

Read the text from the 1990s about a famous vehicle, then choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D) for questions 1–6. Put a cross (☒) in the correct box on the answer sheet. The first one (0) has been done for you.

## Do you Vespa?

*First launched over 50 years ago, the ever-so-stylish Vespa remains at the cutting edge of modernity and fashion.*

The trendiest two-wheeled vehicle in the history of mankind happens to be the Vespa. Born as a low-cost product for the masses, this utilitarian scooter became a style statement in itself, able to influence fashion in successive decades since its birth in 1946. Over fifty years have passed since then, when a two-wheeled vehicle, so completely new as to be revolutionary, was presented at the Golf Club in Rome by an Italian company with a 110-year history in the transport field, Piaggio. Called Vespa, its concept and name were the fruit of Enrico Piaggio's intuition, while its structure took shape on the design table of Corradino D'Ascanio, aeroplane and helicopter engineer. Received at its birth with mixed reactions – from enthusiasm to diffidence – Vespa would very soon become a myth: a myth constructed on over 15 million scooters produced and sold throughout the world, which have served not only to motorise entire countries, but also to unite people of diverse languages and cultures.

Vespa is a word – rather, a concept – which is absolutely international, and which represents the dreams and the desire for freedom of entire generations. Vespa is not a scooter; it is 'the' scooter. The very name Vespa evokes memories of youth; transports the mind to thoughts of free time, beautiful weather, the pleasure of driving in the open air with the sun and wind on the skin – as shown by Gregory Peck and Audrey Hepburn, riding a Vespa around the Colosseum in the 1952 film *Roman Holiday*, or the sensual Anita Ekberg escaping the paparazzi in the famous shot from Fellini's masterpiece, *La Dolce Vita*.

It is extraordinary that the Vespa, having been involved in so much fashion, never passed out of fashion. At first it was green and not wondrously beautiful, a symbol of transformation from war to peace. Then it became white and elegant, a product that imposed the *stile italiano*: from necessity to style, the recipe for the good life. Then it dressed itself in silver and was transformed into a myth of elegance, youth and adventure. The young man riding it was – and is – a modern Prince Charming, the fiancé that every girl would like to have; the exciting 'Latin Lover' who takes female tourists pillion on the beaches of Emilia Romagna. But communication initiatives were not restricted to the cinema: effective mass advertising campaigns were invented, like the one based on the slogan 'Vespizzatevi' (Vespa yourselves!). Piaggio also succeeded in creating a spontaneous customer organisation: Vespa Clubs, for example, with their own magazines and facilities. The Italian union of Vespa riders was born in 1949, and the same year Miss Graziella Bontempo from Naples was elected the first Miss Vespa. The Vespa had been consecrated as a recognisable symbol of Italian-ness: joyful, popular, uninhibited.

Truly an Esperanto among objects, the Vespa, initially presented as solid (it is still made of metal), long-lasting and adventurous, appealed to pioneers during the '40s and '50s. In the '60s it reflected the Italy of change, of pleasure-seeking children, and was transformed into a toy with real performance, expressing novelty, modernity and anti-conformism. In the '70s and

'80s it turned into an object of nostalgia; and in this decade, with technological innovations and the 1996 launch of the sleek new Vespa ET2 and ET4, it has become revolutionary, riding with all its appeal intact into the third millennium. For very many people, the Vespa is the perfect combination of style, design and elegant functionality. The Vespa is timeless: it transcends the capriciousness of fashion.

- 0 **At its beginning, the Vespa was created to be**
- A a fashionable vehicle.
  - B attractive to young people.
  - C a status symbol for its owners.
  - D affordable by many people.
- 1 **The Vespa was**
- A developed and built in Rome.
  - B developed by an aircraft expert.
  - C the first vehicle built by the company.
  - D a success right from the beginning.
- 2 **The Vespa turned into a legend because it has**
- A brought together couples of different nationalities.
  - B become globally successful.
  - C been the main vehicle in many societies.
  - D found more buyers than any other vehicle.
- 3 **The colours of the Vespa**
- A were influenced by practical reasons.
  - B covered the whole colour spectrum.
  - C reflected the atmosphere of the time.
  - D were influenced by fashion designers.
- 4 **Marketing for the Vespa**
- A focused mainly on movies and film stars.
  - B appeared mostly in newspapers and magazines.
  - C happened mostly by word of mouth.
  - D was well-planned and carried out.
- 5 **The Vespa is well-liked because it**
- A represents its home country's culture.
  - B puts fun over practical issues.
  - C is made mainly for young people.
  - D is connected with famous people.
- 6 **Throughout the decades,**
- A the main materials used have changed.
  - B the vehicle has been a symbol of alternative living.
  - C the vehicle has adapted to cultural changes.
  - D the technical know-how used has stayed the same.

## Do you Vespa?

0	A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
1	A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>
2	A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>
3	A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>
4	A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>
5	A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>
6	A <input type="checkbox"/>	B <input type="checkbox"/>	C <input type="checkbox"/>	D <input type="checkbox"/>

Von der  
Lehrperson  
auszufüllen

richtig falsch

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