

THE DAY I MET THE STRANGE AND INSCRUTABLE STEVE JOBS

One morning in Paris six years ago, I found myself sitting opposite Steve Jobs. I was feeling really excited, as getting an interview with Jobs had become an obsession. In recent years, particularly since his health had declined, he had rarely talked directly to the media. But then, one day I got the news: I'd been given an interview.

Over the years I'd built up a vague impression of what I could expect: there were stories about the notorious "**flamethrower** treatment" that he would give to anyone who made a mistake. Beyond this, I expected him to be something like the other captains of industry that I had come across, with magnetic personalities and enormous presence.

However, the reality turned out to be very different. The interview took place at Apple's Paris Expo, an exhibition of the company's latest technology. Once he had finished taking questions from the media I was asked to accompany him on a walk around the Expo. Like everything else in Jobs' life, the program was meant to be strictly managed: a quick turn around the **show floor**, and then downstairs to his temporary office for our interview. But as soon as Jobs began his walk, a wild group of Apple fans suddenly appeared, shouting his name and surrounding us. Jobs visibly **shrank** as they approached. His bodyguards quickly took him downstairs. A public relations officer invited me to follow him. Suddenly I was in a room with the man I'd been running after for years. But it wasn't what I expected at all. Yes, the man sitting in front of me looked like the Steve Jobs I knew. But the Steve Jobs I was used to seeing was always in command, always in control, when launching new products. This one, however, seemed frightened and a little confused.

We had half an hour scheduled to talk. I kept looking up at the clock. His assistant indicated that he still needed time to **settle**. Clearly disturbed by his brief encounter with the real world, he came to sit opposite me and adopted a defensive posture. Although we talked for 30 minutes, it wasn't a fluent and easy conversation. He spent too much of his time avoiding questions that he felt were inappropriate. I asked him about Apple's environmental policy, which had received some criticism recently. He rejected the **claim** that Apple's products were less green than its rivals with the same argument that he had always used in press conferences. When I pushed for more details he simply refused to go any further.

I mentioned his health. It was a year after he had had a pancreatic cancer operation, and it seemed that he had beaten the disease successfully. He refused to give me any details about it. For most of my time with him, it seemed he just wasn't mentally in the room. My presence seemed to be another reminder that not everything could be controlled.

This was, after all, a man whose life was so carefully organized that he rarely had to do anything that he didn't want to. He used to spend most of his life in or around Apple's headquarters in Silicon Valley. He followed a strict routine. He was so used to getting his way that when his cancer first appeared he tried to beat it simply through focusing on a diet of fruit and vegetables. It didn't work.

All in all, I was supposed to have just met the most attractive character that the business world has seen in decades. In person, Steve Jobs turned out to be the most inscrutable and peculiar **entrepreneur** I'd ever interviewed.

Text adapted from *The Times* (August 27, 2011)

flamethrower: llençaflames (en el text, abrupte, brusc) / lanzallamas (en el texto, abrupto, brusco)

show floor: pavelló firal / pabellón ferial

shrank: encongir-se / encogerse

settle: calmar-se / calmarse

claim: acusació / acusación

entrepreneur: empresari / empresario

Part 1: Reading comprehension

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

[0.5 points each correct answer. Wrong answers will be penalized by deducting 0.16 points. There is no penalty for unanswered questions.]

		Espai per al corrector/a		
		Correcta	Incorrecta	No contestada
1.	The narrator felt excited about having an interview with Steve Jobs because... ☐ Steve Jobs had been a myth for him. ☐ Steve Jobs refused to talk to the media. ☐ Steve Jobs never used to grant interviews in Paris. ☐ Steve Jobs hardly ever granted interviews.	☐	☐	☐
2.	When the narrator talks about “the notorious flamethrower treatment”, he means that... ☐ Jobs was a very strict person. ☐ Jobs was a very magnetic person. ☐ Jobs worked very hard every day. ☐ Jobs was obsessed about the computer world.	☐	☐	☐
3.	When the narrator was going to interview Jobs, he found... ☐ him quite different from what he had expected. ☐ him very similar to what he had expected. ☐ him ready to have a long talk. ☐ out that Jobs was not going to answer any questions.	☐	☐	☐
4.	According to the text, Jobs adopted a defensive posture because he was... ☐ angry with the interviewer. ☐ not feeling comfortable in Paris. ☐ still influenced by the incident with the fans. ☐ afraid of the interviewer.	☐	☐	☐
5.	When asked about Apple’s environmental policies... ☐ Jobs refused to answer the question, as he usually did. ☐ Jobs simply repeated the same explanation he always gave. ☐ Jobs answered that the question was inappropriate. ☐ Jobs gave a new point of view about the topic.	☐	☐	☐
6.	When the narrator mentioned his health Jobs... ☐ answered that he had beaten his disease successfully. ☐ said that he had had a cancer operation. ☐ gave a short answer with no more details. ☐ simply did not answer.	☐	☐	☐
7.	In his everyday life, Steve Jobs... ☐ followed a well-established routine. ☐ did not follow a rigorous routine. ☐ used to spend his time working in his office. ☐ was constantly travelling to sell his products.	☐	☐	☐
8.	By defining Steve Jobs as “inscrutable and peculiar”, the narrator means that Jobs was... ☐ a hard-working person. ☐ a model for the business world. ☐ a genius of this century. ☐ difficult to define.	☐	☐	☐
		Correctes	Incorrectes	No contestades
Recompte de les respostes		☐	☐	☐
Nota de comprensió escrita				

Part 2: Writing

Choose ONE topic. Write about number 1 or 2. Minimum length: 100 words.

[4 points]

1. Imagine you are a journalist who had the chance to interview Steve Jobs, asking him questions about his life and his technological products. Write down that dialogue.
2. Write an opinion essay about the following question: Is it possible to live without computers nowadays?

Grammar	
Vocabulary	
Text	
Maturity	
Total	
Nota de la redacció	