Unit One addressed the big picture of labor market realities—which industries are growing, which are shrinking, and technology’s impact on the market. They learned about a wide range of careers in Retail as well as the various kinds of career families available to employees in the Retail sector. They also learned about current issues that affect workers.

Unit Two addressed the inner workings of the job-seeker. What are her interests and passions? What kind of work environment will she enjoy? What careers should she consider based on what she knows about herself and what factors might influence someone making a career change? Students also learned to navigate career database websites, assess their own interests and conduct a group research project about careers in the Retail sector.

In Unit Three, students’ research became personalized. They heard from Retail workers themselves, through firsthand accounts and interviews from workers in text and video, and discussed what they learned. They also conducted further research on Retail careers of interest.

In Unit Four, students considered what it takes to prepare for a career in Retail. They learned about common career pathways in the industry and considered how career movement happens in Retail careers. They learned about different training and education opportunities available for someone interested in this field.

In Unit Five, students learned how to leverage their existing and potential professional networks for job seeking, explore the job search process, including analyzing help wanted ads, learning about workplace expectations, and engage with a panel of Retail professionals. They also learned how to become entrepreneurs by reading about Retail workers who have started their own businesses. They also practiced using online resources available to New Yorkers looking to become self-employed.
In Unit Six, students learn about the history and the future of shopping. They also learn about customer rights and protections, patterns in consumer behavior, and the choices we make about what and how much to buy.

NOTE: This unit addresses much of the Social Studies content tested on the TASC, including Economics concepts such as Supply and Demand and the impact of geography on economics, World and American History such as World War II and its impact on the rise and fall of industry.

1. **THE HISTORY OF SHOPPING**

Students read about the history of Retail from mail order in the late 1800s to the rise and decline of urban department stores, suburban malls, and big box stores. They do a jigsaw reading activity and create a timeline of events in Retail history. Many links can be made to Social Studies topics on the TASC exam.

2. **THE FUTURE OF SHOPPING SERIES**

Students read about current trends in shopping and predictions on how the shopping experience will change. They test their comprehension through a quiz, and practice sentence combining and categorizing information.

2.1 • The Rise of E-commerce

Students read an article and analyze a graph about the rise of e-commerce. They then answer question stems citing evidence from the text.

2.2 • Sentence Combining: Spotlight on the Internet of Things

Students read and annotate an article about the “internet of things”—consumer objects that are connected to wifi technology. They discuss the article as a class and practice combining sentences from the article using FANBOYS (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) and dependent clauses.

2.3 • Consumer Decisions: Buying Online vs. Buying in Stores

Students read an article comparing the reasons that some shoppers prefer buying online and others prefer buying in traditional brick-and-mortar stores, and then apply these reasons to a case study on buying a television.
**2.4 • Virtual Reality Revolutionizes the Retail Experience**
Students read an article about a new trend in Retail shopping and practice their note-taking skills. After reading the article, they take a quiz using their notes.

**3 • CONSUMER EDUCATION**
Students read an informational text on consumer rights and how to report violations. Students then rank this information according to importance, create a graph and respond to the text in writing.

**4 • WHY DO WE CHOOSE THE PRODUCTS WE BUY?**
Students consider the factors that inform and influence their consumer choices of manufactured products, then read an article about the influence of emotions on consumer choice, and create their own quizzes to assess their classmate’s knowledge of the text.

**4.1 • Supply and Demand**
Students watch and discuss a brief movie clip that illustrates the law of supply and demand, and consider their own experiences with supply and demand as consumers and workers.

**5 • FROM CONSUMPTION TO CONSUMERISM AND BEYOND**
Students read an article about the rise of the consumer economy and a new movement to shop more responsibly, and take a quiz to assess their comprehension.
The History of Shopping

Students read about the history of modern Retail starting with mail order in the late 1800s. They consider the social implications of the rise of urban department stores and suburban malls, and consider how technological innovations led to e-commerce. They do a jig-saw reading activity and create a timeline of events in Retail history. Many links can be made to social studies topics on the TASC exam.

PREP

• Prepare timelines on five of the sheets of butcher paper:
  1. Orient the paper horizontally.
  2. Draw a horizontal line through the center of the sheet as a timeline, and label it with the following dates from the history of Retail readings:
  3. Label each timeline *A Retail Timeline: From 1880 to Now*.

• Be prepared to explain terminology:
  **Category killer:** A retail chain store that is dominant in its product category—it generally offers an extensive selection of merchandise at prices so low that smaller stores cannot compete. Examples noted in the video below are Toys ‘R Us, Home Depot, and Barnes & Noble.
  **Superstore:** A very large retail store that sells a vast variety of product lines including apparel, footwear, sporting goods, electronic devices, computers, home appliances, food, cosmetics and much more.

• Review “A Brief History of Retail” video.
  **Link:** [https://www.wsj.com/video/series/a-brief-history-of/a-brief-history-of-retail/F1AE7DC6-BB25-499C-9A2A-D120C18C3798](https://www.wsj.com/video/series/a-brief-history-of/a-brief-history-of-retail/F1AE7DC6-BB25-499C-9A2A-D120C18C3798)

MATERIALS

• *A Brief History of Retail* worksheet
• *The Rise and Fall of Sears* reading
• *Purchasing Power* reading
• *The Lifecycle of the Suburban Mall* reading
• *Big Box Stores: What’s Next* reading
• *Talking Points* handout
Section 1

- **A History of Retail from 1880 to the Present** handout
- Butcher paper, 5-6 sheets (4 for use plus 1-2 extras), each 3-5 feet long
- Markers
- A computer with a projector and speakers

**EXPLAIN**

1. The ways stores sell things and the ways we shop for them has changed a lot, even in one or two generations. It’s hard to imagine what it was like, for example, for someone living in a rural area many decades ago who wanted to purchase an item not grown or raised nearby. They would either have to wait for a traveling merchant to come their way, or they would order it from a mail order catalog and have to wait weeks or even months to receive it.

   We’re going to learn more about the history of the Retail sector from the 1950s to now by watching a video.

2. We are going to watch the video through once without pausing. The second time we watch the video, I will be stopping the video at certain points so that you can take notes and respond to questions on a worksheet.

3. Open *The Wall Street Journal’s* “A Brief History of Retail.”
   Link: https://www.wsj.com/video/series/a-brief-history-of/a-brief-history-of-retail/F1AE7DC6-BB25-499C-9A2A-D120C18C3798

4. Play the video straight through and ask students to watch the video for the main ideas and not take notes. After watching the video once, they should discuss their impressions with a partner.

5. Distribute *A Brief History of Retail* worksheet. Play the video again, this time, pausing as indicated below so that students can respond to the questions on the worksheet:
   - **Stop at 00:10**
     What kind of retail stores are mentioned first? *(Question 1)*
   - **Stop at 00:26**
     What kind of retail establishments started being built in the 1950s? *(Question 2)*
   - **Stop at 00:44**
     Write a few examples of “category killers.” *(Question 3)*
     Write a few examples of “superstores.” *(Question 4)*
   - **Stop at 00:59**
     What was the year that foot traffic in malls started to go down? *(Question 5)*
     Why do you think that happened? *(Question 6)*
• **Stop at 01:45**

Which company is the “new winner” when it comes to sales? *(Question 7)*

How many more online sales are there now than a decade ago? *(Question 8)*

6 Divide the class into four groups. Ask students to work in their groups to respond to the discussion questions located at the bottom of the worksheet. Give students about 15 minutes for their discussion.

7 You are going to look more closely at the changes that have happened in Retail, going further back now, from the 1880s to today. Each group will read about one part of Retail history, then share what they learned with others who read the other readings to form a more complete understanding of how the Retail sector has developed.

This type of reading is called a jig-saw reading. Like a jig-saw puzzle, the four groups will add their own piece of the puzzle to come to an understanding of the whole together. They will then work to create a single timeline of the history of Retail from the 1880s to the present, based on information from each of the readings.

8 Distribute one of the following readings to each group: *The Rise and Fall of Sears*, *Purchasing Power*, *The Lifecycle of the Suburban Mall*, and *Big Box Stores: What’s Next?*

9 Distribute the *Talking Points* handout.

**Say:** In your group you will learn about one part of Retail history, then you will join members from another group to teach them about what you learned. You’ll take notes about what you’ve read and discussed with your group that you can use when telling members from another group about your reading. You can use the worksheet to write down talking points that will help you remember what you want to share.

10 Talking points are usually written as key words, short phrases or a sentence that will help you remember an idea you want to talk about. Talking points are helpful when you have to give a presentation. If you write very detailed notes, you might get confused while presenting or it might appear that you are reading from a script. Talking points are a tool that can help you remember the main points you want to talk about.
First you’ll read and annotate the article, circling all dates. Then you will discuss it as a group. **What kinds of things are you going to want to discuss with your group?**

- *The main idea, what’s important, new terms, information that might be useful to students, anything surprising or interesting, any question you might have.*

Give students time to read, discuss, and write their talking points.

When students are finished, divide them into new groups that include at least one member from each original group. Ask each new member of the group to take turns teaching each other about what they learned from the reading in their original group, using their talking points. Groups should feel free to discuss the new information with each other and ask each other questions.

Distribute *A History of Retail from 1880 to the Present* handout. Groups should discuss how each article relates to the others and answer the questions on the handout. Ask all students to complete the handout, discussing the questions and exchanging information from the different articles they read.

Distribute a blank *Retail Timeline: From 1880 to Now* that you created on butcher paper in Prep to each group.

Students should work together to fill in the timeline with information from their individual readings. Ask them to place the events in the decade or decades in which they happened.

Each group presents their timeline, including key information from the articles that they shared with each other.
A Brief History of Retail

1. What kind of retail stores are mentioned first in the video?

2. What kind of retail establishments started being built in the 1950s?

3. Write a few examples of “category killers.”

4. Write a few examples of “superstores.”

5. What was the year that foot traffic in malls started to decrease?

6. Why do you think that happened?

7. Which company is the “new winner” when it comes to sales?

8. How many more online sales are there now than a decade ago?
GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think Barnes & Noble and Home Depot are called "category killers?"

2. Superstores, such as Target or Walmart, are sometimes called "big box stores." Why do you think they are called that?

3. Why is it hard for "mom and pop stores" to compete with superstores?

4. What do you think is the main idea of this video?
The Rise and Fall of Sears

Adapted from: https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/rise-and-fall-sears-180964181/
https://www.history.com/topics/history-of-sears
https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/capitalbusiness/the-big-missteps-that-brought-an-american-retail-icon-to-the-edge-of-collapse/2017/06/01/19f4bee4-35a3-11e7-b4ee-434b6d506b37_story.html?utm_term=.d5d5044f3c1a
https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2018/10/15/sears-bankruptcy/1595399002/

Sears is a symbol of American capitalism, reflecting the ups and downs of the American economy. For over 100 years, Sears was the way American manufacturers got their products into the hands of people who wanted to buy them. Sears, which started as a 19th century mail order company, changed along with the transformation of the American consumer population. It played a role in the urban department store boom as well as the rise of the post-World War 2 suburban shopping mall.

Early days
In 1886, a shipment of watches arrived at a Minnesota railway station. The local jeweler refused to accept them. Richard W. Sears, a Railway Station Agent, decided to buy and sell the watches to other station agents as a side job. He was successful, and he quit his railway job a few months later to establish the R.W. Sears Watch Company in Minneapolis. A year later, Alvah C. Roebuck joined the business and they moved it to Chicago. By 1893, the partnership had officially become Sears, Roebuck and Company.

In the late 1890s, roughly two-thirds of Americans lived in rural areas, with little access to most consumer goods. Local general stores were usually high-priced, offered little selection, and were hard to get to. Sears and Roebuck used this as an opportunity to expand from a watch business into a mail order business that sold a wide variety of products. The United States' railroad system had grown to link many different parts of the country for the first time, which allowed Sears to sell to people who were otherwise unable to find a wide variety of products. The postal system expanded mail routes in rural areas, which gave

VOCABULARY

Mail order is the process of ordering and receiving products, also called “goods,” through the mail. A boom is when something becomes very popular. Rural refers to the countryside, as opposed to the town or city. Brick and mortar stores are physical stores that you go to and shop in as opposed to online shopping or ordering something from a catalog.

Great Depression: The economic crisis and in the U.S. and other countries, roughly beginning October, 1929 and continuing through most of the 1930s.
Inflation is the general increase in prices, which decreases the amount that people can buy.
Bankruptcy is the failure to make enough profit to stay in business.
Sears another way to deliver their goods to rural customers.

Sears dominated this rural market through its huge catalog. The 500+ page catalog had everything from buggies and bicycles to sporting goods, clothing, cookware and sewing machines. It even included do-it-yourself kits for building houses. As part of its sales strategy, Sears used its catalog to educate millions of shoppers about mail-order procedures such as shipping, cash payment, substitutions and returns. These systems changed the way America shopped.

From rural areas to cities to suburbs
The early 20th century saw the movement of millions of people from rural areas to cities. Since city dwellers could get to a variety of stores easily, Sears no longer needed the huge mail order catalogs that were the foundation of their business strategy. The company responded by opening its first brick and mortar department store in 1925, on Chicago’s West Side. By 1929, on the eve of the Great Depression, Sears was operating more than 300 department stores across the country. Growth continued even during the Depression, because Sears focused on selling basic items such as socks, tools, sheets and towels at low prices, rather than selling the more fashionable and expensive items found in traditional department stores.

In the 1950s and 1960s, Sears began to shift its focus from urban to suburban markets, following the movement of the American consumer from cities to the suburbs. Sears department stores were found in shopping malls all over the country, and Sears even sold auto insurance to capture the suburban motorist market.
New challenges
Sears continued to grow and prosper until the 1970s, when high levels of inflation meant that the new low-price retailers such as Target, Kmart and Walmart (all founded in 1962) were what appealed most to consumers. In 1991, Walmart overtook Sears as the nation’s largest retailer. Throughout the nineties, Sears faced increasing competition from big-box stores that offered even lower prices than Sears did. The company attempted to increase its range of products and services by expanding their insurance services and also offering financial services. Its credit card business, Discover, accounted for 60 percent of the company’s profits by 1999.

In the 1890s, Sears was the “new kid on the block” that put many small rural stores out of business. Today, it finds itself in competition with even newer shopping options, such as giant retailers like Amazon. Over the last 15 years, Sears lost half its revenue (or company income) and laid off nearly 175,000 people as it battled to fight off big box stores while keeping up with the growth of online retailers. In 2018, Sears, which also owns retailer, Kmart, filed for bankruptcy.

Shortcomings of an American icon
Some might look at Sears’ decline with sadness. But the Sears company did not always offer great working conditions to its employees. It was slow to allow workers to unionize, for example, long after other stores of its size had unions. African-American boycotts against Sears in the 1930s exposed racist hiring practices. Gender inequality was evident in hiring and promotion practices such as who got promotions or who was selected for the better paying sales jobs. In these ways, Sears reflects our nation’s struggle to adapt to larger economic, political, and cultural change.
Purchasing Power

Adapted from: https://www.history.com/news/how-19th-century-women-used-department-stores-to-gain-their-freedom
https://www.nwhm.org/articles/department-stores-changing-fashion-pattern

A woman’s place

“A woman’s place is in the home” was once more than a saying: it was a fact of life. In 1890, two women visited Manhattan for a weekend trip, where they learned the hard way that women weren’t allowed to dine in a restaurant past 6pm without a man as an escort. They were asked to leave, but instead of doing so, they asked a messenger boy from the street to join them at their table. Another time, a mother and daughter came into a restaurant to get out of the rain, but before they had a chance to shake the water out of their skirts, the owner took them by the elbows and kicked them out, grumbling about indecency. What did these women have in common? They were in men’s territory, which happened to be anywhere outside the home.

At the end of the 19th century, it was rare to see a middle-class housewife strolling in the town square alone. Other than women laborers, prostitutes were the only ones walking the sidewalk, While there were plenty of lower-class women moving through city streets in the 19th century — from maids running errands to factory workers and launderers rushing to and from work, they weren’t allowed to stop along the way. Many stores, restaurants and public places were closed off to women unless they were accompanied by men; in some places it was even illegal for a woman to enter alone, regardless of her race or economic class.

Breaking free

So how did women eventually break free from this strict set of social rules? Two words: department stores. The emancipation of women started at the makeup counter, and sales receipts were a woman’s keys to the city.

The idea of freedom through shopping sounds ridiculous today. But in the late 19th and early 20th century, department stores represented a new opportunity for middle- and upper-class women. They were among the first urban spaces...
where women could go without an escort outside the home. In this way, department stores gave women an increased social and economic power, leading to a change in the culture.

**A new shopping experience**
Around this time, the number and variety of consumer goods available in stores grew rapidly, creating a need for more buyers. Stores decided to target a new market: affluent (wealthy) women. If these women were given a socially acceptable place to shop, retailers thought, they would learn about—and buy—new products. This led to the creation of an entirely different kind of store as these retailers realized something that earlier ones did not: Shopping could be fun.

Staffed largely by women, the new department stores were luxurious, but homelike, with thick carpets, lounge chairs and private dressing rooms. Prices were fixed, so women were not expected to bargain about the prices or, in some cases, even handle money. The Emporium in San Francisco contained a nursery, a post office, a beauty parlor and a library. Marshall Field’s in Chicago had multiple places for women to dine and take tea. The restaurant at Macy’s in New York City could seat 2,500 women at once. Many department stores had childcare available for their customers.

**Changing culture**
By the 1890s, restaurants wanted to be part of this new trend, so they created ladies’ menus and dining rooms. They even offered alcohol, which had generally been socially forbidden to women. Soon, it was not unusual to see women walking around in public. They took buses and trains, rode on bicycles, ordered carriages, or came in on foot.

At first, these developments caused a strong negative reaction. Doctors cautioned that shopping could make women infertile. Religious groups and newspaper editorials warned that shopping “leads to slang, bold talk and general fastness; to the love of pleasure; to the worst forms of luxury and selfishness.” Even more dangerously, some people thought, women shopping would lead to their wanting to vote. But despite the social backlash, women were not going to give up the economic power and increased independence that shopping provided.
Department stores and other businesses also employed women, opening the way to new careers. Crisp-bloused, young white women made up the majority of department store staff, assisting with sales, operating cash registers and wrapping purchases. Although these women were paid less than men, they earned enough money to live independently, another change for a society that had expected women to live with their parents until marriage. As women formed a larger part of the Retail market, jobs became available in advertising and publishing where a “women’s touch” was considered valuable in selling to other women.

**Department stores: an uneven playing field**

Access to department stores, both as consumers and as workers, was strictly divided by race and class. Working-class women couldn’t afford to do much shopping other than for basic needs, so they were not frequent customers. But many department stores realized that they could increase their business if they included some cheaper items. They put these items downstairs, which led to the term “bargain basement.”

Women of color faced major prejudice. Being a salesperson was considered a **white-collar, middle class job**, and therefore wasn’t open to African-Americans. It took until the 1940s for the first full-time black sales clerk to be hired. In general, black women were only allowed to work in back rooms, cafeteria kitchens, and elevators, but even then, they could be let go to make room for white women workers.

In cities like New York City and Washington, D.C., wealthy African-American customers shopped at the same counters and ate at the same tea rooms as white customers. But in other cities like Baltimore, African-Americans weren’t allowed to shop in department stores unless they were wearing a maid’s uniform and had a list written in their employer’s handwriting.

Black women didn’t find their freedom in shopping like white women did. For white women, the challenge was that public space was meant for men only, but “public” also meant white. Protests and boycotts continued from the 1930s through 1960s to establish the right of African-Americans to work, shop and eat in department stores.

Shopping didn’t just represent the increased ability to be part of public life—it brought a new economic power, too. Over the years, women became the primary consumers for their families, and brands started to compete for their attention and their dollars. Once women became shoppers, they overwhelmed the marketplace. Today, up to 80 percent of all consumer purchasing decisions are made by women—which shows the huge economic power of those first department store shoppers, and of the generations of women that followed them.

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**VOCABULARY**

- **Emancipation** means being freed from legal, social, or political restrictions; liberation.
- **Infertile**: Physically unable to become pregnant.
- **White-collar, middle class job**: A job that is often set in an office or similar and requires more mental work, as opposed to manual or physical labor, which is considered “blue collar” work.
The Lifecycle of the Suburban Mall

Adapted from https://www.worldfinance.com/markets/the-rise-and-fall-of-the-us-mall
http://www.bbc.com/culture/story/20140411-is-the-shopping-mall-dead
https://www.history.com/topics/1950s

During the 1950s, the United States seemed to be on top of the world. It was the world’s strongest military and economic power. “Booming” was the word most often used to describe the United States, from the booming economy to the booming suburbs to the baby boom.

Suburban growth
The baby boom and the suburban boom went hand in hand. Almost as soon as World War II ended, real estate developers began to buy land on the outer edges of cities and use mass production techniques to build inexpensive houses there. The G.I. Bill, a law that provided a range of benefits for returning World War II veterans, enabled these returning soldiers to get low-cost mortgages to buy houses. Because of this, it was often cheaper to buy one of these suburban houses than it was to rent an apartment in the city. Automobile production was increasing rapidly, and with an expanded highway system, it was relatively easy to commute from the new suburban homes to a job in the city.

These new communities were largely made up of young, white, married couples with children,
who often had little or no connection with the cities they had left except for their jobs there. The G.I. bill enabled white veterans to buy homes in the suburbs, but did not extend the same loans in communities of color. The new suburban communities had many benefits to white families, but one thing they lacked was a neighborhood center with places to shop and meet with friends. Victor Gruen, an Austrian immigrant, missed the sense of community and exchange of ideas that were part of life in European town squares. His solution was the creation of the shopping mall.

**Birth of the all-American mall**

In 1956, he designed the Southdale Center, in Edina, Minnesota. It was the first enclosed shopping mall in America. Unlike traditional retail stores which faced the street, store entrances in the Southdale mall were all interior, facing the inside of the mall itself. Large “anchor” stores, usually major department stores that were the customers’ main destination, sat at the ends of the mall. Smaller retailers and restaurants filled the area between the two anchor stores. Although all these features—indoor walkways, inward facing store entrances, food courts—are common now, back in 1956, they were revolutionary ideas.

Although Gruen was trying to create a place for conversation and the exchange of ideas, the mall became a place for spending money. The mall became a shopping destination, as shopping itself was becoming an important part of the economic boom of the 1950s and 1960s. As Elizabeth King said in her article on the rise and fall of the suburbs, “If capitalism is America’s religion, the mall is its church.”

Copycat malls soon followed. The country’s second enclosed mall, in Harundale, Maryland, opened in 1958. As the concept of the mall took off, shopping centers popped up all over the suburbs of the United States. It didn’t take long for thousands of acres of farmland to be converted into massive centers for buying things, surrounded by blacktop parking lots. Their construction was helped along by the Interstate Highway System and changing tax laws which encouraged mall construction. The white flight from cities to the suburbs during the 1960s and ’70s assured a customer base for mall developers.
By the 1980s, there were around 3,000 Gruen-style malls in the U.S., and in 1986, Consumer Reports named the shopping mall one of the top 50 most revolutionary consumer innovations. Malls had become a way of life, with shopping not just an errand to get through, but an established leisure activity. Families spent the day at the mall. Teenagers hung out there with their friends. Mall shopping was an all-American pastime.

**Factors in the fall of the shopping center**

There are a variety of factors that fueled the rise of the mall—the building of interstate highways, the strong post-war economy, and the huge population shift from cities to suburbs—and many factors involved in its fall.

Eventually, there were more retail stores in malls than there were customers to keep them in business. Matt Billerbeck, Senior Vice President of Architecture, Planning and Design at CallisonRTKL, believes the current wave of mall closures is at least partly due to the sheer number of sites that opened between the 1950s and the 2000s. “It was too much of a good thing. There were just more shopping centers than the market could support.” Tax breaks encouraged mall construction, so developers built them by the dozens.

But new malls weren’t necessarily a sign of a growing population. According to a 1996 study by historian Thomas Hanchett, the city of Cortland, New York barely grew at all between 1950 and 1970; however, in the same period, six different malls or shopping plazas were built within two miles of Cortland’s downtown.

By their very nature, malls were built big, and as they grew in size, required more land. This took them further away from the communities they served. Surrounded by wide highways and often lacking public transportation, many malls were impossible to get to without a car.

In addition, inflation and a tightening economy drew consumers away from department stores in malls and towards stores with cheaper prices. This led to an entirely new category of retailers called “big box stores” such as Walmart and Target, that sold a wide variety of products at lower cost; and “category killer” stores like Barnes & Noble and Home Depot that offered one type of product, such as books or hardware, at lower costs than smaller businesses specializing in the same areas. These retailers preferred to open in single-store locations rather than in malls.

These new retailers cut into the profits of “anchor” department stores such as Macy’s and Sears, leading department stores to close many of their mall locations. Without the foot traffic of an anchor store, the smaller stores in the malls lost business as well. The more stores that closed and were boarded up, the less appealing the mall became, creating a domino effect that often resulted in the closing of the entire mall.
Beyond the mall
Malls had once provided the convenience of having many retailers under one roof. But it’s hard to find a more convenient shopping location than your own home or phone. With online shopping taking somewhere between 10 and 20 percent of mall sales—and expecting to rise—customers no longer need to travel for the basic and frequent purchases that once got people through the door.

Between 2007 and 2009, 400 of America’s largest 2,000 malls closed, and experts predict that a quarter of the remaining 1,100 American malls will close in five years. In 2014, Taubman Centers Inc., an operator of luxury malls, built an enclosed 862,000-square-foot mall at University Town Center in Sarasota, Florida. Nobody at the time realized it might very well turn out to be the last mall built in America.

VOCABULARY

**Booming** refers to great growth—economically, in population, or otherwise.

**Baby boom**: Period from the mid-1940s to mid-1960s when the number of babies born was much higher than it had been in other time periods.

**White flight** refers to the movement of white city-dwellers to the suburbs where there were less minorities.

**Inflation** is the general increase in prices, which decreases consumers’ purchasing power.
Big Box Stores: What’s Next?

By Eleanor Cummins March 28, 2018
Adapted from: https://www.popsci.com/repurposing-big-box-stores

My memory of Toys ‘R’ Us now consists mostly of big empty boxes. While I don’t remember many of the toys I got for Christmas as a child, the image of clumps of wrapping paper and piles of discarded cardboard is forever imprinted in my brain.

Now, Toys ‘R’ Us is leaving us with much bigger empty boxes—but these won’t be as easy to throw away. On March 15, 2018, the company announced that, unless someone comes up with a huge amount of cash to invest in the stores, the beloved chain will be closing, leaving its more than 800 American storefronts vacant.

The beginning of the big box stores

Founded in 1948 by Charles Lazarus, Toys ‘R’ Us was the model of a post-war business. Most notably, it transformed the children’s toy industry from a seasonal market to an everyday luxury. By its peak in the mid-1990s, Toys ‘R’ Us had cemented its reputation as a “category killer”—a brand so dominant, thanks to its strategy of offering a wide variety of products within a single market (in this case, the toy market) at lower prices, that it eliminated all competition. But much of Toys ‘R’ Us’s success was due to its physical retail space: the big box store. Unfortunately, its downfall may have been brought on by the very same thing.

For millennials and younger generations, big box stores have always existed as part of the retail landscape, but at one time they were a radical invention. Instead of keeping most of the inventory sealed off in storage, big box stores put the products—all of them—on display.

It’s hard to pinpoint the start of this architectural style, but experts point to 1962 as a critical year for big box stores with the first Walmart, Target, and Kmart.
stores opening within a few months of each other. To fully show off their wares, these companies needed huge, open retail space, with high ceilings that allowed stock clerks to stack the seemingly endless supplies. Outside, they needed big parking lots to fit all their customers, and easy access to highways to keep their car-dependent shoppers close.

For decades, these big box retailers thrived, leading to the closure of smaller stores that couldn’t compete with the variety and abundance of wares. But the rise of online retail has changed all that. Instead of driving to a big box store, our purchases come directly to us. As a result, 2017 saw a record-breaking 6,700 store closures, including big box stores like Kmart as well as specialty retail outlets like Teavana, a tea store. Architects, urban planners, and activists are starting to ask themselves: What becomes of these big, empty storefronts and their sprawling parking lots now that the companies inside have closed down or moved on?

Finding a new purpose

“It’s a fork in the road,” says architect Roger Lewis, professor emeritus of the University of Maryland’s School of Architecture. In some cases, he says, new companies of similar size may seek to fill these spots. That could well be the case of Toys ‘R’ Us. A recent report from business magazine Bloomberg suggests Amazon, the very company that killed the category killers, is interested in buying some of the empty Toys ‘R’ Us stores for Amazon brick and mortar stores.

But even a company the size of Amazon can’t buy every store it puts out of business. There are 10,379,714,043 square feet of retail space in the United States, or 32.5 square feet of retail per person, according to a 2016 report. And the parking lots for each of these retail centers is even bigger. Together, American retail stores and their parking lots equal an area roughly one-third the size of Delaware. That requires a little more vision than just putting a new business
“One option is to tear it down and build something new,” Lewis says, “and the other option is to **repurpose** it.”

While it’s not necessarily the preferred option, sometimes demolition (taking a building down by destroying it) may be the most practical. Lewis says that many of the big box stores were cheaply built, with less solid materials and mechanical systems. They were not meant to last more than 25 or 30 years. Some of the big box stores that have been torn down have had their building parts recycled and the property sold off. But William Leddy, of Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects in San Francisco, is a supporter of the second option: a repurposing strategy known as adaptive reuse, which means using existing architecture for a new purpose. Leddy knows that the big box store “skeletons” have limitations, but he still believes that the vacant stores have potential.

In Julia Christensen’s book, *Big Box Reuse*, the author documents the ways 10 communities have transformed their own empty box stores. Christensen found old Walmarts that had been turned into churches and community centers, and old Kmart that were now courthouses and museums. Though not included in the book, one of the most famous big box reuse cases is the McAllen Main Library, which turned an abandoned 124,500 square-foot Walmart in Texas into a single-story library, complete with community and educational spaces.

Of course, even when a community has a vision for adaptive reuse, it’s not simply a matter of buying an old Toys ‘R’ Us and giving it an extreme makeover. Many adaptive reuse projects are limited by zoning laws, which restrict the kinds of buildings or developments allowed in a certain area. For example, space in a commercial area may only be allowed to be used for Retail, not for housing or other purposes.

While zoning laws can be rewritten, Lewis says it’s an uphill battle. “In every one of these situations, almost without exception, when someone comes in and wants to make a change—whatever that might be—there are going to be some people...
who fear change, oppose change, like it the way it is and are going to fight it,” he says. “[The ideas can’t] go anywhere unless there is political support for it.” Still, adaptive reuse is gaining support. In recent years, experts have worked to reduce, reuse, and recycle whenever possible. “The greenest thing you can do is reuse an existing building,” Leddy says.

Christensen, for her part, hopes for a future where reuse isn’t about giving a second life to an existing building, but instead, to have buildings designed with future purposes in mind. “The best solution, to me, begins long before abandonment—it begins with design,” she writes. “The trend of constructing single-use buildings with no future adaptability in mind is what has led to [this] huge issue.”

Walmart/library © Lara Swimmer Photography
http://www.slate.com/blogs/browbeat/2012/07/07/abandoned_walmart_in_mcallen_texas_becomes_an_award_winning_public_library_how_big_box_stores_are_becoming_public_spaces_.html

**VOCABULARY**

**Inventory:** Goods or merchandise to sell.

**Abundance:** A large quantity.

**Brick and mortar:** Physical stores as opposed to online shopping or ordering something from a catalog.

**Repurpose:** Adapt for use in a different way or for a different purpose.

**Adaptability:** The ability to adjust to new conditions.
MY TALKING POINTS

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MY TALKING POINTS

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Section 1

A History of Retail from 1880 to the Present

1. Why did shopping become important to customers in *Purchasing Power*?

2. In *The Lifecycle of the Suburban Mall*, describe a reason, besides shopping, as to why consumers spent time in malls.

3. Sears has tried many different approaches to selling products. Discuss one of these innovations (or changes) in detail.

4. List three factors that led to the rise of suburban malls.

5. Compare the fall of suburban malls to the fall of big box stores. What do they have in common?

6. What do these articles share in common? Is there an idea or theme that connects the four articles together?
The Future of Shopping Series

Students read about current trends and future predictions about shopping, test their comprehension through a quiz, and practice sentence combining and using graphic organizers.

ACTIVITIES IN THIS SERIES

2.1 • The Rise of E-commerce
2.2 • Sentence Combining: Spotlight on the Internet of Things
2.3 • Consumer Decisions: Buying Online vs. Buying in Stores
2.4 • Virtual Reality Revolutionizes the Retail Experience
The Rise of E-commerce

Students read an article and analyze a graph on the rise of e-commerce. They then write and answer questions from question stems citing evidence from the text.

PREP

• Be prepared to explain the meaning of the words: e-commerce and server.

MATERIALS

• Finding a New Way to Buy and Sell: The Rise of E-commerce handout
• The Rise of E-commerce handout

EXPLAIN

1 How often do you use your phone or a computer to visit a website online? What are some of the sites you visit? Why do you visit those sites? Write student answers on the board. Sample answers might include:
   › Once in a day, a few times a day, constantly, never.
   › Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter; other social media; Youtube, Netflix, Hulu or other media sites.
   › Check email; view school assignments, check on children’s homework or test scores; buy movie tickets; shop for clothes, online dating, etc.

2 You are able to connect to your favorite websites because of something called a server. Internet servers are the machines that make the internet possible. When you connect to a site (or use an app), your phone or computer sends a request for that webpage to the server which finds the page and ‘sends’ it to you.

3 One of the biggest changes in the way people shop is the development of e-commerce. What is the main difference between e-commerce and traditional Retail?
   › E-commerce is buying and selling online or on the internet instead of in person in a shop.

4 What have you bought online? Where did you buy it from? Write the names of the retailers on the board.
Have you ever used Amazon? What do you know about Amazon?
Sample answers might include:

- You buy things off their website using your phone or computer and have them shipped to you.
- Students might share their personal experiences shopping on the site.

Today we’re going to read an article about the rise of e-commerce. The article uses two early e-commerce retailers—Amazon and eBay—as examples.

Distribute Finding a New Way to Buy and Sell: The Rise of E-commerce handout. Ask students to read and annotate the article, marking parts they find important, interesting, surprising or confusing. They can also circle unfamiliar words to look up and write any questions or comments they have in the margins.

What do you think the article was mainly about? What are some big ideas in the article? Write student answers on the board. Sample answers might include:

- E-commerce has grown quickly from the start of the Internet to now.
- Amazon and eBay are big companies.
- Online sales have gone up each year.
- A lot of money is spent online.

Which of these ideas do you think is the article’s central idea? The central idea is the main point that the author wants you to remember. Discuss this question, and as a class, come up with a central idea sentence on the board or circle the answer if it is already listed. A sample central idea might be:

- E-commerce has grown rapidly from the beginning of the Internet until now.

Let’s look at the graph in the reading. What is the title of the graph?

Retail E-commerce Spending in Dollars from 1998 - 2015

What do the numbers on the left side of the graph—the vertical axis—refer to?

- The number of dollars spent on e-commerce.

What do the numbers on the bottom of the graph—the horizontal axis—mean?

- The years e-commerce spending was measured.

What do the bars show?

- How much money was spent in e-commerce by year.
Ask some questions to determine student understanding of the graph. Sample questions can include:

- Approximately how much money was spent on e-commerce in 2014?
- Approximately how much money was spent on e-commerce in 2002?
- What do you notice about the amount of money spent in e-commerce from 1998–2015?
- What statement can you make to summarize the information on the graph?

Divide the class into groups of 4, and distribute *The Rise of E-commerce* handout. Ask students to work together in their groups to answer the questions, citing information from the reading. Then complete the table, comparing and contrasting Amazon and eBay’s business models.

Discuss the answers with the entire class.
Finding a New Way to Buy and Sell: The Rise of E-commerce

Adapted from: https://online.csp.edu/blog/business/history-of-e-commerce
https://www.livescience.com/20727-internet-history.html
https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/190186
https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/e-stats/tables/2015/historic/table_2.xls

The Beginning of E-commerce

During the Christmas shopping season in 2017, online shoppers rang up about $108 billion dollars in sales. Twenty-five years ago, e-commerce didn't exist and 27 years ago, neither did the Internet—at least as we know it today.

Since the early version of internet, a network funded and developed by the U.S. Defense Department in 1969, defense agencies, universities and scientific organizations have been experimenting with and using servers. Servers are machines used to communicate and send information electronically.

But the online world didn't go public for most people until two decades later when computer scientist Tim Berners-Lee invented the World Wide Web. The web involves the directions and systems that let people visit their favorite websites and send and receive emails. In 1991, the same year of the World Wide Web's launch, the Science Foundation, which maintained the common server of the time, lifted its ban on commercial internet use. This historic decision made buying and selling online—e-commerce, in other words—possible.

Security was the next big issue. The release of Netscape 1.0 in 1994 provided a way to keep the personal information used in buying things online, like credit or debit card numbers, secure. On August 11, 1994, The New York Times reported the first online sale: Phil Brandenberger from Philadelphia purchased a Sting album using his computer.

Once the format for buying and selling and the security for online Retail were in place, and rules forbidding using the Internet to sell things were removed, e-commerce began its rise. It’s no coincidence that e-commerce’s two giants, Amazon and eBay, came into being a year later in 1995.

A Tale of Two Giants: Amazon and eBay

Jeff Bezos, Amazon's founder and CEO, sold the company’s first book in July 1995. Within a month, Amazon had sold books to shoppers in every state and
across 45 countries. Though there are many reasons for Amazon’s success, one of the most significant was timing: Bezos got into e-commerce when it was just starting. He had virtually no competition and was able to tap into a growing market. Amazon was able to create a customer-oriented e-commerce site—initially for books—where online shoppers could search for the titles they wanted, browse by category and read user-generated reviews. Amazon continued to expand its inventory beyond books and now sells almost anything users can think of, from electronics to clothing, to movies and more.

During the same year that Bezos launched Amazon, eBay got its start. Pierre Omidyar started a site called AuctionWeb that allowed users to bid on each other’s used items. It leveled the playing field so that the average person, rather than just entrepreneurs and tech experts, could sell things online. And the idea really caught on. By 2007, eBay was earning $52.5 billion in auctions and had more than 220 million users.

Although both started in the same year, and both sell a wide array of products, from clothes to large LED televisions, there are some key differences between these two types of e-commerce businesses.

Amazon began in a garage where its own stock of products—books, at the time—were stored, packaged and shipped. Today, Amazon maintains massive warehouses of products that it sells directly to online customers. Though Amazon has since added a network of “sellers” which ship from their own facilities, most of Amazon’s products are still maintained by the company.

In contrast, eBay does not directly sell anything. The company’s original model connected sellers to buyers, largely leaving the specifics of payment...
and shipment with those two parties. Though many sellers on eBay choose to take advantage of eBay's fixed “Buy it Now” price, much of the company still functions like an auction. Over a three-, five-, seven- or ten-day period, buyers may view the product and make a bid or offer to purchase it. The buyer with the highest bid at the end of the auction term receives the item. Amazon offers a more traditional retail model. Products are offered at a specific price which buyers must pay when they digitally “check out.”

Selling products on eBay is one way for almost anyone to become a business owner with little upfront investment. There are currently more than 247 million registered users buying and selling on eBay. These vendors generate nearly $60 billion in sales each year. However, Amazon went on to become the largest online retailer, capturing 43% of all online sales in 2016 and generating $136 billion in sales.

The internet has revolutionized the way people buy and sell goods. E-commerce sales have increased every year since the U.S. Census started tracking it in 1998. More than 10 percent of all Retail transactions in the United States were attributed to e-commerce in 2015, with sales totaling more than $340 billion. In 2016, sales reached $394 billion, a 15.6% increase from 2015.

Today, E-commerce is the fastest growing Retail segment, especially because launching an online store no longer requires high overhead and extensive technical expertise. According to BigCommerce, the average cost to build an online store in 1999 was about $100,000—and that didn't include purchasing inventory, a warehouse space or shipping costs. Today, startup costs can be as low as $30 and stores can launch in a weekend.

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![Retail E-commerce Spending in Dollars from 1998-2015](image)

Adapted from U.S. Census Table 4: Historical US Retail Trade Sales—Total and E-commerce 1998 through 2015
The Rise of E-Commerce

Work in groups to answer the following questions. Cite evidence from the reading in your answers. Then complete the table comparing and contrasting Amazon and eBay’s business models.

1. Review the first section of the article (the first five paragraphs). Why do you think the author included this background information?

2. Why did the author include the section on Amazon and eBay? What does this add to the article?

3. What is the purpose of including a graph? Which idea(s) from the text does the graph help to show?

4. The article suggests that one reason for the rise of e-commerce is that it is easy for people to become online retailers. Give two examples from the text that support this position.
Fill out the table below. Answer each question for Amazon and for eBay and then write what these two companies had in common and/or how they are different. Cite evidence from the text in your answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Amazon</th>
<th>eBay</th>
<th>What do they have in common? What are their differences?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do they sell?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do they sell things?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What was an important factor in their success?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sentence Combining: Spotlight on The Internet of Things

Students read and annotate an article about the “internet of things”—consumer objects that are connected to wifi technology. They discuss the article as a class, then practice combining sentences from the article using coordinating conjunctions (FANBOYS) and dependent clauses.

PREP

- Read and be prepared to discuss The Internet of Things article.
- Be prepared to explain vocabulary:
  - **Sensors**: device or object that can pick up and respond to a wireless signal.
  - **Hacker**: a person who uses computers to find private information.
  - **Wifi or wireless technology**: sends signals and information over airwaves instead of through wires.
  - **Operating system**: software that runs a computer's basic functions.
- Students should be already familiar with or teacher should be prepared to introduce sentence combining techniques including using coordinating conjunctions (FANBOYS) and dependent clauses. Coordinating conjunctions are often called FANBOYS. This is an acronym that stands for “for,” “and,” “nor,” “but,” “or,” “yet,” and “so.”

MATERIALS

- The Internet of Things article
- Sentence Combining with the Internet of Things worksheet

EXPLAIN

1. What are some of the ways shopping has changed in the recent past that you’re aware of?
   > Online shopping; pop-up stores; self-checkout counters; memberships to warehouses such as Costco and Sam’s Club; etc.

2. Today we’re going to learn about some new trends in Retail, both in terms of the shopping experience and consumer objects available for purchase. Some already exist, while others are just being developed. The future of shopping is driven mainly by new ways to use technology and new ways to give customers a positive and convenient experience.

   Discuss with the class:
• Do you think shopping is a more positive and convenient experience than it used to be? Why, or why not? Name some examples.

• What are some examples of new technology being used in shopping? Do you like these changes? Why, or why not?

3 Distribute *The Internet of Things* article and ask students to read and annotate it. While students read, they should mark anything that refers to potential changes in the way we shop. They should also mark anything they find interesting, surprising, or confusing, circle unfamiliar vocabulary, and write any questions they have in the margins.

4 Divide students into groups of three. Ask students to discuss what they just read together and answer the following questions:

   • What did you notice in the article? (write down as many things as you can)
   • What did you read that interests you?
   • What do you want to know more about?
   • Was anything confusing? What do you have questions about? (be specific)

5 Ask students to write down their group's answers to be discussed afterward as a class.

DISCUSSION GUIDELINES

Facilitate a discussion in which students share what they talked about in groups and raise questions about the following areas:

Content

• According to the article, how will kitchens restock themselves?

• How do consumers and businesses benefit from the *Internet of Things*? Provide examples from the text.

• What are some security concerns about the rise of internet-connected household objects?

Vocabulary

• The article is titled *The Internet of Things*, and it uses this phrase many times. How is the internet you use to check email on your computer different from the *Internet of Things*?
• The second paragraph talks about wifi, or wireless technology. According to the article, what does wireless technology do?

Purpose

• Why do you think the author wrote this article?

• What do you see in the diagram? Which different products are connected to the internet? Did the diagram help you understand the text better? Why or why not?

Making connections to personal experience

• Have you ever seen a “smart” appliance or product as described here?

• Would you want these kinds of products in your home? Why or why not?

• How do you think the Internet of Things will affect our buying habits? Why?

Students should back up their thinking with evidence from the article. Ask follow up questions that help students explain their thinking, delve more deeply into the questions, and cite evidence to support their responses. Some sample follow-up questions might include:

• How do you know that?

• Where in the article do you see that?

• Why do you think that?

• What else do you notice?

• Can you say more about that?

• What do you think that means?

EXPLAIN

6 Now we’re going to use the new information we learned about the Internet of Things to practice sentence combining, a skill that is important in both the reading and writing portions of the TASC exam.

7 Distribute Sentence Combining with the Internet of Things worksheet. Review sentence combining techniques if necessary, specifically how to use coordinating conjunctions and dependent clauses.

8 Students can work independently or in pairs to complete the worksheet. When students are finished, review the worksheet as a class.
The Internet of Things

By Bloomberg, adapted by Newsela staff, 09/08/2016

Adapted from https://newsela.com/read/overview-the-internet-of-things/id/21045/

Some people look forward to the day when their sleeping baby’s diaper will tell them it’s wet before the wetness wakes the baby. Others dread the day when a hacker or the government can learn everything about them from their car, their devices and even their internal organs. Either way, that day is coming.

What is the Internet of Things?

A wave of cheap sensors connected to the Internet is beginning to show up in consumer objects all around us. These sensors are linked by wireless technology, which sends signals and information over airwaves instead of through wires. Together, they make up what’s been called the Internet of Things (IoT), a term originally coined by Kevin Ashton of MIT in 1999.

How the IoT impacts the way we buy, sell and use things

The network of connected objects is expected to grow quickly. Some researchers predict that by 2020, as many as 20 billion devices will be connected. Compare that to just more than 6 billion now. The rise of connected objects has the potential to change the way we buy, sell and use everything around us. For consumers, that could mean coffeemakers that delay grinding beans when a person hits their alarm’s snooze button. For businesses, it could mean huge savings when pipes report their own leaks or warehouses place their own orders.

Tech giants like Samsung, Apple and Google have been connecting all kinds of devices—from thermostats to smart watches—to the Internet. Consumers are always looking for more convenience. In 2015, Amazon introduced Dash Buttons. These devices attach to washing machines and pantry doors. Homeowners can press them to reorder supplies like detergent and food. This year, GE put out a washer that can automatically reorder detergent if it’s running out. Makers of devices ranging from printers to medical devices are following their lead.

Technology company, Cisco, is working to help customers connect and manage their devices through wifi. Companies like Microsoft and IBM have created new tools to help smaller companies manage their own Internet-connected devices. In February, the Linux Foundation said it would build an operating system to help the growth of the Internet of Things. Intel and NXP, who make computer chips, are also supporting that effort.
Technical and safety challenges
One challenge continues to be getting devices to “talk” to each other. For example, a homeowner may need one mobile app to turn up the heat and a different one to turn on a home alarm system.

Safety is an even bigger question. More information can also mean more problems. The information collected, monitored and transferred by wireless devices might include names, addresses, credit card numbers or even health information.

Some worry that the Internet of Things will enable hackers to steal this information in crimes like identity theft. Furthermore, networked doors and electrical systems could provide clues into whether a house is empty.

These problems have not been addressed. Many companies are moving ahead quickly in developing IoT products. U.S. officials are moving more slowly in making rules to help keep consumers safe. Former U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney said last year that he disabled the wireless feature on his defibrillator in 2007. He feared terrorists could use it to kill him.

Cost considerations
Companies are also struggling to figure out which devices people will be most willing to pay to connect to the web. Nest says its $249 thermostat will pay for itself by lowering heating and cooling bills. Wireless diapers may have to be a lot cheaper before people regard them as anything more than a novelty.

Smart Things Automate the Home

Wireless diaper
Sleeping baby’s diaper tells you it’s wet before the wetness wakes your baby.

Gardening
Sensors that track moisture send messages when it’s time to water the plant.

Appliance sensors
A washing machine can text you that it’s time to put clothes in the dryer.

Preventing damage
Pipes can report leaks.

Smart thermostat
Heating and cooling can be controlled remotely from a phone or computer.

Kitchen help
An oven can send a text to say that the cooking time you set has elapsed or the meat has reached a safe temperature for eating.

VOCABULARY

A hacker is a person who uses computers to find unauthorized information.

Sensors are devices or objects that can pick up and respond to a wireless signal.

An operating system is the software that runs a computer’s basic functions.
Sentence Combining with the Internet of Things

Work independently or with a partner to combine the following sentences from the article “The Internet of Things.” Combine the sentences using coordinating conjunctions/FANBOYS (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) in the first section and dependent clauses (because, although) in the second.

Sentence Combining with FANBOYS

Combine these sentences from the article using “and”, “but” or “so.” The first set is done for you as an example.

SET 1

These problems have not been addressed.
Many companies are moving ahead quickly in developing IoT products.

These problems have not been addressed, but many companies are moving ahead quickly in developing IoT products.

SET 2

Former U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney said last year that he disabled the wireless feature on his defibrillator in 2007.
He feared terrorists could use it to kill him.

SET 3

Safety is an even bigger question.
More information can also mean more problems.

SET 4

Consumers are always looking for more convenience.
In 2015, Amazon introduced Dash Buttons.
Sentence Combining using Dependent Clauses

Now combine the same sentences using “although” or “because.” The first set is done for you as an example.

SET 1

These problems have not been addressed.
Many companies are moving ahead quickly in developing IoT products.

Although these problems have not been addressed, many companies are moving ahead quickly in developing IoT products.

SET 2

Former U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney said last year that he disabled the wireless feature on his defibrillator in 2007.
He feared terrorists could use it to kill him.

SET 3

Safety is an even bigger question.
More information can also mean more problems.

SET 4

Consumers are always looking for more convenience.
In 2015, Amazon introduced Dash Buttons.
Consumer Decisions: Buying Online vs. Buying In Stores

Students read an article comparing the reasons some shoppers prefer buying online and others prefer buying in a traditional brick-and-mortar store, then apply these reasons to a case study on buying a television.

PREP

- Review How People Decide Whether to Buy In-Store or Online reading
- Draw the following chart on the board:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITUATION</th>
<th># of students who chose online</th>
<th># of students who chose in-store</th>
<th>Total # of student responses</th>
<th>What part of the class chose online?</th>
<th>What part of the class chose in-store?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I need it right away.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want the largest selection possible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I don't have time to shop.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I want to test out what I buy before purchasing it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I want a deeply discounted price.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I want a secure warranty and easy return policy.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I need help deciding what to buy.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MATERIALS

- My Shopping Preferences Survey handout
- How People Decide Whether to Buy In-Store or Online reading
- Online vs. In-Store Shopping: Advantages and Disadvantages handout
- Case Study: Buying a Television handout

EXPLAIN

1. E-commerce, or buying and selling online, is the fastest growing segment of the Retail industry. For an increasing number of products, consumers have the option of either buying online or going to a store. Discuss the following questions:
   - Have you ever bought anything online?
   - What did you like and dislike about that experience?
   - Are there certain items you buy online, and others you’d prefer to buy in a store?

2. Distribute My Shopping Preferences Survey. Tell students that the survey describes different shopping scenarios. Have students take a few minutes to fill out the survey on the top half of the sheet.

3. After students complete the survey, poll the class on each situation, using a show of hands to see how many students prefer shopping online or in-stores. In this way, complete the first two columns of the chart on the board. Ask students to follow along on their own worksheet, filling out the chart on the bottom half.

4. Surveys are taken to show how a part (or percentage) of a group of people feel about a particular question. In our example, the survey asks people what they would do in different scenarios—whether they’d go to the store or buy something online. In order to talk about the results of a survey, we need to know the total number of respondents (or participants).
   - What is the total number of students who responded to these questions?

Together as a class, count the total number of students in the room, and write this number down in the next column of the chart labeled “Total # of student responses.”
Let’s look at the first scenario together: “I need it right away.”

- How many students said they’d choose to shop online in this case?
- How many students said they’d choose to buy in-store?
- What is the total number of student responses?

(Circle the answer to each question on the chart to as you go, so students can understand how the information is visualized.)

Now, we want to see what part of the whole class said they’d choose to buy online and what part said they’d choose to buy in-store—we will use this information to fill the last two columns.

You can use any way you want to describe what part of the whole class responded a certain way, including words or numbers. For example, you can say that “most of the class,” “about half the class,” or “less than half the class” said they’d shop online in that situation. If you feel comfortable calculating percentages, you can express your answer in numbers. For example, you can say “3 out of 4,” “25%,” or “75%” of the class said they’d shop online.

Ask students to work with a partner to describe what part of the whole class responded that they would shop online or in-store for the remaining situations. After students complete the charts on their worksheets, have students share their descriptions with the class.

Let’s see how our class answers compare with the general public. Distribute How People Decide Whether to Buy In-Store or Online reading. Ask students to read and annotate the article, marking parts they find important, interesting, surprising or confusing. They can also circle unfamiliar words to look up and write any questions or comments they have in the margins.

When the class has finished the reading, divide the class into groups of 4 students. Distribute one Online vs. In-Store Shopping: Advantages and Disadvantages handout to each group.

Have each group choose one group member to report back to the class, and a different group member to record the group’s responses. All group members will participate by working together to list the advantages and disadvantages for each mode of shopping, using the reading as a reference guide. As each group reports back, write the responses on the board.

We’re going to apply these advantages and disadvantages to a case study on buying a television. Distribute Case Study: Buying a Television handout.

For each category, such as warranties or ease of purchase, work in your groups to decide if this category is an advantage for buying online, an advantage for buying in-store, or if it is a tie. Explain your reasons in the right-hand column. Review the answers with the class.
**My Shopping Preferences Survey**

When would you buy something online? When would you go shopping in a store instead? For each situation, pick the choice—online or in-store—that best matches what you would do.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITUATION</th>
<th>Online</th>
<th>In-store</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I need it right away.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want the largest selection possible.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t have time to shop.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to test out what I buy before purchasing it.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want a deeply discounted price.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want a secure warranty and easy return policy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I need help deciding what to buy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**For each statement:**

1. Find the number of students for each response and write down the total number of students who responded.

2. In your own words, describe what part of the whole class chose to buy online vs. in-store.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SITUATION</th>
<th># of students who chose online</th>
<th># of students who chose in-store</th>
<th>Total # of student responses</th>
<th>What part of the class chose online?</th>
<th>What part of the class chose in-store?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I need it right away.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I want the largest selection possible.</td>
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<td>I don’t have time to shop.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I need help deciding what to buy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How People Decide Whether to Buy In-Store or Online


Most consumers are faced with one key question before making a purchase: Should I buy it online or in-person? According to surveys and research, the answer depends on the product, the consumer and what the consumer wants from the shopping experience.

A survey of 1,000 shoppers across the country, conducted by Imprint Plus, found that approximately 32% preferred to shop online, 30% preferred to shop in brick-and-mortar stores and 38% combined both online and in-store shopping.

**In-Store shopping: pros and cons**
Consumers who shop in-store favored this method because they wanted to see, touch and handle merchandise before buying. Another important advantage of in-store shopping was being able to buy items on-the-spot and take them home immediately without having to wait for delivery.

When it comes to purchasing food, the majority of the consumers surveyed (86%) preferred to shop in-store because of the ability to judge quality and freshness. Clothing is another area where customers preferred in-store shopping, with sixty percent (60%) preferring brick-and-mortar stores, while only 17 percent (17%) preferring to buy clothing online.

A 2013 study by WD Partners confirmed that for many consumers, the experience of shopping in a store can’t be replaced by its online counterpart. 79% of shoppers reported that being able to buy and take home their purchase instantly is a top factor in influencing their
decision to shop in stores versus online. The study found 75% of consumers like to touch the items and experience a human connection. “Shopping in the stores is much more emotional—you’re with your friends, you’re listening to music; it’s much more human,” said Lee Peterson, executive vice president of creative services for WD Partners.

What consumers liked least about in-store shopping is that it is too time consuming. They cited long checkout lines and the time they have to spend travelling to and from stores. Other key dislikes of in-store shopping included difficulty in finding the right sizes, styles and colors.

**Online shopping: pros and cons**

More than half (52%) of customers who preferred online shopping listed convenience as an important reason. Other reported advantages of online shopping included the wide range of merchandise to choose from, free shipping and returns, price comparisons and being able to read online customer reviews before purchasing.

What they disliked about online shopping is the inability to see the merchandise in person, try it on for size and fit and the need to wait for shipping.

“I think that the more familiar and predictable a product, the safer you are buying it online from a reputable online retailer,” said Philip Graves, an England-based consumer psychologist and author of *Consumerology: The Truth about Consumers and the Psychology of Shopping*.

For example, Graves said that if he knew which model of Tag Heuer watch he wanted to buy, he would purchase it online due to brand consistency. However, when buying an unfamiliar brand, he went to a store so that he could see the different models and ask questions of the person selling them.

**Best of both worlds?**

Researchers have also noticed there is no longer a clear line between online and in-store shopping, as many people do both for a single purchase. “If we interview customers walking out of a store, a remarkable percentage of them have done some pre-shopping online,” said Paco Underhill, author of *What Women Want: The Science of Female Shopping*.

“For many of us, that’s viewed as being smart. They’re researching the item and checking price, size and details before going into the store to make sure they want to buy it,” Underhill said. Or, they’re shopping the other way around: looking at the item in the store before going online to see if they can find a better price elsewhere.

Whether in-store or online, more than half of the consumers surveyed by Imprint Plus stated that it was important to establish a personal relationship with a sales associate. Even something as simple as a name and title in an online chat box or a store worker’s name badge with their title creates a pathway for developing better customer relations with the retailer, as well as generating more sales and frequent visits. Imprint Plus President, Kristin MacMillan, concludes, “Today’s consumers want personalized experiences when shopping, and retailers need to blend technology and service to meet their needs.”

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**VOCABULARY**

**Brick-and-mortar stores** have a physical location that you can walk into and shop at.
Online vs. In-Store Shopping: Advantages and Disadvantages

Work in your group to list all the advantages and disadvantages of each kind of shopping. List as many as you can. Refer to the reading as a guide but write your response in your own words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ONLINE SHOPPING</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advantages</td>
<td>Disadvantages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iN-STORE SHOPPING</td>
<td>Advantages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disadvantages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ONLINE SHOPPING**

- Advantages
- Disadvantages

**iN-STORE SHOPPING**

- Advantages
- Disadvantages
Case Study: Buying a Television
Adapted from https://www.lifewire.com/buy-online-or-in-store-3276438

If you're in the market for a new television, there are two basic ways to shop. Here's a side-by-side comparison of online stores versus in-store retail outlets. “Online” includes all sales made on the Internet, whether they're from a retail store with an online store, an online vendor, a manufacturer, or a third-party electronics outlet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Online</th>
<th>In-Store</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How can you buy it?</td>
<td>You'll usually need a credit card, PayPal account, checking account, or some kind of online financing option.</td>
<td>You can use cash, a credit or debit card, a store card, or some other in-store payment method, such as layaway or store charge cards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which is better?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Or are they a tie?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain your reasons.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How soon do you need it?</td>
<td>You will have to wait for the item to arrive through the mail or by delivery service. Expedited, or faster, shipping will usually cost more.</td>
<td>All you need is a way to get there and means to take your item home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which is better?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Or are they a tie?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain your reasons.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product selection and availability</td>
<td>Every make and model is at your fingertips without having to leave your home. The only drawback is you can’t test the product beforehand, but you can read product reviews, user opinions, and manufacturer specs easily. Most reputable sites provide the availability of each item.</td>
<td>Limited to products sold at the store location, but you can test your new television in-person before buying it. Depending on store size, selection may be limited, but availability is almost always certain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>In general, online sellers offer lower prices because they don’t have to pay rent, utility bills, or wages for salespersons. Also, websites often offer special promotions and discount codes, which could save you even more money.</td>
<td>In order to compete with online purchasing, retail outlets are slashing prices if you shop around. Paired with a coupon or special ‘in store’ discount, prices might get as low as some online sellers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which is better? Or are they a tie? Explain your reasons.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section 2.3**

**Student Handout**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Taxes, shipping and delivery</strong></th>
<th>Depending on where you live and what store you buy from, you might not have to pay a sales tax. Shipping is a different story. Some stores don't charge shipping or you can get coupons for free shipping while others do charge, which might drive the final cost of the television up several hundred dollars.</th>
<th>You will pay your local sales tax at a retail outlet. If you take the television with you, there won’t be any shipping charges. However, most stores will charge a fee to deliver your new television, while some stores have free delivery.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Which is better?</strong>&lt;br&gt;Or are they a tie?&lt;br&gt;Explain your reasons.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Customer service and warranties: returns, repairs and exchanges</strong></td>
<td>This will depend on the online retailer. Some retailers charge customers restocking fees or shipping fees if sending the item to be fixed through warranty; some will only sell the item with a ‘no return’ clause in the sale. Though, with some warranties, the consumer will get a replacement model. Customer service can be hard to contact, and there’s usually no storefront to voice a complaint in person, so it’s crucial to read user reviews before buying.</td>
<td>With a receipt, modern retail outlets are usually easy to deal with when returning, exchanging, and using the warranty. To be on the safe side, read their return/exchange policy before buying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Which is better?</strong>&lt;br&gt;Or are they a tie?&lt;br&gt;Explain your reasons.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Virtual Reality Revolutionizes the Retail Experience

Students practice note-taking while learning about a new trend in Retail shopping through reading an article about Virtual Reality (VR) enhanced shopping. After reading the article, they assess their note-taking skills by taking a quiz using their notes.

PREP

• Read the Virtual Reality Revolutionizes the Retail Experience article.

MATERIALS

• Virtual Reality Revolutionizes the Retail Experience article
• Quiz: Virtual Reality Revolutionizes the Retail Experience
• Quiz: Virtual Reality Revolutionizes the Retail Experience answer key

EXPLAIN

1. Although buying and selling is still a matter of exchanging products or services for some kind of currency (i.e. money), the ways that people buy and sell is changing, thanks to advances in technology. Many people shop online, for everything from clothing to groceries to cars. What are some of the reasons people like to shop online?
   - It’s convenient
   - The selection is greater
   - You can shop from home or from work, while you are also doing other things

2. Another thing that technology has brought about is virtual reality. Write the following definition for virtual reality on the board and read it together as a class a few times slowly:
   - The computer-generated simulation of a three-dimensional image that can be interacted with in a seemingly real or physical way by a person using special electronic equipment, such as a helmet with a screen inside or gloves fitted with sensors.
Section 2.4

Explain to students that we are going to break this definition down into “chunks.” Underline the following phrases in the definition, then write them down on a separate area on the board:

- computer-generated simulation
- three-dimensional image
- can be interacted with
- in a seemingly real or physical way
- special electronic equipment
- helmet with a screen inside
- gloves fitted with sensors

With a partner, ask students to rephrase each “chunk” in their own words. Then as a class, come up with a paraphrase of the definition under the original definition.

3 Ask if anyone has tried a virtual reality headset. If so, have them describe the experience. If not, ask them to describe what they think it might be like.

4 We’re going to read an article about how some Retail stores are using virtual reality to improve the shopping experience. As you read, you should underline important parts of the article. On a blank sheet of paper, write down key concepts, important points, and things you want to remember. You will be able to use these notes to take a quiz on the article, but you won’t be able to use the actual article. Distribute Virtual Reality Revolutionizes the Retail Experience, and have students read and take notes as instructed. Explain that they will take a quiz later and be able to use their notes for it.

5 Ask students to read the article a second time. They should stop reading after each section to make sure they’ve underlined parts they think are important and to write notes that they can use during the quiz. Remind them not to underline everything, but rather to underline key words and phrases and make notes that summarize the main ideas or interesting points.

6 Ask students if they feel prepared to take a quiz about the article. If not, explain that you will give them time to read the article one more time. Students should add new information to their notes that they might have missed in the first two readings.

7 Ask students to put the reading away, and distribute Quiz: Virtual Reality Revolutionizes the Retail Experience. Ask students to take the quiz. Explain that they should work alone and use their notes to answer the questions.

8 Ask students to exchange papers and correct each others’ answers using their own notes along with the article. Ask for volunteers to discuss their answers. You can use the answer key to support the discussion. Ask students to return their partner’s paper with corrected answers.
DISCUSS

- How was this experience of reading the article, taking notes, and using the notes for information?
- What was challenging?
- What skills did you use?
- What kinds of information did you catch the second or third time you read the article that you did not catch the first time?
- How can this activity be applied to other subjects?
- What did you learn about your note-taking?
Virtual Reality Revolutionizes the Retail Experience

By Los Angeles Times, adapted by Newsela Staff; further adapted.
Adapted from https://newsela.com/read/vr-shopping/id/16848/

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — The next time you visit the mall you might just find yourself trying on a virtual reality headset. Virtual reality, or VR, is a computer-created simulation of a three-dimensional environment. To experience VR, a user puts on a special helmet or headset with a screen inside. It makes them feel like they are inside the VR environment, and as if they can interact with it. VR was once mostly used only by video gamers. Now, it is coming to many other settings, including amusement parks, movie theaters and classrooms.

The technology also presents a major opportunity for retailers. Many stores have lost customers as more and more people do their shopping online. Retailers now see VR as a way to help lure shoppers back.

Retailers look to increase sales with virtual reality

Already, IKEA, Lowe’s, Toms and North Face are turning to virtual reality. They are using it to sell products, boost their brands and make shopping more fun. According to a report from the marketing firm SapientNitro, “virtual reality is going to fundamentally transform the human experience of shopping.” VR, the report predicted, will “lift sales for those retailers who get ahead of the curve.”

The home improvement chain, Lowe’s, has added VR to help customers who are remodeling a kitchen or bathroom. In 19 stores around the country, Lowe’s has installed a space that enables shoppers to see a 3-D mock-up of their renovation plans. Called the Holoroom, the simulated space can be personalized with individual room sizes, equipment, colors and finishings.

Shoppers can give Lowe’s the dimensions of a room and fill it from a selection of thousands of Lowe’s products. They can then slip on a VR headset to look at how all the elements work together. An employee can switch out parts of the room while the customer looks through the headset. Kyle Nel, an executive director at Lowe’s, said the Holoroom helps get people over the biggest hurdle when it comes to redoing a room: imagining what those changes will look like in real life. The way people think about...
remodels now is very indirect and slow, Nel said. “They go and get a little swatch here and one there and lay it on a table.”

**A more realistic approach**

With VR, however, people can get a much faster and clearer view of how a slab of marble or different paint color can change an entire room, Nel said. “It removes five steps along the way.”

The next phase for Lowe’s is incorporating new technological developments that allow VR objects to be overlaid on top of real objects. “You can stand in your own kitchen and overlay a fridge on top of your own fridge,” Nel said. “It’s bizarrely real.”

Down the line, as virtual reality becomes more mainstream and consumers buy their own headsets, much of so-called v-commerce could move away from stores and into the home. Shoppers may be able to walk through a store and browse for new jeans—all without leaving their couch.

However, virtual reality is not just being used to make shopping easier and more convenient—it is also being used to make it more fun and exciting. Retailers are dabbling in VR in part just to tempt people back into stores.

**A way to attract more shoppers**

Retailers have been “down for so long,” they have got to do something to “get people to shop,” said retail expert Ron Friedman.

The shoe company Toms put virtual reality headsets into more than 100 stores around the world last year. The VR video shown depicts a trip to Peru as part of the company’s popular one-for-one campaign, in which it donates a pair of shoes for every pair it sells. Viewers can see a video with panoramic views of a schoolyard as children are handed boxes of shoes.

On a recent weekday, Tyler Costin, 32, slipped on a headset while shopping at the Toms store in Los Angeles. “That’s amazing,” he said, swiveling in his chair to take in the 360-degree views. At one point, Costin lifted his hand to greet the students before quickly putting it back down. “You want to wave back,” he said, smiling.

**More than just simulation**

Although much of retail VR is currently taking place in stores, IKEA launched an app earlier this month that allows people who own a VR headset to look inside a virtual kitchen from home. You can poke inside drawers and change the color of cabinets.

However, some experts say such practical uses of VR will remain minimal for the time being. Until the price of a VR headset comes down substantially, few people will want to buy them for use at home. For now, most retailers will turn to VR for the gimmicky dazzle factor, said retail analyst Sucharita Mulpuru. “The truth is you can probably get a good enough way of simulating something just with photography,” Mulpuru said. Useful or not, many companies are rushing to cash in on the virtual reality gold rush.
QUIZ: Virtual Reality Revolutionizes the Retail Experience

1. Which person in the article would MOST likely agree that the advantages of VR as a shopping aid are probably exaggerated?
   A. Kyle Nel, an executive director at Lowe’s
   B. Ron Friedman, a retail expert
   C. Tyler Costin, a retail customer
   D. Sucharita Mulpuru, a retail analyst

2. At the end of the section “Retailers look to increase sales with virtual reality,” why does the author include the quote by Kyle Nel about remodeling strategies?
   A. to point out one way that VR allows the customer to compare swatches when remodeling
   B. to emphasize that VR has much in common with the current approach toward remodeling
   C. to highlight one of the important steps involved in remodeling when using VR
   D. to reinforce the idea that VR improves the current approach toward remodeling

3. The Holoroom, a simulated space that can be personalized with individual room sizes, equipment, colors and finishings, was developed by
   A. IKEA
   B. Lowe’s
   C. Toms
   D. North Face

4. According to the article, virtual reality was once mostly used only by video gamers. Now, it is coming to many other settings, including
   A. amusement parks, movie theaters and classrooms
   B. hospitals, clothing stores, and zoos
   C. televisions, architecture firms, and hotels
5 Read the fourth paragraph of the article.

The technology also presents a major opportunity for retailers. Many stores have lost customers as more and more people do their shopping online. Retailers now see VR as a way to help lure shoppers back.

How does the word “lure” affect the meaning of the third sentence?

A It suggests that retailers believe they know what shoppers desire.
B It reinforces the idea that VR is primarily used by video gamers.
C It reinforces the idea that VR can be used by shoppers in many ways.
D It suggests that retailers use deceptive methods to attract shoppers.

6 Read the sentence from the section “A more realistic approach.”

The next phase for Lowe’s is incorporating new technological developments that allow VR objects to be overlaid on top of real objects.

Which word could replace “incorporating” WITHOUT changing the meaning of the sentence?

A inventing
B including
C initiating
D investigating

7 The last sentence of the article is: “Useful or not, many companies are rushing to cash in on the virtual reality gold rush.” Virtual reality is compared to a gold rush because

A people who make the VR headsets will get rich if they become popular
B people who use VR to go shopping will save a lot of money
C stores that use VR will get more customers to shop in their stores
D stores that use VR will bring in customers with more money who will buy expensive things
ANSWER KEY

QUIZ:
Virtual Reality Revolutionizes the Retail Experience

1. Which person in the article would MOST likely agree that the advantages of VR as a shopping aid are probably exaggerated?
   D  Sucharita Mulpuru, a retail analyst

2. At the end of the section “Retailers look to increase sales with virtual reality,” why does the author include the quote by Kyle Nel about remodeling strategies?
   D  to reinforce the idea that VR improves the current approach toward remodeling

3. The Holoroom, a simulated space that can be personalized with individual room sizes, equipment, colors and finishings, was developed by
   B  Lowe’s

4. According to the article, virtual reality was once mostly used only by video gamers. Now, it is coming to many other settings, including
   A  amusement parks, movie theaters and classrooms

5. Read the fourth paragraph of the article.
   The technology also presents a major opportunity for retailers. Many stores have lost customers as more and more people do their shopping online. Retailers now see VR as a way to help lure shoppers back.
   How does the word “lure” affect the meaning of the third sentence?
   A  It suggests that retailers believe they know what shoppers desire.

6. Read the sentence from the section “A more realistic approach.”
   The next phase for Lowe’s is incorporating new technological developments that allow VR objects to be overlaid on top of real objects.
   Which word could replace “incorporating” WITHOUT changing the meaning of the sentence?
   B  including

7. The last sentence of the article is: “Useful or not, many companies are rushing to cash in on the virtual reality gold rush.” Virtual reality is compared to a gold rush because
   C  stores that use VR will get more customers to shop in their stores
Consumer Education

Students read an informational text on consumer rights including how to make a complaint and report violations. Students then rank this information according to importance, create a graph and respond to the text in writing.

PREP

• Review Your Rights as a Consumer reading.
• Write on the board:

  **Think before you buy.**

• Be prepared to discuss the following terms: **comparison shopping** (see EXPLAIN #5), **bait and switch** (see EXPLAIN #6), **warranty** (see EXPLAIN #7).

MATERIALS

• **Your Rights as a Consumer** reading
• **Consumer Rights** worksheet
• **Most Popular Consumer Advice Bar Graph** handout
• **Writing a Complaint Letter** handout

EXPLAIN

1 What do you think the phrase “Think before you buy” means? Student responses might include:

  ➢ *Don’t buy things impulsively.*
  ➢ *Shop around for the best deal instead of taking the first offer you see.*

  When making a purchase, have you ever checked for sales or checked the prices at different stores? Describe a time when you thought before you bought. Answers will vary.

2 Checking for sales, checking prices, and checking for quality are consumer responsibilities. **What do you think vendors are responsible for? Are there any rules they have to follow?** Sample answers can include:

  ➢ *They can’t lie about products; they can’t sell merchandise they know is broken; they can’t refuse to serve people.*
3 Distribute *Your Rights as a Consumer* reading, and ask students to read and annotate it, taking notes on consumer tips. Students should also note any questions they have or words that they are unsure of.

4 When the class is finished reading, review the article as a group.

What are some pieces of advice that the article gives for consumers?

Student responses might include:

- Compare prices, return policies, and warranties between different vendors.
- Read product or vendor reviews before buying
- Know what you want and what you are willing to pay.
- Get a receipt.
- If you’re buying online, make sure you are not using public wifi.
- If you’re buying online, stick to well known or recommended websites.

Do you regularly follow any of this advice? Why or why not?

5 The article talks a lot about “comparison shopping.” What do you think this refers to?

- Checking and comparing the prices, shipping cost and warranties offered by different vendors.

6 The article talks about “bait and switch” advertising. What is bait and switch?

- When a store advertises a cheaper item but tries to sell you a more expensive item when you arrive at the store.

Why do you think bait and switch is illegal?

7 The article talks about warranties. What is a warranty?

- A warranty is a guarantee (or promise) by the manufacturer that they will fix or replace products that do not work.

Why does the article suggest getting policies like warranties in writing?

8 Divide the class into groups of 4 students each. Distribute the Consumer Rights worksheet and ask groups to choose what they consider to be the three most important pieces of consumer advice on the sheet, and explain why they picked them.
Draw a table on the board. Label the left column “Consumer Advice” and label the right column “# of Votes.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSUMER ADVICE</th>
<th># OF VOTES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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Have the groups report back on what they thought were the three most important pieces of consumer advice or information. Write the first group’s choices on the chart under “Consumer Advice” and put a tick mark in the “# of votes” column. With each additional group, add any new choices to the list. If a group repeats a choice already listed, add a tick mark to the “# of votes” column for that item. Use keywords when listing the advice as per the example below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSUMER ADVICE</th>
<th># OF VOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comparison shopping</td>
<td>III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profiling</td>
<td>III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save receipts</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once all groups have reported back, ask the class to identify which five pieces of advice got the most votes.

Ask the groups to split into pairs. Distribute Most Popular Consumer Advice Bar Graph handout.

Say: Tables, such as the one on the board, are one way of presenting information. Graphs are another way. Let’s look at the title of the bar graph: Most Popular Consumer Advice. What kind of information do you think will be in this graph?
Let’s look at the horizontal axis, across the bottom of the graph.  
What is the label on the horizontal axis?  
> Consumer Advice.

There are 5 boxes along the horizontal axis. What do you think will go in these boxes?  
> The five most popular or common pieces of consumer advice.

Let’s look at the vertical axis, going up the left side of the graph.  
What is the label of the vertical axis?  
> Number of votes.

In a bar graph, how would you indicate one vote?  
> Fill in one box above the piece of advice for each vote it received.

Referring to the table on the board, ask students to complete the bar graph on the worksheet.

Discuss the bar graphs with the class.

Why would you put information in a graph instead of a table? Which way of getting information is easier for you to read? Answers will vary.

The article also talks about writing a complaint letter. If you buy a product that breaks, you may have to write a complaint letter, fill out an online form or send an email to get your product replaced or refunded. What are some things that you need to put in the letter?

> A description of the problem.
> Explain what you want done.
> Where and when you bought it, how much you paid for it, and the model number.
> A way for people to contact you to resolve this issue.

Distribute Writing a Complaint Letter handout.

Using the information provided, write a complaint letter to True Vision Electronics.
Your Rights as a Consumer

https://app_usa_prod_eqfnyamdzrb.s3.amazonaws.com/Consumer_Action_Handbook_2017.pdf?Rc37jX4tB8.5H.5oHzSSu_LcEYFczpC

“Let the Buyer Beware” was a famous slogan in Ancient Rome. This meant that if you bought something, it was your responsibility to be sure that it worked and that the quality was up to your expectations. The buyer had to “beware” of products that were not what they claimed to be.

Luckily, things have gotten better for customers. Today’s consumers have rights to protect them from fraud, deception and unfair business practices—and a way to complain if those rights are not respected. But complaining after purchasing a faulty product is a last resort: the first step is learning how to protect yourself.

Before the purchase

The time to start protecting yourself is before you buy:

- Decide what you want in advance and how much you can afford to pay. Set a budget for all major purchases.
- Ask family and friends for advice based on their experience. Research the seller and the item or service you are purchasing. Review product test results from consumer experts and comments from past customers.
- Not all sellers are the same. Check the price and quality of similar merchandise in various stores to be sure you are getting a good deal; also compare warranties or guarantees from the manufacturer for fixing or replacing defective items.
- Compare refund policies. New York State merchants must clearly post their refund, return and cancellation policies. If a store does not properly post its return policy, you are entitled to a refund or credit within 30 days of purchase, as long as you have a receipt and the merchandise is undamaged and unused.
- Get a written copy of guarantees and warranties. Be suspicious of any promises a salesperson makes that are not in writing. If there is a problem later, it becomes a matter of your word against theirs.
• Check out a company’s complaint record with your local consumer affairs office. New York City residents can also call 311.

A common—and illegal—tactic is called “bait and switch” advertising, which is used to trick you into buying a more expensive item. In bait and switch, a store will advertise an item for sale at a low price. But when you get to the store and ask about the sale item (the “bait”), the merchant attempts to “switch” you to more expensive product by telling you that the sale item is unavailable or by criticizing the sale item. This can happen anywhere in retail, from a sale on canned corn at a supermarket, to a high priced flat screen television at an electronics store.

Think twice about doing business with a salesperson who tries to rush you into making a decision. Beware of boxes that look repackaged—they might contain used or defective merchandise. To make sure an item is new, if possible, open the package to inspect the goods before making the purchase.

According to New York State’s Consumer’s Bill of Rights, shoppers have the right to shop without being “profiled” by store staff, including store security. “Profiling” is defined generally as the practice of judging and addressing people based on their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, ancestry, appearance, or any personal or physical characteristics. If shoppers feel they have been targeted or discriminated against, they can submit a report to city or state authorities.

**After the purchase**

Once you’ve decided to buy, make sure you get a receipt listing the total price of the item, the tax paid, the date the item was purchased and the correct address of the store. This will help if you need a refund.

Where possible, use a credit card instead of a check or cash when making a purchase. If there is a problem with the merchandise and the store will not refund you, contact your credit card issuer immediately. You might be able to dispute payment if you have tried to resolve the problem first with the store.

The first step in resolving a consumer problem is to contact the seller. If this fails, try going higher up to the national headquarters of the seller or the manufacturer of the item. Many companies have a customer relations or consumer affairs division whose main function is solving consumer problems. You can usually
contact this division through a toll-free number, postal mail, online form or contact information listed on the product label or warranty.

If contacting the seller or manufacturer fails, you can file a complaint with state and local consumer protection agencies. These complaints can be filed online with New York State’s Division of Consumer Protection at https://www.dos.ny.gov/consumerprotection/form/complaintform1.asp. You can also file with local better business bureaus. For example, in New York City, you can file an online complaint at the Better Business Bureau at https://www.bbb.org/consumer-complaints/file-a-complaint/get-started.

**Shopping online**

Online shopping websites often offer great deals, variety, and convenience. However, consumers need to be careful. Some tips for shopping safely online are:

- Stick to websites that are known or recommended.
- Compare prices and deals, including free shipping, extended service contracts, etc.
- Search for online coupons and promotion codes for discounts or free shipping.
- Get a complete description of the item and parts included, and the price, including shipping.
- Find out the delivery time, warranties, return policy, and complaint procedures.
- Avoid making online purchases on public Wi-Fi hotspots. These connections may not be secure, and your payment information could be stolen.
- Print or save your purchase order with details of the product and your confirmation number.
- Use a secure browser. Look for a URL that starts with “https” rather than “http.” Also look for a closed padlock icon, usually in the lower right-hand corner of the screen.

*Beware: Fake Shopping Apps*

Scammers create imposter, or fake, apps of your favorite retailers. Fake apps can install malware on your smartphone. They could also steal the payment information you saved in the app or login credentials for other apps. Beware if a shopping app has:

- No history of previous versions.
- A description with incorrect spelling and grammar.
- Very few or only negative user reviews in the app store.

Download a retailer’s app directly from their website. If you suspect that an app is a fake, delete and report it to the app store. Visit www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0515-apps-help-you-shop-stores for more information about apps.

From U.S. General Services Administration Consumer Action handbook

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*Article 515: Apps Help You Shop Stores*

*NYSED/CUNY CareerKit for HSE & ESL Learners (2018) • Retail*
## Consumer Rights Worksheet

Discuss the reading in your group. What do you think were the three most important points of consumer advice or pieces of information in the article? As a group, write your three choices and explain why you think they are important. Use specific language from the reading to help explain your choices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumer Advice/Information</th>
<th>Why we picked it</th>
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Most Popular Consumer Advice Bar Graph

Select the most popular pieces of advice chosen by the class. Fill in the blank boxes in the X axis with keywords for the advice chosen in the table. Fill in one box on the graph for each vote that advice got.
Writing a Complaint Letter

You purchased a flat screen television on May 15, 2018 at Great Buy Superstore for $499. It is manufactured by True Vision Electronics. The model number is TVE50X690E. Two months after the purchase, the television stops working. When you turn on the power, nothing happens.

When you complain to Great Buy Superstore, they tell you that their store only has a 30-day refund policy and that you have to contact the manufacturer. Your television is under warranty, which guarantees that the manufacturer will fix or replace it. You look up the manufacturer’s website and find they have an online complaint form.

Write a paragraph to the manufacturer explaining your problem and describing what you want them to do. Use *Your Rights as a Consumer* as a guide.

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Why Do We Choose the Products We Buy?

Students consider the factors that inform and influence their consumer choices of manufactured products, then read an article about the influence of emotions on consumer choice, and create their own quizzes to assess their classmate's knowledge of the text.

PREP

- Be able to explain vocabulary: Pavlovian response, attributes, paramount, impulse buying
- Watch “How Retail Layout Affects Profit” at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K_VEKoLcNh8

MATERIALS

- Apple vs. Samsung image
- How Emotions Influence What We Buy article
- Write Your Own Quiz: Emotions and Consumer Choice worksheet
- This activity is best with a computer and projector

EXPLAIN

1. Project or distribute Apple vs. Samsung image and ask students which product they would buy and why. It might be necessary to encourage students to imagine they are choosing between the most recent model of each phone. Be sure to ask students follow up questions until they begin to name specific reasons they would choose one over another, for example,

   I trust/like the brand
   One is cheaper than the other
   It's what I'm used to using/I had one before
   You get more for the price
   One phone has some features the other doesn't
   My family or friends use it

2. Turn to your partner and discuss the following question:
   How do you typically decide to buy the products you buy? In other words, why do you choose one type or brand of product over another?
3. When students are finished, ask them to share aloud highlights from their conversations. Make a list on the board of all the factors that could influence the products they buy. Encourage them to think broadly about the social and environmental factors that influence product choice such as family members, friends, community, marketing, television, movies, etc. If it hasn’t already come up, ask students to discuss where they get information from about products they buy and how they determine which sources are credible.

4. Ask students whether they think most people make consumer decisions based more on facts about products or on how the product makes them feel? For example, someone might buy iPhones because they trust Apple or are used to Apple products so they feel safe and comfortable using them, even if another brand comes out with a phone that has better features.

5. Today we are going to read about what scientists have learned about why and how we choose the products in our lives. Distribute the article, *How Emotions Influence What We Buy* and ask students to read and annotate it, marking anything in the article they can add to the list on the board, as well as anything they think is interesting, important, surprising or confusing.

6. When students are finished, facilitate a discussion of the article in which students share their annotations, teacher clarifies any confusion or questions, and students relate the article back to the opening discussion and list on the board.

7. **Say:** One strategy for reading effectively and remembering new information, is to develop questions about what you just learned.

   Distribute *Write Your Own Quiz: Emotions and Consumer Choice* worksheet. Ask students to create a quiz for their classmates to take using information from the article. All questions they create must be able to be answered using information from the article. They should not answer the questions once they have completed the worksheet.

8. When students are finished, ask them to exchange quizzes with a partner and complete their partner’s quiz. When they are finished, they can exchange papers back, correct the quiz they made and share their results.

9. Debrief the exercise with students and clarify any remaining questions.

10. Advertising targeting emotions isn’t the only way for retailers to affect consumer decisions. Think about the last time you were in a supermarket.
What items are closest to the cashiers?

- Candy, snacks, cookies, etc.

Why do you think candy is right next to the cash register?

- So that people will buy it on their way out.

This type of behavior is called “impulse buying.” What do you think this term means?

- Buying something on the spur of the moment. Seeing something and deciding to buy it, even if you hadn’t been planning to; buying something not on your shopping list.

Why do stores want to encourage impulse buying or adding items to the shopping cart?

- The more money you spend, the more money the stores make.
- Because a supermarket has so many customers in a day, even if each person only adds one item, this adds up to a lot of extra money in sales.

The entire layout (the way that different items are placed in specific areas and on specific shelves of the store) is designed to encourage people to add items to their shopping cart. The video we’re about to watch describes how supermarkets design their floor space to increase sales.

The video refers to the perimeter of the store. What does the word “perimeter” mean? (The sections that go around the outside of the store.) What part of the store is the video referring to?

- The part of the store along the walls of the store, the outer edges of the store.

Distribute How Retail Layout Affects Profit handout.

Go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K_VEKoLcNh8.

Play the video. NOTE: the video is 5:04, but stop at 4:25.

Play the video once in its entirety (to 4:25), and tell students to watch closely and not write anything. Then start it again, stopping it at the following times, asking students to write each time in response to the related question on the worksheet:
• **Stop at 0:38:**
  What items are located around the perimeter of the store?
  > Dairy, bread, produce, seafood, meat.

• **Stop at 1:01:**
  What is meant by complementary items?
  > Items that people buy together.

• **Stop at 1:49:**
  What are three things that the cereal aisle does to sell more cereal?
  > They put better selling items on the middle shelves where they are easier to reach.
  > They put sugared cereals on lower shelves so that kids can see them easily.
  > They mix store brand cereals in with name brand cereals to encourage people to buy the store brand instead.

• **Stop at 2:50:**
  Why are displays put at the end of aisles and in the middle of wide aisles?
  > To draw more attention to them.

• **Stop at 3:17:**
  What are “power items”?
  > Items like milk or butter that most people need.

Divide the class into groups of 4 students. Have the class work in groups to answer the discussion questions on the *How Retail Layout Affects Profit* handout.

Give students about 10 minutes for their discussion, then discuss the questions as a class.
Apple vs Samsung
How Emotions Influence What We Buy

Adapted from https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/inside-the-consumer-mind/201302/how-emotions-influence-what-we-buy

Most people believe that the choices they make result from weighing the facts of a given situation and using logic to come to a conclusion. In reality, however, emotions greatly influence and, in many cases, even determine our decisions.

In his book, Descartes Error, Antonio Damasio, professor of neuroscience at the University of Southern California, argues that emotion is a necessary ingredient in almost all decisions. When we are confronted with a decision, emotions from previous, related experiences can influence how we see our current options. These emotions create preferences which lead to our decision. Damasio’s view is based on his studies of people whose connections between the “thinking” and “emotional” areas of the brain had been damaged. They were capable of rationally processing information about alternative choices, but were unable to make decisions because they lacked any sense of how they felt about the options.

The influential role of emotion in consumer behavior is well documented:

- Brain imaging technology shows that when evaluating brands, consumers primarily use emotions (personal feelings and experiences) rather than information (brand attributes, features, and facts).
- Advertising research reveals that emotional response to an ad has far greater influence on a consumer’s intent to buy a product than does the ad’s information about the product—by a factor of 3-to-1 for television commercials and 2-to-1 for print ads.
- Research conducted by the Advertising Research Foundation concluded that the emotion of “likeability” is the most important factor that determines whether an advertisement will increase a brand’s sales.
- Studies show that positive emotions toward a brand have far greater influence on whether customers consistently buy the same brand than do trust and other judgments which are based on a what the brand has to offer.
Emotions are the primary reason why consumers prefer brand name products. After all, many of the products we buy are available as generic and store brands with the same ingredients at cheaper prices. Why do we decide to pay more for brand name products?

A nationally advertised brand has power in the marketplace because it creates an emotional connection to the consumer. A brand is nothing more than a mental representation of a product in the consumer’s mind. If the representation consists only of the product’s attributes, features, and other information, there are no emotional links to influence consumer preference and action. The richer the emotional content of a brand’s mental representation, the more likely the consumer will be a loyal user. In other words, the stronger a brand is able to make you feel about them, the more likely you are to consistently buy from them.

While emotion can be communicated effectively in a print ad or television commercial, there are other important components of a brand which have emotional dimensions. For example:

- Rich and powerful mental representations of a brand include its personality. Research reveals that consumers perceive the same type of personality characteristics in brands as they do in other people. And just like with people, they are attracted more to some personality types than others—attractions which are emotion based, not rational. Brand personality is communicated by marketers through packaging, visual imagery, and the types of words used to describe the brand. For example, Apple products have a sleek, hip, trendy and youthful personality. Customers are often attracted to their products because they want to feel sleek, hip, trendy and young or because the products make them feel this way.

- Another important foundation for a brand’s emotions can be found in its “narrative”—the story that communicates “who” it is, what it means to the consumer, and why the consumer should care. This narrative is the basis for brand advertising and promotion. For example, Apple sells itself as cutting edge technology that’s simple and friendly enough for the average user while also being sophisticated enough for high-tech creators.

But for consumers, perhaps the most important characteristic of emotions is that they push us toward action. In response to an emotion, humans are compelled to do something. In a physical confrontation, fear forces us to choose between fighting back or running away to insure our safety. In our daily social confrontations, insecurity may cause us to buy the latest iPhone because we want to feel youthful, hip, or part of a group.

An understanding of consumer purchase behavior must be based on knowledge of human emotion and include the most important influence on decision-making: emotions.
Write Your Own Quiz: Emotions and Consumer Choice

Use the question stems below to create a quiz about the article for your classmate to take. The questions must be able to be answered with information from the article. Your goal is to challenge your classmate’s new knowledge. Do not answer the questions after you write them.

1. Why do you think consumers ________________________________?

2. In your own words, describe _________________________________.

3. Studies show that _________________________________. Why do you think that is?

4. What is the difference between _____________________________ and _____________________________?
5. Name three reasons people ________________________________.

6. Why do you think ________________________________ is important to consumers?

7. Do you agree that ________________________________? Why or why not?

8. When you make your own consumer choices, do you ________________________________? Why or why not?
How Retail Layout Affects Profit

Answer the first six questions individually while viewing the video for the second time.

1. What are some items that are located around the perimeter of the store?

2. What is meant by complementary items?

3. What are three things the cereal aisle does to sell more cereal?

4. Why are displays put at the end of aisles and in the middle of wide aisles?

5. What are some examples of “power items”? Why are they called “power items”?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

6. Why are items like milk, bread, produce or meat placed in the perimeter of the store?

7. What is an example of putting complementary items next to each other?

8. What do you think the expression “maximize profits” means?

9. Why do you think supermarkets want people to buy their store brand instead of a product made by an outside manufacturer?

10. What do you think is the main idea of the video?
Supply and Demand

Students watch and discuss a brief movie clip that illustrates the law of supply and demand, and consider their own experiences with supply and demand as consumers and workers.*

PREP

- View the video clip at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JpXKyo-ZeVI. Be prepared to discuss the concept of supply and demand, a fundamental economic concept that appears on the TASC exam.
- Be prepared to explain vocabulary: market, supply and demand, incentives

MATERIALS

- This activity requires a computer with projector or student computers with headphones.

EXPLAIN

1. The price of products is a major factor in our decisions as consumers. **Ask:** Have you ever considered how manufacturers or the retailers who sell their products decide how much to charge for those products? Do you think they try to figure out how much someone is willing to pay for their product or do you think they just take a guess?

2. The price of goods depends on something called the Law of Supply and Demand. It’s not a law that Congress voted on. It’s how economists think the market works most of the time. In this case, “market” does not mean a physical place like the supermarket. “Market” means the buying and selling of products or services. Economists use the term “supply” to refer to the availability of goods or services. “Demand” refers to people wanting a product or service. We can say, for instance, that there was a high demand for the iPhone when it came out. Product prices are determined by the interaction of supply and demand.

3. In order to understand how supply and demand works, we’re going to watch a clip from a movie called, Jingle all the Way, staring the actors Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sinbad. In the movie, the actors both play fathers who are desperate to get their children the hottest toy of the season for Christmas. The scene takes place in a store in a mall that has just received a shipment of the popular toy. Play the video clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JpXKyo-ZeVI.

* This lesson is adapted from https://www.frbatlanta.org and http://www.fl DOE.org/core/fileparse.php/7531/urlt/supply-and-demand.pdf
DISCUSS

- Who are the main characters in the movie?
- What are the characters buying? Is it a need or want? Why?
- What happens in the movie?
- Why did the stores run out of Turbo Man?
- What happens to the price of a good when there is a limited supply such as this?
- Do you think the demand will always be high for this toy? What factors might affect this?
- What do you think will happen to the price of the toy when there is no longer a high demand for it? Why?
- What do you think will happen to the production of the toy when the price goes down? Will the manufacturer produce more or less? Why?
- The Law of Supply and Demand says that if there is a high demand for something and a low supply, the price will be high. If there is a high supply of something and not much demand, the price will be low. At higher prices, consumers have an incentive to purchase less, while producers have an incentive to produce more. At lower prices, consumers purchase more, but producers have an incentive to produce less.
- Think back to your childhood. **Was there a toy or other item that was in high demand around the holiday season?** Describe how the media was involved in creating demand, and what happened as a result—to the store environment, the price of the item, its supply, and consumer demand.
- **What effect do you think the law of supply and demand has on the products in your life today?** Students should describe how supply and demand affects the prices of items they want, such as videogames, cell phones, clothes, even housing. Call on 3 to 5 students to share some of their thoughts with the class.
- Discuss the effect of supply and demand on the workplace. If there is a shortage of workers in a certain field, the demand will increase and competition between companies hiring may be fierce. Some companies may increase their wages for trained workers. Many companies may offer salary packages that include bonuses, higher than average salaries, payment of employee’s student school loans, assistance with purchasing home, etc. Discuss an example of careers such as teachers, Information Technology, lawyers, etc. and how supply and demand has impacted those careers.
From Consumption to Consumerism and Beyond

Students practice note-taking while learning about the difference between consumerism and sustainable consumption, through reading an article about the rise of consumer culture. After reading the article, they assess their note-taking skills by taking a quiz using their notes.

PREP

• Read the *From Consumption to Consumerism and Beyond* article.
• Be prepared to explain the following terms:
  - **Consumption**: Using something up, like a food or a natural resource.
  - **Consumerism**: The idea that the purchase of goods and services in ever-increasing amounts is good for society.
  - **Sustainability**: The use of natural resources in a way that protects and maintains them.
  - **The American Dream**: The idea that every US citizen has equal opportunities to be successful.
  - **Market-driven economy**: When the prices of goods and services are set by the amount of money people will pay, rather than by the government; when a country depends on people buying things to keep the economy going.
  - **Gatekeepers**: A person or thing that controls access to something (for example, a primary care doctor often acts as the gatekeeper to medical specialists).

MATERIALS

• *From Consumption to Consumerism and Beyond* article
• Quiz: *From Consumption to Consumerism and Beyond*
• Quiz: *From Consumption to Consumerism and Beyond* answer key

EXPLAIN

1 It’s easy to avoid thinking about the things we consume. We have to buy things in order to survive, but for many of us, our shopping habits go far beyond buying just what’s needed. In fact, shopping has become a major activity for people around the world, and many of the world’s economies depend on people buying things to keep the economy going.
In response to this, new social movements around the world are asking shoppers to think more carefully about their buying habits. Some movements are concerned with the impact on our natural resources and our environment. Others are concerned with the wages of workers who make the things that we buy. Others are focused on the negative effect on individuals and society when we focus so much on shopping.

All these movements work towards what is called **sustainable consumption**. Consumption is when we buy and use things up, such as food, clothing, electronics, books, or furniture. Sustainable consumption is the idea of buying and using products in a way that won’t use up our natural resources and that will be fair to the people who make the products.

We’re going to read an article about the history of consumer culture and the new thinking about sustainable consumption. As you read, you should underline important parts of the article. On a blank sheet of paper, write down key concepts, important points, and things you want to remember. You will be able to use these notes to take a quiz on the article, but you won’t be able to use the actual article. Distribute *From Consumption to Consumerism and Beyond*, and have students read and take notes as instructed.

Ask students to read the article a second time. They should stop reading after each section to make sure they’ve underlined parts they think are important and to write notes that they can use during the quiz. Remind them not to underline everything, but rather to underline key words and phrases and make notes that summarize the main ideas or interesting points.

Ask students if they feel prepared to take a quiz about the article. If not, explain that you will give them time to read the article one more time. Students should add new information to their notes that they might have missed in the first two readings.

Ask students to put the reading away, and distribute *Quiz: From Consumption to Consumerism and Beyond*. Ask students to take the quiz. Explain that they should work alone and use their notes to answer the questions.

Ask students to exchange papers and correct each others’ answers using their own notes along with the article. Ask for volunteers to discuss their answers. You can use the answer key to support the discussion. Ask students to return their partner’s paper with corrected answers.
DISCUSS

- How was this experience of reading the article, taking notes, and using the notes for information?
- What was challenging?
- What skills did you use?
- What kinds of information did you catch the second or third time you read the article that you did not catch the first time?
- How can this activity be applied to other subjects?
- What did you learn about your note-taking?
C onsumption is the process of buying new items, using them for a while, and then disposing of them when they are used up. Consumption is related to consumerism. Consumerism is when a society and its economy are dependent on people buying material goods in increasingly greater amounts. Both consumption and consumerism are words used to describe what’s called a market-driven economy. Market-driven economies are those countries where the economy—jobs and businesses—depends upon people’s spending habits.

But there is a social movement that sees both consumption and consumerism more negatively. These approaches to buying encourage waste and can become a major focus of people’s lives. It can be unhealthy for people to focus so much on buying things to stay happy.

The social movement is called sustainability. Supporters of sustainability argue that consumerism and excess consumption are not just hurting our planet, but also damaging people.

**How we became a consumerist society**
The second half of the 20th century is known for creating possibly the largest consumption economy in history, particularly in the United States. After the tough times of the Great Depression and World War II (1939-1945), Americans were eager to leave behind the hardship they had suffered.

Troops returned home from the war to jobs with high wages. A law called the G.I. Bill gave service members money to finish high school and attend college.

This photo was taken in Seattle, Washington, on Black Friday. It is the day after Thanksgiving, which is a huge shopping day. A group of “Buy More Stuff” campaigners confuse and entertain with their message.

Credit: John Henderson/Flickr
Suburban housing developments were built with affordable single-family homes and the latest technology in cooking, cleaning and entertainment products. People needed to drive from their new homes to their jobs in the city, so car sales increased. And the newfound **optimism** led to a huge increase in the birth rate. The resulting “baby boom” years lasted from 1946 to 1964. These years brought about increased spending, leading to a new era of the American Dream. This consumerist culture was shaped by the advertising industry, which reached its high point in the 1950s and 1960s when most Americans started to own televisions.

**Wellness concerns in a consumerist world**

From the start, many television ads were aimed at children. In the early 21st century, advertising targeting children had spread to the Internet and even school cafeterias. Advertisers refer to children as “gatekeepers,” which means children strongly influence household buying habits because they see more ads than adults. But they have not yet developed the intellectual judgment to make informed decisions. Psychologists and pediatricians have raised alarms about the effects of exposure to advertising on children’s physical and emotional health. That is not the only problem.

Consumption has also contributed to social and environmental problems. The ongoing high demand for goods has led corporations to relocate jobs to countries with few or no laws to protect workers or pay them well. This keeps prices of the products they make low so that people in richer countries can buy and dispose the products at a fast rate. But it also exploits, or takes advantage of, workers in poorer countries. They are paid little and work in dangerous conditions.

Additionally, richer societies that consume more, use more resources and cause greater environmental damage than those where consumption is limited. America is a good example: the country has 5 percent of the world’s population but creates half of the world’s garbage.
Consumption and sustainability

Earth cannot sustain this consumption lifestyle forever. People must become aware of how their daily activities affect their world and the environment. That’s why sustainable consumption is an important idea. Here is a definition of sustainable consumption: consumption of goods and services that has significantly less impact on the environment and that encourages social justice.

A country dedicated to sustainable consumption would provide all global citizens with basic necessities. Some of these basics include water, healthcare, food and shelter. A more sustainable society would also produce goods and services that promote a better quality of life for everyone.

For society to embrace sustainable consumption, it must educate its citizens. Citizens should be aware and supportive of any new laws that seek to improve how we take care of the environment and the workers who make products. It must value sustainability over consumption.

Awareness of the importance of sustainable consumption is growing. Consumers are increasingly demanding products that last longer and are made in ways that cause less harm to the environment. Consumers are also demanding manufacturing methods that do not harm workers.

Consumption and citizenship

What can people do to help change consumption habits for the better? Through behavior such as voting and using their purchasing power, citizens can influence public policy and industry methods. Nonprofit organizations like Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood try to help people have a positive impact. The organization offers practical information and advice for families hoping to cut down on their consumption and lobby for change at the lawmaking level.

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VOCABULARY

Optimism: being hopeful and confident about the future
QUIZ: From Consumption to Consumerism and Beyond

1. Read the following sentence from the section “Consumption and sustainability.”

   *Earth cannot sustain this consumption lifestyle forever.*

   Which sentence from the section “Wellness concerns in a consumerist world” provides the BEST evidence to support this idea?
   
   A. And the newfound optimism led to a huge increase in the birth rate.
   B. These years brought about increased spending, leading to a new era of the American Dream.
   C. The ongoing high demand for goods has led corporations to relocate jobs to countries with few or no laws to protect workers or pay them well.
   D. Additionally, richer societies that consume more, use more resources and cause greater environmental damage than those in which consumption is limited.

2. Which section of the article highlights the idea that ordinary people can have a big impact on encouraging sustainability?

   A. Introduction [paragraphs 1-3]
   B. “How we became a consumerist society”
   C. “Wellness concerns in a consumerist world”
   D. “Consumption and citizenship”

3. How is consumerism compared with sustainability in the article?

   A. Consumerism depends on people being able to spend their money on lots of different goods; sustainability does not require people to spend their money on goods.
   B. Consumerism is the process of buying new items and throwing them away after a while; sustainability is when the economy is dependent on people buying more and more.
   C. Consumerism leads to poor physical and social health for people and society; sustainability tries to make products in a way that is better for people and the environment.
   D. Consumerism was created because people wanted to have more comfortable lives; sustainability was created because consumerism did not make their lives comfortable.
4 How did advertising affect consumerism in the 1950s and 1960s?

A Advertising helped people make better decisions about what they should buy and what they should not buy.

B Advertising helped to spread consumerism by targeting children as a way to influence their parents.

C Advertising helped to spread the news that consumerism has had negative effects on children’s health.

D Advertising helped troops returning home find jobs with higher wages so they could buy more.

5 Why is the event described in the photo discussed in schools today? What are the lasting lessons that we can learn from studying this event? Support your response with evidence from the text.
ANSWER KEY

QUIZ:
From Consumption to Consumerism and Beyond

1. Read the following sentence from the section “Consumption and sustainability.”

   Earth cannot sustain this consumption lifestyle forever.

   Which sentence from the section “Wellness concerns in a consumerist world” provides the BEST evidence to support this idea?

   D. Additionally, richer societies that consume more, use more resources and cause greater environmental damage than those in which consumption is limited.

2. Which section of the article highlights the idea that ordinary people can have a big impact on encouraging sustainability?

   D. “Consumption and citizenship”

3. How is consumerism compared with sustainability in the article?

   C. Consumerism leads to poor physical and social health for people and society; sustainability tries to make products in a way that is better for people and the environment.

4. How did advertising affect consumerism in the 1950s and 1960s?

   B. Advertising helped to spread consumerism by targeting children as a way to influence their parents.

5. Why is the event described in the photo discussed in schools today? What are the lasting lessons that we can learn from studying this event? Support your response with evidence from the text.

   > Answers will vary.