocean waves carving inland tunnels.	☐	☐	☐
4.	What have researchers gained from studying cenotes and their connected caves? ☐ Maps of modern underwater cave systems. ☐ Evidence of ancient life, both human and animal. ☐ New species of plants that grew during the Ice Age. ☐ Proof that the Maya invented scuba diving.	☐	☐	☐
5.	Why did the Maya place many of their structures so close to cenotes? ☐ They believed these places gave them good luck in the underworld. ☐ The land around cenotes was the most valuable. ☐ Cenotes provided water and were seen as spiritual gateways. ☐ They wanted to protect the cenotes from outsiders.	☐	☐	☐
6.	What do the offerings found in sacred cenotes suggest about Maya culture? ☐ All remains found there were human sacrifices. ☐ They valued precious items for religious ceremonies. ☐ They did not understand how metals were made. ☐ They believed there was no life after death.	☐	☐	☐
7.	What link does Alison Zicari make between cenotes and the dinosaur-killing asteroid? ☐ The asteroid dried out the cenotes completely. ☐ Water flows around the impact crater made a circular chain of cenotes. ☐ Cenotes were created by lava after the impact. ☐ Dinosaurs lived in the cenotes before they disappeared.	☐	☐	☐
8.	Why do animals like manatees sometimes enter cenotes? ☐ They look for protection and need a quiet shelter. ☐ Cenotes contain algae that grow only in underwater caves. ☐ The water in cenotes is warmer than the ocean. ☐ They are disturbed by tourists and go there to get some peace.	☐	☐	☐
		Correctes	Incorrectes	No contestades
Recompte de les respostes		☐	☐	☐
Nota de comprensió oral				

Part 2: Reading comprehension

YOU MIGHT BE A LATE BLOOMER

Today we live in a society structured to promote early bloomers. Our school system has sorted people by the time they are 18, using grades and university entrance exam scores. Some of these people zoom to prestigious academic trajectories while others get left behind. Many of our most prominent models of success made it big while young—Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg, Elon Musk, Taylor Swift, Michael Jordan. Magazines publish lists to glamorize youthful superstars on the rise. Age discrimination is a fact of life. But for many people, the talents that bloom later in life are more consequential than the ones that bloom early. Even brilliant people apparently need at least a couple of decades to master their field.

Successful late bloomers are all around us. Morgan Freeman had his first key roles in *Street Smart* and *Driving Miss Daisy* in his early 50s. Colonel Harland Sanders started Kentucky Fried Chicken in his 60s. Isak Dinesen published the book that established her literary reputation, *Out of Africa*, at 52. Morris Chang founded Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing, the world's leading chipmaker, at 55. If Samuel Johnson had died at 40, few would remember him, but now he is considered one of the greatest writers in the history of the English language. Copernicus came up with his theory of planetary motion in his 60s.

Why do some people **hit their peak** later than others? In his book *Late Bloomers*, the journalist Rich Karlgaard points out that late bloomers are not simply early bloomers on a delayed timetable—they didn't just do the things early bloomers did but at a later age. Late bloomers tend to be *qualitatively* different. They possess a different set of abilities that are mostly invisible to or discouraged by our current education system. They usually have to invent their own paths. Late bloomers “fulfill their potential frequently in novel and unexpected ways,” Karlgaard writes, “surprising even those closest to them.”

If you survey history, a taxonomy of achievement emerges. In the first category are the “early bloomers,” the precocious geniuses. These are people like Picasso or Fitzgerald who succeeded young. As the University of Chicago economist David Galenson has pointed out, these high achievers usually made a conceptual **breakthrough**. They came up with a new idea and then executed it. Then there are the “second-mountain people,” exemplified by, say, Albert Schweitzer. First, they conquer their career mountain; Schweitzer, for instance, was an accomplished musician and scholar. But these people find their career success unsatisfying, so they leave their career mountain to serve humanity—their whole motivational structure shifts from acquisition to altruism. Schweitzer became a doctor in the poorest parts of Africa, and won the Nobel Peace Prize for his work in 1952. Finally, there are the people Galenson calls “the masters.” These are people like Cézanne or Alfred Hitchcock or Charles Darwin, who were not all that successful—and in some cases just not even very good at what they did—when they were young. This could have been discouraging, but they just kept improving.

Late bloomers don't do as much advance planning as the conceptual geniuses, but they regard their entire lives as experiments. They try something and learn, and then they try something else and learn more. Their focus is not on their finished work, which they often throw away **haphazardly**. Their focus is on the process of learning itself, which they enjoy. They live their lives as a long period of trial and error, trying this and trying that, a slow process of accumulation and elaboration, so the quality of their work peaks late in life. They are the ugly ducklings of human achievement, who, over the decades, turn themselves into swans. Slow at the start, late bloomers are still sprinting during that final lap—they do not slow down as age brings its decay. They are seeking. They are striving. They are in it with all their heart.

Text adapted from an article by
David BROOKS. *The Atlantic* [online] (June 26, 2024)

hit their peak: assolir el cim / alcanzar la cima

breakthrough: descobriment / descubrimiento

haphazardly: de qualsevol manera / de cualquier manera

QUESTIONS

Answer the questions below using complete sentences. You may use fragments from the text unless specified not to do so.

[3 points: 0.5 points for each correct answer. Up to 0.3 points might be deducted from the total mark for lack of intelligibility in the answers provided.]

- 1. What evidence does the author of the text use to claim that our society is structured to promote early bloomers? Mention ONE piece of evidence.
- 2. Explain what the examples of late bloomers in the second paragraph have in common (besides being well-known figures).
- 3. Explain IN YOUR OWN WORDS the consequence of late bloomers’ invisibility to the current education system.
- 4. What is meant by the term *second-mountain people* (line 27)?
- 5. Rewrite the following sentence: “They possess a different set of abilities that are mostly invisible to or discouraged by our current education system” (lines 19-20). You may keep grammatical words (i.e. articles, pronouns, conjunctions, etc.) and the word *education*.
- 6. Mention TWO characteristics of late bloomers.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
Deduction for lack of intelligibility (up to 0.3 points)	
Reading comprehension score	

Part 3: Writing

Choose ONE topic. Your answer should be 125-150 words in length. There is no specific penalty for exceeding 150 words in length.

[4 points: 1 point for grammar, 1 point for vocabulary and spelling, 1 point for cohesion, and 1 point for adequacy and coherence]

- 1. During your school’s Communication Week, students will take part in a debate about the growing impact that social media influencers have on teenagers’ behaviour, lifestyle choices, and opinions. You have been asked to write a **for and against essay** discussing both the positive and negative effects that influencers may have on young people. In your text, you should consider aspects such as the promotion of healthy or unhealthy habits, the reliability of sponsored content, and the pressure to conform to certain beauty or success standards.
- 2. Imagine working in your ideal job. **Write a description** of a full day at work in detail, beginning with how you commute to your workplace and what your morning routine is like. Explain your exact daily tasks and responsibilities, the people you work with, and the type of environment you work in. Include information about your colleagues, your interactions with them, and how you collaborate. Finally, explain whether you enjoy this job or not, giving clear reasons for your satisfaction or dissatisfaction.



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Grammar	
Vocabulary and spelling	
Cohesion	
Adequacy and coherence	
Writing score	

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