

ACCESO MAYORES DE 25 AÑOS-UNIVERSIDAD REY JUAN CARLOS-AÑO 2011-INGLÉS

OPCIÓN A

Our Hobbit Ancestors

Archaeologists have recently discovered the skeleton of a new and very small human species that lived on Flores Island in Indonesia. At the same time, our ancestors, the Homo sapiens, were colonising the world. The hobbit-like species grew no larger than a meter tall and most likely disappeared after a volcanic eruption. They have been named Homo floresiensis after the island on which their remains were found and called "hobbits" after the creatures of the Lord of the Rings books.

Researchers are anxious to investigate how and why the hobbits came to be so small. One of the explanations is that, over thousands of years, the species became smaller because of environmental conditions and the fact that islands provide a scarce food supply. Scientists estimate that the tiny people lived on Flores from about 95,000 years ago until at least 13,000 years ago. Some experts say that the Homo floresiensis is the most extreme human ever discovered. Physically, they were about the size of a three-year old modern human child, but with a brain only one-third as large.

Although they looked more primitive than modern humans, part of their behaviour was surprisingly human. Despite their small brains, they used fire for cooking, hunted dwarf elephants and manufactured sophisticated stone tools and hid from huge Komodo dragons. Such intellectual abilities are still a mystery for scientists. In any case, experts believe that the whole idea that you need a particular brain size to do anything intelligent has completely disappeared with this discovery.

QUESTIONS

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

- a. The Homo floresiensis lived on earth much earlier than the Homo sapiens.
- b. A volcanic eruption was perhaps the reason for the disappearance of our hobbit ancestor.
- c. Scientists are not interested in knowing why the hobbits were so small.
- d. Experts now think that you need a special brain size to do intelligent things.

(Puntuación máxima 4 puntos)

2. In your own words and based on the ideas in the text, answer the following questions.

- a. Why did the species Homo floresiensis become so small?
- b. Describe the physical aspect and the intellectual abilities of the Homo floresiensis.

(Puntuación máxima 2 puntos)

3. Find the words in the text that mean:

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- a. found (paragraph 1)
- b. little (paragraph 1)
- c. bigger (paragraph 1)
- d. probably (paragraph 1)
- e. gigantic (paragraph 3)
- f. totally (paragraph 3)

(Puntuación máxima 1,5 puntos)

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

- a. My brother, _____ is a scientist, _____ (travel) last year to Indonesia.
- b. I want _____ (read) The Lord of the Rings. It is _____ (good) than Harry Potter.
- c. If you _____ (visit) Atapuerca next week, you _____ (learn) many interesting things.
- d. The researchers travelled _____ other experts _____ Bali.
- e. I like _____ (study) ancient cultures. The book _____ I am reading is about Atapuerca.

(Puntuación maxima 2,5 puntos)

OPCIÓN B

The World's Oldest Pet Cat

People have had pet cats for thousands of years. Ancient Egyptians kept cats as companions, worshiped them as gods, and used them for pest control. Egyptians even made some of their cats into mummies when they died. Now scientists think that they have found the world's oldest known pet cat. This animal lived 4,000 years before the ancient Egyptians. Scientists discovered the remains of a human and a cat in a 9,500-year-old grave on the Mediterranean island of Cyprus. "The burial of this animal with a human makes a strong case that cats had a special place in their daily lives, and in the afterlives of the people on the island," said the head researcher of the Smithsonian Institute.

Usually it's hard to say whether cat bones buried near humans belong to pets. Wild cats often lived near people because they were attracted to rats and mice that fed on human food. Plus, pet cats are physically very similar to wild cats, so it's hard to tell whether bones come from a pet cat or a wild one. But this cat was different. It was buried just 40 centimetres from a human and both the human and the cat were buried with seashells, polished stones and other items.

With this finding, we can now decide that cats were linked to humans at the time of this burial," said experts. So are cats really man's best friend? Not so fast. Dogs appear to have been pets much earlier than cats. Scientists have found evidence of pet dogs from 12,000 years ago.

QUESTIONS

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

- The oldest pet cat lived around the same time as the Egyptians.
- Cats were important in the day-to day lives as well as in life after death of the inhabitants of Cyprus.
- Scientists find it easy to distinguish between wild and pet cats.
- Cats became pets earlier than dogs.

(Puntuación máxima 4 puntos)

2. In your own words and based on the ideas in the text, answer the following questions.

- According to the text, what was the relationship between the ancient Egyptians and cats?
- Why do scientists believe that the cat buried on Cyprus was a pet cat?

(Puntuación máxima 2 puntos)

3. Find the words in the text that mean:

- found (paragraph 1)
- investigator (paragraph 1)
- if (paragraph 2)
- difficult (paragraph 2)
- objects (paragraph 2)
- specialists (paragraph 3)

(Puntuación máxima 1,5 puntos)

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

- Cats have _____ (good) night vision than dogs, but dogs are _____ (intelligent).
- I _____ (adopt) a dog last year and I _____ (give) it a bath every Saturday.
- In a lot of Asian countries, cats _____ (use) as food, but in Europe we _____ (not eat) cats or dogs.



d. If he _____ (buy) a dog, he _____ (have to) walk it every day.

e. Researchers want _____ (investigate) how pets _____ (live) in ancient times.

(Puntuación máxima 2,5 puntos)

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