

This is a document intended for future candidates for the *acreditación propia de UCO Idiomas nivel C1*. Below, you will find an example task for each language skill and a key at the end of the document. The exam does not have a separate part for grammar and vocabulary, as you are expected to show that in your speaking and, above all, in your writing.

***This is an example of an exam. The accreditation could have other kinds of exercises in listening and reading, such as matching, fill in the gaps, choosing headings, insert sentences/paragraphs into a text, etc.**

In writing, the task could be a letter/an email (formal or informal), review, report, blog post, article, report, essay, proposal or story.

Listening

Listen to five short recordings and choose the best option. There are two questions for each speaker.

- 1) What is **Speaker 1's** main concern?
 - a) not having enough time
 - b) working too hard
 - c) how he'll spend his time
 - d) his garden

- 2) Which activities is **Speaker 1** interested in?
 - a) golf
 - b) gardening
 - c) golf and gardening
 - d) neither

- 3) Is **Speaker 2's** mum unemployed?
 - a) yes
 - b) no
 - c) not mentioned.
 - d) no, she's retired.

- 4) **Speaker 2** is
 - a) saving up to buy her own home.
 - b) didn't go to university.
 - c) having a quarterlife crisis.
 - d) settled down with her family.

- 5) How old might **Speaker 3**'s children be?
- a) They might be newborns.
 - b) They might be teenagers.
 - c) They might be preteens.
 - d) They might be toddlers.
- 6) How old is **Speaker 3**?
- a) She has just turned 30.
 - b) She is on the wrong side of forty.
 - c) She has recently come of age.
 - d) She is in her mid to late thirties.
- 7) **Speaker 4** feels that this new stage in his life is
- a) not what he expected it would be.
 - b) exciting and a whole new world.
 - c) complicated because he can't find a job.
 - d) full of changes.
- 8) What choice does **Speaker 4** have to make?
- a) what he wants to study.
 - b) what kind of job he'd like to do.
 - c) where he wants to live.
 - d) whether to study or work.
- 9) According to **Speaker 5**'s parents, she should
- a) have two children.
 - b) leave the house.
 - c) find a job.
 - d) be more responsible.

10) **Speaker 5** thinks

- a) she needs to rush to do things while she is still young.
- b) her friends shouldn't have got married.
- c) she has time to have kids later on.
- d) in a few years she'll be too old to have kids.

Reading

MEMORIES OF A GARDEN

I was brought up in a small village, which meant I was quite bored for most of my childhood. I did a lot of reading, but my main hobby was visiting a big old house on the edge of the village. Actually it was the garden I visited. The woman who lived in the house was a bit of a recluse, but she told the gardeners to let us children come into the garden, so long as we left her in peace. She said a lot of plants might rub off on us, and it was possible we'd learn something about growing things. It didn't work in my case-I was just interested in running on the lawns and climbing the trees that grew around the house. The gardeners were very busy, but they didn't seem to mind us noisy brats invading their territory.

We'd had theories about the owner of the house: she was an eccentric millionaire; she bred racehorses-there were always horses in the field next to the house; she was a famous artist (on the flimsy evidence that someone had sketch books lying around). But one day I was in the garden, up the trees as usual, and a group of people wandered past with one of the gardeners. They were Americans, and they'd come to England to see some famous gardens, and this was their favourite. I couldn't believe my ears. The gardener said yes, the owner and her late husband had created the garden almost from nothing, and people visited from all over. Now I understood why there were sometimes strangers around, bent earnestly over the flowerbeds.

The house itself was a no-go area. It was huge and dark. Village gossip maintained that most of it was closed up, and only two rooms were occupied. Looking inside from the top of a tall tree, I could see signs that the whole house was lived in, but the rooms looked like something from the 19th century, with heavy, ugly furniture. Though there was electricity and modern heating, the place looked uncared-for, almost dangerously so. There must have been holes on the roof from the number of buckets placed in strategic positions. The garden, on the other hand, was always immaculate, and must have swallowed most of the owner's income.

I grew up, moved away from the village, and became a journalist. One day I heard that the owner of the old house had died, and soon after that I was sent by my magazine to interview the new owners. I first went to the village pub, to get the gossip. Rumours abounded. The house was going to be turned into an expensive retirement home, or a sort of a spa, or the neighbourhood most expensive restaurant. I went to meet the owners, who put me right. They were well known figures in the catering industry, and envisaged the place as a holiday retreat for millionaires and film stars to stay in a luxury hideaway. The garden was being preserved as a horticultural treasure, but where before it had been enjoyed by children and enthusiastic tourists, now it was to be appreciated exclusively by the super-rich.

Some months later I went back to discover what had happened to the house and garden. I had expected a transformation, but apart from fresh paintwork on the doors and windows, from the outside everything looked much the same. Inside, however, there were changes. No buckets for a start! The rooms were filled with antique furniture, and the decorations

were elegant. There was an air of discreet luxury- and security cameras winked from every corner. I felt, with my meagre journalist salary, perhaps I shouldn't be there at all. Was it just me, or was there a faintly unwelcoming air about the place?

But I was being unfair. The new owners were hospitality in itself, and very anxious for my approval. They went out of their way to answer my checklist of questions, and not just, I felt, because they were desperate to acquire free publicity in the press. I got the genuine impression they would do anything to put a guest at ease and make him or her feel quite at home. As I left, and looked at the lights from the house flooding across the garden, I considered I should be happy that the place was still standing at all. Probably my memories of the old building with its eccentricities were romanticized. I was glad I'd been back, and I was sure the village was benefiting from the trade these newcomers brought, though no doubt there was plenty of grumbling in the pub about "strangers" and "change for change's sake". Putting regret resolutely aside, I turned to shout, "Goodbye, and good luck!" to the owners waving from the doorway.

1. The writer had a _____ childhood.
 - a) dull
 - b) original
 - c) amazing
 - d) exciting

2. The writer liked visiting the garden and the old house because
 - a) She enjoyed talking to the gardeners.
 - b) She learnt about different kinds of plants.
 - c) She and her friends were free to play there.
 - d) She found it a peaceful place to spend time.

3. The owner of the house was _____
- A retired artist
 - A poor couple
 - A race horses breeder
 - We don't know
4. The writer found out that _____
- The garden was internationally famous.
 - The owner of the house was a successful artist.
 - The house had been inherited by the owner's husband.
 - The grounds of the property were used for breeding horses.
5. What did the writer realize when she saw inside the house?
- The owner of the house lived only in two rooms.
 - Nothing has changed in the house since the 19th century.
 - More money had probably been spent on the garden than the house.
 - No visitors were allowed to enter the house because it was dangerous.
6. What did the writer do to get information about the new owners?
- Phoned the new owners
 - Phoned the villagers
 - Went to the house
 - Went to the village

7. After the owner's death, the house and the garden were bought by people who
- a. planned to open a luxurious retirement home.
 - b. intended to make the house into a first –class hotel.
 - c. thought they would create the best restaurant in the area.
 - d. wanted to make the garden into a popular tourist attraction.

8. What does the writer say about the alterations of the house?
- a. They were in good taste.
 - b. They created a pleasant atmosphere.
 - c. They were in contrast to the style of the garden.
 - d. They transformed the external appearance of the house.

9. Which phrase is echoed by “to put a guest at ease”?
- a. were hospitality in itself
 - b. anxious for my approval
 - c. went out of their way
 - d. desperate to acquire

10. After her visit to the house and garden the writer concluded that
- a) it can be a mistake to revisit places you once knew.
 - b) traditions should be preserved as far as possible.
 - c) it is important to be cautious about making changes.
 - d) some childhood memories cannot be trusted.

WRITING

Write a description about a revelation or turning point in your life. Include information about what led up to it, what happened and the consequences (225-250 words)

SPEAKING

- How would you feel and what would your main concerns be on your first day on holiday in a foreign country?
- Do you prefer to have your life mapped out? Why or why not?
- What qualities do you think are required to be a good babysitter? Would you be a good babysitter?

KEY:

Reading:

1. A
2. C
3. D
4. A
5. C
6. D
7. B
8. A
9. A
10. D

Listening:

1. C
2. D
3. B
4. C
5. B
6. B
7. A
8. D
9. D
10. C

