

**CONCORSO PUBBLICO, PER ESAMI, A TEMPO INDETERMINATO DI CATEGORIA D -
POSIZIONE ECONOMICA 1, AREA TECNICA, TECNICO-SCIENTIFICA ED
ELABORAZIONE DATI - PER LA COPERTURA DI COMPLESSIVI N. 5 PROFILI
TECNICO-SPECIALISTICI A SOSTEGNO DELL'INNOVAZIONE E
ALL'INTERNAZIONALIZZAZIONE DEI PROCESSI FORMATIVI DI ATENEO PER I
SEGUENTI AMBITI LINGUISTICI: INGLESE, FRANCESE E TEDESCO (CODICE
IDENTIFICATIVO CONCORSO: AM5D1T23).**

PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 1 (AMBITO INGLESE)

- 1) Il Direttore Generale dell'Università

- 2) Le periferiche di input e output

- 3) Should pronunciation and intonation be explicitly addressed to develop speaking skills? If so, at what levels preferably?

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 2 (AMBITO INGLESE)

- 1) Il Regolamento didattico di Ateneo

- 2) I fogli elettronici di calcolo

- 3) How can task-based learning be integrated in a course of general English for B1-B2 university students? You can think of either an on-site class context or a self-access learning platform.

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 3 (AMBITO INGLESE)

- 1) Il procedimento di nomina del Rettore

- 2) La rete internet

- 3) What role would you attribute to grammar in B1-B2 courses held in the context of a university language centre? And in a Foreign Language degree course?

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 4 (AMBITO INGLESE)

1) Il Rettore

2) I virus informatici

3) What are the challenges of teaching C1+/C2 classes in a Foreign Language degree course?

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 5 (AMBITO INGLESE) – PROVA NON ESTRATTA

- 1) Il Consiglio di Amministrazione

- 2) La sicurezza dei sistemi informatici

- 3) What activities can be planned to expand vocabulary at B1 level? You can think of self-access learning platforms or on-site classes.

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 6 (AMBITO INGLESE) – PROVA NON ESTRATTA

- 1) Il Collegio dei Revisori dei Conti

- 2) La posta elettronica certificata

- 3) Which activities can be planned to develop productive abilities in line with the CEFR's action-oriented approach? You can think of a scenario with either B2 or C1 students.

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 7 (AMBITO INGLESE) – PROVA NON ESTRATTA

- 1) Il Dipartimento universitario

- 2) Il Back up dei dati informatici

- 3) Which activities can be planned to develop receptive abilities in line with the CEFR's action-oriented approach? You can think of a scenario with either B2 or C1 students.

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 1 (AMBITO FRANCESE) – PROVA NON ESTRATTA

1) Il Nucleo di Valutazione

2) La web conference e i principali applicativi

3) Quelles capacités l'épreuve de dictée développe-t-elle ? Comment et pourquoi peut-elle profiter aux étudiants de la filière de Langues étrangères ?

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 2 (AMBITO FRANCESE)

1) Il Dottorato di ricerca

2) I social networking

3) Quelles capacités l'épreuve de traduction développe-t-elle ? Comment et pourquoi peut-elle profiter aux étudiants de la filière de Langues étrangères ?

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 3 (AMBITO FRANCESE)

1) Il Senato Accademico

2) I motori di ricerca

3) Comment l'hypothèse s'exprime-t-elle ? Comment l'expliqueriez-vous à une classe de niveau B2 du CECRL ?

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 4 (AMBITO FRANCESE)

- 1) Il Direttore Generale delle Università

- 2) I programmi di videoscrittura

- 3) Qu'est-ce que le « futur dans le passé » ? Comment l'expliqueriez-vous à une classe de niveau B2 du CECRL ?

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 5 (AMBITO FRANCESE) – PROVA NON ESTRATTA

- 1) La riforma universitaria introdotta dalla Legge Gelmini

- 2) L'estensione dei file (.exe, .doc, .pdf)

- 3) Comment présenteriez-vous à vos étudiants l'omission de NE de la négation verbale ? À quel niveau du CECRL est-il envisageable d'introduire la notion de « variation » et à travers quels types d'activités ?

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 6 (AMBITO FRANCESE) – PROVA NON ESTRATTA

1) Io Statuto di Ateneo

2) L'hardware e il software

3) En quoi consistent les signes diacritiques qui composent le système orthographique ? Plus particulièrement, comment expliqueriez-vous l'emploi des accents à des étudiants débutants ?

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 7 (AMBITO FRANCESE)

- 1) Gli organi del Dipartimento universitario

- 2) I virus e i malware

- 3) En quoi consistent les constructions proprement françaises du futur proche, du passé récent et du présent progressif ? À quel niveau du CECRL et à travers quelles activités les proposeriez-vous à vos étudiants ?

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 1 (AMBITO TEDESCO)

- 1) Il Consiglio degli Studenti

- 2) La posta elettronica

- 3) Aus welchem Grund und mit welcher Idee ist das Sprachlabor in den Siebzigerjahren des 20. Jhs. entstanden und welche Funktion bzw. Aufgabe hat es heute?

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 2 (AMBITO TEDESCO)

- 1) L'autonomia universitaria

- 2) Le periferiche del computer

- 3) Welche Rolle spielt die Grammatik heute im modernen Fremdsprachenunterricht und wie sollte die Vermittlung der Grammatik aussehen?

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 3 (AMBITO TEDESCO)

- 1) Il Regolamento di Amministrazione Finanza e Contabilità di Ateneo

- 2) Le periferiche di input e output

- 3) Welche neuen Herausforderungen ergeben sich im Fremdsprachenunterricht durch die zunehmende Digitalisierung?

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 4 (AMBITO TEDESCO) – PROVA NON ESTRATTA

- 1) Il Regolamento Generale di Ateneo

- 2) La rete intranet

- 3) Welche Prinzipien bzw. Strategien sind in einem modernen Fremdsprachenunterricht für den Wortschatzerwerb wichtig?

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 5 (AMBITO TEDESCO)

1) Il personale docente universitario

2) Il cloud

3) Fremdsprachenlernende benutzen heutzutage kaum noch Wörterbücher.
Was ist Ihrer Meinung nach der Grund dafür?

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 6 (AMBITO TEDESCO) – PROVA NON ESTRATTA

- 1) Il reclutamento del personale universitario

- 2) Le cartelle informatiche in condivisione

- 3) Wie sieht die Rolle des Fremdsprachenlehrenden heute, 2023, aus?

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PROVA D'ESAME: ITEM N. 7 (AMBITO TEDESCO) – PROVA NON ESTRATTA

- 1) Il finanziamento del sistema universitario

- 2) I sistemi antivirus

- 3) Für das autonome Lernen im Sinne des lifelong learning sollten die Fremdsprachenlernenden bestimmte Strategien erwerben. Nennen Sie Beispiele.

Domande extra per AMBITO INGLESE

What are the pros and cons of remote classes via Zoom or Microsoft teams? What strategies can be implemented to make them work with B1 - B2 students?

Discuss the use of authentic materials for creating listening activities to B1 and lower-level students in the context of university degree courses.

How can Artificial Intelligence (e.g. softwares like Chat GPT) be used for language learning in university language programmes? Alternatively you can discuss any app for language learning.

Reading B1

A Gym flier

About us

You don't want just a gym membership. You want a membership that means something. And that means you need support, expert help and a community.

Best Body Fitness isn't just a gym: it's a full-service fitness membership made for you.

Here's how it works:

STEP ONE: Your assessment

We begin with an assessment session. This is a chance for you to see what we do at Best Body. Our assessment plans are no-cost and no-risk. We'll also make a training plan specifically for you.

STEP TWO: Your training

When you decide to become a Best Body member, we show you what to do, how to do it and why you are doing it. After a few sessions with an expert private trainer you will feel comfortable working out on your own. But don't worry, we'll always be nearby if you have questions.

STEP THREE: Your membership

Membership works on a month-to-month basis. There are no sign-up fees and no cancellation fees. Start and stop whenever you want. And the best part? Our fees are the most competitive in the whole downtown area.

STEP FOUR: Your community

At Best Body Fitness, we see everyone as part of a big team. And when you work with a team, you can do great things. Join any of our specialised classes, led by expert instructors. Come to our nutrition classes. Participate in our regular social events. Everything is included in your fee.

Finally, we wanted to share with you some reasons why our members say that they have chosen us over any other fitness centre in the city.

It's so EASY

- Easy to start, stop, cancel or refund a membership
- Easy to access – we're open 24/7, we never close
- Easy to do exercise – we have lots of equipment, no long wait
- Easy results – our trainers and equipment give you success, fast

Reading B1

THE IG NOBEL PRIZES

Organized by the scientific humor magazine *Annals of Improbable Research (AIR)*, the Ig Nobel Prizes are presented by a group that includes genuine Nobel Laureates at a ceremony at Harvard University's Sanders Theater.

A parody of the Nobel Prizes, the Ig Nobel Prizes are given each year in early October — around the time the recipients of the genuine Nobel Prizes are announced — for ten achievements that “first make people laugh, and then make them think”. All prizes are awarded for real achievements (except for three in 1991 and one in 1994 due to an erroneous press release).

This is a list of some Ig Nobel Prize winners from 1993 to the present day:

1993. Literature – Presented to E. Topol, R. Califf, F. Van de Werf, P. W. Armstrong, and their 972 co-authors, for publishing a medical research paper which has one hundred times as many authors as pages. The authors are from the following countries: Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

2000. Chemistry – Presented to D. Marazziti, A. Rossi, and Giovanni B. Cassano of the University of Pisa, Italy, and H. S. Akiskal of the University of California, San Diego, for their discovery that, biochemically, romantic love may be indistinguishable from having severe obsessive-compulsive disorder.

2004. Chemistry – Presented to The Coca-Cola Company of Great Britain, for using advanced technology to convert liquid from the River Thames into Dasani, a brand of bottled water, which for precautionary reasons has been made unavailable to consumers.

2006. Peace – H. Stapleton of Merthyr Tydfil, Wales, for inventing an electromechanical teenager repellent, a device that makes annoying high-pitched noise designed to be audible to teenagers but not to adults; and for later using that same technology to make telephone ringtones that are audible to teenagers but probably not to their teachers.

2009. Literature – Ireland's police service for writing and presenting more than 50 traffic tickets to a Polish individual, by the name of “Prawo Jazdy”. Mr. “Jazdy” was widely thought to be the most frequent driving offender in Ireland, until an investigation uncovered the fact that Prawo Jazdy is the Polish term for “Driving License”.

Reading B1

Digital habits across generations

Today's grandparents are joining their grandchildren on social media, but the different generations' online habits couldn't be more different. In the UK the over-55s are joining Facebook in increasing numbers, meaning that they will soon be the site's second biggest user group, with 3.5 million users aged 55–64 and 2.9 million over-65s.

Sheila, aged 59, says, 'I joined to see what my grandchildren are doing, as my daughter posts videos and photos of them. It's a much better way to see what they're doing than waiting for letters and photos in the post. That's how we did it when I was a child, but I think I'm lucky I get to see so much more of their lives than my grandparents did.'

Ironically, Sheila's grandchildren are less likely to use Facebook themselves. Children under 17 in the UK are leaving the site – only 2.2 million users are under 17 – but they're not going far from their smartphones. Chloe, aged 15, even sleeps with her phone. 'It's my alarm clock so I have to,' she says. 'I look at it before I go to sleep and as soon as I wake up.'

Unlike her grandmother's generation, Chloe's age group is spending so much time on their phones at home that they are missing out on spending time with their friends in real life. Sheila, on the other hand, has made contact with old friends from school she hasn't heard from in forty years. 'We use Facebook to arrange to meet all over the country,' she says. 'It's changed my social life completely.'

Teenagers might have their parents to thank for their smartphone and social media addiction as their parents were the early adopters of the smartphone. Peter, 38 and father of two teenagers, reports that he used to be on his phone or laptop constantly. 'I was always connected and I felt like I was always working,' he says. 'How could I tell my kids to get off their phones if I was always in front of a screen myself?' So, in the evenings and at weekends, he takes his SIM card out of his smartphone and puts it into an old-style mobile phone that can only make calls and send text messages. 'I'm not completely cut off from the world in case of emergencies, but the important thing is I'm setting a better example to my kids and spending more quality time with them.'

Is it only a matter of time until the generation above and below Peter catches up with the new trend for a less digital life?

Reading B1

The Taj Mahal

The Taj Mahal (pronounced /ˌtɑːdʒ məˈhɑːl/) is a famous mausoleum next to the river Yamuna in the Indian city of Agra. A mausoleum is a building where people bury the dead. The name Taj Mahal means 'the crown of palaces'.

The most famous part of the Taj Mahal is the large white dome in the centre. It is 35 metres high and is surrounded by four smaller domes. The rooms inside the building are decorated with beautiful archways and precious stones in the walls. The buildings are surrounded by gardens with pathways, pools, fountains and green gardens.

The construction of the Taj Mahal began in 1632 and finished in 1653. It was built with materials from all over India and Asia, but the main material is white marble. Historians believe that the materials were transported by over 1,000 elephants for the construction.

The emperor Shah Jahan built the Taj Mahal as a burial place for his wife, Mumtaz Mahal. According to legend, he wanted to build another Taj Mahal in black on the other side of the river, but this never happened. During the Indian Rebellion of 1857, many parts of the Taj Mahal were damaged by British soldiers, who took some of the precious stones from its walls. Over the years, the Taj Mahal has suffered from environmental damage, and there have been many government attempts to conserve its beauty.

The Taj Mahal is one of India's most famous landmarks. There are millions of visitors to the mausoleum every year. The Taj Mahal is almost always included in lists of famous buildings to visit and is considered one of the New Seven Wonders of the World. It is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

- Encyclopedia Britannica article on the Taj Mahal: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Taj-Mahal>
- UNESCO Profile of the Taj Mahal: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/252>

Reading B1

Social media

It is estimated that about 40 per cent of the world's population use social media, and many of these billions of social media users look up to influencers to help them decide what to buy and what trends to follow.

So what is an influencer and how do we become one?

An influencer is a person who can influence the decisions of their followers because of their relationship with their audience and their knowledge and expertise in a particular area, e.g. fashion, travel or technology.

Influencers often have a large following of people who pay close attention to their views. They have the power to persuade people to buy things, and influencers are now seen by many companies as a direct way to customers' hearts. Brands are now asking powerful influencers to market their products. With some influencers charging up to \$25,000 for one social media post, it is no surprise that more and more people are keen to become influencers too. If you are one of them, then here are five tips on how to do it.

1. Choose your niche

What is the area that you know most about? What do you feel most excited talking about? Find the specific area that you're most interested in and develop it.

2. Choose your medium and write an interesting bio

Most influencers these days are bloggers and micro-bloggers. Decide which medium – such as your own online blog, Instagram or Snapchat – is the best way to connect with your followers and chat about your niche area. When you have done that, write an attention-grabbing bio that describes you and your speciality area in an interesting and unique way. Make sure that people who read your bio will want to follow you.

3. Post regularly and consistently

Many influencers post daily on their social media accounts. The more you post, the more likely people will follow you. Also, ensure that your posts are consistent and possibly follow a theme.

4. Tell an interesting story

Whether it is a photo or a comment that you are posting, use it to tell a story that will catch the attention of your followers and help them connect with you.

5. Make sure people can easily find your content

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Chocolate town for chocolate workers

If you love chocolate, maybe you have eaten a bar of Cadbury's Bournville chocolate. But Bournville isn't just the name of an English chocolate bar. It's the name of a village which was built especially for workers at the Cadbury's chocolate factory.

George and Richard Cadbury took over the cocoa and chocolate business from their father in 1861. A few years later, they decided to move the factory out of the centre of Birmingham, a city in the middle of England, to a new location where they could expand. They chose an area close to the railways and canals so that they could receive milk deliveries easily and send the finished products to stores across the country.

Here, the air was much cleaner than in the city centre, and the Cadbury brothers thought it would be a much healthier place for their employees to work. They named the site Bournville after a local river called 'The Bourn'. 'Ville', the French word for town, was used because at the time, people thought French chocolate was the highest quality. The new factory opened in 1879. Close to it, they built a village where the factory workers could live. By 1900, there were 313 houses on the site, and many more were built later.

The Cadbury family were religious and believed that it was right to help other people. They thought their workers deserved to live and work in good conditions. In the factory, workers were given a fair wage, a pension and access to medical treatment. The village was also designed to provide the best possible conditions for workers too. The houses, although traditional in style, had modern interiors, indoor bathrooms and large gardens. The village provided everything that workers needed including a shop, a school and a community centre where evening classes were held to train young members of the workforce.

Since the Cadbury family believed that their workers and their families should be fit and healthy, they added a park with hockey and football pitches, a running track, bowling green, fishing lake, and an outdoor swimming pool. A large clubhouse was built in the park so that players could change their clothes and relax after a game. Dances and dinners were also held here for the factory workers, who were never charged to use any of the sports facilities. However, because the Cadbury's believed that alcohol was bad for health and society, no pubs were ever built in Bournville!

The Cadbury brothers were among the first business owners to ensure that their workers had good standards of living. Soon, other British factory owners were copying their ideas by providing homes and communities for their workers designed with convenience and health in mind. Today, over 25,000 people live in Bournville village. There are several facilities there to help people with special needs, such as care homes for the elderly, a hostel for people with learning difficulties and affordable homes for first-time homeowners and single people. Over a hundred years since the first house in Bournville Village was built, the aims of its founders are still carried out.

Reading B1

THE LEGEND OF FAIRIES

Fairies today are the stuff of children's stories, little magical people with wings, often shining with light. Typically pretty and female, like Tinkerbell in *Peter Pan*, they usually use their magic to do small things and are mostly friendly to humans.

We owe many of our modern ideas about fairies to Shakespeare and stories from the 18th and 19th centuries. Although we can see the origins of fairies as far back as the Ancient Greeks, we can see similar creatures in many cultures. The earliest fairy-like creatures can be found in the Greek idea that trees and rivers had spirits called dryads and nymphs. Some people think these creatures were originally the gods of earlier, pagan religions that worshipped nature. They were replaced by the Greek and Roman gods, and then later by the Christian God, and became smaller, less powerful figures as they lost importance.

Another explanation suggests the origin of fairies is a memory of real people, not spirits. So, for example, when tribes with metal weapons invaded land where people only used stone weapons, some of the people escaped and hid in forests and caves. Further support for this idea is that fairies were thought to be afraid of iron and could not touch it. Living outside of society, the hiding people probably stole food and attacked villages. This might explain why fairies were often described as playing tricks on humans. Hundreds of years ago, people actually believed that fairies stole new babies and replaced them with a 'changeling' – a fairy baby – or that they took new mothers and made them feed fairy babies with their milk.

While most people no longer believe in fairies, only a hundred years ago some people were very willing to think they might exist. In 1917, 16-year-old Elsie Wright took two photos of her cousin, nine-year-old Frances Griffiths, sitting with fairies. Some photography experts thought they were fake, while others weren't sure. But Arthur Conan Doyle, the writer of the Sherlock Holmes detective stories, believed they were real. He published the original pictures, and three more the girls took for him, in a magazine called *The Strand*, in 1920. The girls only admitted the photos were fake years later in 1983, created using pictures of dancers that Elsie copied from a book.

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MEMORABILIA: WHAT'S THE THRILL?

My friends wonder why I have an extensive collection of other people's clothes and shoes, old concert programmes and albums at home. They think I want to relive special moments in my childhood. That might be true for some collectors, but I'm not sentimental. You can make a lot of money from things that have a special place in history. Sports equipment like balls and shoes that were used in a great match, props from popular movies, clothes worn by famous people and first editions of books are all valuable, especially if they are signed.

There are a few different ways you can find this sort of memorabilia. First, you can buy it at an auction. It's expensive, but if you are lucky, it will be worth it because memorabilia can suddenly increase in value, and you could make a lot of money. For example, a baseball signed by Babe Ruth sold for over \$77,000. In 2017, just four years later, a similar one sold for \$180,000, over twice as much! Imagine if you had enough money to buy that!

I can't possibly buy that kind of memorabilia, but it is possible to buy part of it. Some companies look for rare items from around the world that they think will increase in value. People can buy a share of the memorabilia and buy and sell their shares over time. That's a great way to make money without spending a fortune, and for a little while, you can be the part-owner of a piece of history, although you can't take it home!

If your goal is actually to own memorabilia, you can find some interesting items in second-hand shops. Sometimes, an old collector dies, and their spouse gives away their possessions without realising their value. You could also try to predict who will become famous in the future. Getting some shoes or a ball signed by someone who isn't famous yet is not too hard. Then you just have to wait until they do something spectacular. Then you have something really valuable! That's how I got a signed tennis racket from one of the world's top players!

I have been tricked before, though. I bought a signed record online a few years ago. A few years later, I tried to sell it at an auction house. When I gave it to the auctioneer, he rubbed the signature with his finger. It was smooth, not bumpy, so he knew it wasn't done with a pen. Someone probably printed it on. That was a pity. I'm also always careful to keep my memorabilia in perfect condition. You can't just put it in a cupboard and leave it there. I once left some old concert programmes in a cupboard, and the paper curled and changed colour. Now I use special packaging and equipment to make sure the room doesn't get too hot, cold or damp. It isn't cheap, but you need it if you are serious about collecting.

Reading B1

THE ARM OF LIBERTY

The Statue of Liberty is probably the most famous icon of the USA. It was built to celebrate the end of slavery, and later became a symbol for freedom among immigrants. The statue depicts Libertas, the Roman goddess of liberty. And the torch she carries high above her outstretched arm represents a light that guides people along the path to freedom. Interestingly, however, Liberty looks different from the way the designer first intended.

The idea for the statue came from a poet, Édouard de Laboulaye. When the American Civil war ended, he wanted to commemorate the end of the slave trade with a gift. He and other people who opposed slavery raised money and hired a sculptor, Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi, to design the statue. Bartholdi later employed the French engineer, Gustave Eiffel, to devise its structure. Eiffel, who would subsequently build the famous tower in Paris, was already a well-known designer of railway bridges. So he knew how to build robust structures that are flexible and safe in strong winds. This feature was necessary because the winds in New York harbor are extremely strong. Today, the top of her torch swings over 15cm when the wind is blowing at 50 miles per hour.

Eiffel designed the statue to be built around a massive metal skeleton, similar to the Eiffel tower. Huge pieces of copper were fixed onto this to form its shape. Until recently, two copies of the plans were believed to exist. But recently, a third copy was discovered, which revealed some interesting information. In 2018, a map dealer bought some historic papers at an auction in Paris, which included original plans, calculations, and drawings of the statue. At first, the documents were too fragile to read. But after special treatment, the papers clearly showed that Eiffel's plans had been changed by Bartholdi with red ink. Liberty's arm, which was thick and vertical in Eiffel's drawing, was adjusted to be slimmer, less upright, and generally more attractive than Eiffel's design.

The changes in the plans are dated July 28, 1882, after the construction of the tower had begun. We don't know what Eiffel thought of Bartholdi's changes. By then, Eiffel was working on other projects, and only his assistants were working with Bartholdi in New York. Maybe Bartholdi thought he could make the changes because Eiffel was not there and would not complain.

However, the changes made the arm not only more attractive but also weaker, which has created problems over the years. At first, visitors could climb a ladder to the torch in Liberty's arm, but in 1916, there was an explosion on a nearby island. It damaged the statue and made it unsafe, and the stairway to the torch has been closed ever since. During restoration work in the 1980s, engineers noticed that the structure inside Liberty's head, shoulders, and arm were different from how they were shown on Eiffel's plans. They thought that the builders had made mistakes, but some historians believed that Bartholdi had changed Eiffel's design. The newly discovered papers confirm those theories.

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ACTIVE VILLAGERS

Residents of a small Welsh-speaking community have clubbed together to buy the post office and shop, ten years after buying the pub.

The people of Llithfaen, Caernarfonshire were determined to prevent their village losing its focal point. Ten years ago they paid £40,000 for the pub, called the Victoria, and now they have helped to keep the shop open. Most of the cost, £19,500, was met by the local council and a European Union grant, but the villagers needed to raise a further £6,000 to buy the shop from the owner who is retiring. John Jones, chairman of the community committee, said: "We went around every house and came back with £500 more than we needed. The post office and the pub are essential to the life of the village. There are no other amenities.

"We were not prepared to stand by and let the heart and soul be ripped out of our community. No one else was going to help us so we decided to buy them ourselves." Llithfaen had a population of 600 but that halved when nearby granite quarries were closed. The primary school was shut because of the population decline but the locals turned it into a leisure centre and youth club.

The shop has been leased to Ffion Medi Llywelyn, 24, who lives in the village with her husband, Dillon. She said: "There is a wonderful community spirit here."