

Part 2: Reading comprehension

IS THERE SUCH A THING AS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT?

The science of first impressions is complicated, influenced by things outside of our control, neurological processes that we don't understand and inaccurate stereotypes.

It takes less than a second to form an **assessment** of someone's face. These first impressions predict all kinds of important characteristics, not just attractiveness. These impressions we make in a second tend to be shared by the majority of the people. But that doesn't necessarily make them correct.

"A first impression could be **misleading**," says professor Alexander Todorov, author of the book *Face Value: The Irresistible Influence of First Impressions* and a professor at Princeton University. "Trying to figure out what a person is like from a simple exposure is basically ridiculous. We only make first impressions about strangers. So naturally they are superficial."

Whether our predictions are accurate or not, we make them quickly and we stick to them. Even if we are given more time than a second to judge the attractiveness of a face, we are unlikely to arrive at a different conclusion. According to professor Todorov, there are three universal qualities that people infer from a face: attractiveness, **trustworthiness** and dominance.

In these first impressions, men and women are not judged equally. Women who appear masculine are evaluated negatively whereas men would be evaluated positively. This applies to both genders, so men and women [both] make negative assessments of masculine-looking women."

First impressions of faces are superficial, general and can be inaccurate. If we think about this in the context of dating apps, we also have to think about the effects of how a photo is taken. The photos we choose to publish on dating profiles are those that present ourselves in the best light. Not just chosen for attractiveness, they are also there to reflect personality and social cues, like adventurousness or generosity.

First impressions are rapid but **shallow** and can change over time if you have better information, like when your date starts speaking. "The only way to tell whether two people will really like each other is when they have to talk. People don't make good predictions for compatibility without talking," says professor Todorov.

Professor Todorov has categorised all the conversational strategies we use which should lead to a second date and he came to several conclusions: "The traditional dating habit was that men approach women and we have found that it is men who approach women when dating online, too," says professor Todorov. "But the most interesting part is how few gender differences there were in the types of strategy used."

Men and women are more similar than they are different. Being sincere about the type of person you are looking for is more effective than talking about your wealth, profession or whether you are looking for love.

"Something that is unique about online dating is that you have a longer time to figure out if your date is going to meet your expectations," says Todorov. "Sometimes with online dating you have a tendency to build people up in your head which can lead to disappointment. We can idealise people when we don't have a lot of information to go on."

Having said that, there have been several marriages from these speed-dating meetings, so there must be some logic in there, says Todorov: "Some people now have children, so it produced some nice results".

Text adapted from an article by
William PARK. *BBC News* [online] (April 3, 2019)

assessment: valoració / valoración

misleading: enganyós / engañoso

trustworthiness: confiança / confianza

shallow: superficial

QUESTIONS

Choose the best answer according to the text. Only ONE answer is correct.

[3 points: 0.375 points for each correct answer. Wrong answers will be penalized by deducting 0.125 points. There is no penalty for unanswered questions.]

		Espai per al corrector/a		
		Correcta	Incorrecta	No contestada
1.	According to professor Todorov ☐ we only make first impressions about people we don't know. ☐ we make first impressions only if they are misleading. ☐ our first impressions about someone are usually wrong. ☐ we usually share our first impression with many other people.	☐	☐	☐
2.	Once people have made their first impressions ☐ they may change them quite quickly if their opinions are not accurate. ☐ they will change their opinion if they are not sure of the person they have just met. ☐ they will hardly ever change their first opinion about a person they have just met. ☐ they always change their mind soon afterwards if given more time to judge a person.	☐	☐	☐
3.	Which one of these sentences is TRUE? ☐ In first impressions women and men make similar judgments. ☐ In first impressions women and men are judged similarly. ☐ In first impressions feminine-looking men are badly considered. ☐ In first impressions masculine-looking men are badly judged.	☐	☐	☐
4.	According to the text, the photos people publish on their dating profiles are ☐ their best ones in order to reflect their personalities only. ☐ a mixture of fake and real ones; people don't want to show how they really are. ☐ very superficial in order not to show one's real personality and generosity. ☐ chosen to show physical and personality traits.	☐	☐	☐
5.	Prof. Todorov affirms that ☐ first impressions are always reliable even when our date starts speaking. ☐ people can change their first impressions when they start talking to their date. ☐ talking to our date reinforces our first impressions, making them more certain. ☐ people in general make good predictions from their first impressions.	☐	☐	☐
6.	According to professor Todorov, the conversational strategies used in online dating show ☐ that women talk more about themselves than men do. ☐ that men talk more about their profession than women do. ☐ that men and women use quite different approaches to dating. ☐ that men and women take similar approaches to dating.	☐	☐	☐
7.	If you want to find your perfect date, Prof. Todorov recommends that you be ☐ talkative when you meet your date. ☐ honest when you talk to your date. ☐ a little vague when talking about your interests. ☐ responsible when you talk about your wealth.	☐	☐	☐
8.	At the end of the article we can come to the conclusion that speed-dating meetings ☐ are the only way to get married successfully. ☐ are successful only if you want to have children. ☐ sometimes fulfil people's expectations. ☐ are a very flawed system of meeting people.	☐	☐	☐
Recompte de les respostes		☐	☐	☐
Nota de comprensió escrita				

Part 3: Writing

Choose ONE topic. Your answer should be 125-150 words in length. There is no specific penalty for exceeding 150 words in length. Extra points are not given for exceeding 150 words.
[4 points]

1. Some people believe that making a lot of money and being famous are the true signs of happiness. Do you agree? **Write an opinion essay.**
2. Animal activists all over Europe have organized campaigns against displaying live animals in zoos because they say that animals in captivity suffer from boredom and stress, and that keeping animals in cages is cruel. As a result, many European cities are considering closing their zoos. What do you think? Is it cruel to keep animals in a zoo? **Write a for-and-against essay** for zoos.
3. Most young people today use some form of social media, and many actively use several forms. **Write an essay** describing the role of social media in your life.

Grammar	
Vocabulary	
Text	
Maturity	
Total	
Nota de la redacció	