THE REAL THING?

One of the most successful commercial products ever launched is said to have come about as the result of a mistake. In 1896, Jacob's Pharmacy in Atlanta, Georgia, was selling a nerve tonic known as "French Wine Cola – Ideal Nerve Tonic". By accidentally adding fizzy water instead of still water to the recipe, a pharmacist called John S. Pemberton invented what has today become the most popular soft drink in the world: Coca-Cola. Along with its closest rival – Pepsi – which appeared on the market three years later, Coke has enjoyed phenomenal success worldwide, particularly in the past fifty years. Indeed, old Coke bottles and "limited edition" cans can often fetch considerable sums from collectors, and there are even stores which deal exclusively in Coke products and memorabilia.

What could possibly account for the amazing success of Coca-Cola? How has this combination of carbonated water, sugar, acid and flavourings come to symbolize the American way of life for most of the world? After all, even the manufacturers could hardly describe Coke as a healthy product since it contains relatively high amounts of sugar (admittedly not the case with Diet Coke which contains artificial sweeteners instead of sugar) and phosphoric acid, both of which are known to damage teeth.

One explanation may be found in the name. The original recipe included a flavouring from the coca plant and probably included small amounts of cocaine (an addictive substance), but since the early part of this century all traces of cocaine have been removed. However, Coke (like all cola drinks) also includes a flavouring from the cola tree; cola extract contains caffeine, which is a stimulant, and the Coca-Cola company adds extra caffeine for good measure. While caffeine is not thought to be an addictive substance in itself, there is considerable evidence that over a period of time the consumption of caffeine has to be increased in order for its stimulating effect to be maintained, and so sales of Coke perhaps benefit as a result.

A more likely reason for the enduring popularity of Coke may, however, be found in the company's enviable marketing strategies. Over the years it has come up with some of the most memorable commercials, tunes, slogans and sponsorship in the world of advertising, variously emphasizing international harmony, youthfulness and a carefree lifestyle. Few other companies (arguably including Pepsi) have been able to match such marketing ploys so consistently or effectively. As suggested earlier, the influences of American culture are evident just about everywhere, and Coca-Cola has somehow come to represent a vision of the United States that much of the rest of the world dreams about and aspires to. Perhaps drinking Coke brings people that little bit closer to the dream.

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1. In paragraph 1, "cans can often fetch considerable sums" means the same as _____ .
   A. Coke is quite expensive in some parts of the world
   B. collectors consider carefully how much they are paying for a can of Coke
   C. some collectors will only drink Coke in exclusive stores
   D. certain Coke cans are worth a lot of money as collectable items

2. The writer uses "for good measure" in paragraph 3 to emphasize the fact that _____ .
   A. there is a lot of caffeine in Coke
   B. the amount of caffeine in Coke is carefully measured
   C. the extra caffeine improves the taste of Coke
   D. the extra caffeine balances the amount found naturally in the cola extract

3. "Coke has enjoyed phenomenal success" paragraph 1 suggests the writer _____.
   A. thinks that the success of Coke is very strange
   B. believes that the success of Coke has been impressive
   C. rather disapproves of the success of Coke
   D. considers the success of Coke to be undeserved

4. Describing Coke's marketing strategies as 'enviable' in paragraph 4, means that _____ .
   A. the strategies are based on envy
   B. Coke's marketing staff are encouraged to be envious of each other's ideas
   C. people are persuaded to buy Coke because they are envious of others
   D. rivals are envious of the Coke company's successful methods of marketing

5. "variously emphasizing" in paragraph 4 is closest in meaning to __
   A. stressing at different times
   B. using a wide variety of emphasis
   C. stressing at the same time
   D. using a particular order of emphasis

6. In the last sentence of the passage the writer implies that _____ .
   A. most people would like to live in America
   B. many people wish for a lifestyle like they imagine most Americans have
   C. drinking Coke reminds a lot of people of visiting America
   D. living in the United States is a bit like living in a dream

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7. "both of which" in paragraph 2 refers to _____ .
   A. phosphoric and acid
   B. sugar and artificial sweetener
   C. sugar and phosphoric acid
   D. artificial sweetener and phosphoric acid
8. In paragraph 1, the writer points out that _____ .
   A. Coke is so popular that some shops sell nothing else
   B. only certain people are allowed to enter the most popular Coke stores
   C. some stores can successfully sell Coke at higher prices
   D. Coke is so popular that some shops only sell goods with the Coke label
9. The sentence in lines 33-35 means that _____ .
   A. Pepsi and a few other companies have had better marketing than Coca-Cola
   B. the Coke company has been more successful in marketing than most others
   C. some companies have copied Coca- Cola's marketing strategies very effectively
   D. no other company has been as successful as Coca-Cola in marketing its products
10. "just about everywhere" in paragraph 4 is closest in meaning to ___
   A. in a lot of countries
   B. in every part of the world
   C. in a majority of places
   D. in almost every part of the world
11. In the last sentence of paragraph 2, the writer implies that _____ .
   A. it is easy for the company to argue that Coke is a healthy drink
   B. he/she considers Coke to be unhealthy as a drink
   C. the company believes Coke is not an unhealthy product
   D. Coke is, in fact, quite a healthy drink
12. "Along with its closest rival – Pepsi" paragraph 1 refers to the fact that _____ .
   A. Coke and Pepsi work very closely together
   B. Pepsi is Coke's only competitor
   C. Coke and Pepsi are competitors in the same market
   D. Coke and Pepsi between them keep rivals out of the market
13. In the second sentence of paragraph 2, the writer seems surprised that _____
   A. something so normal could have such importance
   B. all the ingredients can be found in most countries

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C. most of the ingredients are not very healthy

D. Coke must be so easy to produce

14. Which of the following statements about the passage is true _____.

A. Cocaine and caffeine are addictive substances.

B. At least one of the ingredients of Coke is addictive.

C. The stimulating effect of caffeine is reduced over time unless consumption of it is increased.

D. The Coca-Cola company has gradually increased the amount of caffeine it puts in Coke.

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