

Reading

You are going to read an article about a new phenomenon called ethical shopping. For questions 1–6, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which you think fits best according to the text.

The problem with ethical shopping

Now I'm as environmentally concerned as the next man, probably more so, in fact, but a spate of new books urging us to live 'better, greener lifestyles' and to 'live within nature's limits' leaves me rather cold. Evidently, it's easy. Buy products that don't exploit other humans, animals or the environment. Don't shop at the multinational supermarkets, support small shops which sell environmentally friendly products, buy local produce when you need to, and, while you're about it, just make your own bread, butter, cheese, jam, keep a milking cow, a few pigs, goats, chickens, beehives, gardens and orchards. Well, what are you waiting for?

The book *A Slice of Organic Life* by Sheherazade Goldsmith contains plenty of useful advice, and she comes across as modest, sincere and well-informed. But of lobbying for political change, there is not a word. According to Goldsmith, you can save the planet from your own kitchen – if you have endless time and plenty of land. When I was reading it on the train, another passenger asked me if he could take a look. He flicked through it for a moment, and then summed up the problem in seven words: 'This is for people who don't work.'

The media's obsession with beauty, wealth and fame blights every issue it touches, but none more so than green issues. There is an inherent conflict between the aspirational lifestyle journalism that makes readers feel better about themselves and sells country-style kitchens to those who can afford them, and the central demand of environmentalism – that we should consume less. 'None of these changes represents a sacrifice,' Goldsmith tells us. 'Being more conscientious isn't about giving up things.' But it is if, like her, you own more than one home when others have none. Uncomfortable as this is for both the media and its advertisers, giving things up is an essential component of going green. A section on ethical shopping in Goldsmith's book advises us to buy organic, buy seasonal, buy local, buy sustainable, buy recycled. But it says nothing about buying less.

Green consumerism is becoming a pox on the planet. If it merely swapped the damaging goods we buy for less damaging ones, I would champion it. But two parallel

markets are developing – one for unethical products and one for ethical products, and the expansion of the second does little to hinder the growth of the first. I am now drowning in a tide of ecojunk. Over the past six months, I have come to learn that organic cotton bags – filled with packets of ginseng tea and jojoba oil bath salts – are now the obligatory gift at every environmental event. I have several lifetimes' supply of ballpoint pens made with recycled paper and about half a dozen miniature solar chargers for gadgets that I do not possess.

Last week one leading newspaper told its readers not to abandon the fight to save the planet. 'There is still hope, and the middle classes, with their composters and eco-gadgets, will be leading the way.' It made some helpful suggestions, such as a 'hydrogen-powered model racing car', which, for £74.99, comes with a solar panel, an electrolyser and a fuel cell. One wonders what rare metals and energy-intensive processes were used to manufacture it. In the name of environmental consciousness, we have simply created new opportunities for surplus capital.

Green consumerism is becoming a pox on the planet

But there is another danger with ethical shopping. I have met homeowners who have bought solar panels and wind turbines before they have done the simple thing and insulated their lofts, partly because they love gadgets but partly, I suspect, because everyone can then see how conscientious and how rich they are. We are often told that buying such products encourages us to think more widely about environmental challenges, but it is just as likely to be depoliticising. Green consumerism is a substitute for collective action. No political challenge can be met by shopping.

Challenge the new green consumerism and you become a prig and a party pooper. Against the shiny new world of organic aspirations you are forced to raise boring restraints: carbon rationing, contraction and convergence, tougher building regulations, coach lanes on motorways. No newspaper will carry an article about that. But these measures, and the long hard political battle that is needed to bring them about, are unfortunately what is required. ■

- 1 By using the phrase 'Well, what are you waiting for?' (lines 11–12), the writer is emphasising
 - A the impossibility of what is being proposed.
 - B the urgency of the environmental problem.
 - C how unclear it is as to what action is required.
 - D how long it will take to change people's mindsets.
- 2 In the third paragraph, the writer disagrees with Sheherazade Goldsmith on
 - A how people will react to being told how to run their lives.
 - B how the media can best promote the concept of ethical shopping.
 - C the need for the media to get involved in environmental matters.
 - D the need for people to make sacrifices.
- 3 What is the writer saying in the fourth paragraph about the growth of ethical products?
 - A It has a part to play in limiting waste.
 - B It goes hand-in-hand with lack of quality.
 - C It creates its own unnecessary demand.
 - D It results in items that are ever more expensive.
- 4 What irony does the writer pick up on in the fifth paragraph?
 - A The supposedly 'green' substance used to fuel the car is harmful.
 - B The production of the car contributes to environmental damage.
 - C The cost of the car puts it beyond the reach of those who would benefit from it.
 - D The target market for the car is people who cause the most environmental problems.
- 5 What is the 'danger with ethical shopping' that the writer refers to in the sixth paragraph?
 - A It may lead to unfair situations.
 - B It could become a political tool.
 - C It is becoming a signifier of social status.
 - D It encourages us to save money in the wrong areas.
- 6 What is the writer's position on ethical shopping in the article as a whole?
 - A It has become a plaything for the super rich.
 - B There is very little in it which is new or relevant.
 - C It has served its purpose and should now be replaced.
 - D There is a better way of tackling environmental issues.

Grammar

- 2 Which of these nouns are countable, which are uncountable and which can be either? Use your dictionary to help you complete the table. The first one has been done for you.

Noun	Countable	Uncountable	Noun	Countable	Uncountable
advice	X	✓	machinery		
appliance			money		
business			parking		
cash			preference		
clothing			produce		
competition			product		
complaint			promotion		
equipment			publicity		
experience			right		
furniture			shopping		
information			success		

3 Use words from exercise 2 to complete these sentences. Where necessary add *a/an, the, some or any*. There may be more than one correct answer.

- a You've bought a lovely house and it will look great once you get in.
- b When my grandmother was a child, such as washing machines and dishwashers did not exist.
- c We have received about our new service from a dissatisfied customer in Sweden.
- d A huge percentage of new products coming to the market will fail; are surprisingly hard to achieve.
- e Sorry I can't come, but I've been asked to take part in It's for my company's new skin care range.
- f Apparently at the new store is free to drivers who spend over a certain sum there.
- g If there is a choice of colours, do you have ?
- h generated by the court case is hardly what the manufacturers would have wanted.
- i When credit and debit cards are so widely accepted these days, I don't see the point in carrying
- j Although he enjoys his work, he tries hard not to let interfere with pleasure.
- k in the retail sector are likely to see their profits hit.
- l By entering every week, she reckons on winning something at least four times a year!
- m from overseas has prompted many manufacturing companies to slash their costs.

4 Which of the verb forms in italics in these sentences are correct? Sometimes the singular verb is correct, sometimes the plural verb is correct and sometimes both are correct. Delete the options which *don't* apply.

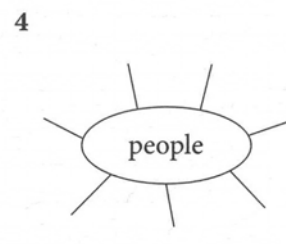
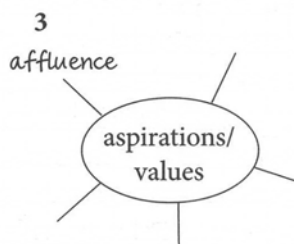
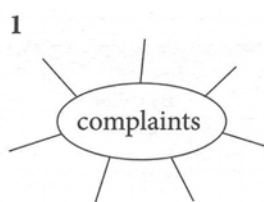
EXAMPLE: Athletics *is/are* on TV this afternoon.

- a Belongings *is/are* sometimes a burden.
- b Your clothes *is/are* very smart.
- c The committee *votes/vote* on the issue tonight.
- d The economy *is/are* in a state of decline.
- e A new family *has/have* moved in next door.
- f The goods *is/are* scheduled for delivery next week.
- g The government *is/are* expected to announce new proposals.
- h Management *has/have* offered staff a 3% pay rise.
- i The news *is/are* on at 10 p.m.
- j The police *is/are* investigating fraud allegations against him.
- k Their premises *was/were* demolished last year.
- l The public *is/are* not interested in the lives of second-rate popstars.
- m Our swimming team *is/are* the best.
- n The United States of America *has/have* been the world's principal economic power.

Vocabulary

5 Which of the topic areas below do the words in the box belong to? Complete the word spiders accordingly. Use your dictionary to help you. The first one has been done for you.

affluence	consumers	credit note	customers
defect	department store	designers	faulty goods
image	Internet	legal rights	lifestyle
mail order	malpractice	money back	possessions
retailers	returns	sales assistants	shopaholics
shoppers	status	supermarket	superstore



- 6 Which word from the box can precede every word in each group of words below? Use your dictionary to help you decide and check any meanings you don't know.

advertising	brand	consumer
market	retail	shopping

EXAMPLE: awareness, image, leader, loyalty, name
brand (brand awareness, brand image, etc.)

- a goods, issues, products, rights, society
 - b bag, basket, centre, mall, spree, trolley
 - c agency, budget, campaign, executive, slogan
 - d forces, leader, niche, research, segment, share, value
 - e business, outlet, price, therapy
- 7 Which of these expressions take *right*, which take *wrong* and which can take either? Delete the words which *don't* apply. Use your dictionary to help you and check any meanings you don't know.

EXAMPLE: bark up the *right/wrong* tree

- a be in the *right/wrong*
- b be the *right/wrong* way round
- c be within your *rights/wrongs*
- d catch somebody on the *right/wrong* foot
- e do the *right/wrong* thing
- f get hold of the *right/wrong* end of the stick
- g get on the *right/wrong* side of
- h get out of bed on the *right/wrong* side
- i rub somebody up the *right/wrong* way
- j strike the *right/wrong* note
- k start off on the *right/wrong* foot
- l the *rights/wrongs* and *rights/wrongs* of something
- m two *rights/wrongs* don't make a *right/wrong*

Use of English

- 8 Read the text below. Use the word given in capitals at the end of some of the lines to form a word that fits in the gap in the same line. There is an example at the beginning (0).



'Retail therapy' – shopping to improve your mood – has become something of a fashionable leisure (0) *pursuit* PURSUE

in Britain in recent years. It is the acceptable face of something much more sinister – the serious medical condition of shopping addiction. The number of people suffering from this illness has (1) the TAKE number of drug and drink addicts combined. Some experts believe that twenty per cent of the female population may be shopaholics. The condition has led to family break-ups, depression and (2) HOME

Psychiatrists claim one reason for the epidemic is that shopping has never been so (3) ALLURE

Shopping centres are now beautiful, attractive places. In some shops, store cards or (4) cards LOYAL

are offered indiscriminately at the till, and credit is still relatively easy to obtain. Experts also claim that shopping addiction often masks deeper problems. As one of them says, 'Mostly there is underlying depression and (5) ANXIOUS

, sometimes caused by a disturbed relationship with one's parents. Cold and (6) EMOTION

parents often lavish presents on their (7) SPRING

, who then come to associate that with (8) PLEASE