

Vaugirard 1

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**Discipline :** *Anglais*  
(Unité d'Enseignements Complémentaires 2)

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**PART 1 (answer in the space provided on the document)**

**A. Transform the following sentences from active form to passive form. /2**

1. David Cameron organized the referendum on Brexit when he was Prime Minister.

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2. Many political leaders in the UK have widely criticized Theresa May's negotiation skills.

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**B. Make one complete sentence from each of the sentence pairs below using an appropriate relative pronoun (for example: which, that, where, etc...) /3**

1. The sharing economy is a new economic model. It relies on the idea that consumers can share unused resources or labour.

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2. Members of Theresa May's cabinet believe she will have to resign this week. Some members of Theresa May's cabinet will resign too.

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3. The tech entrepreneur Elon Musk declared he wanted to take humans to Mars and possibly live there himself. Elon Musk co-founded Tesla.

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## PART 2 (answer in the space provided on the document)

### Ofo, Pioneer of China's Bike-Sharing Boom, Is in a Crisis

The New York Times, by Raymond Zhong and Carolyn Zhang, Dec. 20, 2018

BEIJING — Brilliantly simple, emission-free solution to the problem of urban congestion? Or the maddening height of **venture-backed** technology hubris?

Dockless rented bicycles swept into Chinese cities two years ago. Their arrival inspired a wave of similar mobility experiments around the world, even as city dwellers in China bemoaned the sight of candy-colored bikes heaped in unholy piles on their sidewalks. Now, one of China's leading bike start-ups, Ofo, is facing serious financial problems. Its founder is on a government blacklist for unpaid bills. Millions of riders who placed deposits are demanding their money back. And the business model used by many of China's tech firms — spend furiously to acquire new users, worry about profits later — is showing its limits.

The run of Ofo customers seeking refunds appears to have started last week. Doubts about the company's financial health had swirled for months. People said on social media they were unable to get refunds on deposits of \$15 to \$30, which they put down to rent Ofo's bumblebee-yellow bikes. (The company's Chinese nickname translates as "Little Yellow Bike.")

"Ofo's user base is large, so there is a possibility that the number of applications for deposit refunds will soar," the company said late Monday in a statement posted on Weibo. "Please be patient. We promise that deposits will be refunded according to the proper procedures. To all users, please don't worry!"

The statement appears only to have made people worry more.

Many customers used the Ofo app to apply for refunds and joined a queue that had climbed to nearly 12 million people by Thursday.

In an email to employees on Wednesday, Ofo's founder, Dai Wei, acknowledged that the company had been under financial strain all year.

"I thought countless times about cutting operating capital to pay back some of users' deposits and debts to suppliers, and even about dissolving the company and filing for bankruptcy," Mr. Dai wrote.

By then, he had spent a total of around \$15 to travel to and from Ofo's offices by subway and taxi. But he said it was worth it.

When the history of the current **go-go era** in China's tech industry is written, Ofo's rise and fall may serve as a useful parable. In bike rentals, ride hailing, food delivery and more, a good business idea attracts a swarm of copycats. Cutthroat competition ensues.

Many companies and investors get burned.

Mr. Dai founded Ofo in 2014 while studying at Peking University. Cities like New York, London and Paris had long had programs for renting bicycles for short time periods. But those programs required riders to return the bikes to docks fixed to the ground.

Ofo and another Beijing start-up, Mobike, realized that by equipping bikes with GPS and digital locks, commuters could use their phones to rent bikes, freeing them from fixed docks. That would keep bikes circulating, and available wherever people needed them.

Almost overnight, the streets of China's cities started to resemble a kind of bicycle free-for-all. Imitators sprouted by the dozen, and other start-ups angled to find the next big thing in sharing: umbrellas, basketballs, cellphone power banks.

40 Investment poured in. China's tech giants, including Alibaba and Didi Chuxing, put money into Ofo. Eventually, the start-up raised \$2.2 billion, according to Crunchbase. State media hailed bike-sharing as one of China's "new four great inventions," putting it and high-speed rail, e-commerce and smartphone payments on the same plane as paper, movable type, the compass and gunpowder.

45 But it did not take long for the fever to become madness. Vandals set two-wheelers ablaze and heaved them into rivers and canals. Financial pressure started building as well. As long as new riders kept signing up, cash kept flowing in the form of deposits. But it has been expensive for the companies to replace damaged stock, and to hire workers to **haul** bikes all day from low- to high-demand locations.

50 In April, Mobike was acquired by Meituan-Dianping, a food-delivery giant whose financial resources could help it continue to **subsidize** cheap bike trips. But Ofo has had trouble lately raising money from investors, Mr. Dai said in his letter this week. The company withdrew from several overseas markets, including the United States, this year just months after entering them.

55 Ofo's bikes still have their fans in China. Bi Wenwen, a 38-year-old entrepreneur in Shanghai, applied for a deposit refund in November. She does not expect to receive it, but she said she would still use Ofo in the meantime.

60 "It provides a lot of convenience," Ms. Bi said. Mr. Wang, a 28-year-old financial analyst in Beijing, lost the \$500 deposit he paid a high-end car-sharing company after the company folded. He also failed to get his deposit back from Bluegogo, another bike-rental start-up.

"Actually, I didn't have much confidence right from the beginning," Mr. Wang said, about the sharing economy. "So many similar companies fighting against one another." In the end, he bought his own bike.

(820 words)

**A. Explain or find a synonym for the following words in bold in the text. (No French translation) /2**

1. venture-backed \_\_\_\_\_ /0.5

2. go-go era \_\_\_\_\_ /0.5

3. haul \_\_\_\_\_ /0.5

4. subsidize \_\_\_\_\_ /0.5

**B. Transform the quotes underlined in the text from direct speech to indirect speech. Use a different reporting verb for each sentence. Do not use "say".** /3

1. "Ofo's user base is large, so there is a possibility that the number of applications for deposit refunds will soar," » the company said last Monday.

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2. The company said: "Please be patient. We promise that deposits will be refunded according to the proper procedures. To all users, please don't worry!"

/1

3. "It provides a lot of convenience," Ms Bi said. "Actually, I didn't have much confidence right from the beginning," Mr Wang said.

/1

**Part 3:**

**Answer the two following questions in your exam booklet.**

**C. Write a 200-word summary of the article above.**

**/20**

Remember to use your own words. Any sequence of more than three consecutive words taken from the text will be considered copying. Please note that you are being evaluated on your understanding of the text, your ability to recognize key points and the quality of your English.

**D. Answer the following question in a well-structured paragraph, (120 words)/10**

Give your opinion and illustrate your ideas with concrete examples.

**Is the growing protectionism in international trade a boon or a bane for the global economy?**