



OPCIÓN DE EXAMEN Nº 1

Spain's Economic Problems Change Traditional Holiday Habits

There is a sign behind the counter of Trinxant Butcher's and Delicatessen beside a row of whole legs of cured Iberian ham which reads: "This year we're not closing for holidays."

It is a trend that has been noticed in towns and cities around Spain. Stores, bars, market stalls and newspaper kiosks that used to close for August have decided to stay open. Cities continue to bustle with busy workers and traffic jams that traditionally disappeared in August.

Seville's city government announced last week it would be "open and fully active" all month. The annual August exodus is said to be vanishing like that other great Spanish cultural tradition, the siesta, as companies cut lunch breaks down from two or three hours to one.

The changing attitude to summer holidays is partly due to the crisis in the Spanish economy. The country has the highest level of unemployment in the EU at 21% and even higher at 46% among those under 24 years of age. In Catalonia, the region of north east Spain that includes Barcelona, 18% of the 7.5 million population are living below the poverty line, earning less than 640 euros a month. Many small businesses are struggling in these circumstances and few can afford the luxury of a month without earnings.

Adapted from *The Guardian* August 2011.

Question 1: [2 POINTS] Indicate whether the following statements are true or false and write down which part of the text justifies your answer.

- a) This year Trinxant Butcher's and Delicatessen is shutting for vacations.
- b) Most people who live in Catalonia have a very low standard of living.
- c) Companies are allowing people more time for breaks.
- d) Many small companies can allow their staff to have the whole of August off.

Question 2: [2 POINTS] Answer the following questions in your own words according to the text.

- a) What is preventing people from going on holiday for the whole of August?
- b) What has happened to daily life in cities in August?

Question 3: [1,5 POINTS] Find words or phrases in the text that correspond to the words and definitions given.

- a) A tendency (paragraph 2).
- b) Disappearing (paragraph 3).
- c) To reduce (paragraph 3).

Question 4: [1,5 POINTS] Complete the following sentences without changing the meaning.

- a) This new company has offered Paul a very well paid job.
Paul "....."
- b) "I'll do my best in the next exam", Susan promised her parents.
Susan promised her parents
- c) "Students must hand in their essays by the end of next week", the teacher said.
The teacher said that

Question 5: [3 POINTS] Write a short essay (about 120-150 words) on the following topic:

– Do you think holidays are important for people? Why?/Why not? Give reasons.

OPCIÓN DE EXAMEN Nº 2

The Playmobil Theme Park that's a Different kind of Adventure

Yes, the rumours are true. Playmobil which makes ambulances, dragons, princesses and pirates for millions of children, is going to bring its theme park to Britain. The German toy company has announced that it is “a matter of when, not if”. For many parents going to theme parks, with their queues, expensive burgers and alarming rides, is awful. However this is not an ordinary theme park.

In fact, it is not a theme park at all as it does not have any traditional theme park rides. Hans Beck, the original designer of Playmobil believed that children's greatest gift was their imagination. The moment a little plastic figure, with arms and legs, was in their hands, they would make up stories. Playmobil is what all toys were before video games, television or the cinema; a way for children to enter a world entirely of their own making.

Playmobil theme parks are the Playmobil universe but in human size. There is a pirates' ship on a lake, whose rigging can be climbed, a knights' castle, from whose walls children can shout and scale, located next door to the cowboy area, with Playmobil horses and wagons which can be ridden.

Herr Beck's legacy was his strong belief that his toys must not encourage violence or horror, Horst Brandstatter, who owns the company has always refused to make Playmobil tanks or warplanes although he knows it would be a lucrative option.

Horst Brandstatter says, “I hope that there is enough fantasy in the Playmobil world that children can make up and play out their own story. That's what we want. I hope we can perpetuate that.”

Adapted from *The Daily Telegraph* 2011.

Question 1: [2 POINTS] Indicate whether the following statements are true or false and write down which part of the text justifies your answer.

- There will be a Playmobil theme park in Britain.
- For many parents going to theme parks is unpleasant.
- Playmobil toys are not the same as video games, television or the cinema.
- Tanks or warplanes are not made by Playmobil because the company would not make a lot of money.

Question 2: [2 POINTS] Answer the following questions in your own words according to the text.

- According to Horst Brandstatter and Hans Beck why are Playmobil toys different from video games, television or the cinema?
- What can children do in Playmobil theme parks?

Question 3: [1,5 POINTS] Find words or phrases in the text that correspond to the words and definitions given.

- Frightening (paragraph 1).
- To scream (paragraph 3).
- To reject (paragraph 4).

Question 4: [1,5 POINTS] Complete the following sentences without changing the meaning.

- We couldn't hear her because she was whispering.
She
- Scientists say that this vaccine will cure cancer in the future.
This vaccine
- Fred said he didn't know what Sam was doing the following day.
“.....”, Fred said.

Question 5: [3 POINTS] Write a short essay (about 120-150 words) on the following topic:

- Do you think there is too much violence in the world nowadays? Why?/Why not? Give reasons.