Opció A.

Read the passage carefully and answer the questions in English. USE YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE. Time allowed: 1 hour and 30 minutes. Total score: 10 points.

Perfect faces: The rise of virtual celebrities

A different kind of internet celebrity is emerging; virtual characters that talk on YouTube or pose on Instagram like living, breathing people. Is this the dawn of a new breed of star?

Kizuna AI (Artificial Intelligence) has 2.3 million YouTube followers. She posts videos nearly every day, talking to camera about life, love and video games. But she is also a computer-generated Instagram (CGI) construct; a fictional character made to look like a young woman, voiced by an actor, claiming to be an advanced artificial intelligence. Her channel is part of a growing trend in Japan for so-called virtual YouTubers, or VTubers. Much like regular YouTubers, these personalities speak about everyday subjects - from relationships to TV shows - but under the guise of an animated avatar, created using inexpensive motion-sensing technology.

This type of virtual personality is growing in popularity. And it is not only people in Japan that are interested in this subculture, says Minoru Hirota, who runs the Japanese virtual reality news website, Panora. "Kizuna AI has gained popularity in Europe and the United States". In fact, in the West, at the same time as VTubers are emerging in Japan, virtual personalities have infiltrated Instagram. Lil Miquela, for example, has built up 1.5 million followers with candid CGI selfies. Claiming to be a Brazilian-American 19-year-old model, she will often appear beside actual people in real places. Lil Miquela has even had relationships and arguments with other CGI Instagrammers.

Ultimately, though, the driving reason for the rise of virtual internet celebrities is likely to be money. This seems to be a lucrative subculture, and brands spend money on it deliberately. Much like regular YouTubers or Instagram influencers, the likes of Kizuna AI and Lil Miquela attract attention from high-profile companies, who will pay to have their products featured. Indeed, using a controllable CGI avatar rather than a human model for this purpose could have its advantages. Furthermore, some experts can envision a time when fashion brands have their own CGI characters, each with their own social media channels; a mascot or model.

At a time when facial recognition technology is becoming ever more accessible, it has never been so easy to inhabit a fiction. It seems clear, then, that the lines around reality continue to blur.

Adapted from *BBC News*. December, 2018

1. Say whether the following statements are TRUE or FALSE. Explain WHY using your own words OR finding evidence in the text. NO marks are given for only TRUE or FALSE. (1 point)

a) Kizuna AI is a virtual YouTuber who talks about specialised scientific topics. (0.5)

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b) Lil Miquela appears as a CGI character in the middle of real locations standing next to humans. (0.5)

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2. In your own words and based on the ideas from the text, answer the following question. NO marks are given for *personal opinions* or *responses copied directly* from the text. (1 point)

Why do fashion brands want to invest money in virtual internet celebrities?

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3. Find in the text words or phrases which mean the same as the ones below. In the case of verbs, ONLY *infinitive forms* will be accepted (1 point):

1) To be in charge of an activity, business or organization. (0.25)

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2) A particular kind of person, animal or type of thing. (0.25)

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3) Looking like someone or something else, or pretending to be them. (0.25)

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4) To become difficult to see something clear, often because the edges are not clear. (0.25)

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4. Follow the instructions for each question and answer them (2 points):

4.1. Fill the blanks in the following sentences with the correct form of the verb in brackets. (0.5)

A: Have you heard the news? There .... (be) a recent argument between two computer-generated Instagram models.

B: Really? Well, I prefer .... (not know) anything about it.

4.2. Complete the following sentences with the correct form of the word in brackets. (0.5)

a) They are very .... (pride) of her for the hard work she has put into the company.

b) What do you think it is the latest .... (achieve) in technology?

4.3. Fill the blanks in the following two sentences with a <u>phrasal verb</u> that means the same as the verb in brackets. (0.5)

a) They are trying to .... (discover a fact or find the answer) the most effective ways to market their products.

b) I really think you should .... (become an adult) and stop watching so many videos on the web.

4.4. Turn the following sentence into the passive voice. (0.5)

CGI characters could easily replace models' jobs.

Models' jobs ....

5. Look at the highlighted part of the words below. Three of the words in each line (A, B, C, D) contain the same sound. <u>Circle</u> the word which contains a different sound (1 point):

5.1.	**A)** **y**outh	**B)** **y**ou	**C)** **y**olk	**D)** **j**uice	(0.25)
5.2.	**A)** **ou**tside	**B**) n**ow**	**C)** b**ou**ght	**D)** ab**ou**t	(0.25)
5.3.	**A)** **h**eir	**B)** **h**ero	**C)** **h**otel	**D)** **h**ave	(0.25)
5.4.	**A)** wash**ed**	**B)** us**ed**	**C)** damag**ed**	**D)** call**ed**	(0.25)

6. Write a composition of 120-150 words on the following topic. Answer <u>ALL</u> the questions (4 points):

Why do you think virtual celebrities are so popular? Do you think these kinds of celebrities have a powerful impact on teenagers' attitudes and behaviour? Explain.

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Total number of words: ....

Assessment criteria:					
Task fulfilment:	0	0.25	0.50	0.75	1
Grammar:	0	0.25	0.50	0.75	1
Organisation:	0	0.25	0.50	0.75	1
Vocabulary:	0	0.25	0.50	0.75	1
Total :					

Opció B.

Read the passage carefully and answer the questions in English. USE YOUR OWN WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE. Time allowed: 1 hour and 30 minutes. Total score: 10 points.

'Intimacy plus': Is that what makes podcasts so popular?

If you mention the word "podcast" to people, many immediately come up with a list of "must listens". But this popularity is fairly recent. Why have podcasts taken so long to become visible, and does that mean you can make a living out of them?

It is easy to make a podcast. All you need is something you want to say, a microphone, a recording device, and some editing software. While podcasts have been around for a good decade and a half, they have recently become popular thanks to the proliferation of smartphones, podcast apps and voice-activated speakers in homes. Plus, their more informal, less "produced" style is attracting the interest of the much sought-after "millennial" generation, says Emily Bell, director of the Tow Center for Digital Journalism in New York. "What podcasting has is a youth audience that feels very passionately about the people that they listen to and that they engage with".

Now there are more than 600,000 shows worldwide covering everything from sport, politics and music. The podcast has become fashionable. And not just in the West. South Korea tops the global rankings, according to the Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2018, with 58% of its population listening to a news podcast in the past month, compared with 33% in the US and 18% in the UK. Young people are now far more likely to listen to podcasts than to speech radio, Reuters says. "What distinguishes radio from TV is the intimacy. What distinguishes a podcast from radio is that it's intimacy plus, because you've chosen it and it's literally in your ears", explains Olly Mann, a podcast producer. "People tend to listen on headphones in their personal bubble", he adds. However, he acknowledges that there is probably one show responsible for propelling the genre into the mainstream: 'Serial', an investigative journalism podcast released in 2014, which narrates a true crime story set in Baltimore County, Maryland. Listeners were fascinated by reporter Sarah Koenig's investigation into the murder of high school student Hae Min Lee and the conviction and imprisonment of her ex-boyfriend Adnan Syed. Now in its third season, 'Serial' has been downloaded 420 million times in total.

But how do you make money from podcasting? Admittedly, the marketplace is still too crowded for many people to make serious money. But audio has never been all about the money. It is a medium for enthusiasts produced by enthusiasts. And podcasts may have secured its future.

Adapted from *BBC News*. December, 2018

1. Say whether the following statements are TRUE or FALSE. Explain WHY using your own words OR finding evidence in the text. NO marks are given for only TRUE or FALSE. (1 point)

a) Podcasts have been popular for more than a decade. (0.5)

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b) Young people prefer to listen to podcasts rather than to mainstream radio. (0.5)

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2. In your own words and based on the ideas from the text, answer the following question. NO marks are given for *personal opinions* or *responses copied directly* from the text. (1 point)

According to the author, what makes podcasts so 'intimate'?

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3. Find in the text words or phrases which mean the same as the ones below. In the case of verbs, ONLY *infinitive forms* will be accepted (1 point):

1) To think of something such as an idea or a plan. (0.25)

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2) A particular style or type of writing, music or art, which can be recognized by certain features. (0.25)

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3) Considered ordinary or normal and accepted or used by more people. (0.25)

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4) A ball of air or gas in a liquid. (0.25)

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4. Follow the instructions for each question and answer them (2 points):

4.1. Fill the blanks in the following sentences with the correct form of the verb in brackets. (0.5)

A: I've seen a new episode of 'Serial'. Do you really think he .... (kill) his girlfriend?

B: It seems so, but we .... (not know) until the final episode comes out.

4.2. Complete the following sentences with an appropriate word (Use only <u>ONE</u> word in each blank). (0.5)

a) Do you know the reason .... so many people listen to podcasts nowadays?

b) .... I was very tired, I couldn't stop listening to the new podcast.

4.3. Write a question for the underlined word in the following sentence. (0.5)

It took us <u>some time</u> to discover who the murderer was.

....?

4.4. Rewrite the following sentence in reported speech. (0.5)

'Don't miss the final episode of season 1 tomorrow', she told me.

She told ....

5. Look at the highlighted part of the words below. Three of the words in each line (A, B, C, D) contain the same sound. <u>Circle</u> the word which contains a different sound (1 point):

5.1.	**A)** br**ea**d	**B)** s**ai**d	**C)** h**ea**t	**D)** b**e**d	(0.25)
5.2.	**A)** l**o**st	**B)** **a**ll	**C)** d**oo**r	**D)** bef**o**re	(0.25)
5.3.	**A)** **c**an	**B)** clo**ck**	**C)** **c**innamon	**D)** **c**ool	(0.25)
5.4.	**A)** follow**ed**	**B)** need**ed**	**C)** promot**ed**	**D)** want**ed**	(0.25)

6. Write a composition of 120-150 words on the following topic. Answer <u>ALL</u> the questions (4 points):

What do you think of podcasts? Are you a podcast fan? What kinds of programmes do you usually listen to and what are they about? Explain.

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Total number of words: ....

Assessment criteria:				
Task fulfilment:	0	0.25	0.50	0.75	1
Grammar:	0	0.25	0.50	0.75	1
Organisation:	0	0.25	0.50	0.75	1
Vocabulary:	0	0.25	0.50	0.75	1
Total :				

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