

TEXTO A

TikTok, a Social Media Sensation

Andy Warhol predicted a time everyone would have 15 minutes of fame. He was nearly right – it is actually 15 seconds. That is the maximum duration of a video clip with music (non-music clips can last up to a minute) on TikTok, the videosharing platform that has taken the world by storm. Favoured by under-20s, who make up its core audience, TikTok this year surpassed Facebook and WhatsApp as the world's most downloaded non-gaming app. TikTok's content doesn't take itself too seriously, and ranges from food to fashion, pranks to pets – as well as the omnipresent dance challenges. It is a perfect fit, in other words, for the lockdown, when many of us were stuck inside and in desperate need of some silly fun. What makes it stand apart from Snapchat is one crucial difference: the closely guarded algorithm that produces the app's opening dashboard. Unlike other apps, this home screen is not full of people you are following. That is because the algorithm searches for new clips rather than pushing already popular ones. So, you don't need lots of followers to go viral. TikTok as a family business is not uncommon. One of the most famous TikTok families is the Harfins (Felicity and her sons). Their 1.8 million followers watch the family play pranks, dance, and cook. Felicity, a former marketer, runs the account and has helped to turn it into a business giving clients the chance to be mentioned or promoted in their videos. Indeed, it is now Felicity's main job. But it was the boys who initiated the project. "They grew up watching videos online and always wanted to create themselves." It took them years to persuade her. "I didn't realise how much fun it was going to be."

Adapted from "TikTok is the social media sensation of lockdown. Could I become its new star?" The Guardian, April 14, 2020.

QUESTIONS

A.1.- Are the following statements TRUE or FALSE? Copy the evidence from the text. No marks are given for only TRUE or FALSE.

a) Most people watching TikTok videos are adults.

FALSE: "Favoured by under-20's, who make up its core audience, TikTok this year surpassed Facebook and WhatsApp as the world's most downloaded nongaming app."

b) Becoming famous exclusively depends on the number of fans you have.

FALSE: "So, you don't need a lot of followers to go viral."

(Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

A.2.- In your own words and based on the ideas in the text, answer the following questions. Do not copy from the text.

a) What is the usual content of TikTok videos?

The videos are varied, from recipes, dressing, jokes to domestic animals and dancing. It is generally anything that can be funny or entertaining.

b) In which two ways does Felicity take advantage of TikTok?

The first way is by making a profitable business and the second is by having a good time with her family.

(Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

A.3.- Find the words in the text that mean:

- a) almost (paragraph 1) **nearly**
- b) trapped (paragraph 2) **stuck**
- c) previous (paragraph 3) **former**
- d) possibility (paragraph 3) **chance**

(Puntuación máxima: 1 punto)

A.4.- Complete the following sentences. Use the appropriate form of the word in brackets when given.

a) Research shows / has shown / has showed (show) that apps have been used b) Although / Though / Whereas / While / Even though TikTok is very well known, the most popular site for sharing videos is YouTube.

c) The funnier (funny) a video is, the higher (high) number of likes it gets.

d) Complete the following sentence to report what was said.

“When did you discover social media for the first time?”

He asked me when I had discovered / discovered social media for the first time.

(Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

A.5.- Write about 150 to 200 words on the following topic. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of using social media.

(Puntuación máxima: 3 puntos)

It is an undeniable fact that social media have been included in most aspects of our lives. However, we should ask ourselves what the upsides and downsides of their widespread use are.

On the one hand, they allow you to get in touch with old friends keeping connections that otherwise would be lost. Another positive aspect is that social media can keep us informed in a short time. Furthermore, certain platforms allow us to explore our creative side by uploading photos or sharing our views and reflections.

On the other hand, you may be vulnerable to scammers, stalkers or suffer from the hate spread by the so-called “trolls”. Another downside is that teenagers or people with addictive personalities could end up being taken over them. Besides, they are not always a reliable source of information.

In a nutshell, social media shapes most of our interactions nowadays and most of us enjoy the numerous advantages it offers. However, we must be careful when using them, avoiding the spread of fake news and not losing contact with real life.

TEXTO B

Gap Years for Every Student

Taking a gap year – a period of time during which a student takes a break from studying after school and before college or university – has long been considered a rite of passage. Students delay advanced academic studies to spend a year in the world focused on experiential education, internship, volunteer work and gaining real-world experience to complement the classroom learning. It is not so much a year “off” of school, as a year “on” your own terms used to experiment with interests and pursue passions that may clarify a student’s future career path. Academic experts say that students who take gap years will frequently be more mature, more self-reliant and independent than non-gap year students. Career advisors state that taking a year out can set you apart from other applicants. The benefits of taking a gap year aren’t just a matter of opinion. Research statistics show that 90 percent of students who took a gap year returned to college within a year and confirmed that this experience had an impact on their choice of academic major and career. Students who have taken a gap year report being satisfied with their jobs and figures confirm that 88 percent of them improved their employability thanks to this experience. The question that is hotly debated, of course, is that of economic parity. Traditionally, gap years have been seen as something for children of wealthy families. While statistics indicate that 18% of students taking a gap year come from families with high-income levels, 19% came from families with more limited incomes. Therefore, the value of a gap year is widely recognized and even families in the lower to middle income brackets are investing in this experience for the educational benefit of their students.

Adapted from “Gap Years for Every Student: How to Make the Most of the Opportunity,” Bootsnnal Articles, November 27, 2020.

QUESTIONS

B.1.- Are the following statements TRUE or FALSE? Copy the evidence from the text. No marks are given for only TRUE or FALSE.

a) It is said that taking a gap year does not contribute to students’ autonomy and confidence.

FALSE: “Academic experts say that students who take gap years will frequently be more mature, more self-reliant and independent than non-gap year students.”

b) According to statistics, job opportunities decrease due to taking a gap year.

FALSE “Students who have taken a gap year report being satisfied with their jobs and figures confirm that 88 percent of them improved their employability thanks to this experience.”

(Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

B.2.- In your own words and based on the ideas in the text, answer the following questions. Do not copy from the text.

a) Mention two kinds of activities students do during their gap year.

Students spend time travelling around the world to get more real-life experiences. They work in a company, cooperate as volunteers and learn about life.

b) To what extent does the family income level affect students’ opportunities to take a gap year? Explain.

The money a family has does not significantly influence this decision; students take a gap year both from high-income and from low-income families; families pay for their children gap year regardless of their economic level because they believe the experience is worthy.

(Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

B.3.- Find the words in the text that mean:

- a) put off (paragraph 1) **delay**
- b) follow (paragraph 2) **pursue**
- c) influence (paragraph 3) **impact**
- d) equality (paragraph 4) **parity**

(Puntuación máxima: 1 punto)

B.4.- Complete the following sentences. Use the appropriate form of the word in brackets when given.

- a) I still don't know **who** my career advisor will be **at** Oxford University.
- b) Before **started** (start) college, I would like to check if I would be able to live **on** my own.
- c) If she had known what she **wanted** (want) to study, she **would have completed** (complete) a university degree.
- d) Only after she **had spent** (spend) one year working, did she manage **to decide** (decide) which field she wanted to specialise in.

(Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

B.5.- Write about 150 to 200 words on the following topic. What would you like to do if you had the opportunity to take a gap year? Explain.

(Puntuación máxima: 3 puntos)

Some people decide to take a gap year after finishing their studies or at the end of any other stage in life. Even though it could involve certain downsides, most people claim that it was an extremely positive experience, so, in my case, I would not miss the opportunity.

If I were to suffer the negative effects of not entering the job market right after finishing my studies, I would certainly plan carefully what I would do. First, I would take into account my grounding, so I would probably choose an Anglophone country to live abroad so that I could boost my second language skills.

On the other hand, it would be a great idea to choose a place where I could not only improve my English, but also delight in an exotic and pleasant land in order to enjoy nature and sports. Australia would be a great destination for that purpose. In order to make a living, I could perhaps work as a Spanish teacher and I would also attend English classes. Surfing, running, hiking, exploring new places and meeting new people would fill my free time.

In short, if I had the opportunity to have a gap year, I would go abroad to master my English and live an amazing experience. In fact, thanks to this essay I am determined to dig up what I need to prepare before going to Australia.