

MOCK TEST - A.A. 2018-2019

**A. READING COMPREHENSION – Read the article and do the exercises below.**

**How far can Amazon go? (Adapted from The Economist, 24 June 2014)**

(I) WHEN Jeff Bezos left his job in finance and moved to Seattle 20 years ago to start a new firm, he rented a house with a garage, as that was where the likes of Apple and HP had been born. Although he started selling books, he called the firm Amazon because a giant river reflected the scale of his ambitions.

(II) Amazon has one of the world's most impressive physical distribution systems, even as it has branched out into cloud computing, ebooks, video streaming and music downloads. There is the drive for market share over immediate profits. So far its insatiable appetite has helped consumers; but as it grows in size and power the danger is that it will go too far. For the moment, admiration should count for more than fear. Many things the world now takes for granted were introduced by Mr Bezos. Typing your credit card number into a web browser was once considered a sign of insanity until Amazon showed how easy and safe buying things online could be. Once people had bought a book, they tried other things. Today the global e-commerce market is worth \$1.5 trillion.

(III) Amazon also fostered the emergence of customer reviews. From the start it let buyers rate and review books. This still irritates some professional critics, and some of the most excessive five-star ratings may be from spouses of authors. But overall they provide valuable advice to buyers. Today everything from apps to hotels to garden tools can be rated online, and retail websites seem incomplete without customer reviews.

(IV) Before Amazon launched the Kindle in 2007, e-readers were difficult gadgets that few people used. The Kindle was easy to use, worked anywhere and allowed instant delivery straight to the device (rather than via a PC). Amazon also pioneered a new model for cloud computing. Amazon's cloud services are now being used by startups including Netflix, Instagram, Pinterest, Spotify and Airbnb.

(V) At a time when Wall Street is obsessed by quarterly results and share buybacks (*riacquisti di azioni*), Amazon has made it clear to shareholders that, given a choice between making a profit and investing in new areas, it will always choose the latter. While other technology giants sit on record piles of cash, Amazon still has plenty of ideas about where to invest and innovate. And investors seem happy with it: Amazon's price-to-earnings ratio has exceeded 3,500 at times. It aligns top executives' interests with those of shareholders by paying them largely in stock: its highest salary is \$175,000 a year.

(VI) The problem is that many of these virtues come with accompanying vices. Amazon stands accused of unfair competition—of being a horrible employer, evading taxes and bullying its rivals. Amazon says median pay in its American warehouses is 30% higher than in large retail stores. As for bullying competitors, most of this is just the savage magic of capitalism. Amazon has crushed local bookshops but only in the same way that Tesco and Walmart crushed grocers— by providing a cheaper, easier way to shop.

(VII) Perhaps the biggest concern about Amazon is, paradoxically, a consequence of its long term vision. It is hard to compete with a company whose shareholders do not expect it to make a profit. Its vast scale and willingness to operate at zero or negative margins represent high barriers to entry for potential competitors. And this cannot go on for ever.

**Reading comprehension 1: Decide if these statements are True or False**

1. J. Bezos decided to start his company in Seattle because of the cheap renting prices in that city.
2. He called his company Amazon as it was set up in Brazil.
3. When Amazon launched the Kindle, e-readers were already popular gadgets all over the world.
4. Amazon philosophy is to reinvest its profits into the company's innovations.
5. The author believes that Amazon's behaviour towards competitors is nothing new and can be compared to other retail giants in different sectors.
6. Amazons' shareholders expect to make a profit, like most shareholders

**Reading comprehension 2: Answer the following questions:**

1. Why is product rating and reviewing (hotels, books, ecc.) considered to be an important element of the buying process? (3 points)

---

---

---

2. What is the article about? (5 points)

---

---

---

---

---

---

3. What do the following numbers refer to? (2 points each)

- \$1.5 trillion \_\_\_\_\_
- 30% \_\_\_\_\_
- 2007 \_\_\_\_\_

4. Find words in the text that mean the same as: (1 point each)

a) Expand one's interests (v): \_\_\_\_\_

- b) innocuous, harmless (adj): \_\_\_\_\_
- c) Value, having the value of (n./adj.): \_\_\_\_\_
- d) Percentage, proportion, relation (n.): \_\_\_\_\_
- e) The highest level of management organization (2 words): \_\_\_\_\_

**B. WORD FORMATION – Complete the blank space with the most appropriate form of the word: a noun, an adjective, a verb or an adverb (1 point each).**

The brands of the Adidas Group \_\_\_\_\_ (COMPLEMENT) each other in a unique way to help athletes perform better, play better, feel better. Our \_\_\_\_\_ (PRODUCE) break records, set \_\_\_\_\_ (TREND), make \_\_\_\_\_ (HISTORICAL), every day, all over the world.

It is not only about \_\_\_\_\_ (FAST) shoes and fashion \_\_\_\_\_ (STATE). Your success is our \_\_\_\_\_ (AMBITIOUS). Your defeat conquers encourage us to be better.

Our brands complement each other like the skills of an \_\_\_\_\_ (EXCEPTION) gifted decathlete. Our consumers' brand love is based on our employees' \_\_\_\_\_ (EXTRAORDINARILY) passion for a sporting lifestyle. \_\_\_\_\_ (SHAPE) the sporting goods industry sustainably is more than a job.

**C. PHONETICS – Write the words with the appropriate spelling**

- 1. /ɪn,θju:zɪ'æstɪk/ \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. /'leɪbə(r)/ \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. /tʃɪ:p/ \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. /'mɪʃn/ \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. /wɜ:k/ \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. /'væljəbl/ \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. /ə'plaɪ/ \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. /fɔ:l/ \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. /kə'mɒdətɪ/ \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. /'z:nɪŋz/ \_\_\_\_\_