

**DAY111 Women hold most government positions in Spain**



Women are on the rise in Spanish politics. Spain's newly-formed government consists of eleven women and six men. The newly-elected socialist Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez has put women in some of the biggest positions in his cabinet, including head of defence, economy, education and finance. Spain now has the highest

proportion of women in top government positions than anywhere else in Europe. In a televised statement, Mr Sanchez said his new government consisted of people who wanted to move Spain forward. He said: "All are highly qualified and bring a vocation for public service and reflect the best of Spain. [They are]...open to the world but anchored in the European Union."

Mr Sanchez seems an unlikely leader. His Socialist party holds just 84 of the 350 seats in Spain's parliament. He took office on Friday, replacing the unpopular conservative leader Mariano Rajoy. Ex-prime minister Rajoy was the focus of a corruption scandal and had become unpopular because of his austerity measures. Sanchez promised to bring change to Spain. However, he has to work quickly to turn Spain's economy around. He has promised to call elections in less than two years, which may not be enough time to amend the outgoing government's

budget for 2018. One of his biggest challenges will be rebuilding relations with the northeastern region of Catalonia.

**WORD CHECK UP**

**Proportion**

**Vocation**

**Austerity**

**GIVE YOUR BEST ANSWER**

The women in Spain's government are in more junior roles. T / F

No EU country has a higher ratio of women in top government roles. T / F

Spain's leader said his government wants a vacation for public service. T / F

Spain's leader's party holds less than 50% of seats in parliament. T / F

What medium did Pedro Sanchez use to make his statement?

What did Pedro Sanchez say his government brings to public service?

What did Pedro Sanchez say his government was anchored in?

How many parliamentary seats does Pedro Sanchez's party hold?

## Slack off !!!

Mr. Wang	So, Sutton, why do you want to work here ?
Sutton	I really love photography. It's one of my passions.
Mr. Wang	Why did you leave your last job ?
Sutton	I was actually asked to leave.
Mr. Wang	Can you tell me why ?
Sutton	My boss said I <b>slacked off</b> too much.
Mr. Wang	Thanks for coming in, Sutton. I'll be in touch.

### Explanation :

**Slack off** - Decrease in activity or intensity

*Example :* When the project fell behind schedule again, she thought we were **slacking off**.

### KEY WORDS AND PHRASE

1. Passion
2. Amend
3. Improbable

## DAY 113 Chinese couples asked to take divorce exam



Authorities in China are looking at a new way of halting the country's increasing divorce rate. In parts of China, couples who file for divorce are being asked to take an exam to ascertain how much they still might love each other and whether or not their marriage can be

salvaged. Up to half of all Chinese marriages between those who were born in the 1980s have ended in divorce. China's rising divorce rate has been attributed to the increased empowerment of working women, who are more financially independent and less reliant on a partner. Media sources say the rise of social media and dating apps are adding to the problem, as there are increasing numbers of extramarital affairs.

The divorce tests have had a mixed reaction in China. Liu Chunling, the director of a marriage-registration office, told reporters that the test was aimed at reducing the divorce rate and preventing "impulsive divorces". She said: "Only the harmony of millions of family units can achieve the harmony of an entire society." Chinese Internet users were less enthusiastic about the 15-question test being used to determine a couple's love for each other. One post on the Weibo social media site asked: "So if you remember your wedding anniversary you can't

divorce? Divorce isn't a case of amnesia." Another wrote: "They are adults and they have the right to divorce. This is interference in domestic affairs."

### WORD CHECK UP

**Halt**

**Ascertain**

**Attribute**

### GIVE YOUR BEST ANSWER

Every Chinese couple in China must now take an exam to get divorced. T / F

Up to half of all marriages between people in their 80s end in divorce. T / F

One reason for higher divorce rates is there are fewer working women. T / F

More people are cheating on their partners because of social media. T / F

What kind of apps have added to the rise in divorce rates?

What kind of affairs are people having more of?

What kind of reaction have the divorce exams had in China?

What kind of divorces is the test aimed at preventing?

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**Draw a blank !!!**

<b>Ruby</b>	How did you do on the test ?
<b>Gigi</b>	Horrible. As soon as the paper was in front of me, I just <b>drew a blank</b> . I don't know what I'm going to do.
<b>Ruby</b>	Don't let it get you down too much.
<b>Gigi</b>	Yeah, but now I really need to pull up my GPA.
<b>Ruby</b>	Maybe you can do some extra credit.
<b>Gigi</b>	Extra credit won't help much at this point. I need a miracle. Maybe I'll call a priest.

*Explanation :*

**Draw a blank** - Fail to find or remember something

*Example :* He looks familiar but I've **drawn a blank** on his name.

**KEY WORDS AND PHRASE**

- 1. Horrible
- 2. Intrusion
- 3. Impulsive

## DAY 115 Man aims to swim across the Pacific Ocean



A French swimmer will try to become the first person to swim across the Pacific Ocean. Ben Lecomte, 51, set off from Japan on Tuesday on his superhuman task of crossing the ocean. It will take

him more than six months to complete the 9,000-km swim. He will have to swim for eight hours a day to reach his target on the west coast of the USA. He will also have to face many dangers. There will be sharks, jellyfish, storms, rough seas, and very low water temperatures. He will also have to fight exhaustion and any injuries he picks up along the way. However, Mr Lecomte said: "The mental part is much more important than the physical. You have to make sure you always think about something positive."

Lecomte has been training for six years to take up this challenge. He has practised every day during that time by swimming in the sea. This is to make sure he is in top physical condition. He has also been training his mind. It will be a very lonely swim and he needs to be mentally tough. Lecomte said he is doing the swim to raise awareness of climate change, the effects of plastic rubbish in the ocean, and the effects of the Fukushima nuclear disaster on the ocean. Scientists will also study his body to monitor how extreme exercise affects the heart. In 1998,

Lecomte made the first solo trans-Atlantic swim. It took him 73 days to cover the 6,400km. When he reached dry land, his first words were, "never again".

### WORD CHECK UP

**Exhaustion**

**Fatigue**

**Venture**

### Give your best answer

The man must swim for at least eight hours every day. T / F

The man said the physical part is more important than the mental part. T / F

The man has been training for over ten years for this challenge. T / F

The man said he has also been training his mind. T / F

How much of a temperature rise caused a 1% decrease in learning?

What is the name of the research paper?

What other thing did the researchers say global warming might affect?

How much money could the average American student lose?

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