

National Spanish Examinations

Practice Proficiency Exam – Level 4 - 2014

Part One. Reading Comprehension.

This section will measure your proficiency in reading Spanish and contains 17 multiple choice questions in increasing order of difficulty. You should work as far into the section as you can.

Each item is comprised of (1) a context in English, (2) an authentic reading in Spanish, and (3) a question in English. Each question is followed by four possible answers, only ONE of which is correct. Choose the **ONE** answer which best completes each statement.

1. Roberto reads the following information on a bulletin board while waiting in line at the post office.

ABOGADOS---Se habla español

- Tarjeta verde / Residencia permanente
- Asilo político
- Visas de estudiantes
- Visas de comerciantes
- Defensa contra deportación

Who might respond to this information?

- A business person looking for Spanish-speaking clients.
 - A person looking to buy a house or condominium.
 - A political science student seeking a scholarship.
 - An immigrant wanting to live in the United States.
2. You are browsing Facebook and see the following post.



Rincones, historias y mitos de Buenos Aires compartió una foto.

Parroquia San Pedro Telmo en el barrio de San Telmo



| Parroquia San Pedro González Telmo - Humberto 1° 340

Me gusta · Comentar · Compartir · 92 2 22 · Hace 22 minutos ·

En 1734, los jesuitas decidieron fundar una iglesia en la zona cercana al Puerto de Buenos Aires, para dar auxilio espiritual a los pobladores. En 1748 comienza la construcción de la Iglesia Nuestra Señora de Belén, el arquitecto elegido fue Antonio Masella. En 1806 se creó la Parroquia de San Pedro González Telmo, patrono de los navegantes, designándose a la iglesia de Nuestra Señora de Belén como sede provisora de la misma hasta tanto se erigiera el templo cabecera, cosa que nunca se realizó. Durante la época de las invasiones inglesas, la Parroquia fue tomada por los invasores y utilizada como hospital.

According to this selection, why was the church founded?

- To supply sailors with a safe refuge from pirates.
- To provide for the spiritual needs of the settlers.
- To serve as a hospital during the British invasions.
- To honor the patron saint of Buenos Aires.

3. While doing research on the origin of symbols, Alejandro found this article posted on a technology website.

¿Cuál es el origen del signo @ que utilizamos cotidianamente para enviar un correo electrónico o en redes sociales como Twitter? Pues, en otros tiempos y más precisamente en España, la arroba designaba una medida de peso utilizada fundamentalmente para transacciones comerciales. Este tipo de medición comenzó a usarse a partir de la llegada de los árabes a la península ibérica y resultó ser una forma de medición en común entre pobladores locales y los árabes. Pues, la arroba proviene del árabe arba, que significa cuatro, porque la arroba equivale a un cuarto de quintal, o sea unos once o doce kilos.

According to the article, what did @ originally refer to?

- A pharmaceutical symbol in early Spain.
 - An Arab measurement.
 - A symbol for the price of an item.
 - A mathematical sign to represent a constant.
4. Jeremy reads this article online about a photo app.

Snapchat es una aplicación para dispositivos IOS que permite enviar imágenes a otros usuarios con fecha de caducidad. Es decir, que se pueden visualizar durante un tiempo determinado. Cuando se cumple, se autodestruyen. Snapchat ofrece la posibilidad al usuario de establecer un tiempo de vida limitado para las fotos que va de 1 a 10 segundos. Las imágenes no se almacenan en ningún servidor una vez que pasa su tiempo de vida. Es el propio usuario quien decide antes de enviar la instantánea cuánto tiempo se podrá ver. Se dice que el secreto del éxito de Snapchat es la caducidad de la foto, que anima a los usuarios a enviar más.

How does this article describe pictures sent on Snapchat?

- As self destructing before a screenshot can be taken.
 - As having a guarantee that they can't be saved.
 - As having an expiration date.
 - As being part of one of the most successful social media.
5. As Reynaldo reads the newspaper, he comes across this advertisement.

Características Técnicas: El Solac

Es liviana.
Regulación de potencia escalonada.
Incluye dos cepillos de pelo suave para cualquier mueble.
Un tubo telescópico con accesorios.
Protege, no destruye.

Parachoques y ruedas de goma para que no destruya las maderas.
Uso para todos tipos de suelos y muebles.
Capacidad de la bolsa es 3.4 L.
El producto es limitado.
71,00 €
¡Cómprala hoy!

What kind of product is offered in this advertisement?

- A telescope.
- A toddler's bicycle.
- A pair of hairbrushes.
- A vacuum.

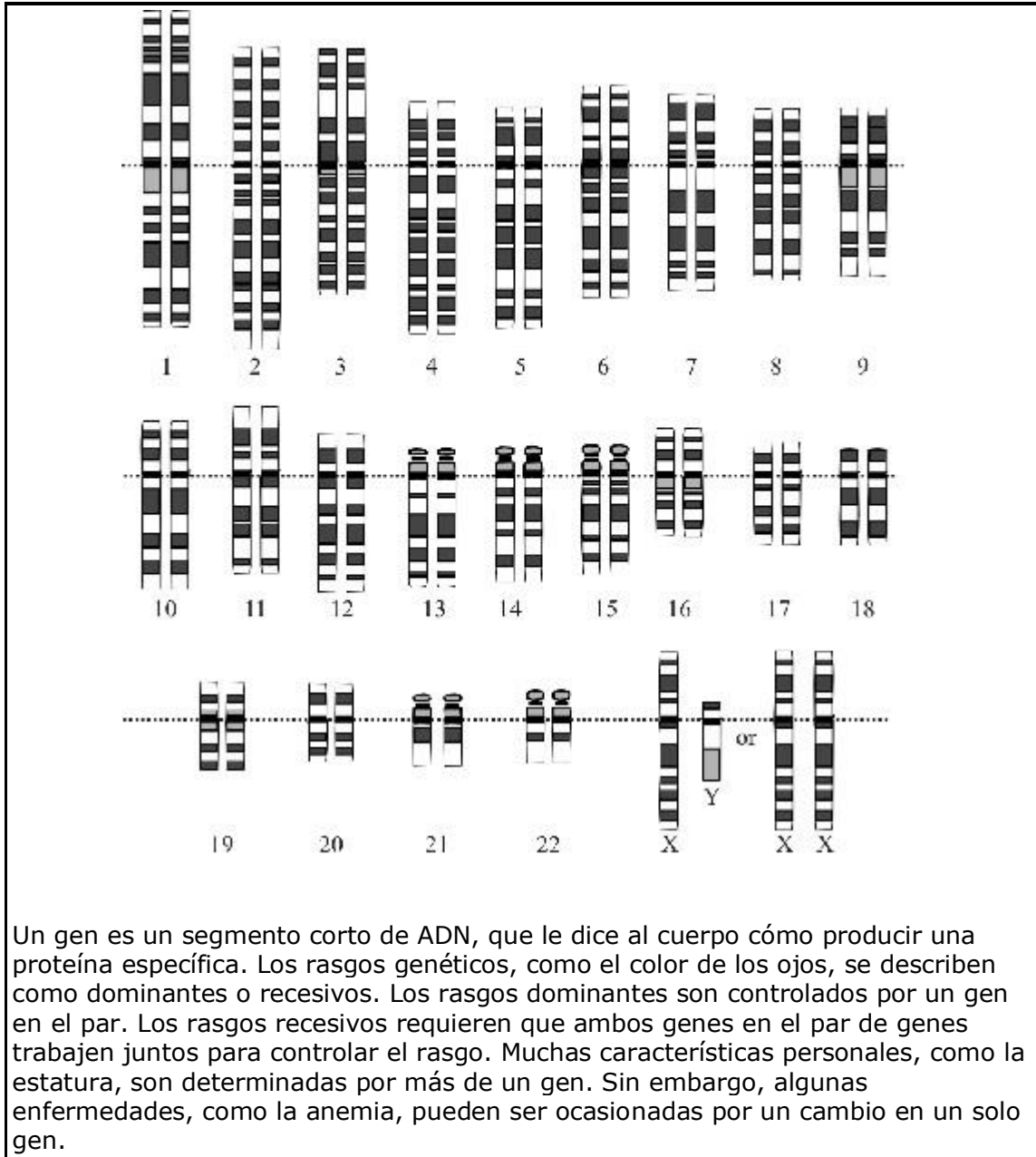
6. Juan Patricio reads this article in a magazine about choosing a university.

¿Es necesario asistir a la universidad para enfrentar a la vida? La verdad es que ir a la universidad depende por completo de cada persona. Si la persona tiene la voluntad y el impulso de tener éxito, encontrará la manera de hacerlo con o sin la universidad. Si las personas que asisten a la universidad aplican la misma voluntad y determinación en su vida profesional, también encontrarán éxito. El asistir a la universidad no garantiza una vida de lujo después de la graduación. Los estudiantes universitarios solamente son equipados con teorías y conocimientos para enfrentar un poco más fácil las circunstancias que ofrece la fuerza de trabajo, pero al final depende totalmente de la persona para desarrollar estas teorías y conocimientos.

What is the main point of the author?

- That a college education does not guarantee that a student will acquire the knowledge needed to do her/his job well.
- That a student's success in college will depend on his/her motivation and work ethic.
- That having a college education is the best indicator of future success in today's world.
- That a college education is not necessary for success in life.

7. Jaime is Reading a blog about genetics and comes across the following entry.



What is the purpose of this paragraph?

- It defines the connection between genetics and illness.
- It explains how gene pairs control personal characteristics.
- It describes how proteins affect cellular development.
- It clarifies how sex chromosomes determine gender.

8. João is reading a travel brochure about Brazil's cultural history.

Si pudiera viajar a cualquier país del mundo, viajaría al Brasil. La cultura brasileña es una de las más diversas. Principalmente se deriva de la cultura portuguesa, a causa de sus fuertes lazos coloniales con el imperio portugués. Sin embargo, la cultura fue fuertemente influida por las culturas y tradiciones africanas, indígenas y europeas no portuguesas. Además, hay contribuciones de los inmigrantes europeos: los italianos, los alemanes y otros que llegaron en gran número al sur y sureste del Brasil. Los amerindios indígenas influyeron en el lenguaje y la cocina, y los africanos en el lenguaje, la gastronomía, la música, la danza y la religión. El Brasil es un país lleno de contrastes con ciudades industriales como San Paulo, ciudades modernas como Brasilia, ciudades gentiles como Bahía, y, por supuesto, ciudades vivas como Río de Janeiro, convirtiendo a este país en uno de los destinos predilectos del turismo internacional.

According to this selection, what can be concluded about the cultural history of Brazil?

- That the Portuguese were more imperialistic than their European neighbors.
 - That the cities are overcrowded due to the influx of immigrants.
 - That the cuisine is primarily African while the largest ethnic groups are indigenous.
 - That its cultural, complex richness is deeply rooted in its diversity.
9. Josue is reading an article about Venezuela in his world history class and comes across the following passage.



La expresión «*Tierra de Gracia*» dada por Colón a Venezuela, ha prevalecido hasta el día de hoy como seudónimo del país. En otra travesía, la tripulación observó las viviendas construidas por los indígenas añú, construidas sobre plataformas de madera que sobresalían del agua. Dichas plataformas le recordaron a Américo Vespucio a la ciudad de Venecia, o sea, *Venezia*, en italiano. Y así se derivó el nombre de *Venezziola* o Venezuela —Pequeña Venecia— a la región y al golfo de Maracaibo. El nombre acuñado por el explorador envolvería luego a todo el territorio. Otras versiones menos probables aluden a la noción que el nombre de Venezuela es autóctono, proveniente de una palabra indígena, y no a un diminutivo veneciano.

According to this article, from what was the name "Venezuela" most likely derived?

- From a native tribe.
- From a Venetian boat.
- From an Italian city.
- From a Spanish explorer.

10. While doing research for your economics class, you find this article about recycling posted on an online encyclopedia.



El **reciclaje** consiste en someter de nuevo una materia o un producto ya utilizado a un ciclo de tratamiento total o parcial para obtener una materia prima o un nuevo producto, útil a la comunidad.

Razones para reciclar

- El costo de recogida y eliminación de una tonelada de basura es de entre 46 y 120€ en España.
- En España se tiran al año más de 300.000 toneladas de metales. Esto es un

despilfarro de material.

- Si se recicla el vidrio se ahorra un 40% de energía y por cada tonelada reciclada se ahorran 1.2 toneladas de materias primas.
- Recuperar dos toneladas de plástico equivale a ahorrar una tonelada de petróleo.
- Por cada tonelada de aluminio tirada al vertedero hay que extraer cuatro toneladas de bauxita (que es el mineral del que se obtiene). Durante la fabricación se producen dos toneladas de residuos muy contaminantes y difíciles de eliminar.
- Al reciclar una tonelada de papel se salvan 17 árboles.

Which one of the following philosophies is addressed in **THIS** article?

- Recycling saves money, energy, raw materials and eliminates waste.
- Government mandated recycling is more expensive than putting the garbage into landfills.
- Recycling creates jobs and boosts local and domestic economies.
- The amount of money actually saved through recycling depends on the efficiency of the recycling program used to do it.

11. Mackenzie reads this story online in a geography magazine.

El pronóstico del tiempo de aquí a unos cuantos años es que van a ocurrir tormentas solares con probabilidad de apagones catastróficos en la Tierra. Los científicos han medido el efecto de las tormentas espaciales en la Tierra durante décadas, a medida que la actividad solar aumenta y disminuye en un ciclo de 11 años. La probabilidad de que una tormenta grande golpee la Tierra no ha cambiado, pero el daño que puede causar aumenta conforme crece nuestra dependencia de las comunicaciones satelitales y las tecnologías de navegación. A la mayoría de las redes eléctricas terrestres sólo la amenazan tormentas extremas, que son muy raras; éstas también provocan auroras en latitudes templadas.

According to the article, why is increasing catastrophe from solar storms expected?

- There is an increased frequency of auroras in temperate climates.
- The measurement of the effect of solar storms in space has become much more accurate.
- There is a growing dependence on satellite-enabled technology.
- The possibility of a big storm hitting the Earth grows every year.

12. Hailey saw this write-up in an entertainment magazine.

El tatuador fue entrevistado por varias revistas para saber la verdad sobre los tatuajes de Zayn Malik y Louis Tomlinson de la banda *One Direction* y su experiencia tatuándoles. "Los miembros del grupo llegaron con ideas de lo que querían, pero estaban abiertos a las ideas de los artistas," dijo el tatuador. Al contrario de los reportajes, el tatuaje de Zayn no es de su novia, Perrie Edwards, sino que fue parcialmente inspirado en ella. Zayn dibujó el esbozo inicial de "una chica con un gorro de lana" que se convirtió en su tatuaje. Louis consiguió los garabatos de una tela de araña y una bomba. También le dibujó una cuerda que pasa alrededor de su muñeca que forma un nudo al estilo marinero. Después de

tatuarse, los músicos comieron sándwiches de pollo de KFC y comentaron que la comida en los Estados Unidos es mucho más dulce de lo que están acostumbrados; incluso el pan es más dulce.

What misconception about a band member's tattoo is clarified by his tattoo artist in this paragraph?

- That Zayn's tattoo is of his girlfriend.
- That the girl with the woolen cap has a tattoo of a spider web.
- That Louis has a tattoo of the Kentucky Fried Chicken logo on his wrist.
- That the band is looking for a logo for *One Direction* for a common tattoo for all members.

13. Laura is reading an excerpt from *La siesta del martes* in preparation for an essay she is writing.

La locomotora salió del trepidante corredor de rocas bermejas, penetró en las plantaciones de banano, simétricas e interminables, y el aire se hizo húmedo y no se volvió a sentir la brisa del mar. Una humareda sofocante entró por la ventanilla del vagón. En el estrecho camino paralelo a la vía férrea había carretas de bueyes cargadas de racimos verdes. Al otro lado del camino, en intempestivos espacios sin sembrar, había oficinas con ventiladores eléctricos, campamentos de ladrillos rojos y residencias con sillas y mesitas blancas en las terrazas entre palmeras y rosales polvorientos. Eran las once de la mañana y todavía no había empezado el calor.

—Es mejor que subas el vidrio —dijo la mujer—. El pelo se te va a llenar de carbón.

La niña trató de hacerlo pero la ventana estaba bloqueada por el óxido.

Which phrase best describes the setting of this short story?

- A sunny morning sitting on a balcony.
- A sultry afternoon working in a banana plantation.
- A walk down a narrow road in the countryside.
- An uncomfortable ride on board a train.

14. Alberto reads this article in a magazine about chess.

En la actualidad existe una importante investigación psicológica del ajedrez. Uno de los hechos mejor establecidos es que aunque el ajedrez es ampliamente considerado el mejor ejemplo de actividad intelectual entre los juegos, existe muy poca evidencia entre capacidades cognitivas concretas y la pericia en el ajedrez. Aunque existe una débil correlación entre inteligencia y pericia en el ajedrez entre los niños que están aprendiendo, dicha correlación no existe cuando consideramos grandes maestros o niños altamente talentosos para el ajedrez.

What is the main point of the article?

- That there is little connection among children between intelligence and skill at chess.
- That a psychological study of chess players shows similar skill level between children and adults.
- That chess could be one example of an intellectual videogame.
- That the correlation between skill at chess and intelligence is proportionate.

15. Luz is reading a blog and finds this entry about the indigenous culture of Mexico.

Las "Guerras Floridas" fueron una alternativa para los pueblos del imperio Mexica de obtener prisioneros para hacer sus sacrificios, ofrecidos principalmente a las deidades Tláloc, dios del Agua y Huitzilopochtli, Dios de la guerra. En aquellas épocas no existía un verdadero motivo de guerra, lo cual se combinó con la escasez de lluvia y con la consecuente afectación de la agricultura, lo cual fue atribuido a la falta de sacrificios por la falta de guerras. Fue entonces que decidieron hacer este tipo de enfrentamientos, con el único objetivo de obtener prisioneros de guerra, para después sacrificarlos como ofrenda para satisfacer a sus dioses, que suponían estaban molestos por la falta de sangre ofrecida.

According to this text, which of the following was **NOT** a reason for the Guerras Floridas?

- To hunt sacrificial victims.
- To please the gods.
- To conquer neighboring territory.
- To address the water shortage.

16. While reading an online newspaper from Colombia, you come across this article dealing with conditions in various prisons.

A la frialdad de las cifras que revelan el estado lamentable en que se encuentra la mayoría de las cárceles del país, le hacía falta la crudeza testimonial de sus protagonistas: los miles de sindicados y condenados que, por diversas circunstancias, hoy pagan sus culpas en centros penitenciarios que degradan la condición humana. Las imágenes de los reclusos que deben compartir un reducido espacio, durmiendo incluso bajo los camastros de una celda; el estado deplorable de los sanitarios; la demora en el suministro de medicamentos para quienes padecen enfermedades graves; la falta de agua y de mínimas condiciones higiénicas distan mucho de lo que debería ser la prestación de un servicio carcelario digno y eficiente.

What can be inferred about the conditions in the Colombian jails?

- The prisons are overcrowded.
- There is no medical care for the prisoners.

- The government cannot afford to maintain the prisons.
 - There are not enough prison guards.
17. While doing research for a university theology class, Annette comes across this philosopher's journal entry.

Opino que hay diferencias entre la religión y la espiritualidad. La mayoría de las religiones ofrecen un conjunto específico de creencias y estructuras para ayudar a las personas a sintonizarse con su espiritualidad innata. La espiritualidad abarca el impulso humano de alcanzar un nivel mayor del que todos formamos parte. Un nivel mayor o conciencia superior es un concepto de la trascendencia espiritual de la conciencia humana en las diversas tradiciones del misticismo. Puede ser de conciencia o de conocimiento, a veces conocido como Dios.

According to the text, what statement best summarizes this person's opinion?

- Religion offers a flexible approach to beliefs and doctrines.
- Although religion and spirituality are related, they are different.
- Most religions lead people to be more spiritual and less materialistic.
- Whether one is conscious of it or not, God exists.

Part Two. Listening Comprehension.

This section will measure your proficiency in listening to spoken Spanish and contains 17 multiple choice questions in increasing order of difficulty. You should work as far into the section as you can.

Each item is comprised of (1) a context in English, (2) an audio clip in Spanish, and (3) a question in English. Each question is followed by four possible answers, only ONE of which is correct. Choose the **ONE** answer which best completes each statement.

To access the following audio files, visit: www.nationalspanishexam.org.

18. You are listening to a podcast about customs among people living in small towns in Spain.





According to this passage, what is the purpose of a horseshoe hanging on a door?

- A person in that household is a soldier who has gone to war.
- The house was once occupied by slaves.
- The family living there is hoping for good luck.
- The farm has work horses for hire.

19. Alicia is sitting in the Plaza Mayor in Madrid when she strikes up a conversation with the man seated next to her.



What has Alicia discovered from her conversation with the man?

- That they are both from the Montevideo.
- That they are near an interesting cemetery.
- Where to buy a lace handkerchief.
- How to get to the Prado Museum.

20. Angelina hears this interview on a website about visual arts.



What topic is the main point of this discussion?

- Cuban nominees at the Cannes film festival.
 - The aftermath of the revolution in Cuba.
 - The Latin American filmmaking industry.
 - The quality of Cuban movies.
21. You are listening to a sports broadcast and hear this person's opinion about salaries of professional athletes.



Why does the speaker think that professional athletes are paid so much?

- Because they are a product that generates income.
 - Because not many people have their exceptional athletic abilities.
 - Because of the possibility of athlete product endorsements.
 - Because athletes, actors, and musicians are compensated for their difficulty with fame and popularity.
22. You are listening to Maria Luisa recount a story about a new biology course in which she has enrolled.



Why was María Luisa initially excited about the new course?

- She thought it would be very interesting.
 - She had become tired of reading literature.
 - The class used a modern online textbook.
 - The teacher was supposed to be exceptional.
23. You're listening to a podcast from Spain about the history of national ID cards and hear the following segment.





To whom was the first ID issued according to this selection?

- King Juan Carlos.
- Francisco Franco.
- Queen Sofia.
- An unidentified male prisoner.

24. Elena is listening to a podcast about the history and culture of western civilization.



What statement best summarizes the purpose of the passage?

- It presents the origin of Valentine's Day.
- It gives insight into religious beliefs of the third century.
- It offers ideas for sweethearts to use in writing love notes.
- It provides the military history of the Emperor Claudius II.

25. You're listening to a presentation by a psychologist speaking to a group of students.



Which statement best describes the psychologist's viewpoint regarding the internet?

- The internet should be used in moderation; otherwise it can become an addiction.
- Dependency on the internet has diminished the personal touch of communication among frequent users.
- The internet is an endless source of information but can have harmful effects if used in excess.
- Children should be closely monitored when using the internet whether at school or at home.

26. A lender offers the following comments to Mr. and Mrs. Ramos who are applying for a home loan.



According to this selection, what suggestion does the loan officer make for use of their savings?

- Furnishing their new home.
- Reducing the length of the mortgage.
- Investing in stocks.
- Depositing it into a savings account.

27. You are in the Museo de Arte de Ponce in Puerto Rico viewing a special exhibit entitled "Masterpieces from the Prado Museum" when you hear the following description of a painting on the audio tour.





Which **ONE** of the following statements is substantiated by the audio clip?

- The artist uses light and lines to imply that Saint Sebastian is reaching for heaven in a swirl of clouds.
- This work was commissioned because Saint Sebastian was the patron saint of Toledo and under his protection.
- The painting of this piece was delayed for eight years due to an outbreak of the bubonic plague in Spain.

- El Greco painted this work in two separate pieces to delineate the differences between life on earth and that in heaven.

28. You are surfing the Internet and come across this excerpt posted on YouTube.



According to this passage, why did the Romans found Merida?

- Because of its strategic importance in the midst of rough terrain.
- Because it was located on a peninsula, making attack by the enemy difficult.
- Because the Emperor Augustus felt it was of tactical value in the staging of military exercises.
- Because the Romans saw the surrounding area as vital to the survival of the Roman Empire.

29. Alicia hears this passage on an internet website about homelessness.



What is the speaker's attitude toward political rhetoric about the homeless?

- That the true reasons for poverty are not addressed.
- That quantity is better than quality.
- That comparisons of poverty among different districts are unfair.
- That poor living conditions are the government's fault.

30. You are surfing the Internet and come across this excerpt posted on YouTube.



What statement best summarizes the main point of this passage?

- Europeans were the first to discover the Asian origins of the native Americans.
- Present day Americans can trace their ancestral and cultural roots to a variety of civilizations.
- There are different hypotheses about the human and cultural origins of the Americas.
- No one thesis about how the Americas were populated is more widely accepted than any other.

31. You are listening to the news in Spain and hear the following headliner.



According to this selection, what is being inaugurated?

- A new president.
- A new train route.

- A new budget.
- A new bridge.

32. You're listening to a public hearing in the town hall and hear the following message.



What is the speaker's tone regarding the governing body?

- Indifferent.
- Sarcastic.
- Outraged.
- Anxious.

33. Bernardino is a young man from Chile and he is describing a belief system related to his daily life.



What can be inferred from this cultural practice?

- Working at high altitudes can have negative impact.
- The gods can sometimes be evil.
- The workers are superstitious.
- Family structure is important in this society.

34. Perla is listening to the radio in Chile and hears the following breaking news.



What was the outcome of this event?

- Some buildings in the capital were destroyed.
- Several areas briefly lost electricity.
- Communication was temporarily cut off to Argentina.
- There were no deaths or major problems.

This test measures proficiency in Spanish reading and listening comprehension.

1. An immigrant wanting to live in the United States.
2. To provide for the spiritual needs of the settlers.
3. An Arab measurement.
4. As having an expiration date.
5. A vacuum.
6. That a college education is not necessary for success in life.
7. It explains how gene pairs control personal characteristics.
8. That its cultural, complex richness is deeply rooted in its diversity.
9. From an Italian city.
10. Recycling saves money, energy, raw materials and eliminates waste.
11. There is a growing dependence on satellite-enabled technology.
12. That Zayn's tattoo is of his girlfriend.
13. An uncomfortable ride on board a train.
14. That there is little connection among children between intelligence and skill at chess.
15. To conquer neighboring territory.
16. The prisons are overcrowded.
17. Although religion and spirituality are related, they are different.
18. The family living there is hoping for good luck.
19. That they are both from the Montevideo.
20. The quality of Cuban movies.
21. Because they are a product that generates income.
22. She thought it would be very interesting.
23. Francisco Franco.
24. It presents the origin of Valentine's Day.

25. The internet is an endless source of information but can have harmful effects if used in excess.
26. Furnishing their new home.
27. The artist uses light and lines to imply that Saint Sebastian is reaching for heaven in a swirl of clouds.
28. Because of its strategic importance in the midst of rough terrain.
29. That the true reasons for poverty are not addressed.
30. There are different hypotheses about the human and cultural origins of the Americas.
31. A new train route.
32. Outraged.
33. The workers are superstitious.
34. There were no deaths or major problems.