READING COMPREHENSION C1

Choose the correct word from the box and type it in the gaps. There are 7 extra words in the list.

ACTUALLY ALL ALONE ANY EITHER HOWEVER ITS LOSS MAINSTREAM MAY NEITHER OBJECTIVE OVER REAL SAME SHOULD SOME THAT THEIR THROUGH WASTE WHAT WHATEVER WHICH WHO WIDE WOULD

WHAT ARE BOOK REVIEWS FOR?

A quarrel has been going on recently in the columns of the *Bookseller*, bible of the publishing industry, __(**1**)__ the value of book reviews published in newspapers. The magazine has recently hired Scott Pack, manager of the bookstore chain, Waterstone's, __(**2**)__ criticised the broadsheets' books pages, asking, essentially, what is __(**3**)__ point? 'They should inspire reading,' he said. 'They should excite, stimulate, agitate and empower readers to discover new books.'

That's __(**4**)__ very well and we would agree with him so far but I would add that they should also cut __(**5**)__ the hype and act as a filter for literary culture, offering a degree of __(**6**)__ appraisal of what is good and what is not. It's a nice theory anyway. __(**7**)__ book pages - and individual critics – very often fail in these noble aims is an ancient complaint, and there is never __(**8**)__ shortage of new literary magazines being founded in the name of 'pure' criticism to counter the vendettas and hidden agendas perceived to exist in the __(**9**)__ reviewing culture.

But this was not Pack's complaint. He said simply that most book review pages are 'very dull' and that literary editors are 'turning __(**10**)__ should be a force for good in our industry into a complete __(**11**)__ of time'. Also, perhaps, a fair point some of the time. But read a bit further and you find his __(**12**)__ gripe: 'Reviews no longer sell books in the volume that they used to.'

__(**13**)__ the purpose of literary pages, their job is not primarily to sell books – that is the job of the bookseller – but the high-street retailers are no longer selling books in the volumes they used to __(**14**)__, thanks to competition from supermarkets and online sales. Naturally booksellers would be happier if review pages enthusiastically promoted the __(**15**)__ titles that are to be found on the front table of Waterstone's. In other words Pack seems to be saying that literary editors ought to provide free advertising to support the choices of the chain-store buyers.

But that really __(**16**)__ be very dull. Not only do the chain buyers not trust the judgement of newspaper reviewers, they no longer trust the taste of respected publishers. If we rely on bookstores __(**17**)__, how do we know what is good any more? What's more, what choice does the reader have? Review pages have their part to play, and Pack __(**18**)__ be right in suggesting that they could do more to reflect the books people __(**19**)__ buy. But if he is serious about enabling readers to discover a __(**20**)__ variety of books, he and his fellow buyers need to provide that variety and acknowledge that many excellent books don't win prizes or are not generally advertised, but might still be of interest to his customers.

Adapted © The Observer, 2005

LIVEWORKSHEETS