SAMPLE TESTS FOR THE *PAAU-LOGSE* ENGLISH EXAMINATIONS

INTRODUCTION

These ten tests are adaptations of ten articles, covering up-to-date topics, found on the Internet. The questions are based on the latest available format for the *PAAU-LOGSE* English examinations in Catalonia. The texts cover ten different subject areas as listed below.

Test 1 Studying and working.

More and more students are combining part-time work and study at college. We talked to a student at Manchester University about his night job.

Test 2 Sport and fame.

Before the 1998 World Cup nobody had heard of Michael Owen. Now he's a 19-year-old with superstar status.

Test 3 Truancy.

The number of students missing school lessons has increased dramatically over the past year. One school thinks it's found a solution to the problem.

Test 4 Technology and the home.

The new cocooner is no couch potato. But why go out when you can make the world come to you?

Test 5 Reading and the future.

It looks like any other book. It's the same size and shape and has two hundred pages. But it could be the last book you'll ever buy.

Test 6 The cinema and fame.

Think of Hollywood and you think of film stars living luxury lifestyles, driving fast cars and going to the extravagant parties. James Dean is one of the most famous Hollywood film stars, although he experienced this lifestyle for only a short time, and made just three films. Why then is Dean so famous?

Test 7 Teenage problems in big cities.

Children are speaking out about the problems they face on Britain's most dangerous city estates – and adults are taking note.

Test 8 Holidays and travel.

Venice used ______to be the most beautiful city in the world - but not any more. This month, the city authorities are launching an advertising campaign starring rats, dead pigeons and canals full of rubbish. So why are they promoting this ugly new image? Test 9 Health and teenage smoking. Despite health risks, more and more teenagers are taking up smoking. A recent report says cinema and film stars are partly to blame. Test 10 Countries and cultures. New research suggests that Britons are becoming less creative than their European neighbours. Please note: You may photocopy this material. Suggested answers to the tests can be found at the end of this document. Teachers may wish to include a glossary for each text including a translation of 2 or 3 words. The inclusion of a glossary is common practice in the latest available format for the PAAU-LOGSE English examinations.

Test 1All work and no playIan is studying geography at Manchester University. He also works as a barman at a local student bar, and often works up to 20 hours a week. Why does he work so many hours? 'Money is a major factor,' he explains. 'At times it's difficult to work and study, because I have a lot of essays to write, but I need to do paid work.' Ian, like many other students, works to help pay for his studies. 'Sometimes I don't get home from the bar until 2 am,' he says, 'and then I have to go and work on my computer for college.'Show does he do it? 'I've got quite a lot of stamina!' he replies. 'If I get a good degree, hopefully I'll find a good job.'

And if it all gets too much, he can always call on his work mates. 'We all help each other out,' he says. 'I've got everyone's number, and if I can't work one evening, I'll call people up and eventually get someone to cover for me.'

Ian thinks this juggling of essays with earning is common amongst students. 'I don't think I work harder than other people,' he explains. 'Everybody has their financial problems.'

At university Ian's tutor and head of year know about his workload. They say it's important for him to find a balance between doing part-time work and his university studies. 'If his studies start to suffer because of the work,' says Ian's tutor, 'he should stop and rethink his timetable.'

(278 words)

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Answer the following questions according to the information in the text "All work and no play".

(1 point each correct answer.)

- 1. Why does Ian work in the bar?
- 2. What happens if he can't work one evening?
- 3. What do Ian's teachers think about his situation?
- 4. Which of the following sentences (a, b, c) summarises the text best?
 - a) Many students enjoy working and studying at the same time as they can make extra money.
 - b) According to Ian it is sometimes difficult to work and study but he needs the money to finance his studies.
 - c) According to the text many students can not study because they have to work to make money.

PART TWO: WRITING

Choose ONE: Write about either 1 or 2. Write a minimum of 65 words.

- 1. Imagine you are Ian's tutor. You are very worried that he is spending too much time working and you feel his studies are suffering. Write the conversation between Ian and his tutor.
- 2. Ian's situation is very common in many universities. Do you think it is fair that students should have to work to finance their studies? Write an article for a magazine expressing your opinion on this.

3

Test 2

Teenage superstar

The World Cup was an experience Michael Owen will never forget. He was only 18 at the time, and was the youngest footballer ever to wear an England shirt. In the second round of the tournament, when England were playing against Argentina, Michael scored an unbelievable goal. He became a national hero overnight. Suddenly everyone wanted to know everything about the new wonderboy. So how did he do it?

Michael Owen was born on 14th December 1979. He grew up in the North of England with his parents and four brothers and sisters. Michael had a passion for football at a very early age – his dad was a professional footballer so Michael wanted to play football too. As a result Michael was only seven years old when he played in his first team. He scored an amazing 34 goals in his first season! Then, after ten years of playing football, he was chosen to play for England. The rest is history.

Since his sensational performance in the World Cup, Michael has received hundreds of fan letters, mostly from teenage girls. Because of Michael's fame and good looks, groups of admirers wait outside his house just for a glimpse of the star. But despite his success, Michael hasn't changed. He still lives with his parents, helps with the household chores and goes out with a local girl he met at school.

So what does Michael think about all this attention? 'I don't mind if girls see me as a sex symbol,' he says. 'If they want to put pictures of me on their walls, that's fine. It's nice that they appreciate me.'

(287 words)

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Answer the following questions according to the information in the text "Teenage superstar".

(1 point each correct answer.)

- 1. When did Michael become a national hero?
- 2. How long had Michael played football before he was chosen to play for England?
- 3. What do his fans do?
- 4. Which of the following sentences (a, b, or c) summarises the text best?
 - a) According to the text Michael has changed because of his fame.
 - b) Michael has always enjoyed playing football but does not enjoy the fame it has brought him.
 - c) Although Michael has become a very famous footballer his life has not really changed very much.

PART TWO: WRITING

Choose ONE: Write about either 1 or 2. Write a minimum of 65 words.

- 1. Imagine that Michael has been invited to appear on a television programme about young superstars. Write the conversation between the interviewer and Michael.
- 2. Write about the advantages and disadvantages of becoming famous at an early age.

Dial-a-dreamer

Yesterday, pupils from Islington Green School with a poor attendance record had a surprise. Teachers telephoned their homes at 7.30 a.m. telling them to wake up and go to school. Islington School has begun a 'dial-a-dreamer' scheme in an attempt to stop truancy and lateness. It surprised 80 pupils with calls to remind them that lessons started promptly at 8.40 a.m.

'We woke up a few sleepy parents as well!' said teacher Rupert Perry. 'Most of them were pleased that we cared enough about their kids' education to call them up. One or two parents were surprised to find out that their kids were arriving late for school when they sent them in good time.'

The wake-up calls were the idea of the school headmistress, who hopes to reduce the number of students missing lessons – truancy levels at the school were five times the national average last year.

'We are telling parents that we mean business and intend to make sure that their kids get the best education,' said Mr Perry. 'If we want to raise standards, we have got to get them into school and learning rather than disrupting classes by arriving late.'

One parent, however, was unimpressed by the scheme. 'My son slept through the call, but it woke me up,' he said. 'Frankly, I think this is going a bit too far. How long will it be before they are phoning up to check whether children are in bed by nine?'

(268 words)

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Answer the following questions according to the information in the text "Dial-a-dreamer".

(1 point each correct answer.)

- 1. Why did the pupils receive a phone call from their school?
- 2. What did most of the pupils' parents think of this new scheme?
- 3. What is the objective of this scheme?
- 4. Which of the following sentences (a, b, c) summarises the text best?
 - a) One school has instigated a new scheme to try to solve the problem of students missing lessons and arriving late.
 - b)
 - c) Many parents have become very angry about the dial-a-dreamer campaign as the telephone calls wake them up in the morning.
 - d) Many teachers do not agree with the dial-a-dreamer scheme and believe it will not work, as their early morning telephone calls will annoy many sleepy parents.

PART TWO: WRITING

Choose ONE: Write about either 1 or 2. Write a minimum of 65 words.

- 1. You are a parent and the telephone call from the school has just woken you up. You are angry. Write down your conversation with the teacher who has telephoned you.
- 2. To what extent do you think the dial-a-dreamer scheme is a good idea? Do you think it is a good way to improve attendance?

Home sweet digital home

Greg Rowland last left his house two days ago – he thinks. He says he went out for a pint of milk the day before yesterday, just after a TV game show. Then he came back to make his son's tea and watch his favourite soap opera.

Greg doesn't think he is a couch potato. He's a television critic, plays in a band and helps look after his 7month-old son. He has a full and active life with his family and friends; it's just that it all takes place at home. Greg is one of a new generation of 'cocooners' – people who believe that their home is not just their castle, but, thanks to technology and digital culture, their supermarket, cinema, games arcade and social life. 'When my friends visit,' he says, 'they find everything they need here: food, drink, videos, large TVs and comics.'

Cocooners don't experience the harsh realities of the external world – they don't commute to work, they don't shop at supermarkets and they don't sit in overcrowded bars in the evening. Greg uses his computer and fax for work, the Internet for shopping, and when he feels like a chat with a friend he uses his e-mail. At 32, Greg is settling down, not to a pipe and slippers, but to the digital age.

Soon, even more of us will become cocooners. Computer technology will enable more and more people to work at home; hundreds of digital TV channels will provide us with 24-hour entertainment; Internet shopping will deliver door-to-door groceries, clothes and holidays. By the beginning of the next millennium, there'll be no need to leave your home.

(292 words)

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Answer the following questions according to the information in the text "Home sweet digital home".

(1 point each correct answer.)

- 1. Does Greg feel he leads a full and active life?
- 2. According to the text what is a 'cocooner'.
- 3. Which three activities does Greg use his computer for?
- 4. Which of the following sentences, (a, b, or c) summarises the text best?
 - a) Although Greg very rarely leaves his house he feels he leads a full and complete life.
 - b) According to the text 'cocooners' run the risk of never meeting friends.
 - c) According to the text this way of living will never really become popular as not everybody has a computer.

PART TWO: WRITING

Choose ONE: Write about either 1 or 2. Write a minimum of 65 words.

- 1. You are one of Greg's friends and you think he is wasting his life staying at home all the time. Write down the conversation you have with Greg.
- 2. Imagine you are writing a magazine article about Greg. Write down some of the advantages and disadvantages of this stay-at-home existence.

The book to end all books

Scientists have developed an exciting new electronic book that can store thousands of titles in a single volume. The revolutionary design uses 'electronic ink' inside each page, which can be programmed to print any text that is downloaded into the book. The volume, which is the size and shape of a normal book, will have up to 200 pages of 'digital paper' and is likely to be on sale within the year.

The electronic wonder was invented by Professor Joseph Jacobson, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. We asked him why he created it.

'I wanted to preserve all the qualities of a traditional book,' he explained, 'but to also add features that will take books into the 21st century. It could be the Bible one day and the story of Peter Pan the next. People will be able to have whole libraries that consist of just one book.'

Titles can be downloaded from libraries or the Internet into a computer in the book's spine. The computer then sends messages to particles on each page, which make patterns that look like normal type. These patterns remain in place until the book is reprogrammed, while a display on the spine allows readers to choose the title they want.

Experts believe that the book will eventually make reading cheaper and more convenient. Jacobson argues that the invention will also help the environment. 'Just think how many trees it will save,' he said.

(267 words)

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Answer the following questions according to the information in the text "The book to end all books".

(1 point each correct answer.)

- 1. What is digital paper?
- 2. Why did Professor Jacobson create this new type of book?
- 3. What, according to the text, are the advantages of this new invention?
- 4. Which of the following sentences, (a, b, or c) summarises the text best?
 - a) In the future most books will be available in a single volume.
 - b) A recent invention now means that there is no limit to the amount of books which can be stored in an electronic book.
 - c) A new invention may encourage people to read and may also help with environmental conservation.

PART TWO: WRITING

Choose ONE: Write about either 1 or 2. Write a minimum of 65 words.

- 1. Imagine you are Professor Jacobson. You are interviewed on television about your invention. Write down the conversation between the interviewer and the Professor.
- 2. Compare the new computer book with the traditional paper one. What are its advantages and disadvantages?

Rebel without a cause

Born in 1931 in Indiana, James Dean spent most of his childhood living on a farm. During his teens he had an enviable life – he was allowed to race his motorbike, he was popular with girls at school and he was the star of the school drama club. He decided early on that his life would be divided between acting and racing.

After finishing High School, James began studying at Santa Monica City College. But a year later he decided to leave and find work as an actor. At first getting work was difficult; James starred in a TV commercial for Pepsi Cola, and acted in a few plays. But then in 1955 his luck changed and he was offered the part of Jim Stark in *Rebel Without A Cause*. The film caused a sensation and teenagers across America queued up to watch it again and again. As Jim Stark, James was someone teenagers could easily identify with – he was an outsider, the opposite of everything well-behaved kids were meant to be. Dean became a teenage idol overnight.

James made just two more films, then was tragically killed in a car accident in California. He was only twentyfour. Amazingly, his image as a teenage rebel is still popular today. 'Jimmy knew the problems young people experienced,' a friend once said. 'He understood.'

(275 words)

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Answer the following questions according to the information in the text "Rebel without a cause".

(1 point each correct answer.)

- 1. What sort of things did James Dean enjoy doing as a teenager?
- 2. What were his first acting jobs?
- 3. When did James Dean become a teenage idol?
- 4. Which of the following sentences (a, b or c) summarises the text best?
 - a) The text tells us that Dean was a hugely successful actor with a well-established reputation when he was killed.
 - b) Dean worked for many years as an actor in small parts before he became famous.
 - c) Although Dean worked for some time as a minor actor it was Dean's first film which really established him as a teenage idol.

PART TWO: WRITING

Choose ONE: Write about either 1 or 2. Write a minimum of 65 words.

- 1. Imagine you are one of James Dean's friends. You are worried that he is living too dangerously. Give him some advice.
- 2. Imagine you are a television presenter. Write your interview with James Dean.

Mean streets

Last month a team of journalists talked to kids from Britain's worst housing estates where gang violence, drugs dealing and burglary are everyday things. 'We found that many children are victims of their environment,' commented one journalist. 'However, children can often add to the problems surrounding them.' On many estates, young people hang around street corners drinking and smoking. Boredom and alienation lead to vandalism, joyriding and violence.

John, in his early teens, has lived on the Marquess estate in London for seven years. 'The only things for most of the kids to do are get drunk, stand on street corners smoking and smash up houses,' he says. 'During the day I'm at school, but from eight or nine in the evening the trouble starts. It happens all through the night. Parents let their kids roam the streets at all hours.'

John wants to leave the estate and live somewhere else.

'I want to leave because I can't invite people to my house any more,' he explains. 'If they leave at ten o'clock at night, they might be attacked by one of the street gangs. I can't take it any more.'

Phillip, Amanda and Stephen live on the Cowgate estate in Newcastle. 'There is nothing to do,' says Phillip. 'We just hang around the streets because there's nowhere else. There was a park, but it got wrecked.'

Amanda agrees. 'There are too many girl gangs,' she explains, 'and the police are always driving around, so you can't really go anywhere. But the drug dealers, joyriders and burglars are the worst.'

'Sometimes I don't like Cowgate,' adds 12-year-old Stephen, 'because people burgle your house and steal all of your nice things.'

(299 words)

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Answer the following questions according to the information in the text "Mean streets".

(1 point each correct answer.)

- 1. Why is there so much violence on Britain's worst housing estates?
- 2. According to John, what do kids usually do on the Marquess estate?
- 3. What are the problems with living on the Cowgate estate?
- 4. Which of the following sentences (a, b or c) summarises the text best?
 - a) On Britain's worst housing estates there are serious problems caused by the environment itself and made worse by the kids.
 - b) The way kids behave on these housing estates causes the problems.
 - c) There are many problems on these estates but the police have the situation under control.

PART TWO: WRITING

Choose ONE: Write about either 1 or 2. Write a minimum of 65 words.

- 1. In your opinion what is the solution to these terrible problems on these housing estates?
- 2. You are a frightened resident of one of these housing estates. Write a letter to a newspaper complaining about the situation.

Too many tourists

Venice is one of the most popular cities in the world, with an estimated 12 million visitors each year. Unfortunately, as well as bringing money into Venice, tourists also cause serious damage to historic buildings and canals. The latest posters advertising Venice aim to discourage tourists, especially day-trippers, and reduce the number of visitors.

'Venice needs intelligent visitors, not the tourists who rush in, take what they want and rush out again,' explains one city official. 'We don't want visitors who are looking for the picture-postcard image of Venice; we need people who realize what problems the city faces.'

Day-trippers on a five-hour visit to Venice usually spend 20 minutes looking at paintings in the Doges' Palace. For the rest of the time, they crowd into streets around the Rialto Bridge, sit in overpriced cafés in St Mark's Square, block public transport and create tons of rubbish. The Venice authorities hope that the new advertising campaign will discourage day-trippers who spend little or no money, and encourage richer visitors who often stay several nights.

However, not everyone thinks this latest campaign is a good idea. Shopkeepers whose business depends on daytrippers are worried. 'If the authorities want only rich people to come, I don't agree,' says Mario who owns a craft shop off St Mark's Square. 'My business depends on day-trippers just as much as visitors who stay longer.'

(273 words)

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Answer the following questions according to the information in the text "Too many tourists".

(1 point each correct answer.)

- 1. What 's the unusual thing about the new posters advertising Venice?
- 2. What type of visitors do the city authorities wish to discourage?
- 3. Which three typical tourist attractions do the visitors usually see?
- 4. Which of the following sentences (a, b or c) summarises the text best?
 - a) The text tells us that the more visitors there are to Venice the better as they are good for business and bring a lot of money to the city.
 - b) According to the text the Venetian authorities are concerned that some tourists do not realise the problems faced by the city and the damage they can cause.
 - c) All Venetians think that the campaign to restrict the number and type of visitors to the city is a good idea.

PART TWO: WRITING

Choose ONE: Write about either 1 or 2. Write a minimum of 65 words.

- 1. You are an angry shopkeeper who does not agree at all with the new advertising campaign. Write an angry letter to the Venice town council to protest against this campaign giving your reasons.
- 2. Do you agree with this campaign? Do you think this is a good way to bring the problems of Venice to the attention of tourists? Write down your opinions.

Smoke screen

Health experts are becoming concerned about the increase in the number of film scenes showing cigarette or cigar smoking. Many tobacco companies are sponsoring films as a way of advertising their product. This often involves a top star smoking a cigarette brand on screen. Health authorities are now prepared to 'name and shame' superstars whose films encourage young people to smoke.

Research has shown that 40% of recently released films include 10 or more scenes with actors smoking, compared with only 10% in 1990. Leonardo Dicaprio smoked in *Romeo and Juliet*, as did Julia Roberts in *My Best Friend's Wedding*. Aliens escaping from Earth in the film *Men in Black* were carrying boxes of duty-free Marlboro cigarettes, and the latest James Bond movie has earned £200,000 for including cigarette brands in the film.

Health authorities are worried that these images are encouraging more and more teenagers to smoke. Since 1990, the number of teenage girls smoking has risen from 25% to 33%. Boys have also been influenced by the new tough-guy image of smoking, with 28% of 15-year-olds smoking compared with 21% in 1990. As a result, the Health Education Authority is asking film directors to cut back on smoking scenes.

Some doctors, however, think a more dramatic approach is necessary. 'What we really need is an action hero coughing and grey-faced in the morning,' said one doctor last week. 'That should make a few kids think twice about lighting up.'

(267 words)

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Answer the following questions according to the information in the text "Smoke screen".

(1 point each correct answer.)

- 1. Why are health experts worried about smoking scenes in films?
- 2. What does the Health Education Authority think film directors should do?
- 3. According to the text what could be another solution to this problem?
- 4. Which of the following sentences (a, b or c) summarises the text best?
 - a) Over the last few years there has been an increase in the number of teenagers smoking in film scenes.
 - b) Almost all recently released films contain many scenes with film stars smoking.
 - c) Film scenes that show well-known film stars smoking may be part of the reason for the increase in the number of teenage smokers over the last few years.

PART TWO: WRITING

Choose ONE: Write about either 1 or 2. Write a minimum of 65 words.

- 1. You are the head of the Health Education Authority. You have a meeting with a film director and ask him/her to stop including so many smoking scenes in his/her films. Write down the conversation.
- 2. Imagine that the government has decided to make smoking scenes in films illegal. Do you think this is a good idea or do you think film directors should have the artistic freedom to include the scenes they wish?

11

Test 10 Britain loses its cool

A study of more than 5,000 people from four nations has shown that the British are less talented than the French, Spanish and Americans. 'The British have a reputation of being very traditional and not open to new ideas,' said Andrew Mead, a senior scientist who helped conduct the test.

The scientists measured talent by using a standard profile of a creative person: someone who enjoys putting forward his own ideas, is open to change, and who is sensitive and independent. France did much better than Britain in the test and emerged as the country most able to produce world-class creative achievement. France has outstanding actors such as Gerard Depardieu; designers such as Jean-Paul Gaultier; and sportsmen like Zinedine Zidane, whose footballing skills helped his team win the 1998 World Cup.

Spain is the most creative nation after France. According to research, the country that produced Picasso is in the middle of a cultural renaissance. There are artists such as film director Pedro Almodovar; and writers like Antonio Gala who has won many prizes for his writing. And American talent is represented by people such as Steven Spielberg, director of *Saving Private Ryan*.

British artists last week attacked the research, claiming that Britain was just as creative as other countries. One artist commented: 'Britain has world-beating popular music, fashion and design. We have one fifth of the population of America but many more good writers; and the culture of France, such as its cooking, is boring compared with the variety and energy of our own cooks.'

(271 words)

PART ONE: READING COMPREHENSION

Answer the following questions according to the information in the text "Britain loses its cool".

(1 point each correct answer.)

- 1. According to the text what was the result of the research?
- 2. How did the scientists reach their conclusion?
- 3. Why did British artists attack the results of the research?
- 4. Which of the following sentences (a, b or c) summarises the text best?
 - a) Scientists have now proved that the British are extremely traditional and not open to new ideas.
 - b) According to the study France and Spain are the most creative countries.
 - c) The research carried out by scientists into national creativity has left the British in a very bad position.

PART TWO: WRITING

Choose ONE: Write about either 1 or 2. Write a minimum of 65 words.

- 1. Do you think that this research is correct? Can we really say that a person from one country is more creative and imaginative than a person from a different country? What is your opinion?
- 2. You are a very creative and imaginative British musician. You completely disagree with the results of this study. Write an article for a magazine in which you express your complete rejection of this research. Give reasons why.

ANSWERS TO THE TESTS

Test 1

- 1. He needs to do paid work./He needs the money to pay for his studies.
- 2. He can always call on his work mates.
- 3. They say he must find a balance between doing part-time work and his university studies.
- 4. B

Test 2

- 1. When he scored a goal against Argentina.
- 2. 10 years.
- 3. They wait outside his house, they put pictures of him on their walls and they write him letters.
- 4. C

Test 3

- 1. They received a phone call to tell them to get up.
- 2. Most of them were pleased.
- 3. To reduce the number of students missing lessons.
- 4. A

Test 4

- 1. Yes, he doesn't think he is a couch potato.
- 2. A person who does everything from home.
- 3. For work, shopping and for talking to his friends.
- 4. A

Test 5

- 1. Paper with electronic ink.
- 2. To preserve the qualities of a traditional book and to take books into the 21st century.
- 3. Reading will be cheaper and more convenient and the invention will help the environment.
- 4. C

<u>Test 6</u>

- 1. He raced his motorbike, went out with girls and acted in the school drama club.
- 2. He starred in a TV commercial and acted in a few plays.
- 3. In 1955.
- 4. C

Test 7

- 1. Because of the environment and because the children often add to the problems.
- 2. They get drunk, smoke and smash up houses.
- 3. There is nothing to do.
- 4. A

Test 8

- 1. On the posters there are pictures of rats, dead pigeons and rubbish.
- 2. The authorities wish to discourage daytrippers.
- 3. They usually see the Doge's palace, the Rialto Bridge and Saint Mark's square.
- 4. B

Test 9

- 1. Because these scenes encourage young people to smoke.
- 2. They should cut back on smoking scenes.
- 3. There should be an action hero who coughs and has a grey face.
- 4. C

<u>Test 10</u>

- 1. The British are less talented than other nationalities.
- 2. They used a standard profile of a creative person.
- 3. They attacked the research because they thought it was unfair/didn't agree with it/claim that Britain is just as creative as other countries.
- 4. C