INTERMEDIATE GROUP

Class:_________ Name:________________________
The Good Buy Man

1 So you don’t want to get your toes crushed in the summer sales? Michele Dalton has met a man who’ll do your shopping for you: Bryan Bonaparte!

2 Bryan Bonaparte is a rare person: A man who loves shopping. Indeed, he loves it so much that he’s set up an agency to provide a shopping service for those people who don’t share his enthusiasm. “I get a real buzz out of shopping,” admits Bryan. “People say to me ‘I can’t believe you enjoy doing this,’ but I do. It is a challenge to track down what people want and to find new and interesting things on their behalf. And it is great to get paid for it as well.”

3 Bryan’s agency, called Ace, started in a small way one Christmas. It was meant to be just a seasonal thing, but it turned out to be so successful that he carried on throughout the year. It seems there are always gifts to buy for weddings, birthdays, anniversaries and retirements. A survey published in the London Evening News last year found that many people are getting increasingly depressed at the prospect of shopping, and this may go some way to explaining Bryan’s success. The survey pinpointed crowds, bad weather, choosing the right present and carrying heavy bags as stress triggers.

4 Planning a shopping trip with military precision is Bryan’s solution to the problem. “A lot of people go shopping, especially during the sales, with no idea what they are looking for,” he explains. “It’s no wonder they find walking around the stores frustrating and exhausting.” The shopping stretch covered by Ace runs through most of London’s West End shopping districts. Bryan, or another member of his team, is happy to take anyone shopping within this area. Moreover, they can visit stores on their behalf, and can deliver goods to clients’ homes or offices at a convenient time, including evenings and weekends. If you don’t actually know what you want, Ace makes suggestions, buys the items, then returns to the shops to exchange them if you are not completely satisfied.

5 Although £15 per hour applies to either service, it is worth paying for because otherwise clients would spend a lot for the items. Clients with a list of requests are given a quota based on the amount of time involved. The only thing Bryan won’t do is buy food. For sales shopping, customers need to be specific about size, color, style and designer labels. Details about the normal price and the discount that clients want are required, and Bryan warns that shops generally won’t exchange items bought in sales. What’s more, Bryan’s specialist knowledge means that clients usually get a good deal. “I’ve come to know how long the sales will run for, the stock that will be carried and whether old stock will be brought back in at sale time. If I know the stores will reduce prices after a month, then I’ll hang on before buying. Sometimes, they can be 70% less a few days before the sale ends.”

With Bryan to guide you, will shopping ever be the same again? ☺
PART A. What do the following refer to?

1. doing this (para. 2) : ____________________________________________

2. this (para. 3) : the fact that ______________________________________

3. they (para. 5) : ________________________________________________

PART B. Mark the following statements True (T) or False (F).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>T</th>
<th>F</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Bryan and his team work only in specific seasons.</td>
<td>T</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Bryan buys everything that a client asks for.</td>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Bryan’s expertise might help his clients save a lot of money.</td>
<td>T</td>
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PART C. Answer the following questions according to the information in the text. Give SHORT answers where possible.

1. Write three of the factors that make shopping stressful.

________________________________________

2. Why do customers have to be specific about size and color for sales shopping?

________________________________________

PART D. Language: Fill each gap below using the information in paragraph 4 in the text. You need to make some changes.

Bryan (1)_________________________ a shopping trip with military excellence to solve the problem. During sales, people go shopping but they (2)________________________ what they are looking for. As a result, they are (3)________________________ and (4)________________________. Bryan, or one of his employees happily takes anyone shopping in London’s West End shopping districts. In addition, stores (5)________________________ on their behalf and (6)________________________ _____________ to customers’ homes or offices at any suitable time. If a customer isn’t certain about what he wants, (7)________________________ made and items (8)________________________ by Ace. If the customer is not satisfied with the items, Ace returns to the shops to exchange them.

GOOD LUCK ☺
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ANSWER KEY

A.

1. shopping
   tracking down what people want and finding new and interesting things on their behalf
   providing a shopping service

2. (many) people are getting increasingly depressed at the prospect of shopping

3. prices

B.

1. F
2. F
3. T

C.

1. Crowds, bad weather, choosing the right present, carrying heavy bags. (Any three is sufficient)
2. Because shops (generally) won’t exchange items bought in sales.

D.

1. plans
2. don’t know / have no idea
3. exhausted
4. frustrated
5. can be visited (on their behalf)
6. goods can be delivered
7. suggestions are
8. are bought