Generalitat de Catalunya
Consell Interuniversitari de Catalunya
Oficina d'Accés a la Universitat

2026

Proves d'accés a la universitat

Llengua estrangera
Anglès

Sèrie 5 - A

Espai per a la correcció

Qualificació	
Comprensió oral	
Comprensió escrita	
Expressió escrita	
Suma de notes parcials	
Qualificació final	

Espai per a la revisió

Comprovació	2a correcció

Etiqueta de qualificació

Etiqueta de correcció

Etiqueta de l'estudiant

Ubicació del tribunal .....

Número del tribunal .....

The exam consists of THREE mandatory parts.

In the first part, listening comprehension is assessed through 8 multiple choice questions. It is worth 3 points.

In the second part, reading comprehension is assessed through 6 open-ended questions. It is worth 3 points.

In the third part, written expression is assessed. Here, you may choose ONE of the two given options. It is worth 4 points.

Part 1: Listening comprehension

A CONVERSATION WITH YAYOI KUSAMA ON THE POWER OF ART AND EMOTIONS

In this radio programme you are going to hear some new words. Read and listen to them. Make sure you know what they mean.

art installations: instal·lacions artístiques, creacions artístiques / instalaciones artísticas, creaciones artísticas
polka dots: estampat de rodones / estampado de lunares
boundless: sense límits / sin límites
tapestry: tapís / tapiz

Ready?

Now read the questions on the following page. Read them carefully before listening to the radio programme.

[Now listen to the interview.]

QUESTIONS

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

[3 points: 0.375 points for each correct answer. Wrong answers will be penalized by deducting 0.125 points. There is no penalty for unanswered questions.]

		Espai per a la correcció		
		Correcta	Incorrecta	No contestada
1.	How does Yayoi Kusama see the relationship between her work and the emotions it expresses? ☐ The essence of her art is driven by a love for immense chaos and mystery. ☐ Her installations aim to change viewers' perspective on love. ☐ The essence of her art lies in creating a collective supportive feeling. ☐ Her work is meant to reflect the limits of love and hope.	☐	☐	☐
2.	Yayoi Kusama created her "Infinity Rooms" to invite people to think about ☐ the problem of mental illness. ☐ the possibility of space travel. ☐ our place in the universe. ☐ mirrors and tapestries.	☐	☐	☐
3.	In her autobiography, Yayoi Kusama mentions suffering from mental health problems. How has art affected her? ☐ Art has increased her sense of despair and hopelessness. ☐ Art has given her tools to reverse her suffering and despair. ☐ Art has intensified her need to overcome her mental health problems. ☐ Creating art has cancelled her positive emotions.	☐	☐	☐
4.	According to the interviewer, why does Yayoi Kusama paint dots abundantly? ☐ To portray the universe. ☐ As a form of artistic rebellion. ☐ To represent distress. ☐ To create a sense of abundance.	☐	☐	☐
5.	What other type of message does Kusama's use of polka dots convey? ☐ The dots represent how the elements of outer space are interconnected. ☐ They serve as a visual metaphor for the chaotic nature of the universe. ☐ Polka dots symbolize how individuals are connected. ☐ The repetition of dots represents individuals' everyday fighting.	☐	☐	☐
6.	Why does Yayoi Kusama believe her art can surpass cultural gaps? ☐ Because people from all walks of life visit her installations. ☐ Because her art speaks a language that can be understood by all art experts. ☐ Because her art connects people at the core of their essence as human beings. ☐ Because polka dots are bound to a specific cultural audience.	☐	☐	☐
7.	According to Yayoi Kusama, why did she choose to leave Japan? ☐ Kusama was aware of her artistic identity in Japan and chose to leave to develop it further. ☐ The Japanese artists did not support her because of her mental health issues. ☐ The Japanese government's restrictions on kimonos made her move. ☐ Kusama had connections in New York that could allow her to succeed as an artist there.	☐	☐	☐
8.	How does Yayoi Kusama see the power of art in facing global challenges? ☐ Art has the power of eliminating global uncertainty. ☐ Art inspires people to work together for the common good. ☐ Art helps people see global challenges as an inevitable part of their future. ☐ Art gets people to look into the past and learn from it.	☐	☐	☐

	Correctes	Incorrectes	No contestades
Recompte de les respostes			

Nota de comprensió oral

Part 2: Reading comprehension

THE SCIENCE OF FEAR: HOW IT AFFECTS YOUR BODY AND MIND

Fear is a natural response that has helped humans survive dangerous situations for centuries. While, unlike those faced by our ancestors, today's threats are less likely to involve sabre-tooth tigers, haunted houses, scary movies, and harmless **pranks** still trigger the same physical and emotional reactions. The body's fight-or-flight response releases stress hormones and prepares us to either face the challenge or escape it. But how exactly does fear work, and what happens when it is activated too often?

The amygdala is a part of the brain that handles the processing of emotions and detection of danger. The fear response originates from it; upon detecting an apparent peril, signals are sent to the hypothalamus. The hypothalamus is an organ that initiates nervous and endocrine systems. Further, it encourages the release of stress hormones like cortisol, adrenaline, and noradrenaline. These chemicals cause a chain reaction in the body: your heart beats faster to pump oxygen-rich blood to your muscles and brain, your breathing quickens, your pupils dilate for better vision, and your muscles tense up ready for action. Adrenaline also reduces pain and heightens focus, allowing you to respond effectively to a threat. Interestingly, the release of dopamine, another hormone, can create a feeling of happiness during fear-inducing situations, which explains why some people enjoy being scared.

Your brain doesn't instantly distinguish between actual and imagined dangers. When an actor in a haunted house jumps out wearing a scary mask, for example, your body automatically behaves as if the danger were real. This is the automatic and brief initial phase of the fear response. However, the prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain that is responsible for reasoning, quickly weighs this event. It confers with the hippocampus, an organ that **retrieves** the memories of similar events from storage to determine if there really is any danger. If you have been through a haunted house before, your brain knows the threat is not real, and the fear response turns off. But when the situation is unfamiliar—say, some terrifying scene in a horror movie—your body may release stress hormones, and physical effects—such as a racing heart or sweaty palms—may be more obvious.

While the fear response is necessary for survival, frequent activation can damage the body. Continuous release of stress hormones may lead to high blood pressure, heart problems, digestive issues and immune system dysregulation because your body is constantly in "high alert" mode. Chronic exposure to jump scares can also desensitize the brain to real threats, potentially dulling critical survival instincts.

Some groups should take more care with scary activities. For instance, people with heart diseases, chronic pain, and anxiety disorders are more sensitive to the negative side effects of scares. According to experts, scary activities are not recommended in order to protect mental and physical health.

Controlled scares—the ones in haunted houses or elsewhere—are enjoyable to many. The temporary flash of stress hormones followed by relief creates an **exhilarating** sensation. But just like with any other activity involving health risks, moderation must be observed. When you become aware of what fear is, you can appreciate its role in survival and entertainment but also treat its impact on your health with respect.

Text adapted from an article by
Daryl Austin. *National Geographic* [online] (October 2, 2024)

prank: bretolada, broma / gamberrada, broma
retrieve: recuperar
exhilarating: emocionant, excitant / emocionante, excitante

QUESTIONS

Answer the questions below using complete sentences. You may use fragments from the text unless specified not to do so.

[3 points: 0.5 points for each correct answer. Up to 0.3 points might be deducted from the total mark for lack of intelligibility in the answers provided.]

1. According to the text, which threat is not usually encountered today?

2. Paraphrase the following sentence: "The release of dopamine […] can create a feeling of happiness during fear-inducing situations" (lines 14-15). You may keep the word *dopamine*.

3. How does the hippocampus help in distinguishing real threats from fake ones? DO NOT COPY DIRECTLY FROM THE TEXT. You may keep the words *hippocampus*, *brain*, and *past*.

4. How can frequent exposure to scary experiences affect someone's reaction to real danger?

5. Find a synonym in the text for *consider* in the sense of "assess, evaluate, and analyze."

6. Complete the following sentence:

It's important to understand what fear is so that you…

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
Deduction for lack of intelligibility (up to 0.3 points)	
Reading comprehension score	

Part 3: Writing

Choose ONE topic. Your answer should be 125-150 words in length. There is no specific penalty for exceeding 150 words in length.

[4 points: 1 point for grammar, 1 point for vocabulary and spelling, 1 point for cohesion, and 1 point for adequacy and coherence]

1. Before going to university, you would like to spend a semester abroad improving your English while working as an au pair. Write a **formal email** to an au pair agency applying for a job as an au pair and explaining why you would like this job, your experience in childcare and the personal qualities and skills that would make you the ideal person for the job.

2. Up to 2025, Catalonia suffered from serious water supply problems that affected agriculture, industries, and personal use at home due to the prolonged absence of rainfall. The Government acted by implementing measures that affected many of us, regardless of the quantity of water we used. Write an **opinion essay** on the policies and regulations created to control water usage to be published in the school newspaper.

Grammar	
Vocabulary and spelling	
Cohesion	
Adequacy and coherence	
Writing score	

Comprovació i 2a correcció:

3a correcció:

Etiqueta de l'estudiant

IEC
Institut d'Estudis Catalans

L'Institut d'Estudis Catalans ha tingut cura de la correcció lingüística i de l'edició d'aquesta prova d'accés.

Sèrie 5

I. Listening comprehension (3 points)

A CONVERSATION WITH YAYOI KUSAMA ON THE POWER OF ART AND EMOTIONS

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art installations: instal·lacions artístiques – creacions artístiques / instalaciones artísticas – creaciones artísticas

polka dots: estampat de topos / estampado de topos

boundless: sense límits / sin límites

tapestry: tapís / tapiz

Ready? Now read the questions on the following page. Read them carefully before listening to the radio programme. [Now listen to the interview.]

Interviewer: In the realm of contemporary art, few figures are as iconic and enigmatic as Yayoi Kusama. Renowned for her avant-garde **art installations**, **polka dots**, and infinite reflections, Kusama has captivated the world with her unique artistic vision. Today, we have the privilege of delving into the mind of this visionary artist, exploring her thoughts on the transformative power of art. Good morning, thanks for being with us today.

Yayoi Kusama: Good morning, thanks for the invitation.

Interviewer: Your art is often described as a celebration of love and hope. How do you envision the relationship between your work and these powerful emotions?

Yayoi Kusama: Love and hope are the essence of my art. They are the driving forces behind my creations. When people encounter my installations, I want them to feel a sense of **boundless** love and hope, transcending the boundaries of time and space. Through my work, I aim to cultivate a shared experience that unites people in a profound, positive way.

Interviewer: That was deep indeed! Your "Infinity Rooms" are immersive experiences that transport viewers into realms beyond this world. How do these installations contribute to the exploration of love and hope?

Yayoi Kusama: The "Infinity Rooms" are like cosmic vessels, offering a glimpse into the countless possibilities of love and hope. As visitors step into these spaces, surrounded by endless reflections, they are immersed in a universe of boundless

potential. It's a symbolic journey that mirrors the limitless nature of love and hope, inviting individuals to reflect on their own place within the cosmic **tapestry**. I believe sharing these positive emotions is the power of art. I fight anxiety and fear every day, and the only method I have found that relieves my illness is to keep creating this type of art.

Interviewer: Actually, in your autobiography, you mention struggling with mental health issues. How has art been a source of healing and hope for you?

Yayoi Kusama: Art has been my refuge, a sanctuary where I can channel my innermost feelings. In the darkest moments of my mental health struggles, creating art became a lifeline. It allowed me to transform pain into beauty, despair into hope. Art has been a cathartic journey, helping me to navigate the complexities of my emotions.

Interviewer: In any case, your use of polka dots is a signature element in your art. I perceive these motifs as a representation of hallucinatory visions. Similar to how episodes of depersonalization invoke fear, these dots create a visual manifestation of anxiety. The dots multiply and attach themselves to the surroundings, becoming a form of psychic obsession that you attempt to run away from.

Yayoi Kusama: Yes, I paint them abundantly; it's my way of trying to escape.

Interviewer: But can you also tell us about the significance of polka dots in conveying positive messages?

Yayoi Kusama: Polka dots are a symbol of the world, the cosmos, and our interconnectedness. When I cover surfaces with dots, I'm expressing the idea that we are all dots in this vast universe. The repetition of dots signifies the multiplicity of individuals, yet the pattern also reflects unity. It's a visual metaphor for the collective energy that binds us together, creating a sense of harmony and love.

Interviewer: Oh wow. Now, your installations are experienced by people from diverse backgrounds. How do you believe your art can bridge cultural gaps and speak a universal language of love and hope?

Yayoi Kusama: Art transcends cultural barriers, you know, it's a universal language that speaks directly to the heart. My installations are intentionally designed to be inclusive, offering a space where people from all walks of life can connect on a fundamental level. Love and hope, being universal emotions, provide a common ground for individuals to come together, fostering a sense of unity that surpasses cultural differences.

Interviewer: Can you tell us about your time in Japan before going to the US? You moved to New York at twenty-seven. By then, you must have already developed your unique style as a painter, rooted in Japan. Yet you didn't emphasize your identity as a Japanese artist.

Yayoi Kusama: I wasn't really aware of it. In Japan, the art community isolated me because of my mental health struggles. That's why I chose to leave Japan and pursue my art in New York. I picked America because of my connections and the belief that the future of art was in New York. However, I faced challenges due to restrictions on foreign exchange imposed by the Japanese government. I even had to sell my kimonos.

Interviewer: How do you see the role of art evolving in society, especially in fostering a sense of hope and unity in the face of global challenges?

Yayoi Kusama: In times of uncertainty, art becomes a ray of light. It has the power to inspire, uplift, and unite communities. As we confront global challenges, art catalyzes change, encouraging collective action and fostering a shared vision of a better future. It's a testament to the enduring capacity of art to instill hope and bring people together in the pursuit of a brighter tomorrow.

Interviewer: This interview has come to a close, leaving us with a profound understanding of how this visionary artist continues to shape the landscape of contemporary art with her timeless messages of love and hope.

Adapted from:

Yayoi Kusama on Sixties New York, Surviving Mental Illness and Why She's Never Thought About Feminism, Artspace, Akira Tatehata (May 5, 2020).

https://www.artspace.com/magazine/interviews_features/meet_the_artist/interview-yayoi-kusama-on-sixties-new-york-living-with-mental-illness-and-why-shes-never-thought-56560

Yayoi Kusama on love, hope and the power of art, Wallpaper, Megan C. Hills (March 22, 2023).

https://www.wallpaper.com/art/yayoi-kusama-interview

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

[3 points: 0.375 points for each correct answer. Wrong answers will be penalized by deducting 0.125 points. There is no penalty for unanswered questions].

1. The essence of her art lies in creating a collective supportive feeling.
2. our place in the universe.
3. Art has given her tools to reverse her suffering and despair.
4. To represent distress.
5. Polka dots symbolize how individuals are connected.
6. Because her art connects people at the core of their essence as human beings.
7. The Japanese artists did not support her because of her mental health issues.
8. Art inspires people to work together for the common good.

II. Reading Comprehension (3 points)

THE SCIENCE OF FEAR: HOW IT AFFECTS YOUR BODY AND MIND

Answer the questions below using complete sentences. Each question is worth 0.5 points with a total of 3 points. Up to 0.3 points might be deducted from the total mark for lack of intelligibility in the answers provided. You may use fragments from the text unless specified not to do so.

1. Sabre-tooth tigers are not usually encountered anymore.
2. The production of dopamine can cause a sense of joy/satisfaction/bliss when experiencing/during/in frightening moments/events.

   (among others)
3. The hippocampus recalls familiar past events/thoughts/actions to aid the brain know whether the present danger is true or unreal.

   (among others)
4. Frequent exposure to scary experiences can desensitize the brain, reducing its ability to react strongly to real threats.
5. weigh(s) (line 20)
6. It's important to understand what fear is so that you… can appreciate its role in survival and entertainment but also treat its impact on your health with respect.

III. Writing (4 points)

Choose ONE topic. Your answer should be 125-150 words in length. There is no specific penalty for exceeding 150 words in length. Extra points are not given for exceeding 150 words.

Including a title is optional.