

1. NIVELL AVANÇAT C2. COMPREENSIÓ DE TEXTOS ESCRITS (READING COMPREHENSION)

Part 1. GAPPED TEXT. You are going to read an extract from a newspaper article about modern gadgets. Eight paragraphs have been removed from the extract. There is an extra paragraph which does not fit in the text. From the paragraphs A-J, which are in your task booklet, choose the one which fits each gap (1-8). The exercise begins with an example (0), which corresponds to paragraph D.

Sitcom star on his crusade against "infernal gadgets"

No iPod or mobile... that's the *Good Life*

Well, I'm pleased to tell you I belong to a rather elite club with a dwindling membership: I'm one of the few people in Britain who doesn't have a mobile phone. I don't possess one because I'm anti-progress and very reactionary. I'm also 75, bad-tempered and I don't want to talk to anyone that much.

As an actor, I've always found that the landline in my sitting room is all that's necessary both for work and social communication. I barely know how to operate my answering machine. If my agent has a job for me and I happen to be out, he phones me later when I'm back, meanwhile, the phone remains silent. We have, for the past 50-odd years, always found this to be a perfectly satisfactory arrangement.

0. D

I particularly detest mobile phones when I'm sitting peacefully on a train reading my newspaper. I'm afraid to say, at the risk of sounding like some dreadful curmudgeon, that the older I get the less tolerant I become of the beeps, jingles, pop tunes and tinny renditions of classics that emanate from those infernal gadgets. Neither do I want to be forced to eavesdrop on multiple inane conversations or be regaled with strangers' life stories.

1.

The other day I was travelling by rail to Euston from Coventry, relishing the prospect of a quiet hour's reading and gentle contemplation of the passing landscape. Sadly, I was denied these simple pleasures because the chap opposite me was yelling into his mobile for the duration of the journey. He was also talking in an incomprehensible foreign language and, I would judge – if the deafening volume at which he was shouting was anything to go by – to someone on a particularly bad line several continents away.

2.

My father was famous for railing against the "bloody phone", and I suppose I have inherited his intolerance. But I also like to think I'm an old-fashioned chap with sound values at heart. I cherish courtesy, kindness; thoughtfulness and all these virtues seem conspicuously lacking in folk who bellow ceaselessly into their mobiles. Wouldn't it be lovely to have just one day's truce from them every week on an experimental basis?

3.

It will doubtless come as no surprise to you that aside from the mobile, I also eschew almost every other form of modern technology. I do not own a computer and, thank God, I wouldn't have the faintest clue about how to send an email. I've always found a hand-written postcard dispatched with a first-class stamp does the job adequately.

Of course, I know that young people idle away hours chatting to their chums on these newfangled social networking sites. But at my age, alas, so many of my dearest friends are

dead. Those who soldier on are mostly actors. Having spent a lifetime in a very rowdy profession, like me they value tranquility and have no wish to share the minutiae of their everyday lives with hundreds of new " friends " via the Internet.

4.

I make no apologies that my home – in which my wife, Ann, and I have lived for 42 years and raised our two children – is a shrine to a slower-paced era, when household goods were made to last and no one with a scintilla of common sense threw anything away if it still worked. I still possess a gramophone and a fine collection of 78s. My second cousin, the actor Terry-Thomas, who died in 1990, initiated me into the joys of listening to the Ink Spots, a popular African-American group of my boyhood, and I still have a selection of their original discs.

Do I need or desire an iPod? Of course not! I'm afraid I won't live long enough to find time to listen to the 10,000 tunes you're supposed to be able to store on them. More-over, I would not want to contribute to the sound pollution on our railways by wearing headphones that leak a continual infuriating din.

5.

My grandchildren, who while away most of their leisure hours playing with some form of electronic gadgetry, doubtless consider me an old fossil. But I am, frankly, too old to change. I have never been ambitious about the acquisition of possessions, and at my time of life I discard more than I acquire. But I do love books. I have shelf after shelf of them. I relish the feel and scent of them; the act of sitting down with them, leafing through their pages and revisiting favourite chapters. So you will not be remotely surprised to learn that I haven't the slightest wish to own an electronic book which stores umpteen volumes that can be accessed at the press of a button.

6.

I don't covet a new car either. Our modest Japanese hatchback is ten years old. I bought it second-hand because I think it the height of folly to fritter away hard-earned cash on a new model which depreciates in value as soon as you drive it out of the showroom. So I am irrevocably and unashamedly old-fashioned. I subscribe to the *Oldie* magazine – written expressly for the grumpy elderly – and I relish a good whinge.

I do, I confess, own a facsimile machine – a virtually obsolete piece of technology in itself – but I still haven't the remotest idea how to send a fax.

7.

A couple of years ago our dear friend the actress Penelope Keith, who co-starred with me in the Seventies *The Good Life*, came for supper. She walked into our sitting room, spotted our elderly TV with its screen and wood surround, and roared with laughter.

"Why on earth have you still got that old relic? ",she shrieked. I think we'd had it for a couple of decades, and on the principle that it still functioned perfectly, I insisted on keeping it. But Penny embarrassed me into swapping it for a new flat-screen model. I still feel vaguely piqued that I was cajoled into doing so.

Perhaps I should have been born in the Edwardian era. I'm sure I could have adapted to a Bertie Wooster-ish lifestyle. I enjoyed playing P.G Wodehouse's great comic creation on the radio, on the "wireless" as we oldies call it, and there was no electronic equipment to moan about then.

8.

In the absence of mobile phones, I'd probably have been penning furious letters to the newspapers about the deafening din of horses' hooves in the street.

Adapted from "**The Mail on Sunday**".

PART 2. You are going to read a newspaper article about the publication of a book about one of the British Secret Services. For questions 1 – 8 , choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text. The exercise begins with an example (0). Write your answers on the ANSWER SHEET.

A talent for spying

The publication of the history of MI6 reveals the British gift for espionage.

The concept of an authorised history of a secret agency, which did not officially exist until 1992, is slippery, to say the least. The publication of Professor Keith Jeffery's *MI6: The History of the Secret Intelligence Service 1909 – 1949*, is notable for the very fact of its existence as well as the secrets that it reveals. It also invites a much broader question. Why is British identity so bound up with espionage and subterfuge? Have the British made unusually good spies, and if so, do they continue to do so in today's very different diplomatic environment?

MI6 began with a mistake. "We went to the office and remained there all day but saw no one, nor was there anything to do". That was the verdict of Mansfield Cumming in 1909 after his first day at work as head of the foreign section of the new Secret Service Bureau, the agency that later became the Secret Intelligence Service (or MI6). For once there was simple explanation: Cumming had accidentally started work a week early.

That inauspicious start quickly gave way to serious victories. *La Dame Blanche*, the most successful intelligence network of the First World War, orchestrated 880 men and women working behind enemy lines. During the operation to penetrate occupied France and Germany in the Second World War, an agent's average life expectancy was three weeks. An incalculable debt is owed to the bravery of those men and women.

But even armed with the evidence of this book, taking measure of MI6 is unusually difficult. First, although MI6 has opened up in recent years (it now has a more conventional recruitment process than the donnish tap on the shoulder) it remains much more secretive than its sister agency MI5. Second, Mr Jeffrey's evidence covers only 1909- 1949 – perhaps because it stops just short of the most embarrassing era in MI6's history. In 1951, a Cambridge spy ring was exposed, in which double agents such as Kim Philby had betrayed British state secrets in the service of the Soviet Union.

That MI6 was once so dominated by Oxbridge and the public schools exposes both the genius and the fault line in British intelligence. The British class and education system, by honing the ability to hide real feelings beneath charm and polish, made for natural spies. Charm, in Evelyn Waugh's phrase, "is the English disease". But the ability to say one thing while feeling another has practical benefits. "For the British it could be said that the inclination to deceive is already available as a natural asset," concluded one American intelligence chief. Indeed, the United States did not even have a secret service until 1942.

In recent decades, MI6 has been accused of being slow to adapt. The absence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq undeniably tarnished its reputation. And MI6 was influenced by America's overreliance on high-tech intercepts, rather than face-to-face human intelligence. But 9/11 showed that high-tech systems can only augment traditional intelligence, never replace it.

MI6 has continued to punch above its weight. Oleg Gordievsky's defection was a Cold War triumph. And Libya's decision to abandon its nuclear programme in 2003 owed much to MI6's relationships, its agents' ability to persuade. When it comes to human intelligence, it remains the case that nobody does it better.

Adapted from *The Times*

Part 1: Extracts A - J from the text "No iPod or Mobile...". Remember to write your answers on the ANSWER SHEET in THIS TASK BOOKLET.

A. Similarly, I don't want to learn how to send a text, operate a satellite-navigation device or buy something of dubious value on eBay. I find a Biro, a set of maps – ably read by my wife – and the clutter I already have around at home are sufficient for my limited needs.

B. So we confine our socialising to the occasional leisurely lunch and that does us all very nicely.

C. Dreadful! Imagine a bookcase on which sits a single sterile box containing all one's favourite literature. I can't think of anything less appealing, and finally I flatly refuse to contemplate the thought of settling down in my armchair to read "Little Dorrit" on a screen.

D. No request is so urgent that it has to be relayed to me as I walk breathlessly along the High Street straining to hear the caller above police sirens, traffic noise and the insistent, mindless chatter of all those mobile phone users.

E. That said, I'm certain I would have found something to be cross about.

F. And all this applies especially when I'm cooped up with no means of escape from the cacophony; unless of course I throw myself from the moving carriage – which is an extreme measure I might yet be forced to consider.

G. I'm sure everyone would discover they could rub along quite happily – even the very youthful, who would have to be surgically detached from theirs – and we would all find ourselves infinitely less fraught as a result.

H. My technology obsessed friend Ted rang my landline this week to make final arrangements for his 49th birthday bash: 'Have you still not got a mobile phone yet?' he asked, his voice dripping with disbelief.

I. On one occasion only have I been shamed into updating the ancient electronic equipment in my home.

J. There were momentary respites as we went through tunnels, then the awful noise would start up again. I felt like snapping: "For God's sake shut up!" but, of course, I'm far too British for that

Part 2: Questions on "A Talent for Spying". Write your answers on the ANSWER SHEET.

0. Where would you expect to find such a text?
a) In a broadsheet.
b) In a tabloid.
c) In a magazine.
d) On a special interest website.
1. The existence of Professor Keith's *MI6: The History of the Secret Intelligence Service* is surprising because ...
a) of the secret nature of the organization which was not publicly recognised until relatively recently.
b) of the fact that organizations such as MI6 consider that an authorized history of the Secret Service is slippery.
c) it reveals other questions not included within its cover.
d) not everyone would agree with the publication of the activities of the Secret Services.
2. During the First World War, MI6...
a) carried out exceptional work despite its undistinguished beginnings.
b) began in a spectacular way but went on to make an important contribution to the war effort.
c) started off badly and suffered disastrous losses of its men and women.
d) was a disaster from its very beginnings and never expected its spies to live very long.
3. MI6 has traditionally recruited its agents by....
a) testing them in the field
b) tapping them on the shoulder in the street
c) choosing them from among acquaintances
d) recruiting directly from public schools
4. The fact that *MI6: The History of the Secret Intelligence Service* ends in 1949 is significant because ...
a) it seems to deliberately avoid the more difficult periods of the Service's history.
b) the information after that period is probably still classified.
c) it does not cover the period when Russian spies infiltrated Cambridge University.
d) MI6 does not want its more embarrassing history to be widely known.
5. The fact that MI6 has traditionally drawn its agents from the higher echelons of British society may have been ...
a) the reason it is faultless.
b) viewed at times as something negative.
c) admired by the rest of the world.
d) the only secret of its success.
6. It could be said that during the period described in the book, MI6 agents possessed certain skills, which if sharpened, could ...
a) allow them to hide their feelings from others under questioning.
b) be used to say one thing and mean another.
c) be used as excellent espionage tools when dealing with foreigners.
d) allow them to use their background to great effect.
7. In the final two paragraphs of the text, the author seems to be saying that recently,...
a) MI6 has pulled off some very important deals for Britain.
b) MI6's reputation has been irretrievably damaged by the weapons of mass destruction scandal.
c) MI6 is excessively influenced by USA intelligence methods.
d) MI6 is still more than holding its own in the way it gains and uses intelligence.

PART 3. OPEN CLOZE TEST. Read the text and fill in the blanks with ONE word. The activity begins with an example (0). Write your answers on the ANSWER SHEET in Your TASK BOOKLET.

How to Save the Grasslands

To many, the Western grasslands still reflect (0) **...the...** essence of this country: the vast plains that are home to herds of cattle and the cowboys that run them. Yet this indelible image belies the facts, as much of the nation's rangeland has been degraded (1) overgrazing. Land where lush grasses flourished is now eroded and only sparsely covered by plants. One consequence, says farmer and rural public policy expert Michael Bowman of Wray, Colorado, is that "hundreds of small communities whose economies relied (2) healthy grassland are withering with the grass."

Many ranchers, conservationists, and investors are determined to revive (3) magical and (once) highly productive landscape. And have embarked on doing (4) by increasing the density of livestock.

Wait — wasn't overgrazing the problem?

The key is (5) grazing animals are managed. For according to Shannon Horst, CEO and co-founder of the Savory Institute, an organization dedicated to restoring the world's grasslands by Holistic Management, ranchers can consistently (6), triple and even — depending on the condition of the land and adherence to the practices — quadruple livestock capacity (7) time.

However, more cattle per acre is just one benefit. By actively planning and managing the grazing and recovery of the plants as opposed to allowing continuous grazing, ruminants become part of the solution (8) of a burden to the land. Allan Savory, who developed Holistic Management as a researcher and farmer in Southern Africa, saw the relationship (9) roaming animal herds and grassland vitality. The dynamic is as follows: the animal chews the grass (10) to stimulate plant and root growth, and allow sunlight to get (11) to the growth points, then moves on in a herd formation, (in a leisurely (12)) to find fresher grass or (with a pounding of hooves) to elude a predator. He found that when domestic livestock are managed to replicate this behaviour (13) degraded lands, the grasses come back: the deep-rooted plants enrich and aerate the soil and the hoof movements chip away at hardened earth so that (14) can germinate and grow and water can penetrate.

Specialists in land restoration say that (15) by considering animals, plants, soil and water as a system, can farmers and ranchers work to restore the carbon, water and plant nutrient cycles that underlie land's biological productivity, and as a result, economic viability.

Adapted from Time magazine

PART 4. MULTIPLE CHOICE CLOZE TEST . Read the following text and then decide which of the words (A, B, C or D) best fits each space. An example (0) has been done for you. Write your answers on the ANSWER SHEET in your TASK BOOKLET.

Europe Needs a New Renaissance

Looking at the problems Europe--(0)--today, it is hard to believe this continent once --(1)-- all others. Today, Bernini's Four Rivers fountain in Rome is a spectacular--(2)-- visited by tourists from everywhere. Yet when it was built in the 17th century, the figure of the River Plate on this gorgeous sculptural--(3)--was an image of European rule --(4)-- the Americas. Four hundred years ago, the rise of Europe seemed as--(5)-- as its decline may appear today. What were the factors that once made this continent so powerful?

A map of the world created by Martin Waldseemuller in 1507--(6)--that power. On it, Waldseemuller--(7)--an entire new western continent and names it, for the first time, America. Several things about this map illustrate the success of Europe in its youth. The voyages of discovery that--(8)--Europeans to name "America"--(9)--of a culture of genuine curiosity and open thinking, the Renaissance. In Leonardo da Vinci's unfinished painting *The Adoration of the Magi*, there seem to be infinities of figures, infinities of landscapes; it pictures a world that is literally--(10)--. This artwork, begun a decade before the voyages of Columbus, expresses a culture that was ready to see new worlds.

Today,--(11)--by austerity, spooked by debt, Europe is just one continent among others. America and China seem far ahead. Can Europeans ever--(12)--the qualities that once made them the most creative people on earth? It is easy to--(13)--the achievements of Europe in the past as mere aggressive "imperialism".

Curiosity, cultural ambition and imagination made Europe great. Can they be--(14)-- again? European governments desperate to revive growth (our own included) should be trying to --(15)-- a new Renaissance.

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| 0 A allows | B faces | C concerns | D makes |
| 1 A originated | B indoctrinated | C dominated | D permeated |
| 2 A landmark | B sighting | C signpost | D memorial |
| 3 A creation | B installation | C redaction | D inception |
| 4 A upon | B over | C thereof | D among |
| 5 A unending | B incoherent | C intractable | D inevitable |
| 6 A empathises | B aggregates | C epitomises | D admonishes |
| 7 A outlines | B pantomimes | C constructs | D designates |
| 8 A founded | B enabled | C succumbed | D cajoled |
| 9 A grew out | B fled out | C spun out | D carried out |
| 10 A outmanned | B relentless | C outbound | D limitless |
| 11 A swarmed | B fastened | C hurtled | D crippled |
| 12 A realign | B reclaim | C retract | D redress |
| 13 A oversee | B dismiss | C regale | D discard |
| 14 A unmasked | B redeemed | C unleashed | D dismantled |
| 15 A dull | B extinguish | C kindle | D fire |

Adapted from The Guardian

PART 5. WORD BUILDING. Read the following text. For questions 1-10, use the word in brackets to help you write a related word which fits the context. The exercise begins with an example(0). Write your answers on the ANSWER SHEET in your *TASK BOOKLET*.

Plea to Film Makers

Given the enormous influence the **--(0 MAKE)--** of films, television programmes and music videos now have on our young people, we believe they have a moral **--(1 DUE)--** to exercise that power responsibly. We appeal to them to avoid the **--(2 GLORY)--**of violence and **--(3 HONEST)--**and antisocial behaviour and ask them not to **--(4 COURAGE)--**sexist, racist or xenophobic attitudes. We expect them to **--(5 KNOWLEDGE)--** that all their productions including "adult" films will inevitably be seen by many children and to recognize the **--(6 HARM)--**effects such material can have. This may range from the frightening and the

--(7 SET)--, to the terrifying and the **--(8 DEEP)--** disturbing. We find the **--(9 ARGUE)--** that it is for the parents to decide what their children see totally **--(10 REAL)--** in this age of working mothers and independent young people.

Adapted from *Towards Proficiency*

PART 6. GAPPED SENTENCES. Each question consists of three discrete sentences, with one gap in each sentence. Supply the ONE word which fits appropriately in ALL THREE SENTENCES. There are 5 questions in total. Write your answers on the ANSWER SHEET in the TASKS BOOKLET. The activity starts with an example (0).

0. Natasha could just make out two tall **--figures--** in the distance.
I don't know if we can afford it, we'll have to look at the **--figures--**.
The **--figures--** and tables in my new Maths book are excellent.
1. He **---** up his Spanish while travelling in South America.
The carnival parade **---** up a large crowd of followers as it went through town.
The old locomotive slowly **---** upspeed when it left the station.
2. I was on the **---** of phoning you when you knocked on my door.
In **---** of fact, I never lived at the address stated on the form.
They rambled on and would not get to the **---**.
3. Since he wanted to manage his property well he **---** the services of professional property managers.
My wife is now **---** in business transactions. She doesn't work for Central Bank any longer.
They got **---** last month, but I doubt there will be a wedding in the near future.
4. Banks should **---** less than 10% interest while lending to microfinance institutions.
He's being tried on a **---** of murder.
Yesterday there were student demonstrations and a violent **---** by the police.
5. He is a quiet person but, as they say, 'Still waters run **---**', so there may be more to it than appears.
Unusually, her wedding dress was **---** purple rather than the traditional white.
A sense of historical outrage against the British runs **---** in many Irish people.

PART 7. KEYWORD TRANSFORMATIONS. Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between 3 and 8 words. The activity starts with an example (0). Write your answers to the activity in the ANSWER BOOKLET.

0. The name was totally unfamiliar to them.

never

They had never heard of the name before.

1. She wanted to travel incognito, so she wore a wig and sunglasses.

recognised

She wore a wig and sunglasses to _____ the trip.

2. Earlier enforcement of the new regulations could have improved the situation.

force

Had the new regulations _____ not be so difficult now.

3. Surely you didn't find this book recently – it's been out of print for years.

across

You can't _____ this book recently – it's been out of print for years.

4. James and I disagree on the subject of juvenile delinquency.

eye

James and I _____ on the subject of juvenile delinquency.

5. Jessica was really looking forward to spending some time with her family again after spending a year living alone in Brazil.

wait

Jessica _____ some time with her family again after a year alone in Brazil.