



*Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca*

**PL0A - ESAME DI STATO DI LICEO LINGUISTICO**

**Tema di: LINGUA STRANIERA**

**TESTO LETTERARIO – LINGUA INGLESE**

*(comprensione e produzione in lingua straniera)*

There was music from my neighbor's house through the summer nights. In his blue gardens men and girls came and went like moths among the whisperings and the champagne and the stars. At high tide in the afternoon I watched his guests diving from the tower of his raft, or taking  
 5 the sun on the hot sand of his beach while his two motor-boats slit the waters of the Sound, drawing aquaplanes over cataracts of foam. On weekends his Rolls-Royce became an omnibus, bearing parties to and from the city between nine in the morning and long past midnight, while his station wagon scampered like a brisk yellow bug to meet all trains. And  
 10 on Mondays eight servants, including an extra gardener, toiled all day with mops and scrubbing-brushes and hammers and garden-shears, repairing the ravages of the night before.

Every Friday five crates of oranges and lemons arrived from a fruiterer in New York – every Monday these same oranges and lemons left his back  
 15 door in a pyramid of pulpless halves. There was a machine in the kitchen which could extract the juice of two hundred oranges in half an hour if a little button was pressed two hundred times by a butler's thumb.

At least once a fortnight a corps of caterers came down with several hundred feet of canvas and enough coloured lights to make a Christmas  
 20 tree of Gatsby's enormous garden. On buffet tables, garnished with glistening hors-d'oeuvre, spiced baked hams crowded against salads of harlequin designs and pastry pigs and turkeys bewitched to a dark gold. In the main hall a bar with a real brass rail was set up, and stocked with gins and liquors and with cordials so long forgotten that most of his female  
 25 guests were too young to know one from another.

By seven o'clock the orchestra has arrived, no thin five-piece affair, but a whole pitful of oboes and trombones and saxophones and viols and cornets and piccolos, and low and high drums. The last swimmers have  
 30 come in from the beach now and are dressing upstairs; the cars from New York are parked five deep in the drive, and already the halls and salons and verandas are gaudy with primary colors, and hair bobbed in strange new ways, and shawls beyond the dreams of Castile. The bar is in full swing, and floating rounds of cocktails permeate the garden outside, until the air is alive with chatter and laughter, and casual innuendo and introductions  
 35 forgotten on the spot, and enthusiastic meetings between women who never knew each other's names.

The lights grow brighter as the earth lurches away from the sun, and now the orchestra is playing yellow cocktail music, and the opera of voices pitches a key higher. Laughter is easier minute by minute, spilled with



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- 40 prodigality, tipped out at a cheerful word. The groups change more swiftly,  
 swell with new arrivals, dissolve and form in the same breath; already  
 there are wanderers, confident girls who weave here and there among the  
 stouter and more stable, become for a sharp, joyous moment the center of  
 a group, and then, excited with triumph, glide on through the sea-change  
 45 of faces and voices and color under the constantly changing light.  
 Suddenly one of these gypsies, in trembling opal, seizes a cocktail out  
 of the air, dumps it down for courage and, moving her hands like Frisco,  
 dances out alone on the canvas platform. A momentary hush; the orchestra  
 leader varies his rhythm obligingly for her, and there is a burst of chatter as  
 50 the erroneous news goes around that she is Gilda Gray's understudy from  
 the *Follies*. The party has begun.

From *The Great Gatsby* by Francis Scott Fitzgerald

**Comprehension**

**Answer the following questions:**

1. What does the passage describe?
2. "Men and girls came and went like moths" (line 2). What idea is conveyed through the simile?
3. What is the Rolls-Royce used for at weekends?
4. Identify all the people involved with arrangements and their respective jobs (lines 9 – 20).
5. In whose house and gardens do the facts described take place?
6. What idea is conveyed through the description of the food served? Justify your answer by quoting from the text.
7. What feeling does the description of the interpersonal relations conjure up?
8. How does the party begin?

**Summarize** the content of the passage in about 150 words.

**Composition:**

Do you go to parties or organise any? Are they similar to the one described in the passage? What do you think parties are an occasion for? Discuss your views on the topic in a paragraph of some 300 words.