

EBAU Practice Examination (Islas Canarias)

	Stop Trying to Change In an effort to gain better control of our lives, lots of us make declarations of good intentions – promises to ourselves that we are going to do and be better in the future: “I’m going to make major changes.” And there are many self-help books that claim to show the way – books that tell you to tidy your room, to <u>take up</u> yoga or meditation (or both), to look for a new hobby or seek out new experiences. There are books that suggest you be more assertive or less assertive, that you start talking to <u>strangers</u> on the bus, etc. But I can’t help thinking that if one of these books was <u>genuinely</u> effective, we wouldn’t need all the others – we could simply follow the instructions. Unfortunately, despite what the books suggest, it’s not easy to make major changes. It takes time to develop new habits, and in the meantime there’s the ever present danger of falling back into your old ways. As the famous American author Mark Twain said, “<u>Giving up</u> smoking is easy; I’ve done it hundreds of times.” The biggest obstacle of all, it seems, is ... ourselves. The French novelist Marcel Proust once said that it’s not about travelling to new places, but about looking with new eyes. And of course, we can’t change our eyes – or the brain behind our eyes. The truth is that you can never stop being you. Perhaps the wisest sentence I ever heard is, “Wherever you go, there you are.” So, instead of trying to change ourselves, we should try to know ourselves. When you know yourself well, you realise that there are situations and places that are suitable for you, and those that aren’t. Just as different species of flowers need different conditions, so there are circumstances and conditions that will be especially good for you. Rather than trying to change yourself, change your circumstances. Put yourself in situations where the conditions suit you – discover what you are good at and when and where you prosper and flourish.
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1. Say whether the following sentences are TRUE or FALSE according to the text. COPY the evidence from the text. No marks will be given without the evidence. (1.5 points)

- a) The author has found one very effective self-help book.
- b) Mark Twain was successful in giving up smoking.
- c) Another good title for the text would be: “Change Yourself and Change Your Life”.

2. ANSWER the questions below. COPY no more than 10 words and/or a number from the text to answer each question. (1.5 points)

- a) Why do we need self books for ?
- b) What is the difference between real life and what self-help books tell us?
- c) What does the writer suggest?

3. WRITE a synonym (=), an opposite (≠), a definition or a sentence for each of the following words to show that you understand their meaning in the text. Use your own words. (1 point)

a) take up (line 4)

c) genuinely (line 7)

b) strangers (line 6)

d) giving up (line 11)

4. READ this conversation and COMPLETE your part. Write the numbers (1-6) and complete each sentence on your exam paper. (1.5 points)

You and your friend Neil are discussing a school project

Neil: I'm glad we're doing the geography project together. What country do you want to write about?

You: How about Mexico? (1) _____.

Neil: Really? Every summer?

You: Yes, (2) _____.

Neil: How fantastic! I wish my grandparents lived somewhere cool like that.

You: Well, I wish mine lived closer! Anyway, (3) _____?

Neil: One section is supposed to be on population and cultures, and the other one on topography and climate. It looks like a lot of work.

You: (4) _____.

Neil: OK, that's a good idea. Which one do you want?

You: I could do population and culture. (5) _____?

Neil: I'm not sure. That leaves me with topography and climate. Don't you think that's harder?

You: Well, let's get started and see how it goes. (6) _____?

Neil: By next Wednesday.

5. READ the following situations and WRITE what you would say in or about each one to show that you understand the context of the situation. Write between 10 and 25 words. (1.5 points)

a) You forgot to meet your friend. Apologise and explain what happened.

b) You are always the one in your group of friends who organises all of the weekend activities. Complain about it.

c) Your sibling is having a hard time making friends at his / her new school. Give him / her some advice.

6. WRITE a composition of about 120-150 words giving your opinion on the following topic (3 points):

Life teaches us more than books.