Dog Training and the Myth of Alpha-Male Dominance

Dogs are descended from wolves. Wild wolves live in hierarchical groups in which the aggressive alpha male rules over everyone else. Therefore, humans need to dominate their pet dogs to get them to behave. This logic has dominated the canine conversation for more than five years. But many experts say alpha-male dominance philosophy is based on old-fashioned animal studies. The debate has its roots in 1940s studies of confined wolves that, when forced to live together, naturally competed for dominance. Acclaimed animal behaviourist Rudolph Schenkel first introduced the theory of alpha-male dominance after observing male and female dogs in captivity. As it turns out, Schenkel’s research was based on a faulty premise: wolves in the wild, says L. David Mech, founder of the Minnesota-based International Wolf Center, actually live in nuclear families, in which the mother and father are the group leaders and their offspring’s status is based on birth order. Mech, who used to support alpha-wolf theory but has changed his opinion in recent years, says the group’s hierarchy does not involve anyone fighting to the top of the group, because just like in a human family, the youngsters naturally follow their parents’ lead.

It is leadership by showing a good example, not dominance, that owners should try to practice in relation to their dogs. Dominant-submissive relationships that do occur in nature are a means to distribute food and other basic needs. This problem rarely exists between dogs and their owners. House pets, on the contrary, bark too much, jump up on you, ignore your commands, and growl at you because they have been rewarded for this conduct or because they have not been trained to act differently.

Whether you are at the beginning of your studies or at the very end, you surely have heard countless times so far that studying is the best period of a person’s life. At first glance it seems like a cliché, which people always pronounce with a certain dose of sadness. With all the commitments, strict professors and difficult exams for which one needs to study for months, it does not really seem to be an amusing period of life. However, if you look at things from a different angle, at the end you definitely will come to the same conclusion. It is absolutely worthwhile.

You will enjoy freedom because you are finally on your own and you can arrange your free time the way you please. The students that live outside their hometown get to really experience this advantage. You can do or stop doing things you couldn’t even dream of in your parents’ home. A spontaneous party or a stroll at 4 am, why not?

Going away from home can be both stressful and difficult. Nevertheless, there are very few things that will contribute to your personal development and self-reliance as much as this experience. If you have decided to study in a foreign country, then you are facing the real challenge. When you get used to it, there are no limits for you anymore. And if you manage to work part-time at university while you study, it can be a very rewarding experience.

In the end, the best moment comes when you successfully overcome all the problems and obstacles, tasks and obligations that the study brings, and you are finally able to say that you are a grown-up. You are gradually changing every single day you spend as a student. Don’t be surprised if you start your academic education as one person, and finish it as another, a better one, for sure.

Adapted from “University is the best time of your life,” Student Voices, October 11th, 2017. <https://rb.gy/xiqvv8>

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**QUESTIONS**

**B.1.- Are the following statements TRUE or FALSE? Copy the evidence from the text. No marks are given for only TRUE or FALSE.**

a) Living by yourself makes you improve as an individual.

b) It is not advisable to work and study at the same time.

(Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

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

a) Mention two advantages of living on your own when studying at university.

b) When do students feel they are at the peak of their university experience?

(Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

**B.3.- Find the words in the text that mean:**

a) innumerable (paragraph 1)

b) organize (paragraph 2)

c) hard (paragraph 3)

d) get over (paragraph 4)

(Puntuación máxima: 1 punto)

**B.4.- Complete the following sentences. Use the appropriate form of the word in brackets when given.**

a) More companies _____ (hire) me years ago if I _____ (have) a university degree.

b) Parents assume their kids learn the things they _____ (interest) in, while children look forward to _____ (satisfy) all their curiosity in a particular field.

c) Most students will agree this is _____ (precious) life period, but they only become aware of it _____ those days are behind.

d) I wish I_____ (take up) more extracurricular activities years ago in order to meet someone _____ shared my passion.

(Puntuación máxima: 2 puntos)

**B.5.- Write about 150 to 200 words on the following topic.**

Do you think studying abroad can make you grow as a person? Justify your answer.

(Puntuación máxima: 3 puntos)
Question A.1

a) TRUE: “The debate has its roots in 1940s studies of confined wolves that, when forced to live together, naturally competed for dominance.”

b) TRUE: “Dominant-submissive relationships that do occur in nature are a means to distribute food and other basic needs.”

Question A.2

Key ideas

a) Because this theory misinterprets how wolves live in the natural world. In nature, wolves live in families. Consequently, their relationships are based on family roles and not on dominance.

b) Pets’ misbehaviour is caused because their owners reward them when they behave incorrectly, and because of the lack of proper training.

Question A.3

a) old-fashioned

b) faulty

c) lead

d) commands

Question A.4

a) by ------- where

b) If / In case / Should / As long as ------- do not pay

c) who ------- wrote

d) My friend asked me whether/if I preferred having dogs or cats at my home.
Question B.1

a) **TRUE**: “Nevertheless, there are very few things that will contribute to your personal development and self-reliance as much as this experience.”

b) **FALSE**: “And if you manage to work part-time at university while you study it can be a very rewarding experience.”

Question B.2

Key ideas

a) You will be alone and free to decide what to do with your time. In addition, there will be room for doing things you never dreamt of, for instance going out late at night and partying.

b) Students find they are in their best moment when eventually they get over their difficulties and feel that they have matured as persons.

Question B.3

a) countless

b) arrange

c) difficult

d) overcome

Question B.4

a) would have hired ------- had had

b) are interested ------- satisfying

c) the most precious ------- when / once / after

d) had taken up ------- who / that
CRITERIOS ESPECÍFICOS DE CORRECCIÓN

El ejercicio incluirá cinco preguntas, pudiendo obtenerse por la suma de todas ellas una puntuación máxima de 10 puntos. Junto a cada pregunta se especifica la puntuación máxima otorgada. La valoración y los objetivos de cada una de estas preguntas son los siguientes:

**Pregunta 1**: Hasta 2 puntos. Se trata de medir exclusivamente la comprensión lectora. El estudiante deberá decidir si dos frases que se le presentan son verdaderas o falsas, copiando a continuación únicamente el fragmento del texto que justifica su elección. Se otorgará 1 punto por cada apartado. Se calificará con 0 puntos la opción elegida que no vaya justificada.

**Pregunta 2**: Hasta 2 puntos. Se pretende comprobar dos destrezas: la comprensión lectora y la expresión escrita, mediante la formulación de dos preguntas abiertas que el estudiante deberá contestar basándose en la información del texto, pero utilizando sus propias palabras en la respuesta. Cada una de las preguntas valdrá 1 punto, asignándose 0,5 puntos a la comprensión de la pregunta y del texto, y 0,5 a la corrección gramatical y ortográfica de la respuesta.

**Pregunta 3**: Hasta 1 punto. Esta pregunta trata de medir el dominio del vocabulario en el aspecto de la comprensión. El estudiante demostrará esta capacidad localizando en el párrafo que se le indica un sinónimo, adecuado al contexto, de cuatro palabras o definiciones. Se adjudicará 0,25 por cada apartado.

**Pregunta 4**: Hasta 2 puntos. Con esta pregunta se pretende comprobar los conocimientos gramaticales del estudiante, en sus aspectos morfológicos y/o sintácticos. Se presentarán oraciones con huecos que el estudiante deberá completar o rellenar. También podrán presentarse oraciones para ser transformadas u otro tipo de ítem. Se adjudicará 0,25 a cada “hueco en blanco” y en el caso de las transformaciones o ítems de otro tipo se concederá 0,5 con carácter unitario.

**Pregunta 5**: Hasta 3 puntos. Se trata de una redacción, de 150 a 200 palabras, en la que el estudiante podrá demostrar su capacidad para expresarse libremente en inglés. Se propondrá una única opción y se otorgarán 1,5 puntos por el buen dominio de la lengua – léxico, estructura sintáctica, etc. – y 1,5 por la madurez en la expresión de las ideas – organización, coherencia y creatividad. Para corregir esta redacción se utilizará la siguiente rúbrica de evaluación:

Puntuación: de 0 – 3

Cada apartado se valorará entre 0 y 0,5, según se ajuste a lo que figura en el descriptor de “Excelente” (con la nota máxima de 0,5) o de “Deficiente” (con la nota mínima de 0).
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