



*Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca*

**PL0A - ESAME DI STATO DI LICEO LINGUISTICO**

**Tema di: LINGUA STRANIERA**

**TESTO LETTERARIO – LINGUA INGLESE**

*(comprensione e produzione in lingua straniera)*

There was music from my neighbor's house through the summer nights. In his blue gardens men and girls came and went like moths among the whisperings and the champagne and the stars. At high tide in the afternoon I watched his guests diving from the tower of his raft, or taking  
 5 the sun on the hot sand of his beach while his two motor-boats slit the waters of the Sound, drawing aquaplanes over cataracts of foam. On weekends his Rolls-Royce became an omnibus, bearing parties to and from the city between nine in the morning and long past midnight, while his station wagon scampered like a brisk yellow bug to meet all trains. And  
 10 on Mondays eight servants, including an extra gardener, toiled all day with mops and scrubbing-brushes and hammers and garden-shears, repairing the ravages of the night before.

Every Friday five crates of oranges and lemons arrived from a fruiterer in New York – every Monday these same oranges and lemons left his back  
 15 door in a pyramid of pulpless halves. There was a machine in the kitchen which could extract the juice of two hundred oranges in half an hour if a little button was pressed two hundred times by a butler's thumb.

At least once a fortnight a corps of caterers came down with several hundred feet of canvas and enough coloured lights to make a Christmas  
 20 tree of Gatsby's enormous garden. On buffet tables, garnished with glistening hors-d'oeuvre, spiced baked hams crowded against salads of harlequin designs and pastry pigs and turkeys bewitched to a dark gold. In the main hall a bar with a real brass rail was set up, and stocked with gins and liquors and with cordials so long forgotten that most of his female  
 25 guests were too young to know one from another.

By seven o'clock the orchestra has arrived, no thin five-piece affair, but a whole pitful of oboes and trombones and saxophones and viols and cornets and piccolos, and low and high drums. The last swimmers have come in from the beach now and are dressing upstairs; the cars from New  
 30 York are parked five deep in the drive, and already the halls and salons and verandas are gaudy with primary colors, and hair bobbed in strange new ways, and shawls beyond the dreams of Castile. The bar is in full swing, and floating rounds of cocktails permeate the garden outside, until the air is alive with chatter and laughter, and casual innuendo and introductions  
 35 forgotten on the spot, and enthusiastic meetings between women who never knew each other's names.

The lights grow brighter as the earth lurches away from the sun, and now the orchestra is playing yellow cocktail music, and the opera of voices pitches a key higher. Laughter is easier minute by minute, spilled with



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- 40 prodigality, tipped out at a cheerful word. The groups change more swiftly,  
 swell with new arrivals, dissolve and form in the same breath; already  
 there are wanderers, confident girls who weave here and there among the  
 stouter and more stable, become for a sharp, joyous moment the center of  
 a group, and then, excited with triumph, glide on through the sea-change  
 45 of faces and voices and color under the constantly changing light.  
 Suddenly one of these gypsies, in trembling opal, seizes a cocktail out  
 of the air, dumps it down for courage and, moving her hands like Frisco,  
 dances out alone on the canvas platform. A momentary hush; the orchestra  
 leader varies his rhythm obligingly for her, and there is a burst of chatter as  
 50 the erroneous news goes around that she is Gilda Gray's understudy from  
 the *Follies*. The party has begun.

From *The Great Gatsby* by Francis Scott Fitzgerald

**Comprehension**

**Answer the following questions:**

1. What does the passage describe?
2. "Men and girls came and went like moths" (line 2). What idea is conveyed through the simile?
3. What is the Rolls-Royce used for at weekends?
4. Identify all the people involved with arrangements and their respective jobs (lines 9 – 20).
5. In whose house and gardens do the facts described take place?
6. What idea is conveyed through the description of the food served? Justify your answer by quoting from the text.
7. What feeling does the description of the interpersonal relations conjure up?
8. How does the party begin?

**Summarize** the content of the passage in about 150 words.

**Composition:**

Do you go to parties or organise any? Are they similar to the one described in the passage? What do you think parties are an occasion for? Discuss your views on the topic in a paragraph of some 300 words.



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TESTO DI ATTUALITÀ – LINGUA INGLESE

*(comprensione e produzione in lingua straniera)*

**Couples Adorn Bridges With Weighty Tokens of the Heart**  
***'Lovelocks' Excite Passions in Paris: Symbol of Romance or Graffiti?***

PARIS—Among the must-dos for visitors to the French capital: ride to the top of the Eiffel Tower, pay homage at the Louvre and seal your love with a Master Lock.

Paris's picturesque bridges over the Seine are heaving with padlocks, bike locks, handcuffs and other talismans of amour. Enamored visitors write their names on a lock, attach it to a bridge and throw the key into the river. (...) But, many Parisians are asking: What's love got to do with it?

The public displays of affection have unchained loathing among cold-hearted locals. Some gripe that the locks are no better than graffiti, defacing the city's landmarks. Rust and pollution are concerns, too. (...) Others argue that the symbolism is all wrong. "The lock is a negative symbol of enclosure and imprisonment, the exact opposite of what love should be," says Esther Pawloff, a 48-year-old executive assistant here in Paris.

The locks have been turned into expensive contemporary art and melted down for the value of their brass. When thousands of locks were mysteriously removed one night in 2010, cynics suspected a spurned lover—or a padlock manufacturer looking for new business.

In recent months, the two original padlock bridges have become so overloaded that locks have spread to any bridge with a small grate. Couples have attached their love tokens to statues and monuments, causing damage that the city has had to repair.

The lovelock phenomenon came to Paris five years ago. Most observers date the phenomenon to an Italian teen novel titled "I Want You," published in 2006, featuring two Roman lovers who immortalized their bond on a bridge in the Eternal City and threw the key in the Tiber.

Readers copied the romantic gesture—until one of the bridge's lamp posts was so junked up with locks that officials worried that it would collapse. Padlocks have since sprouted from the Great Wall in China to the Brooklyn Bridge to the fence of a freeway overpass in Silicon Valley.

Paris, however, seems to have fallen for lovelocks more than any other city. They are entwined with its image as a romantic destination, fueling the tourist trade. For Valentine's Day, several hotels are advertising romantic getaways offering the possibility to partake in the padlock custom.

Some suspect tourism is the reason city hall backed down from a plan to remove and ban the locks to preserve Paris's architectural heritage. (...)

The Pont des Arts and the Pont de l'Archevêché, with the Notre Dame cathedral in the background, were the first two bridges to serve as padlock canvasses. (...) The two bridges became a destination for seekers of eternal love because their chain-link grates are small enough to get a lock around. Enterprising souvenir hawkers peddle padlocks along the bridges. Personalized padlocks sell for as much as €20, or about \$27.

Paris's tourism industry perpetuated the fad. The bateaux mouches barge-like boats that carry tourists up and down the Seine quickly added mention of lovelocks to their commentaries. (...)

However, artists and scavengers see other value in love on the bridges. (...) French contemporary artist Loris Gréaud had plenty of choice when he made his installation "Tainted Love" from Pont des Arts locks last year. (...)



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Mr. Gréaud melted and molded the locks into 15 sculptural shards, priced at €675,000. He was exploring the paradox of transforming metal that was imbued with love into an unemotional geometric object, he said. François Pinault, a French art collector, bought all of them.

In fact, the weight of love is becoming dangerous. Last week, it was the city's turn to clip locks. A cleanup crew removed five damaged grates from the Pont des Arts. (...) The city worries that the weight of the locks, as much as 330 pounds on a single grate, is making the bridge unsafe. Officials also attribute the danger to metal-resellers who cut the grates instead of the locks because the metal is thinner.

There is one possible solution that causes no pollution or damage to public property.

Master Lock, part of *Fortune Brands Home & Security Inc.*, last year began offering "virtual" locks that it displays in an online gallery. In front of a shot of the Pont des Arts plastered with padlocks, the company advertises "no travel necessary."

(Adapted from Christina Passariello, *The Wall Street Journal*, Europe Edition ,  
 Monday, February 11, 2013 / U.S. Edition, February 12, 2013)

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323511804578297832498983360.html>

### **Comprehension**

**Answer the following questions:**

1. What must visitors to Paris do?
2. What do Parisians think of "lovelocks"?
3. What happened one night in 2010?
4. When and why did the phenomenon start in Paris?
5. Why did the authorities abandon the plan to remove and ban the locks?
6. What did Mr Gréaud do with those locks last year?
7. Why is "the weight of love" becoming dangerous?
8. What solution did Master Lock offer last year?

**Summarize** the content of the passage in about 150 words.

### **Composition:**

Have you ever sealed your love with a lock? What do you think of the phenomenon? Is a lovelock a symbol of romance or a sort of graffiti? Write your views on the topic in a 300-word essay.