SCANNING

Paragraph A

Marcel Bich, a French manufacturer of traditional ink pens, was the man who turned the ballpoint pen into an item that today almost anyone can afford. Bich was appalled at the poor quality of the ballpoint pens that were available and was also shocked at their high cost. However, he recognised that the ballpoint was a firmly established invention, and he decided to design a cheap pen that worked well and would be commercially successful.

Paragraph B

Bich went to the Biro brothers and asked them if he could use the design of their original invention in one of his own pens. In return, he offered to pay them every time he sold a pen. Then, for two years, Bich studied the detailed construction of every ballpoint pen that was being sold, often working with a microscope.

Paragraph C

By 1950, he was ready to introduce his new wonder: a plastic pen with a clear barrel that wrote smoothly did not leak and only cost a few cents. He called it the "Bic Cristal". The ballpoint pen had finally become a practical writing instrument. The public liked it immediately, and today it is as common as the pencil. In Britain, they are still called Biros, and many Bic models also say "Biro" on the side of the pen, to remind people of their original inventors.

Paragraph D

Bich became extremely wealthy thanks to his invention, which had worldwide appeal. Over the next 60 years his company, Bic, opened factories all over the world and expanded its range of inexpensive products. Today, Bic is as famous for its lighters and razors as it is for its pen, and you can even buy a Bic mobile phone.

Complete the summary below

Write NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS from the passage for each answer.

It is thanks to Marcel Bich that most people today are able to (1) _____ a ballpoint pen. It was the bad quality and (2)_____ of the pen which were available at the time that inspired him to design a (3)_____ ballpoint pen that would be both inexpensive and reliable. After getting permission from the Biro brothers to base his pen on their (4)_____, he carefully (5)_____ other ballpoints that were sold in the shops, and in 1950 introduced his own version, the "Bic Cristal". It was popular with the (6)_____, and Bich became very rich. His company, Bic, now makes a variety of cheap (7)_____, such as lighters and razors.

LIVEWORKSHEETS