

Part 2

Read the article on 'A New Version of Barbie' in the Insert Booklet, Part 2, Pages 4-5 and answer Questions 11 - 25.

A New Version of Barbie

I'm sitting in a bright pink room inside Mattel's El Segundo offices, playing with a Barbie that only 20 people in the world are aware of. Her development was kept so secret that even the designers' wives were unaware of her existence, thus the project was code-named Project Dawn.

I rip her clothing off and try to put on a new outfit, just like every other girl who has ever played with the most popular toy in history. It's a blue summer dress with a black ribbon tied at the waist. I try to pull it over her head, but the waistline gets stuck at her shoulders, and her golden mane peeks out from behind the neckline. "Try going feet first," says the lead designer, which I do. This isn't good. Her fat bottom gets caught in the same area again and over again. Plump, to be sure. Barbie has been given a new body.

In Mattel's extensively discussed vocabulary, there are three new bodies: petite, tall, and curvy, and they will be offered alongside the classic busty, thin-waisted shape on Barbie.com beginning Jan. 28. They'll all be known as Barbie, but the curvaceous one—with flesh on her thighs and a bulging belly and back—marks the most striking alteration to the world's most recognized physique.

Mattel is taking a huge risk. Barbie is much more than a doll. Barbie sells \$1 billion in more than 150 countries each year, and 92 percent of American girls aged 3 to 12 have had one, due in part to the doll's low price of \$10. For centuries, she's been the global icon of a particular sort of American beauty, with a brand awareness that rivals Mickey Mouse. Barbie was created "to educate women what—for better or worse—is expected of them in society," according to M.G. Lord, a Barbie biographer.

The firm believes that the new dolls, which come in a variety of body shapes, as well as the new skin tones and hair textures released last year, will better reflect the reality of their young owners. However, if it isn't too late, the endeavor might lead to a dramatic backfire. Adding three additional body categories today is bound to annoy someone: it took months to select out the phrases petite, tall, and curvaceous and translate them into dozens of languages without offending anybody. Girls, like myself, will undress curvy Barbie and try to put original Barbie's clothes on her or exchange petite and tall Barbie's skirts. Not everything will close with Velcro. Fits will be thrown, and irritated mothers will dial Mattel's number. Project Dawn concerns will be handled by a separate support line established up by the firm.

However, remaining the course was out of the question. Barbie sales fell by 20% between 2012 and 2014, and they continued to decrease last year. Lego Friends, despite boosting utmost imagination among players, this series of toys is meant to educate females how to construct. This helped propel Lego past Mattel as the world's largest toy business in 2014. Then, just as Elsa from the film Frozen dethroned Barbie as the most popular girl's toy, Hasbro took over the Disney Princess business from Mattel. Mattel is expected to lose \$500 million in income as a result of Elsa and the other Disney Princesses.

Meanwhile, American beauty norms have evolved: Kim Kardashian West's, Beyoncé's, and Christina Hendricks' curvy bodies have become famous, while millennial feminist leaders like Lena Dunham are consciously baring their un-Barbie-like proportions onscreen, fuelling a body acceptance movement. In this atmosphere, a new generation of mothers favors toys for their daughters that they believe to be more powerful. Elsa may be just as blond and waif-thin as Barbie, but she has a strong and sisterly history. "We understand that the millennial parent is the future," admits Evelyn Mazzocco, president of the Barbie brand.

**Adjusted from Barbie New Body Cover (www.time.com)*

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Questions 11 - 20

Answer the following questions. For each question write no more than THREE words that must be taken from one point in the text. DO NOT write full sentences.

11 What is the name of the secret Barbie development?

.....(1)

12 Due to the problems that happened to Barbie and its dresses, what change was given to Barbie?

.....(1)

13 When were Barbie's three new bodies introduced on Barbie.com?

.....(1)

14 Of all the three new bodies, what is the curvaceous one regarded as?

.....(1)

15 Barbie was compared to Mickey Mouse in what way?

.....(1)

16 According to the text, what might happen following an attempt to add diversity to Barbie?

.....(1)

17 Who would Mattel's operator have to deal mostly with?

.....(1)

18 What does Lego Friends is aimed to teach woman customers about?

.....(1)

19 What have famous celebrities changed in American society?

.....(1)

20 What effect does the writer think it create when an imperfect body shape is exposed on TV?

.....(1)

(Total for Questions 11 - 20 = 10 marks)

Questions 21 -25

Indicate your answers to the questions below by marking a cross for the correct answer ☒. If you change your mind about an answer, put a line through the box-☒-and then indicate your new answer with a cross ☒.

21 What troubles the writer in Paragraph 2? (1)

- A** the blue summer dress does not match with the black ribbon.
- B** the lead designer is too bossy about how Barbie should be dressed.
- C** the new body type of Barbie makes it difficult to take off its clothes.
- D** the writer is not satisfied with the Barbie accessories.

22 What is true about the three new bodies of Barbie ? (1)

- A** they will replace the classic model.
- B** the curvaceous body type is considered the most impressive one.
- C** “petite, tall, and curvy” are used to call the new body types worldwide.

D the new body types are first introduced in stores in America.

23 What is the point of making Barbie more diverse according to the text? (1)

A to become a global icon of American beauty.

B to teach women about their role in the society.

C to portray the current reality of young women.

D to increase sale.

24 What was the financial performance of the new Barbie after it had been launched? (1)

A the brand awareness continued to increase.

B the sales decreased and the company lost its market share to competitors.

C there were more complaints from the customers.

D it helped the company gain the title of World's Largest Toy Business .

25 In what aspect might Elsa be more popular than Barbie (1)

A its appearance.

B its value as a strong character.

C its powerful plot.

D it is promoted by celebrities.

(Total for Questions 21 - 25 = 5 marks)

TOTAL FOR PART 2 = 15 MARKS

