## Proves d’Accés a la Universitat. Curs 2010-2011

### Llengua estrangera

**Anglès**

**Sèrie 1 - A**

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**Etiqueta identificadora de l’alumne/a**

**Ubicació del tribunal** .................................................................

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WHAT THE AU PAIR SAW

Silvia, an 18-year-old from Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, could not believe how mean her employers were. They hardly spoke to her, made her work very long hours for very little pay and restricted her access to food. Silvia didn’t work in a shop. She was an au pair to a middle-class British family.

Silvia’s story comes from a new book, called Au Pair, which takes a full and honest look at British families from the sincere point of view of the girls who come to look after their children and help around the house.

The book focuses on the experiences of 50 Slovakian au pairs who have lived with more than 100 host families in London. Its author is Zuzana Burikova, a Slovakian sociologist who has been working on this project for more than three years.

The book’s most noticeable feature is the pejorative view that au pairs develop towards their host British families. In particular, they are highly critical of the ‘having it all’ culture. British parenting, it seems, is shockingly bad. The book suggests that the British concept of a woman’s right to a career as well as a family is viewed negatively by au pairs. The author thinks that “au pairs generally feel that any family that chooses to have an au pair must, by definition, either be lazy, or lack proper care and consideration for children and for people in general”.

In the book we can read about the experience of an au pair called Jarmila, whose host mother worked at home as a clothes designer. Even when she was not working, her child spent all his time with Jarmila, who really felt like a second mother. Another case is that of Darinka, who was fascinated by “English mothers constantly talking about quality time and feeling guilty if they were not actually reading to or playing with their children”. In fact, in most cases it was pretty clear they spent very little time with their children. “English women do love their children,” Darinka reluctantly admits, “but the problem is that they are just not able to combine childcare, housework and a career.”

From the experiences in the book we can learn that “food is a particularly tricky issue,” says Ms. Burikova. “I’m surprised that children and parents do not eat the same food and that parents buy healthy food like vegetables and fish for themselves but not for their children.” Zuzana Burikova explains that “the British like TV programmes where experts tell them how to keep their home, since they don’t know how to do it themselves. That’s why they need au pairs.”

And yet, as with all things, there is a flip side. And not all families are cold and unfeeling. In the book we can read the experience of Tina. Tina worked in London as an au pair about nine years ago. She had an absolutely terrific time in there, and there was good understanding between Tina and her host family, as a result of which the family decided to put her up until she finished her studies.

After having studied all these experiences, Zuzana Burikova comes to the conclusion that none of all these au pairs’ negative experiences stop people from applying for the job. Most Slovakian women go to Britain to work as an au pair in order to learn the language and earn some money at the same time, but there are also others that accept this job because it’s a way of escaping from their families or simply because they have just split up with their boyfriend. So, up to a point, the arrangement suits them.

Text adapted from The Sunday Times (August 1, 2010)
Part 1: Reading comprehension

Choose the best answer according to the text. Only ONE answer is possible.
[0.5 points each correct answer. Wrong answers will be penalized by deducting 0.16 points. There is no penalty for unanswered questions.]

1. The book called Au Pair is about...
   - the way Slovakian au pairs look after their own children. [ ]
   - how Slovakian families should raise their children. [ ]
   - what Slovakian au pairs think about British families. [ ]
   - the way Slovakian girls can get a job in England. [ ]

2. After reading the text, the ‘having it all’ culture could be explained as...
   - British women’s aim of working out instead of being mothers. [ ]
   - the idea of bringing up children and working at the same time. [ ]
   - the difficult choice between having a family and working at the same time. [ ]
   - the idea of having an au pair at home to look after the children. [ ]

3. According to the text, the British idea of a modern woman...
   - is not shared by Slovakian au pairs. [ ]
   - is generally accepted by au pairs. [ ]
   - is never criticised by au pairs. [ ]
   - has become a model for Slovakian au pairs. [ ]

4. According to Ms. Burikova’s book, some British families contract au pairs because...
   - they think it is the cheapest way of educating their children. [ ]
   - they can’t survive without the au pair’s help. [ ]
   - they can’t afford to raise their children on their own. [ ]
   - they don’t care enough about their children. [ ]

5. Darinka thinks that most English mothers...
   - do their best to look after their children. [ ]
   - do not spend enough time with their children. [ ]
   - prefer their careers to their children. [ ]
   - play their role successfully. [ ]

6. By saying that “food is a particularly tricky issue” Ms. Burikova suggests that parents...
   - don’t feed their children healthily. [ ]
   - only care about what their children eat. [ ]
   - do not care about their health problems. [ ]
   - believe their children are healthy enough. [ ]

7. Tina’s experience as an au pair was...
   - terrible. [ ]
   - wonderful. [ ]
   - depressing. [ ]
   - unbelievable. [ ]

8. Most Slovakian au pairs apply for the job mainly because...
   - they want to travel abroad to get a well-paid job. [ ]
   - it’s a good opportunity to leave their homes and relatives. [ ]
   - their love relationships are broken and they want to meet new people. [ ]
   - it’s a way of learning a language and earning some money. [ ]
Part 2: Writing

Choose ONE topic. Write about number 1 or 2. Minimum length: 100 words.
[4 points]

1. Imagine you want to apply for a job as an au pair. Write a formal letter to an au pair agency explaining the reasons why you think you are the ideal person for the job.

2. Write an opinion essay about the following question: “Is it better to work in your own country instead of working abroad?” Explain the advantages or disadvantages in either case.
Part 3: Listening comprehension

LOST... OR MAYBE NOT?

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

crew: equip / equipo
sequel: continuación / continuación
cue: pista
source: font / fuente
huge: enorme
stage: etapa
thread: fil / hilo
to wrap up: concloure / concluir

Ready?
Now read the questions on the following page. Read them carefully before listening to the interview.

Since Lost, one of the most successful TV shows in recent times, came to a dramatic finish at the end of the sixth season, many fans have been wondering whether the last episode could have possibly left any options for a sequel. In the following interview, Pat Lawson chats with Matthew Fox, Dr. Jack Shepard in the show, and tries to find out how truly final the end was.

[Now listen to the interview.]
QUESTIONS

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

[0.25 points each correct answer. Wrong answers will be penalized by deducting 0.08 points. There is no penalty for unanswered questions.]

Look at number 0 as an example.

0. Lost was a TV show that...
   □ had a successful sequel in recent times.
   □ was one of the most successful shows in recent times.
   □ finished at the beginning of the sixth season.
   □ not many fans have been wondering about.

1. Matthew Fox is surprised that...
   □ people have lost interest in the show so soon.
   □ so many people are still interested in the show.
   □ people's interests have moved to other shows.
   □ speculation about the show lasted for one month.

2. About the show's end...
   □ everybody was happy with it.
   □ everybody was disappointed with it.
   □ people were neither happy nor disappointed.
   □ some people liked it a lot, some didn't like it at all.

3. What are some fans looking for in the last episode?
   □ Hidden secrets about the last episode.
   □ The presence of a hidden message.
   □ Hidden cues about the possibility for a sequel.
   □ Evidence of extraterrestrials.

4. Matthew Fox finds it fascinating that...
   □ they were all abducted by aliens but didn't know it.
   □ the show was a source of aliens.
   □ so many people discussed the show.
   □ the aliens helped to create the source of discussion.

5. How does Matthew Fox feel about the possibility of a sequel?
   □ He will know if there will be one as soon as the interview is published.
   □ He's convinced that there will not be one.
   □ He thinks the other actors disagree with him.
   □ He thinks a sequel would be a turning point in his career.

6. A sequel without Dr. Shepard or Hurley wouldn't be the same because...
   □ these characters did not generate a lot of interest in the forums.
   □ Lost was a unique thing that can't be repeated.
   □ they weren't interested in serious time travel.
   □ it would ruin the theories about the island.

7. According to Matthew Fox, the last episode is...
   □ appropriate because it is so complicated.
   □ appropriate because it concludes a very complicated story line.
   □ inappropriate because it finished all the open threads.
   □ inappropriate because all questions were answered.

8. Was Lost a realistic show?
   □ Yes, because the people in the island lived for hundreds of years.
   □ No, because polar bears and smoke monsters don't live hundreds of years.
   □ Yes, because tropical islands are usually inhabited by polar bears.
   □ No, because it showed a tropical island inhabited by polar bears and smoke monsters.

Recompte de les respostes
Correctes Incorrectes No contestades

Nota de comprensió oral