

Longman English

# Spark!



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# 5

# Think

# before you shop

Are you a responsible shopper? Circle your answers in the questionnaire to find out.

*What's in your shopping bag?*



**1** I compare products and read reviews before I decide to buy something.

- A always
- B sometimes
- C never

**2** I try not to buy things just because they're on sale.

- A always
- B sometimes
- C never

**3** I buy good-quality products that last, even if they're more expensive.

- A always
- B sometimes
- C never

**4** I buy from companies that follow good business practices, such as treating their workers well.

- A always
- B sometimes
- C never

**5** I avoid buying things that I don't need or can't afford.

- A always
- B sometimes
- C never

If you answered mainly **As** :

You're a smart shopper because you think before you buy. This unit will expand your knowledge about responsible shopping.

If you answered mainly **Bs** :

You're on your way to becoming a responsible shopper. This unit will show you how to improve your shopping habits.

If you answered mainly **Cs** :

You need to make a lot of changes to become a responsible shopper. You can start by following the tips given in this unit.



Share your answers with a partner. Do you agree with the results of the questionnaire? What could you change about your shopping habits?



In this unit, you will listen, read and talk about shopping, and write a speech.



Read the title of the text.  
What do you think are  
some reasons why people  
should be responsible  
shoppers?



Skim the interview. Who  
is the text written for?



Text 1

# Why you should be a responsible shopper



Our news reporter Lulu Chee recently attended the school fair and interviewed Go Green Chairperson Chris Lee about their club's stall.

**Lulu:** Why did you run a stall at the fair this year?

**Chris:** We decided to run a stall to encourage students to be responsible shoppers. This involves being aware of *who* makes the products you buy. It's important to know this because you could be buying products that were made by people who work long hours in crowded factories for very little pay. For instance, do you know who made the T-shirt you're wearing?

**Lulu:** No, I don't. I bought the T-shirt because I like the style, and it was cheap.

**Chris:** Well, the reason it was inexpensive is because the person who made it was probably paid less than HK\$8 an hour. In fact, in some countries, children as young as five years old are employed to make the clothes we buy and are paid even less!

**Lulu:** Wow, I honestly had no idea! I usually buy cheap clothes because I can't afford to spend a fortune to keep up with the latest trends. However, given what you've told me, I'm definitely going to rethink my buying habits. Perhaps I could reuse the clothes I have instead of buying new ones. Then when I really need new clothes, I'll shop at second-hand clothing stores.





**Chris:** That's a great plan! I hope that more students set an example by using their spending power to take a stand against these unfair business practices. It's about time that workers were treated fairly and child labour became a thing of the past.

**Lulu:** I agree! Is there anything else we can do to be responsible shoppers?

**Chris:** Well, besides thinking about who makes the clothes we buy, we also need to think about who grows the food we buy. For example, a family may pay around HK\$80 to buy a bag of rice. However, rice farmers are usually only paid a very small amount of that money. It's really sad that most of them can't afford to take care of their families. It's even sadder that their children have to work because they can't afford to send them to school.

**Lulu:** I can't imagine missing out on school because I have to work to support my family! So how can we help make an impact on these farmers' lives?

**Chris:** Have you ever heard of Fairtrade products? These are products that are supported by Fairtrade International. This organisation works with companies to make sure that farmers get a fair price for their hard work and their children get the opportunity to go to school instead of working. Some of the Fairtrade products we sold at our stall were chocolates, tea, honey and bananas. I highly recommend that you look for products with a Fairtrade logo next time you go shopping!

**Lulu:** I definitely will. Thanks for teaching us about how to become better consumers. I hope students take this issue seriously because the sooner we all become responsible shoppers, the better!



## Check your understanding

**A** Answer the questions using information from Text 1. For multiple-choice questions, blacken one circle only.

- 1 a) According to the Go Green Club, a responsible shopper would not buy a product without knowing ...

\_\_\_\_\_.

- b) Why is it important for people to know this information?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 2 Find a word in lines 5–10 that means the opposite of 'empty'.

\_\_\_\_\_

- 3 a) What reasons does Lulu give for buying the T-shirt she is wearing?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- b) Does she usually buy similar clothing? Explain.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

-  4 In lines 13–14, Chris mentions that factory workers make HK\$8 an hour to show \_\_\_\_\_.

- ☐ A how little money they make  
☐ B how much they make per month  
☐ C that they are treated well  
☐ D why people buy cheap clothes

- 5 What did Lulu discover about the T-shirt she was wearing?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 6 Give one example that shows Lulu has decided to become a responsible shopper.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

-  7 If you 'take a stand against' something (line 24), you \_\_\_\_\_.

- ☐ A are annoyed by it  
☐ B are supportive of it  
☐ C have a strong opinion about it  
☐ D respect it

- 8 According to lines 23–25, Chris wants students to \_\_\_\_\_.


- ☐ A only buy products from local companies  
☐ B save their money  
☐ C stop supporting companies that use child labour  
☐ D use their money to buy expensive clothing

- 9 What expression in lines 23–26 means 'something that no longer happens'?

\_\_\_\_\_

-  10 Who does 'we' refer to in line 27?

\_\_\_\_\_

-  11 Based on the information given in lines 28–34, why are rice farmers unable to provide for their families?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 12 What benefit do farmers and their children receive when you buy Fairtrade products?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- 13 How can you tell if a product is supported by Fairtrade International?

\_\_\_\_\_



Look at the photos. What does each of them show?

Read the title of the text. What do you think an 'impulse buyer' is?

Have you ever bought something you didn't really want or need? Read on to find out why most people have done this.

Text 2



# Are you an Impulse Buyer?

SALE



1 Do you have a closet full of clothes you have barely worn or you don't even remember buying? If this sounds familiar, then you're probably an impulse buyer. This is someone who buys things without really thinking about whether they need them or can afford them. Don't worry though. You're not alone. According to research, impulse buying is common since forty-two percent of clothing purchases among 13–24 year-olds are bought on impulse. So let's take a closer look at impulse buying and find out why it's so difficult to break the habit.

2 Whether you buy on impulse or not depends on your mood. For example, if you go shopping when you're unhappy or upset, you're more likely to buy on impulse. The reason for this is because purchasing something is like giving yourself a present, so it instantly cheers you up.

Unfortunately, this feeling of happiness is only temporary because you will start to reconsider your purchase and then begin to feel regret. 'Oh no, I don't need it, I don't have the space for it, or I can't afford it,' are things you might say to yourself. That's why it might be time for you to realise that the more you buy, the worse it makes you feel.





**3** The main reason we buy on impulse is because shops use various marketing strategies to tempt us to purchase their goods. For example, marketing 'sales' signs make it hard for people to avoid the temptation of a good deal.

**4** In fact, studies show that eighty-eight percent of impulse purchases are made because an item is on sale. Companies are aware of this so they will frequently display sale signs, usually in red, all around the store. These signs make us think, 'I have to buy it because it's such a great bargain.' And before we know it, we're walking out of the store with our new purchase.

**5** Another successful marketing strategy that makes us buy things on impulse is when supermarkets display products, such as sweets and snacks, at the checkout. Since we have to wait in line, it's hard to resist these tasty snacks. Therefore, it's very likely that we will add an impulse purchase to our basket before checking out!

**6** Now that you know why people shop impulsively, it can help you make fewer purchases and be less wasteful. You can learn to be a smarter consumer by making an effort to think before you buy in order to stop impulse shopping.

### Check your understanding

**A** Answer the questions using information from Text 2. For multiple-choice questions, blacken one circle only.

**1** According to paragraph 1, what is an impulse buyer?

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**2 a)** What does the writer compare an impulse purchase to in paragraph 2?

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**b)** According to paragraph 2, why do people make impulse purchases?

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**3** What does 'it' refer to in line 18?

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**4** How does our mood change when we buy on impulse? Use the correct form of words from paragraph 2.

We go into a shop feeling <sup>(a)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_  
or <sup>(b)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_.

We buy something on impulse and feel <sup>(c)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_.

We then think about our purchase and feel <sup>(d)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_.

## Collocations

When learning English, it is useful to know which words are often paired together, e.g. *make a difference* (verb + noun). These word pairs are called collocations. Collocations are best learnt as 'chunks' of language. However, you can also use a dictionary to check if two words are 'partners'. Most good dictionaries will show collocations. Below are some examples of verb + noun collocations used in Text 1 and Text 2.

Many teens can't afford to *spend a fortune* on clothing. (NOT ~~use a fortune~~)

I'm trying to *break the habit* of buying things just because they're on sale. (NOT ~~cut the habit~~)

- Form collocations by filling in the tables below with the correct verbs from the word box. Two verbs are NOT used. You can use a dictionary to help you.

avoid go launch make set take

(1)	a mistake an effort an impact	(2)	a campaign a product
(3)	a goal a trend an example	(4)	a mistake (the) temptation

- Edit the following conversation by underlining the mistakes and correcting them using the verbs from the tables above. Make sure you use the correct form of the verbs.

**Amy:** I did a big mistake. I bought these T-shirts that were on sale even though  
I got a goal to try to shop less.

**Tony:** Well, it's hard to stop the temptation of buying things that are on sale.

**Amy:** Yeah, but ever since my school set a campaign about responsible shopping,

5 I've been doing an effort to be a better consumer.

**Tony:** So how have your shopping habits changed?

**Amy:** I'm trying to spend my money on things that can help get an impact on  
people's lives. That's why I've decided to return these T-shirts.

There are six mistakes.



## Calling for action

When we write or speak, we sometimes need to call on people to take action. To do so, we can begin our suggestions with the following expressions. Each is followed by a clause.

*I highly recommend that* you look for products with a Fairtrade logo.

*I hope* consumers will think twice before they buy.

*The sooner* we all become more responsible shoppers, *the better*.

We can also use *It might be time for ... to* followed by an infinitive clause.

*It might be time for* us *to* rethink our buying habits.

### Grammar in text

Find examples of calling for action in Texts 1 and 2.

What actions are being suggested?

### Let's practise

Complete the following forum discussions using the above expressions to call for action. Use the verbs in brackets to help you complete the clauses that follow.

January 3 at 9:45 p.m.

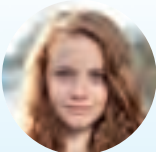


**lollipop**

Hello everybody

I love shopping, especially when I feel sad. Every time I go out, I buy something — T-shirts, jeans, notebooks, pens ... But actually I don't really need them. Now my room is full of useless stuff.

January 3 at 10:13 p.m.



**handymandy**

I'm sure a lot of people do the same. They go shopping when they feel sad. But this doesn't help at all because you'll just feel guilty later. To make yourself happy, <sup>(1)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (do) some sports, e.g. swimming or basketball. Trust me. <sup>(2)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (begin), the better. Doing sports is the best way to make one feel happy.

January 4 at 7:26 a.m.



**bingolam**

<sup>(3)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (review) your buying habits. I have a good tip for you — try to stay at home as much as you can. If you don't go out, then you can avoid all these temptations. <sup>(4)</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (think) about it seriously.

## TASK

## Write a speech

In this unit, you've learnt all about being a more careful shopper. Why not share what you've learnt by giving a speech on responsible shopping?



**A** First let's take a look at some common questions that responsible shoppers ask themselves when they buy a product. Match the given questions with the pictures. Write the correct letters in the circles.

- a Is the product environmentally friendly?
- b Is the product Fairtrade?
- c Is the product made using child labour?
- d Is the product really needed?
- e Does making or transporting the product leave a high carbon footprint?
- f Does producing the product involve animal cruelty?

☐  
☐  
☐  
☐  
☐  
☐  
☐

1



2



3



4

Not tested on animals



5



6



Next put a tick (✓) in the boxes above if you have ever asked yourself a similar question before buying anything. Put a cross (X) if you have not.

# VOCABULARY ROUNDUP



## Words and phrases related to responsible shopping

animal cruelty ( <i>n phr</i> ) p. 15	carbon footprint ( <i>n phr</i> ) p. 15
child labour ( <i>n phr</i> ) p. 3	compare products ( <i>v phr</i> ) p. 1
cut down on consumption ( <i>v phr</i> ) p. 11	environmentally friendly ( <i>adj phr</i> ) p. 15
Fairtrade logo ( <i>n phr</i> ) p. 3	good working conditions ( <i>n phr</i> ) p. 17
good-quality product ( <i>n phr</i> ) p. 1	import ( <i>v</i> ) p. 16
locally grown ( <i>adj phr</i> ) p. 15	organic ( <i>adj</i> ) p. 13
read reviews ( <i>v phr</i> ) p. 1	recyclable ( <i>adj</i> ) p. 17
second-hand ( <i>adj</i> ) p. 2	smart shopper ( <i>n phr</i> ) p. 1
spending power ( <i>n phr</i> ) p. 3	toxic chemicals ( <i>n phr</i> ) p. 16

### Add more!

What other useful words and phrases have you learnt? Add them to the appropriate lists.

## Words and phrases related to buying or shopping habits

be a bargain ( <i>v phr</i> ) p. 7	buy on impulse ( <i>v phr</i> ) p. 6
keep up with the (latest) trends ( <i>v phr</i> ) p. 2	on sale ( <i>idiom</i> ) p. 1
shop impulsively ( <i>v phr</i> ) p. 7	stock up ( <i>phr v</i> ) p. 11
wasteful ( <i>adj</i> ) p. 7	

## Other vocabulary

a variety of ( <i>exp</i> ) p. 11	barely ( <i>adv</i> ) p. 6
benefit ( <i>n</i> ) p. 12	brand ( <i>n</i> ) p. 18
business practice ( <i>n phr</i> ) p. 1	campaign ( <i>n</i> ) p. 9
checkout ( <i>n</i> ) p. 7	cheer sb up* ( <i>phr v</i> ) p. 6

\* 'Sb' stands for somebody.

