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Pixar

Listen!



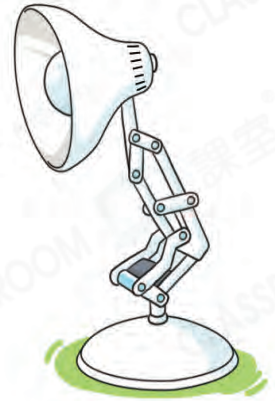
Let's Think

1. Have you ever watched any animations produced by Pixar?
2. Did you know Pixar developed its own 3D animation rendering software?

You are Heidi. You are reading an article about Pixar in a magazine.

PIXAR— the revolutionist of animations

Pixar might not be a familiar name to you, but I bet you must have heard of *Toy Story*, *Monsters University* or *Inside Out*. These are just some of the blockbusters produced by Pixar. Each of them has enjoyed a box office of more than 1 billion US dollars.



- 5 Pixar is a renowned motion-picture studio based in California in the US. It is highly acclaimed for its outstanding animation technology and expertise in creating stories for filmgoers of all ages. Before Pixar became part of The Walt Disney Company in 2006, Pixar was a corporation founded by computer scientists Edwin Catmull and Alvy Ray Smith in 1986, with Steve Jobs as the major shareholder. They were the pioneers that have given wings to creativity and revolutionised the creation of animated films.

- 10 With nine years of unremitting effort, Pixar, in 1995, released *Toy Story*, the world's first computer-animated feature film. Praised for the technical innovation of the 3D animation, screenplay, music and excellent voice performances, *Toy Story* received three Academy Award nominations and remains one of the highest-grossing films in the US and worldwide. Following the footsteps of *Toy Story*, *Toy Story 2*, *Toy Story 3* and *Toy Story 4* achieved great success and made huge profits.



- 20 On top of great leaders and great productions, the in-house animation rendering software RenderMan is another factor in Pixar's success. Facing keen competition in the computer graphics and filmmaking industries, Pixar released the software for non-commercial use, including education, research, and personal projects. Pixar's generosity enables more amateur animation producers to start using this software to make quality images as great as Pixar's productions.

- 25 It is expected that Pixar is going to produce more and more motion pictures that continue to redefine the industry standard for animated films.

(286 words)

Part A

Answer the following questions using the information from the article. Choose the **BEST** answer and blacken **ONE** circle only.

1. Pixar became a company under Disney in _____ and *Toy Story* was one of its production in _____.
 A. 1986, 2006
 B. 1995, 2006
 C. 2006, 1995
 D. 2006, 1986
2. What is the possible box office gross of *Toy Story*?
 A. 1 million dollars
 B. 100 million dollars
 C. 1 billion dollars
 D. 1.06 billion dollars
3. Read line 11. What does the word 'released' mean?

released v.

- A. gave freedom to someone or something
 - B. allowed something to be shown in public or to be available for use
 - C. expressed a feeling that one has been trying not to show
 - D. stopped holding something
4. Which of the following is **NOT TRUE** about Pixar?
 A. Pixar revolutionised the way animated films are created.
 B. Pixar makes animations of high quality.
 C. Pixar allowed the public to use their in-house software for free in non-commercial projects.
 D. Pixar sold its in-house software and made huge profits from it.
 5. The writer is _____ about the future development of Pixar.
 A. hopeful
 B. worried
 C. uncertain
 D. joyful

Grammar Corner

We use the idiom 'on top of' to mean 'in addition to'.

e.g. *On top of great leaders and great productions, the in-house animation rendering software RenderMan is another factor in Pixar's success.*
(Lines 17-18)

Pay attention to how Pixar's productions are described.

Part B

Answer the following questions using the information from the article. Write your answers in the spaces provided.

1. Name three blockbusters produced by Pixar.

2. Name three factors in the success of the animations produced by Pixar.

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

3. Why were Edwin Catmull, Alvy Ray Smith and Steve Jobs regarded as Pixar's great leaders?



4. Find words in the article that match the following definitions. Fill in each blank with one word only.

(a)	(<i>adj.</i>) clearly very much better than what is usual
(b)	(<i>n.</i>) people who are the first to do something
(c)	(<i>adj.</i>) extreme or very strong
(d)	(<i>adj.</i>) doing something for pleasure, not as a job



5. RenderMan used to be available only for in-house production. Now, it is free for everybody. How does it benefit people who are interested in making animations?

Vocabulary Bank

The following are some buildings and areas for entertainment and leisure. Match them with the correct pictures. One of the words is not used.

aquarium clubhouse theme park gymnasium mall
 pavilion stadium theatre concert hall



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.



Let's Discuss

- It is said that the animations produced by Pixar are more suitable for adults than kids. Do you agree with this statement?
- Share a Pixar animated film you have recently watched.