TEXTO A

University Education

It used to be that a university degree was a fast track to a good career. But today, thousands of British students are instead having to struggle to find work to match their qualifications. The Office for National Statistics reported this year that almost one in every three graduates is overqualified for their job. Some students have taken their universities to court for failing to provide value for money and received thousands of pounds in settlements.

So which degrees should British students avoid if they want to become high earners? As regards men, a creative arts degree leads to the lowest average graduate salary. Men studying English or philosophy may also earn less than the average man who left school at the age of 16. As for women, in almost all cases doing any degree means a woman will earn at least slightly more than if she had not attended university. This is so because the earnings of women without university qualifications are much lower than those of men. Even those females studying social care, the degree with the lowest average earnings, enjoy a slightly higher salary post-graduation than women without a degree.

So, is doing a degree still really worth it? Yes, research does conclude that completing a degree is still worthwhile. “If a higher salary is the key reason for going to university, students need to choose their subjects carefully,” said an investment expert. “For women, studying medicine or economics increases their earning potential by more than 60% and for men over 20%.”

However, a high salary post-graduation is not the only motivating factor for young people choosing to continue their studies. “There are plenty of artists and philosophers who were enormously enriched by their university experiences – just not financially,” Ms Coles added.

Adapted from: “The ‘Mickey Mouse’ degrees that could reduce your earning potential,” The Telegraph, 4 November 2019

QUESTIONS

A.1 (2 puntos) Are the following statements TRUE or FALSE? Copy the evidence from the text. No marks are given for only TRUE or FALSE.

a) In the past studying at university opened the door to suitable job opportunities.

True: “It used to be that a university degree was a fast track to a good career”.

b) There exists a possibility for male university graduates to earn a lower salary than men who never studied at university.

True: “As regards men, a creative arts degree leads to the lowest average graduate salary. Men studying English or philosophy may also earn less than the average man who left school at the age of 16”.

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

a) Why do women find it economically more convenient to go to university than men – even when women choose a lower-paying career?
Due to the fact that women earn statistically lower salaries than men, and the jobs to which they have access if they don’t study are even lower.

b) Is it still useful to study at university according to the text? Why/Why not?

Yes, if one chooses their subjects carefully or has other interests besides economic profit.

A.3 (1 punto) Find the words in the text that mean:

a) try hard (paragraph 1) – try hard
b) a little (paragraph 2) - slightly
c) determine (paragraph 3) - conclude
d) inspirational (paragraph 4) - motivating

A.4 (2 puntos) Complete the following sentences. Use the appropriate form of the word in brackets when given.

a) If I didn’t know this university degree was going to be so difficult, I wouldn’t have chosen it. But it’s too late to make any changes now that I’m in 2nd year.

b) The London School of Economics, which usually scores highly in university rankings, was reported (report) last year as the one with the highest employment rate in the UK.

c) She hasn’t succeeded in getting (get) the results she wanted. Therefore, she intends to sit (sit) the exam next year again.

d) I’m so tired of school life: I’ve been looking forward to starting university since I was in 3rd year of secondary education.

A.5 (3 puntos) Write about 150 to 200 words on the following topic.

“Passion vs. Money”. Which reasons will determine your university degree choice?

What is the most relevant criteria when choosing our professional future? Should we listen to the pragmatic—or materialistic—people around us? Perhaps listening to our heart’s desires sounds like a sensible choice too.

Firstly, it seems to me like passion and money have been presented as things that might never coexist, but this needn’t be true. I believe that there is no bigger motivation than working on one’s passion. And precisely hard work is often what leads to economic success.

On the other hand, there is no use in studying something that will make one’s life miserable. There is already so many aspects of life we don’t get to decide on, it is a real pity to misuse this choice that future-university-students have.

Finally, Seneca, a Latin playwright, said that “no wind is useful to those who do not know to which harbor they are headed”, and I could not agree more. I firmly believe that passion should be the most important criteria when choosing university studies.
The Ladies Bridge

Waterloo Bridge in London is nicknamed ‘The Ladies Bridge’ for the women who built it. As World War II overtook Europe and men went off to battle, the women of England entered the wartime workforce. “Before long,” says the BBC, “women made up one third of the total workforce in the metal and chemical industries, as well as in ship-building and vehicle manufacture.” They also worked on English infrastructure.

But while Rosie the Riveter, the star of a campaign aimed at recruiting female workers for defence industries during World War II, became perhaps the most iconic image of American working women, those who built this bridge were largely forgotten. “Today the riverboat pilots on the Thames tell the story of Waterloo Bridge being built by women in World War II,” says the summary of The Ladies Bridge, a documentary by filmmaker Karen Livesey. Though a crew of largely women workers built the current Waterloo Bridge in the early 1940s, at the official opening of the bridge in 1945, Herbert Morrison, an English politician, thanked all the men who worked on the project: “The men who built Waterloo Bridge are fortunate men. They know that, although their names may be forgotten, their work will be a pride and use to London for many generations to come.”

The displacement of women’s role in the history of the Waterloo Bridge, says a 2006 article, wasn’t out of malice, or discrimination. Peter Mandell, the head of Peter Lind and Company, the contractor that oversaw the building of the bridge in 1940s, said “there’s no hidden agenda behind their unacknowledged achievements – the archive was simply lost when Lind temporarily suspended trading in the 1970s.” “We’re very proud of our female workforce,” he says. “We’re rebuilding this archive and want to honor them with a plaque on the bridge.”

Adapted from “This Bridge is Nicknamed the ‘Ladies Bridge’ because it was Built Largely by Women,” Smithsonian Magazine, July 15, 2013.

QUESTIONS

B.1 (2 puntos) Are the following statements TRUE or FALSE? Copy the evidence from the text. No marks are given for only TRUE or FALSE.

a) During World War II English women had to substitute male workers.

True. “As World War II overtook Europe and men went off to battle, the women of England entered the wartime workforce”.

b) An article said that the contribution of women in the construction of the bridge was not mentioned on purpose.

False. “The displacement of women’s role in the history of the Waterloo Bridge, says a 2006 article, wasn’t out of malice, or discrimination”.

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

a) Why did Rosie the Riveter become a symbol in the USA?

Because she was more visible, as she starred in an advertisement for women to start working on the defence industries.
b) What happened at the official opening of the bridge?

Only men were thanked at the official opening. The politician, Herbert Morrison, did not thank the women who had actually built it.

**B.3 (1 punto) Find the words in the text that mean:**

a) called (paragraph 1) - nicknamed

b) possibly (paragraph 2) - perhaps

c) lucky (paragraph 2) - fortunate

d) supervised (paragraph 3) - oversaw

**B.4 (2 puntos) Complete the following sentences. Use the appropriate form of the word in brackets when given.**

a) Waterloo Bridge is known as the Ladies Bridge ____due to____ the key role women ____played____ (play) in its construction.

b) More women were employed in industrial sectors ____during____ the early forties as the segregation between men and women ____was diminished____ (diminish).

c) The government has decided to go ____along____ with the plans for building a new airport 50 kilometres away ____from____ the city.

d) They had worked hard all morning, so ____at____ midday they stopped ____to have____ (have) a coffee and a sandwich.

**B.5 (3 puntos) Write about 150 to 200 words on the following topic.**

*Do you think the roles of men and women in society have changed over the last fifty years? Justify your answer.*

Societies change, and that is undeniable. The difficult thing is to understand what or who cause those changes. Have the roles of men and women changed during the past fifty years? I definitely believe so.

Firstly, let us recall how most men and women behaved in a family. During the 60s and 70s women were slowly joining the job market once again -as after WWII they were excluded from it. Most women stayed home and numerous men did not involve themselves at all with any house related chores, nor even with the upbringing of their children.

Nowadays, on the other hand, we can say that our societies are headed towards a more equal world. It is not unusual for men to be single-parents, to cook and take care of their children. Women attend university and aim to reach powerful job positions. Although we cannot say our sexist heritage has completely been forgotten.

All things considered, I firmly believe that the roles of men and women have indeed changed during the past fifty years, and that the evolution was towards a more equal world.