



Sèrie 1

I. Listening comprehension (3 points)

The Rise of Pregnant Stand-Up

In this radio programme you are going to hear some new words. Read and listen to them. Make sure you know what they mean.

stand-up – monòleg – monólogo

pregnant – embarassada - embarazada

stretch mark - estria – estría

booker – agent - agente

lactation – lactància - lactancia

Ready? Now read the questions on the following page. Read them carefully before listening to the radio programme. [Now listen to the interview.]

Interviewer: Men have dominated stand-up comedy for a long time. But as women have come to the stage more often, one kind of performance has been hard not to notice: pregnant comedians popping up on high-profile comedy specials, late-night shows, and in clubs. Udane Castle, a pregnant comedian based in Boston, is with us today to talk about this phenomenon. Hi, Udane! Let's start from the beginning: what is it like to be a stand-up comedian?

Udane: Good evening! I am thrilled to be here. Being a comedian is the most fun and depressing lifestyle that I could possibly imagine.

I get to perform in front of hundreds of people and work with some of the funniest people in the world. It's the biggest rush that I've ever felt, and at times it is totally crazy to think about what I do and who I do it with.

But comedy also isolates you from a lot of people. You spend all day looking at the world to find out what's funny or weird about it rather than just living in the moment and enjoying social experiences. A couple of years ago, for example, I stopped going to clubs or bars with my friends, because all I could think about was how silly it was that everyone considered going out like that to be the highlight of their week.

Interviewer: What about when you're on stage? What does it feel like?

Udane: Everything has to be perfect. Your tone, your rhythm, your cadence, and especially your timing. You have to be charming and charismatic even though you don't know any of the people in front of you. You have to connect with that room full of



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strangers. All while those spotlights are cooking you. You have no idea how much they make you sweat.

Interviewer: You are pregnant now. Do you use your pregnancy as a topic for your stand-ups?

Udane: I do! In comedy, pregnancy is no longer seen as something that gets in the way of the act and the microphone stand. In fact, a baby on the way is now a rich source of stand-up material: stretch marks, placentas and all!

Interviewer: Tell us about your models—the people you look up to. Where have you found inspiration so far?

Udane: I love Ali Wong's monologues—she has done two Netflix specials while pregnant. She is hilarious when she talks about lactation consultants and diapers. I also really like Kara Klenk, a stand-up comedian in Los Angeles.

Interviewer: Is this something new? What was it like before?

Udane: It is. Let me tell you just a couple of examples. When Joan Rivers, who is considered a pioneer of women in comedy by many critics, appeared on "The Ed Sullivan Show" in 1967 she was carrying her daughter, Melissa. She was not allowed to say she was pregnant and was asked to wear a really uncomfortable dress to hide it. Also, just four years ago, Ophira Eisenberg, a comedian and the host of the comedy show "Ask Me Another", said that some bookers had warned her that she might alienate her audience by talking about her pregnancy on stage.

Interviewer: What do you think has changed?

Udane: There is no comprehensive account of women in comedy, but comedians, club owners and bookers say there are more of them working today, even though they remain vastly outnumbered by men. And with women starting families later than they used to, female comics are now more likely to have established careers by the time they start having babies.

Interviewer: For women who have difficult pregnancies, I guess the travel often required for stand-up can be a real challenge. Do you know of any bad experiences so far?

Udane: Sadly, I do. Amy Schumer, a well-known comedian from New York, announced that she had to cancel the remainder of her tour last February. She had a pregnancy complication and was no longer allowed to fly. She wanted to push through and do her shows, but she had to prioritize her health and the baby's.

Interviewer: Do you think this tendency will last?



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Udane: I am not sure. As fun as it can be to play with expectations about maternal behavior and delicate pregnant ladies, many comics, including myself, look forward to the day that an expectant mom on stage is not unusual at all.

Adapted from the following sources:

“Amy Schumer, Ali Wong and the Rise of Pregnant Stand-Up”, *The New York Times*, April 19, 2019. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/19/arts/pregnant-comedians-amy-schumer-ali-wong.html>

“What does it feel like to be a stand-up comedian?”, *Quora*, <https://www.quora.com/What-does-it-feel-like-to-be-a-stand-up-comedian>



Clau de respostes

1. How does Udane feel about being a comedian?

She can tell it has both advantages and disadvantages.

2. Why does Udane not go to clubs or bars anymore?

Because she thinks there are more meaningful ways to pass the time.

3. What is Udane's problem with the lights on stage?

They make her feel too hot.

4. Which of the following is **NOT** true about Udane?

She lives in Los Angeles, like Kara Klenk.

5. What happened to Joan Rivers in 1967?

She was asked to keep her pregnancy a secret.

6. According to Udane, female comics

are more frequent today than they used to be.

7. Which of the following best summarizes Amy Schumer's experience?

She had to cancel some shows because of a medical condition.

8. What does Udane think about using pregnancy on stage?

She hopes that people will normalize the image of a pregnant woman on stage.



III. Reading comprehension

1. In this text, the word **immersion** (and **immersive**) refers to
leisure experiences where people can interact with series or movies scenes.
2. In the second paragraph, the author of the text
wonders why immersion experiences are popular now.
3. Netflix
has incorporated new ways of making profits.
4. Which of the following is NOT TRUE about the Stranger Things experience?
Only the show's actors take part in it.
5. The Queen's Ball
attracts female Bridgerton fans of several ages.
6. Elizabeth Cohen thinks that
the fans' contact with the fictional world has become normal.
7. Why does there seem to be a double standard for pop culture?
Because immersion tends to be criticised more often than sports fandom.
8. Immersion experiences
give people the chance to escape from real difficulties.



Sèrie 5

I. Listening comprehension (3 points)

Chocolate and Valentine's Day: A Sweet Story

In this radio programme you are going to hear some new words. Read and listen to them. Make sure you know what they mean.

whip fuetejar /azotar

elixir elixir/elixir

Ready? Now read the questions on the following page. Read them carefully before listening to the radio programme. [Now listen to the interview.]

Interviewer: Welcome to our weekly chat about holiday celebrations around the world. Today's guest is going to tell us about our sweetest holiday celebration, Valentine's Day. Today we know that a heart-shaped box of chocolates is a symbol, and an important part, of Valentine's Day, but how did that tradition arise? We know that chocolate is not native to Britain, or even to the United States. To find out more about Valentine's Day and chocolate, we've invited Dr. Anne Ward, a professor at King's College London, to give us some background about this sweet connection.

Welcome, Anne, to the program.

Anne: Thank you, I'm glad to be here.

Interviewer: Has chocolate always been a part of Valentine's Day? How did we get to celebrate Valentine's Day in the first place?

Anne: Chocolate is relatively new to Valentine's Day. The roots of Valentine's Day are ancient, but not entirely clear. It probably originated with the Romans and a fertility festival they held. But the Romans did not exchange candy, they sacrificed goats and dogs and **whipped** people, among other things. Eventually, hundreds of years later, this festival became a Christian feast associated with a martyred saint, Valentine. The Roman Emperor Claudius had had Valentine executed on February 14th in the third century A.D.

Interviewer: And how did this martyred saint become associated with love?

Anne: We don't know exactly, but we do know that in *Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer talks about St. Valentine's Day as a day in which birds gather together to choose their mates. That means that by the 14th century, there was a strong link between love, mating, and St. Valentine's Day.



Interviewer: So when does chocolate come into the picture?

Anne: Obviously, Chaucer didn't talk about chocolate. Chocolate was first introduced into Europe by the Spanish, who had seen people drink it in Mexico. Chocolate as a drink became very popular in Spain, and from there it traveled to other parts of Europe. It became very popular in France. And people at the time thought that chocolate was a sexual stimulant. Giacomo Casanova, the famous Italian adventurer and womanizer from Venice, called chocolate the "elixir of love."

Interviewer: Was chocolate always served as a drink?

Anne: Yes, until the mid-19th century, chocolate was always consumed as a drink. They didn't eat chocolate cake. Chocolate was very popular with Europe's kings. For example, documents from the 17th century show us that British King Charles II spent 30 times more money on chocolate than on tea. He certainly spent more money on chocolate than on his servants. For most people of that time, though, chocolate was a very extravagant, exotic product. Most never tasted it.

Interviewer: So when did we start eating chocolate bars? Today, we tend to think of chocolate as something that is eaten as a solid, not drunk as a liquid.

Anne: In the mid 19th century, specifically in 1847, the British chocolate maker J.S. Fry & Sons produced the first modern-day candy bar. The company combined cacao powder and sugar with cacao butter, the fat that is extracted from cacao beans, to form a paste that they could shape into bars. A few years later, they started making individual chocolates filled with flavored creams.

Interviewer: So was it this company, J.S. Fry & Sons, that linked chocolate to St. Valentine's Day?

Anne: No, chocolate didn't become an important part of St. Valentine's Day celebrations until a rival chocolate company, Cadbury, decided to start selling fancy boxes of chocolates. Cadbury knew that extreme ornamentation was very popular in Victorian England, so he came up with the idea of selling chocolate in boxes with heavily decorated lids and lace inside. And soon after that, Cadbury created boxes in the shape of a heart. Once the chocolates had been eaten, people would save the pretty boxes and use them to keep special mementos.

Interviewer: I see, you might say that we eat chocolate on St. Valentine's Day because it was a successful business strategy.

Anne: Yes, Cadbury's idea was a huge success. This year in the United States alone, companies will sell more than 40 million heart-shaped boxes of chocolate, many of them decorated with roses and lace. Surveys show that 70% of Americans prefer receiving chocolate as opposed to flowers as a Valentine's Day gift.



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Interviewer: And is chocolate really an aphrodisiac? You mentioned that Casanova thought it was.

Anne: Despite what Casanova and others have said, modern science has found little evidence to support chocolate as an aphrodisiac.

Interviewer: That's all we have time for today, Anne. Thank you for joining us today.

Anne: My pleasure.



Clau de respostes

1. Where and when did St. Valentine's Day celebrations originate?

With the Romans before Christ.

2. Which of the following best describes who Valentine was?

A martyr who was executed in ancient Rome.

3. Who first introduced chocolate to Europe?

The Spanish.

4. What did Europeans use to think chocolate was good for?

They thought it was an aid in sexual activity.

5. Which of the following is TRUE?

In the 18th century, a very few rich Europeans drank chocolate.

6. When did chocolate candy bars first appear?

In the middle of the 19th century, in Britain.

7. Which of the following occurred first?

J.S. Fry made individual, cream-filled chocolates.

8. What differentiated Cadbury's chocolates from those made by others?

They were sold in heart-shaped boxes that could be kept.



II. Reading comprehension

1. At the COP21 summit, countries

agreed to limit the increase in global temperatures to 2C.

2. The most ambitious target at the Paris climate summit...

was considered too difficult to reach by a number of countries.

3. The 1.5C mark...

represents a major difference with respect to the 2C target.

4. What prediction has the IPCC made?

Heat waves will become more frequent in the future.

5. Which of the following is TRUE?

If ice sheets in Antarctica become destabilized, sea levels will rise.

6. The number of people living in areas of extreme heat stress...

doesn't reach a hundred million today.

7. What are the IPCC estimates for the remainder of the 21st century?

Temperatures might start declining after 2050 if action is taken.

8. What does the IPCC predict will happen if no climate action is taken now?

Temperatures might rise by more than 4C by the end of the century.