	<p align="center">Evaluación de Bachillerato para el Acceso a la Universidad de Castilla y León</p>	<p align="center">INGLÉS</p>	<p align="center">EXAMEN Nº páginas: 4</p>
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NOTE: Choose option A or B, and answer the questions from 1 to 4. For question 5, you can choose to write the composition that you like best, from either option A or option B.

OPTION A

NUMBER OF REGISTERED NEWBORNS IN CHINA DROPS 15% IN 2020

Births in China fell sharply last year as the coronavirus pandemic intensified the scale of the demographic challenge facing the nation. They dropped 15 per cent from 2019, according to data from the country's Ministry of Public Security, with 10.04m births in the country last year compared with 11.79m a year earlier based on household registrations. The steep decline is the latest evidence of the demographic challenges facing China, where urbanisation and the historic one-child policy has resulted in a rapidly ageing population that will put pressure on public economy over coming decades.


"We've known for some time there would be a decline, but such a big drop was beyond our expectations," said Huang Wenzheng, a demography expert at the Center for China and Globalization, a Beijing-based think-tank. "We believe last year's decline is related to Covid: that households are more worried now."

In 2015, China's leadership loosened its family planning restrictions in order to address looming demographic problems, but the two-child policy it implemented has failed to strengthen birth rates. Academics expect China to further relax its birth policies, but also warn the moves may come too late. "It's very clear from those numbers that the negative demographic spiral in which China finds itself is powerful and will cause really large scale fundamental problems," said Dariusz Kowalczyk, an economist at Crédit Agricole in Hong Kong. Kowalczyk anticipates the Chinese population will begin to shrink in 2027, which he says will limit its potential to challenge the US as the world's leading superpower.

Pessimism over the data contrasts with a recent economic boom in China following the pandemic. Gross domestic product grew 2.3 per cent in 2020 in contrast to declines across other economies. Experts say the country's birth rate challenge will require additional policy measures. "Although we might see a small recovery in the next few years, the overall trend is one of long-term decline in birth rates," said Huang. "To truly address this issue, we need to make it a policy priority." (Fragment adapted from *The Financial Times*.)

1) BRIEFLY ANSWER ONLY 4 OUT OF THE FOLLOWING 6 QUESTIONS WITH ONLY THE DATA REQUIRED (NOT A WHOLE SENTENCE) (2 POINTS; 0.5 POINTS EACH).

1. In the phrase *They dropped 15 percent from 2019* (line 2), the word 'they' refers to ...
2. The data released by the Ministry of Public Security, what are they based on?
3. What have urbanisation and the one-child policy caused?
4. In the phrase *the two-child policy it implemented* (line 12), the word 'it' refers to ...
5. What will happen in 2027?
6. In the short-term, which is China's trend in birth rates?

	<p align="center">Evaluación de Bachillerato para el Acceso a la Universidad de Castilla y León</p>	<p align="center">INGLÉS</p>	<p align="center">EXAMEN Nº páginas: 4</p>
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2) ARE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS TRUE OR FALSE? INDICATE THE LINES THAT SUPPORT YOUR ANSWER (1 POINT).

1. Chinese Authorities knew the population was going to be reduced, but the data released by the Ministry are higher than expected.
2. The two-child policy has strengthened birth rates and it will stop this temporary birth fall.

3) CHOOSE a OR b, ONLY ONE CHOICE IS CORRECT ACCORDING TO THE TEXT (1 POINT).

- a) The negative demographic situation in China will affect its position as a world power and it will create additional problems.
- b) Birth falls in China are related to Covid; once it is over, everything will come back to normal.

4) VOCABULARY (2 POINTS).

4.1 Choose one of the options below and find one word in the text for its definition (0.6 POINTS):

- a) A group of specialists organized by a business enterprise, governmental body, etc, and commissioned to undertake intensive study and research into specified problems.
- b) To contract or lessen in size.

4.2 Find a synonym in the text for one of the two words below (0.6 POINTS):


- a) imminent
- b) foresees

4.3 For one of the following words from the text, give a synonym that fits the meaning of the text (0.8 POINTS):

- a) steep (line 4)
- b) issue (line 22)

5) WRITE ABOUT THE FOLLOWING TOPIC USING BETWEEN 120-150 WORDS (4 POINTS).

Spain has got an ageing population mainly in rural areas. Which measures should be taken to revive those wastelands?

	Evaluación de Bachillerato para el Acceso a la Universidad de Castilla y León	INGLÉS	EXAMEN Nº páginas: 4
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NOTE: Choose option A or B, and answer the questions from 1 to 4. For question 5, you can choose to write the composition that you like best, from either option A or option B.

OPTION B

THIS IS YOUR SKIN ON STRESS

5 A mass of cells divides and develops, splits and stretches, and from a single layer of embryonic tissue, two seemingly separate but inherently interconnected systems are born: the brain and the skin. They are bound for life. So, for example, when one bears the burden of a pandemic, the other gets a pimple. This is your skin on stress. “There are two types of stress: acute stress and chronic stress,” said Dr. Whitney Bowe. A quick surge of stress can be a good thing. It may heighten your senses, enhance mental clarity and help create collagen to facilitate wound repair.

10 During times of stress, cortisol slows the production of beneficial oils. We get dry and without adequate lipids to seal in hydration, the skin starts to “leak” water in a process known as transepidermal water loss. At the same time, cortisol stimulates the overproduction of sebum, the oil that is implicated in acne. All of this alters the skin’s pH, which compromises the acid mantle and creates an inhospitable environment for the one trillion symbiotic micro-organisms that exist on and in the skin barrier. — a.k.a., the microbiome.


15 Chronic exposure to cortisol also inhibits the production of hyaluronic acid and collagen. “These are what keep the skin plump and youthful,” Dr. Bowe said. “When you can’t make enough, the skin gets thinner.” Sadly, skin-care products aren’t the answer to stress skin at all. Managing stress may seem nearly impossible, considering that so many modern stressors are systemic. Yet according to Dr. Heather Woolery-Lloyd, a dermatologist, “90 percent of our stress is not the stressor itself, but how we deal with that stressor.”

20 To address and prevent free radical damage, fill your plate with antioxidants, which stabilize these unstable molecules to leave skin clearer, calmer, brighter and more even toned. Vitamins A and C (abundant in fruits and vegetables), lycopene (found in tomatoes), astaxanthin (salmon) and polyphenols (dark chocolate) are all great options, according to Dr. Bowe.

25 Exercise increases antioxidants, as well. It lowers cortisol levels, meaning fewer breakouts and a stronger skin barrier. And if you’re exercising outdoors? Even better. (Fragment adapted from *The New York Times*.)

1) BRIEFLY ANSWER ONLY 4 OUT OF THE FOLLOWING 6 QUESTIONS WITH ONLY THE DATA REQUIRED (NOT A WHOLE SENTENCE) (2 POINTS; 0.5 POINTS EACH).

1. What systems are born from a single layer of embryonic tissue?
2. What happens when cortisol slows the production of beneficial oils?
3. What compromises the acid mantle and creates an inhospitable environment for the microbiome?
4. What keeps the skin plump and youthful?
5. What’s the role of Vitamins A and C?
6. Does exercise decrease antioxidants?

	<p align="center">Evaluación de Bachillerato para el Acceso a la Universidad de Castilla y León</p>	<p align="center">INGLÉS</p>	<p align="center">EXAMEN Nº páginas: 4</p>
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2) ARE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS TRUE OR FALSE? INDICATE THE LINES THAT SUPPORT YOUR ANSWER (1 POINT).

1. As a rule, when the brain is very stressed, the skin is fresh and healthy.
2. Seldom does the exposure to cortisol prevent the creation of collagen.

3) CHOOSE a OR b, ONLY ONE CHOICE IS CORRECT ACCORDING TO THE TEXT (1 POINT).

- a) Cortisol is the responsible for the production of beneficial oils.
- b) According to Dr. Bowe, “50% of our stress is not the stressor itself.”

4) VOCABULARY (2 POINTS).

4.1 Choose one of the options below and find one word in the text for its definition (0.6 POINTS):

- a) A duty or misfortune that causes hardship, anxiety, or grief; a nuisance.
- b) Harsh and difficult to live in.

4.2 Find a synonym in the text for one of the two words below (0.6 POINTS):

- a) repair
- b) damage

4.3 For one of the following words from the text, give a synonym that fits the meaning of the text (0.8 POINTS):

- a) mass (line 1)
- b) types (line 4)

5) WRITE ABOUT THE FOLLOWING TOPIC USING BETWEEN 120-150 WORDS (4 POINTS).

If you were a doctor, what would you suggest that your patients should do to reduce their daily stress?