

Paragraph Completion

Directions: In each of the following passages, there are numbered blanks indicating that words or phrases have been omitted. For each numbered blank, four completions are provided. First, read through the entire paragraph. Then, for each numbered blank, choose the completion that is most appropriate given the context of the entire paragraph and fill in the corresponding oval on the answer sheet.

Parecía que el pasado 6 de abril todo (1) listo para el (2) del transbordador *Discovery* cuya misión era la de realizar investigaciones atmosféricas y estudios solares, pero una (3) de última hora obligó a la Agencia Nacional de Aeronáutica y el Espacio (NASA) a abortar por (4) vez consecutiva el lanzamiento de la nave.

El se apagó del motor (5) antes de que los tres motores principales de la nave, alimentados por hidrógeno, fueran activados a las 2:32 de la madrugada del pasado 6 de abril, unos 6.6 segundos antes del lanzamiento. 1.

(A) estaba

(B) esté

(C) estaría

(D) está

2. (A) desempleo

(B) despegue

(C) desventaja

(D) descanso

3. (A) negocio

(B) testigo

(C) retrato

(D) dificultad

4. (A) nueva

(B) tremenda

(C) segunda

(D) dos

5. (A) años

(B) días

(C) segundos

(D) lugares

La quinceañera de Rosa (1) un día inolvidable. Todos sus (2) vinieron, incluyendo su bisabuela, a quien Rosa nunca había (3) antes. La ceremonia empezó, tradicionalmente, con la misa de acción de gracias. Rosa traía un vestido largo, color rosa. Ella se veía tan elegante que hasta su padre (4) un poco al verla. Después de la ceremonia, todos se reunieron (5) su casa para una gran fiesta. Rosa inició los bailes con su padre, luego con sus tíos y sus primos. Al final de la noche, su padre tomó un vaso y (6) a su hija querida.

1. (A) fue

(B) fuera

(C) sea

(D) sería

2. (A) parabrasas

(B) parientes

(C) paraísos

(D) paraguas

3. (A) conoce

(B) conozca

(C) conocido

(D) conoció

4. (A) lloró

(B) llamó

(C) llovió

(D) llegó

5. (A) con

(B) para

(C) en

(D) por

6. (A) brindó

(B) desconoció

(C) asombró

(D) guardó

Paragraph Translation:

It seemed that last April 6 everything (1) was ready for the (2) takeoff of the shuttle *Discovery*, whose mission was to conduct atmospheric investigations and solar studies, but a last-minute (3) difficulty forced the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to abort for the (4) second time the launching of the ship.

The shutdown of the motor occurred (5) seconds before the three principal engines of the ship, fed by hydrogen, were activated at 2:32 in the morning last April 6, some 6.6 seconds before takeoff.

1. A (A) was

(B) is (present subjunctive)

(C) would be

(D) is (present)

The first sentence of the first paragraph mentions “el pasado 6 de abril” just before we get to our first blank, so we know that we want the past tense of **estar**. If you can recognize that choice (A) is the only one in the past tense (the imperfect, to be precise), then your work is done. Eliminate choices (B), (C), and (D), which use the present subjunctive, the conditional, and the simple present tense, respectively. If you had trouble determining whether the event was in the past, present, or future, don’t forget to look forward—the word **obligó** later in the sentence tells you that it’s in the past. There are always clues in the passage that help you fill in the blanks, but it’s up to you to find them.

2. B (A) unemployment

(B) takeoff

(C) disadvantage

(D) rest

After a quick glance at the choices, you might realize that you don’t know most of the words. If so, this is probably a question for the second or third pass.

When you come back to it, you will want to first see what can you figure out from the context. Before the blank, we see the phrase “listo para” (ready for), and after the blank, we see “del transbordador *Discovery*.”

If you don't know what **transbordador** means, you might recognize that *Discovery* is a space shuttle. Putting the pieces of the puzzle together, you might come up with something like "launch" for the blank. Let's say you know that (D) **descanso** means "rest." Does that agree with the word which you selected? No. Not sure what any of the other words mean? See if you can break down any of them to help you make an educated guess. You might be familiar with the word **ventaja**, which means advantage; therefore, you might deduce that (C) **desventaja** means disadvantage, which is the correct definition. Does that work for the blank? No. Eliminate it. Similarly, we can get rid of (A) **desempleo** (unemployment). The best answer is (B) **despegue** (takeoff).

3. **D** (A) business

(B) witness

(C) portrait

(D) difficulty

Abortar, which means the same thing in English as it does in Spanish (to abort), tells you that something went wrong with the launch, so you want a negative word for the blank. This leaves you with only choice (D). In addition, and even more simply, the word **una** tells us that we need a feminine word. Only (D) is feminine.

4. **C** (A) new

(B) tremendous

(C) second

(D) two

It's easiest to think of this blank as part of the larger phrase **abortar por...vez consecutiva**. In this context, only (C) **segunda** (second) makes any sense in the blank.

5. **C** (A) years

(B) days

(C) seconds

(D) places

If you think about the situation described in the passage, and read ahead in the last paragraph, you realize that the period of time you're looking for is very brief. Also, there is a clue earlier in the passage that helps you out on this question. **De última hora**, which appears in the first sentence, means "at the last moment." Choice (C) is the correct answer.

Paragraph Translation:

Rosa's quinceañera (1) was an unforgettable day. All her (2) relatives came, including her great-grandmother, who Rosa had never (3) met before. The ceremony began, traditionally, with the mass to say thanks. Rosa wore a long, pink dress. She looked so elegant that even her father (4) cried a little when he saw her. After the ceremony, everyone met (5) at her house for a big party. Rosa began the dancing with her father, and then continued it with her uncles and cousins. At the end of the night, her father took a glass and (6) toasted his beloved daughter.

1. **A** (A) was (preterite)

(B) was (imperfect subjunctive)

(C) is (present subjunctive)

(D) would be

The quinceañera already took place. There is a clue in the second sentence: **vinieron**, which is in the preterite (simple past) tense. Therefore, (A) is correct.

2. **B** (A) windshield

(B) relatives

(C) paradises

(D) umbrella

Here you're presented with a group of choices that look similar. Know your definitions. The passage mentions **bisabuela**, which means great-grandmother. Choice (B) is the only one that makes any sense.

3. **C** (A) meet (present)

(B) meet (present subjunctive)

(C) met (past participle)

(D) met (preterite)

A key word here is **antes**. This tells us that we need a form of the verb in the past. Additionally, the auxiliary verb **había** (a form of **haber**) tells us we need a past participle to complete the past perfect. Choice (C) is the only one that works.

4. **A** (A) cried

(B) called

(C) rained

(D) arrived

What makes sense that her father might do after seeing Rosa in her lovely dress? He'd shed a tear. Even fathers cry. Thus, choice (A) is correct, as none of the other choices makes any sense.

5. **C** (A) with

(B) for

(C) at

(D) for

This answer is idiomatic. They met **at** her house.

6. **A** (A) toasted

(B) denied

(C) amazed

(D) guarded

A clue is that the father picked up a glass. Choice (A) is the only logical option. There are some tough words in these answer choices. Be sure to add any unfamiliar vocabulary to your list of words to know.