Famous People in IT (Week 4 Day 4)

Activity 1: Read Ben Silbermann's biography. Put paragraphs A-F in the correct order 1-6.

A 6

And it seemed that a lot of people liked their idea. When they launched the first desktop version of Pinterest in March 2010, it grew quickly and had 10 million users after the first year. This was an amazing number compared with Twitter and Facebook: Twitter took two years to reach 10 million users and Facebook took over five years. Just a year after starting, Pinterest was worth $200 million and had over 421 million page views. According to Forbes, he is worth an estimated $1.6 billion as of 2018. Silbermann's ordinary interest as a boy certainly became an extraordinary business.

B 1

Ben Silbermann is an American billionaire Internet entrepreneur. He is the co-founder and CEO of Pinterest, a visual discovery engine, which lets users organize images, links, recipes and other things.

C 3

In 1998, Silbermann attended the Research Science Institute at MIT. Subsequently, he went to Yale University and studied political science. In 2006, when he graduated from university, he moved to the state of California and got a job at Google in the online advertising group where he learned to think big and met a lot of people there who were very interested in technology and built amazing products. Thanks to this experience, he decided two things: he wanted to start a business and he wanted to do something he loved.

D 5

Silbermann and Sharp realized they both loved collecting, and they made a 'virtual pinboard' - pages online where you 'pin' pictures of things you like and things you 'collect'. Their idea was to connect everyone in the world through the things they find interesting. Silbermann says that the genesis of Pinterest really came from his love of collecting as a kid. "Collecting tells a lot about who you are," he said, and when they looked at the web "there wasn't a place to share that side of who you were."

E 2

Silbermann was an ordinary boy. He was born in 1982. He was raised in Des Moines, Iowa. His parents are ophthalmologists, and he is married to Divya Bhaskaran, with whom he has two children. He loved collecting things: stamps, leaves and especially insects. At the time, he felt like any other child, but as a young man in his 20s, his love of collecting became big business.

F 4

He worked at Google for two years. Then, in 2008, Silbermann left his job and he started his own business designing his own iPhone apps with his friend, Paul Sciarra. However, their initial application, Tote, failed to gain significant attraction. After that, they teamed up with Evan Sharp, and they got an apartment together in Palo Alto, California, and started work on Pinterest in November 2009.

Activity 2: Read Ben Silbermann's biography again and answer these questions.

1. This paragraph (A-F) refers to a time in the past and uses direct speech to describe a situation. _____

2. The aim of this paragraph (A-F) is to introduce the subject and explain why this person is noteworthy. _____

3. This paragraph (A-F) summarizes and reaffirms the subject's importance and his contribution to the industry. _____

4. The main purpose of the text is:

a. To inform the reader about Ben Silbermann's life and achievements.

b. To entertain the reader about how Ben Silbermann became a billionaire entrepreneur in the industry.

c. To persuade the reader to take risks and start up his business using Ben Silbermann's life as an example.

5. What is **NOT** said about Ben Silbermann in the text?
   a. He got a bachelor's degree in politics.
   b. He is an Iowa native startup owner.
   c. He went to pre-med school for a year.

6. Was Tote a successful product? YES / NO

7. They launched Pinterest a decade ago. TRUE / FALSE

8. How long did Silbermann enjoy the Google experience?

   12 / 24 / 48 months

9. According to the text, Pinterest will only allow you to pin websites and photos to your board. TRUE / FALSE

10. Did Pinterest double the number of Twitter users in just 53 weeks? YES / NO