



*Ministero dell' Istruzione, dell' Università e della Ricerca*  
**PL01 – ESAME DI STATO DI ISTRUZIONE SECONDARIA SUPERIORE**

**Indirizzo:** LI04 - LICEO LINGUISTICO

**Tema di:** LINGUA STRANIERA - INGLESE

# ATTENZIONE

IL CANDIDATO È TENUTO A SVOLGERE LA PROVA  
PER UNO DEI TESTI DI SEGUITO PROPOSTI:

- A - ATTUALITÀ
- B - STORICO - SOCIALE
- C - LETTERATURA
- D - ARTISTICO



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A - ATTUALITÀ

***The New Age of Much Older Age***

We live in extraordinary times. And thanks to medical and scientific advances that even a generation ago would have sounded like science fiction, our lives are getting longer. An American born today has a projected average lifespan 20 full years longer than one born in 1925, and we are, as a society, growing old. For the first time in U.S. history, the number of people over 60 exceeds those under age 15. [...]

The challenge we face today is converting a world built quite literally by and for the young into a world that supports and engages population that live to 100 years and beyond. This is no small feat. Consider, for example, that parks, transportation systems, staircases and even hospitals presume that users have both strength and stamina; suburbs across the country are built for two parents and their young children, not single people, multiple generations or elderly people who may be unable to drive. Our education system serves the needs of children and young adults and offers little more than recreation for experienced people. [...]

Science and technology are the reasons for the increase in life expectancy, and looking forward, science and medicine will be responsible for how we extend life even further. [...]

Although we were and remain little different genetically from our ancestors 10,000 years ago, the working capacity of our vital organs has improved greatly. Average body size has increased. We have grown taller, and our brains have come to process information faster.

Longer lives and the fact that we're having fewer kids, in combination, began a global process by which population pyramids – with many at the bottom and a tiny proportion of old people at the top – are being transformed into rectangles. If you're the type of person who can get chills for population statistics, these are the numbers for you. What they mean is that for the first time in history, the majority of babies born in the developed world have the opportunity to grow old.

As much as we may fancy ourselves freethinking, the crux of the longevity challenge is, quite frankly, that humans are creatures of culture. The culture that guides us today – that tells us when to get an education, marry, have children, buy a house, work and retire – is profoundly mismatched to the length of the lives we are living. Today's culture offers little in the way of cures or even treatments for the chronic diseases that afflict older people, nor does it offer guidance about how to finance decades-long retirements. And so individuals worry they will succumb to dementia, run out of money, lose their relevance. But it needn't be so. Instead of hand-wringing about productivity falling and infirmity rising, we need to change the course, both biologically and socially, of long life.

With sufficient financial support, the potential of scientific advances is breathtaking. Biologists are beginning to understand, at a molecular level, the processes by which aging increases the risk of a whole range of diseases and, importantly, how to slow and even reverse some of these processes. The very nature of chronic, degenerative diseases is being revealed, which paves the way for therapies and possibly even cures that were scarcely imagined a generation ago.



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A - ATTUALITÀ

40 Meanwhile, technological advances have made available devices that can compensate for a wide range of age-related problems, such as difficulties with hearing, balance and mobility, just as eyeglasses rendered presbyopia no more than a minor inconvenience more than a century ago. And with an investment in social science we can develop methods that help people better envision and plan for their futures, improve fitness, remain cognitively sharp and, in some cases, reverse diseases rooted in lifestyles. [...]

An essential first step is to change the way we think about our suddenly longer lives.

45 Thirty or more extra years of life also means we can improve the way we live. To the extent that we can build a world where people arrive at old age mentally sharp, physically fit and financially secure, the problems of individual aging will recede. And finally, we can change the ongoing conversation about a crisis on the horizon to one about long life and new opportunities.

(698 words)

*Time*, February 23, 2015

***Comprehension and interpretation***

Answer the following questions by using complete sentences and your own words.

1. Why does the article say that our society is “growing old” (line 4). Substantiate your answer by referring to the text.
2. What kinds of challenges does our world have to face because of increased longevity?
3. What kinds of problems afflict old people in our towns?
4. In what ways can we be considered genetically different from our ancestors?
5. Why are population pyramids being transformed into rectangles? Justify your answer by referring to the text.
6. Explain the expression “the crux of the longevity challenge” (line 23) by referring to the text.
7. According to the article, why do we fear old age?
8. How can biology help in solving the problems connected to the aging process?
9. What kind of contributions can come from technological advances?
10. What do we have to do to make the problem of individual aging recede?



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A - ATTUALITÀ

***Production***

Choose **one** of the following questions.

Number your answer clearly to show which question you have attempted.

*Either*

1. The article gives a positive view of our aging society suggesting that most problems connected to old age will find a solution thanks to science and technology. Do you agree with this point of view? Write a 300-word paragraph on the topic.

*Or*

2. What do you imagine your life will be like when you are old? Write a 300-word paragraph on the topic.

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Durata massima della prova: 6 ore.

È consentito soltanto l'uso dei dizionari monolingue e bilingue.

Non è consentito lasciare l'Istituto prima che siano trascorse 3 ore dalla dettatura del tema.



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**B – STORICO - SOCIALE**

***Public and Paid for***

It was a tight vote but on September 22, 2013, residents of Germany's second largest city decided to take their power back. On that day, 50.9 percent of Hamburg's voters cast their ballots in favor of putting their electricity, gas, and heating grids under the control of the city, reversing a wave of corporate sell-offs that took place over a decade earlier.

5 It's a process that has been given a few clunky names, including "re-municipalization" and "re-communalization." But the people involved tend to simply refer to their desire for "local power."

10 The Our Hamburg-Our Grid coalition made a series of persuasive arguments in favor of taking back the utilities. A locally controlled energy system would be concerned with public interests, not profits. Residents would have greater democratic say in their energy system, they argued, rather than having the decisions that affect them made in distant boardrooms. And money earned in the sale of energy would be returned to the city, rather than lost to the shareholders of multinationals that had control over the grids at the time - a definite plus during a time of relentless public austerity. "For people it's self-evident that goods on which everybody is dependent should belong to the public," campaign organizer Wiebke Hansen explained in an interview.

15 There was something else driving the campaign as well. Many of Hamburg's residents wanted to be part of *Energiewende*: the fast-spreading transition to green, renewable energy that was sweeping the country, with nearly 25 percent of Germany's electricity in 2013 coming from renewables, dominated by wind and solar but also including some biogas and hydro - up from around 6 percent in 2000. In comparison, wind and solar made up just 4 percent of total U.S. electricity generation in 2013. The cities of Frankfurt and Munich, which had never sold off their energy grids, had already joined the transition and pledged to move to 100 percent renewable energy by 2050 and 2025, respectively. But Hamburg and Berlin, which had both gone the privatization route, were lagging behind. And this was a central argument for proponents of taking back Hamburg's grid: it would allow them to get off coal and nuclear and go green.

25 Much has been written about Germany's renewable energy transition - particularly the speed at which it is being achieved, as well as the ambition of its future targets (the country is aiming for 55 - 60 percent renewables by 2035). The weaknesses of the program have also been hotly debated, particularly the question of whether the decision to phase out nuclear energy has led to a resurgence of coal.

30 In all of this analysis, however, scarce attention has been paid to one key factor that has made possible what may be the world's most rapid shift to wind and solar power: the fact that in hundreds of cities and towns across the country, citizens have voted to take their energy grids back from the private corporations that purchased them. As Anna Leidreiter, a climate campaigner with the World Future Council, observed after the Hamburg vote, "This marks a clear reversal to the neoliberal policies of the 1990s, when large numbers of German municipalities sold their public services to large corporations as money was needed to prop up city budgets."



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**B – STORICO - SOCIALE**

35 Nor is this some small trend. According to a Bloomberg report, “More than 70 new municipal utilities have started up since 2007, and public operators have taken over more than 200 concessions to run energy grids from private companies in that time.” And though there are no national statistics, the German Association of Local Utilities believes many more cities and towns than that have taken back control over their grids from outside corporations.

40 Most surprising has been the force with which large parts of the German public have turned against energy privatization. In 2013 in Berlin 83 *percent* of participating voters cast their ballots in favor of switching to a publicly owned power utility based eventually on 100 percent renewable energy. Not enough people turned out to vote for the decision to be binding (though the campaign came very close), but the referendum made public opinion so clear that campaigners are still pushing for a nonprofit cooperative to  
 45 take over the grid when the current contract ends.

Energy privatization reversals - linked specifically to a desire for renewable energy - have started to spread beyond Germany in recent years, including to the United States.

(738 words)

From *This Changes Everything* by Naomi Klein

***Comprehension and interpretation***

Answer the following questions by using complete sentences and your own words.

1. What did Hamburg’s voters decide on September 22, 2013?
2. What had happened ten years earlier?
3. What were the arguments in favour of the “re-municipalization” of public services?
4. Is public opinion generally in favour of public services?
5. What does the “transition to green” consist in?
6. Why is Germany’s transition to green considered so ambitious?
7. Can you mention one weakness in this transition?
8. What made such a rapid shift to wind and solar power possible in Germany?
9. What is the reason that led many German municipalities to sell their public services in the 1990s?
10. Did Berlin switch to publicly owned power utility in 2013?



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**B – STORICO - SOCIALE**

***Production***

Choose **one** of the following questions.

Number your answer clearly to show which question you have attempted.

*Either*

1. In Italy, in recent years, there has been great discussion about the opportunity of privatizing public services. Discuss your view on the topic by writing a 300-word paragraph.

*Or*

2. Describe an ideal town: mention what it should be like and what kinds of services it should provide to citizens. Write a 300-word paragraph on the topic.

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Durata massima della prova: 6 ore.

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C – LETTERATURA

She came to see me every week, all through the war, always on Thursday night at about the same time. We talked a bit, about the weather, the war, her job and my job, never anything important. Often we'd sit for a long time looking into the fire from our different stations in the room, me by the hearth and Kathy a bit further away at the table as if she'd just finished a meal, both of us silent yet not uneasy in it.  
5 Sometimes I made a cup of tea, sometimes not. I suppose now that I think of it I could have got a pint of beer in for when she came, but it never occurred to me. Not that I think she felt the lack of it, for it wasn't the sort of thing she expected to see in my house anyway.

She never missed coming once, even though she often had a cold in the winter and would have been better off in bed. The blackout and shrapnel didn't stop her either. In a quiet off-handed sort of way  
10 we got to enjoy ourselves and looked forward to seeing each other again, and maybe they were the best times we ever had together in our lives. They certainly helped us through the long monotonous dead evenings of the war.

She was always dressed in the same brown coat, growing shabbier and shabbier. And she wouldn't leave without borrowing a few shillings. Stood up: "Er ... lend's half-a-dollar, Harry." Given,  
15 sometimes with a joke: "Don't get too drunk on it, will you?" - never responded to, as if it were bad manners to joke about a thing like that. I didn't get anything back of course, but then, I didn't miss such a dole either. So I wouldn't say no when she asked me, and as the price of beer went up she increased the amount to three bob then to three-and-six and, finally, just before she died, to four bob. It was a pleasure to be able to help her. Besides, I told myself, she had no one else. I never asked questions as to where she  
20 was living, though she did mention a time or two that it was still up Sneinton way. Neither did I at any time see her outside at a pub or picture house; Nottingham is a big town in many ways.

On every visit she would glance from time to time at the fishing-boat picture, the last of the fleet, hanging on the wall above the sideboard. She often mentioned how beautiful she thought it was, and how I should never part with it, how the sunrise and the ship and the woman and the sea were just right. Then  
25 a few minutes later she'd hint to me how nice it would be if she had it, but knowing it would end up in the pawnshop I didn't take her hints. I'd rather have lent her five bob instead of half-a-crown so that she wouldn't take the picture, but she never seemed to want more than half-a-crown in those first years. I once mentioned to her she could have more if she liked, but she didn't answer me. I don't think she wanted the picture especially to sell and get money, or to hang in her own house; only to have the  
30 pleasure of pawning it, to have someone else buy it so that it wouldn't belong to either of us any more.

But she finally did ask me directly, and I saw no reason to refuse when she put it like that. Just as I had done six years before, when she first came to see me, I dusted it, wrapped it up carefully in several layers of brown paper, tied it with post-office string, and gave it to her. She seemed happy with it under her arm, couldn't get out of the house quick enough, it seemed.





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C – LETTERATURA

35

It was the same old story though, for a few days later I saw it again in the pawnshop window, among all the old junk that had been there for years. This time I didn't go in and try to get it back. In a way I wish I had, because then Kathy might not have had the accident that came a few days later. Though you never know. If it hadn't been that, it would have been something else.

(739 words)

From *The Loneliness of the Long-distance Runner* by Alan Sillitoe

***Comprehension and interpretation***

Answer the following questions by using complete sentences and your own words.

1. How did the protagonist and Kathy spend the evening together when she went to see him?
2. Did they use to drink anything together?
3. How often did the woman go to see the protagonist?
4. Did they enjoy their evenings together?
5. Do you think the woman was in need of money? Substantiate your answer by referring to the text.
6. How do you think the protagonist felt about giving her money? Justify your answer by referring to the text.
7. Did the woman like the picture of the fishing-boat hanging above the sideboard?
8. Why didn't the protagonist offer to give the woman the picture?
9. Why did the woman want it?
10. Did the protagonist get the picture back from the pawnshop?



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C – LETTERATURA

**Production**

Choose **one** of the following questions.

Number your answer clearly to show which question you have attempted.

*Either*

1. In this period of economic crisis the number of people who pawn their most precious things has increased. How do you think a person feels in that situation? Discuss your view on the topic by writing a 300-word paragraph.

*Or*

2. Has anybody ever asked you for money? How did you react to the request and what did you think of that person? Write a 300-word paragraph on the topic.

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D – ARTISTICO

***Boyhood***

The idea for *Boyhood* first came to Linklater in the summer of 2001. He was searching for a way to make a movie about childhood but was struggling to isolate one moment that defines it. [...]

5 That summer of 2001, the simple idea of childhood was powerful in Linklater's life. He'd grown up a child of divorce, moving around a lot, and was then still a relatively new father. *Boyhood*, he says now, "became a 12-year journey about coming to grips with my own childhood, while also understanding parenting." So he decided to catalog the entirety of childhood, shooting with the same actors a few days a year for 12 years. He asked Hawke and Patricia Arquette to play the divorced parents and cast his own 7-year-old daughter, Lorelei, as the older sister. [...]

10 Linklater's biggest roll of the dice, though, was finding his Mason, the boy of *Boyhood*. He hired an untested 6-year-old, Ellar Coltrane, an unactorly sort with two artist parents and a strong sense of self. [...]

15 When filming began in 2002, [...] he was worried about the usual things – his actors' connections to one another and the material, the framing in each scene – but first and foremost he needed to make sure he could keep this grand experiment going for 12 years. He had found an eager partner in Jonathan Sehring, president of the indie production company IFC, who had agreed to hand Linklater about \$200,000 each year to reunite the cast and crew. [...]

Not even that financial backing, however, could guarantee him that his actors wouldn't bail somewhere down the line. Contacts for personal services like acting are generally only valid for seven years, so the entire endeavor would have to be based on trust. [...]

20 Virtually nothing about the film followed a conventional model. Before shooting began the first time, Patricia Arquette spent an entire weekend playing house with Ellar and Lorelei to create a comfort level between the three of them that would, she hoped, translate on screen. "It was just me and them, making them dinner, drawing them baths, doing art projects," says Arquette, 46. "That first year was really magical. Rick's approach was so different, and the kids were just these wild little babies."

25 As the years progressed, the director continually reaffirmed his commitment to keep the film focused on the small, intimate moments that come to define our real selves. "Our lives don't have plot so much as they have character and a time structure," Linklater, now 54, says. "I knew I was trading one for another." But it would be inaccurate to say that he never had doubts, never worried that may be this accumulation of seemingly insignificant moments would, in the end, lead only to an insignificant film. In fact, that fear plagued him. "Staring at a dead bird and your dad selling his car and you being disappointed, is that enough? Is that the substance to the movie?" He asks with his slow-burn Southern drawl. "But that was the pitch. We accept all the plot points and storytelling tropes as part of the genre we are in. Well, I was in my own genre, and I really wanted to break down those barriers and have a direct communication with an audience. I was betting everything on the cumulative effect of time going by."

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D – ARTISTICO

35 His young star was betting everything too, in a different way. Unlike the grown-ups, Coltrane, now 20, was experiencing this journey to late adolescence in real time. Those small moments Linklater agonized over? They didn't seem insignificant to him. "I was always the age the character was, and those things only seemed trivial to some jaded adult," Coltrane says. "When you're 8, going to a new school is a really big deal. Having a drunken stepdad is a really big deal. In the moment they are really meaningful, and I was in the moment."

40 It is those very moments, the slow gathering of them, that give *Boyhood* its distinct and singular emotional weight. "Rick's choices were the least obvious storytelling choices," Arquette says. "They were the most human choices." Audiences leave the theater feeling less like they've seen a movie and more like they've had an experience – one that somehow reflects their own lives, whether or not they grew up in Texas in the early 2000s. [...]

45 He [Linklater] did something most artists long for and few ever realize: he committed to a simple idea, for an incredibly long time, refused to compromise, and created something wholly original. "This has really never been done," Arquette says, "and it would be so difficult to ever do it again."

(774 words)

*Entertainment Weekly*, January 23, 2015

***Comprehension and interpretation***

Answer the following questions by using complete sentences and your own words.

1. Why did Linklater, the film director, become interested in the idea of childhood in the summer of 2001?
2. How did he decide to describe childhood in his movie?
3. What kind of boy did he choose for the role of "the boy" in the movie?
4. What was Linklater most worried about when filming began?
5. What did the leading actress decide to do before shooting began? Why did she do it?
6. Why did Linklater decide to focus the film on seemingly insignificant moments?
7. Did Coltrane, the boy actor in *Boyhood*, consider those episodes insignificant?
8. Linklater was at the same time worried and confident about his film. Can you explain why?
9. How do spectators feel at the end of the movie?
10. What opinion is expressed in the article about Linklater and his movie? Justify your answer by referring to the text.



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D – ARTISTICO

***Production***

Choose **one** of the following questions.

Number your answer clearly to show which question you have attempted.

*Either*

1. In *Crome Yellow*, Aldous Huxley said “All that happens means something; nothing you do is ever insignificant” (*Random House eBooks, chap.2*). Discuss the meaning of this sentence and express your opinion on the topic in a 300-word paragraph.

*Or*

2. Write about a movie you have seen lately and explain why you did or did not like it. Was it the plot, the characters or the setting? Write a 300-word paragraph on the topic.