

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*You have found an opinion article in the newspaper about shopping. Read the opinion article.*

**Text 1 Opinion article**

# Overconsumption: *when too much is not enough*

**By Ethan Clarke**

① Everywhere we go, we are constantly surrounded with advertisements that tell us to spend. The media tells us that the key to happiness is owning more material possessions. Now, online shopping makes it even easier to buy what we  
5 want. Businesses are making money, while the environment is suffering from the unimaginable amount of junk that we send to the landfill each day. When is enough, enough?

② Studies show that compulsive shopping and low self-esteem are closely connected. People spend too little time  
10 thinking about what they really need. Instead, they choose a quick fix by splurging at the shops. Psychologist J. Wang states, 'Compulsive shoppers go on a shopping spree to feel happier. After overspending, they feel worse than before. So to feel better, they go shopping again. It is a vicious circle  
15 that never ends.' Likewise, I believe these shoppers are looking for more than just 'things to buy'. To them, shopping is like a form of escape in which they can forget their problems and feel more important and respected. They see themselves as valued customers who are purchasing  
20 expensive products that reflect their social status. As a result, spending offers some sort of comfort to insecure individuals that they are better than their actual selves (maybe that is why it is called 'retail therapy').



# Oxford English (Second Edition) 2A

## Simplified reading and comprehension

2 of 4

### Unit 1

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25 **3** However, in my opinion, affluent First World countries should rethink what it means to be a consumer. I know too many people whose wardrobes are stuffed with never-ending piles of clothes, and homes cluttered with all sorts of useless objects. Most of them are in debt because they keep swiping their credit cards even though they do not have enough money to pay back the bank. And as the debts accumulate, they get more depressed. In fact, they are only getting poorer by owning more expensive things.

30 **4** So, where do we go from here? As clichéd as it sounds, too few people think before they spend. We need to stop rushing for instant satisfaction, i.e. to own things and to own them now, and to only spend within our limits. Personally, I prefer second-hand shops. Sometimes, I organize swap parties with my friends. All of these options can save money and are probably the best ways to meet our needs without harming the environment. After  
35 all, as the saying goes, 'Money cannot buy happiness.'



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**Comprehension 1** *Your teacher wants to know if you understand the writer's view on overconsumption. Answer the questions using information from the opinion article. For multiple-choice questions, choose the best answer and blacken ONE circle only.*

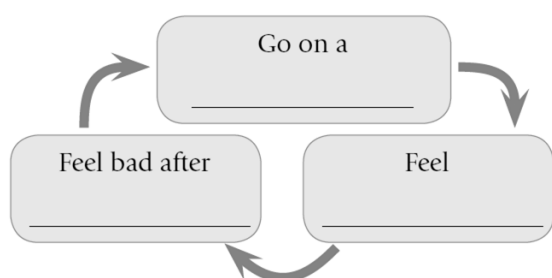
1 What is the 'key to happiness' (line 3)?

\_\_\_\_\_

2 Which word in paragraph 1 means 'impossible to think of or to believe exists'?

\_\_\_\_\_

3 i) Complete the following diagram about 'compulsive shopping' (line 8).



ii) What phrase did psychologist J.Wang use to describe this cycle?

\_\_\_\_\_

4 i) According to the writer, how do people feel when they go shopping?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

ii) Why does the writer think shopping is called 'retail therapy' (line 23)?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5 Who does the writer think are the people who should change the way they spend?

☐ A online shoppers

☐ B people with low self-esteem

☐ C people from affluent countries

☐ D bankers

6 Based on the information in paragraph 3, use ONE word to complete each blank.

Overconsumption causes people's homes to become (i) \_\_\_\_\_ with junk and their wardrobes (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ with piles of unworn clothes.

7 According to paragraph 3, why do people feel depressed after spending?

☐ A because they bought the wrong thing

☐ B because they are in a lot of credit card debt

☐ C because the things they bought do not work correctly

☐ D because they want to go shopping again

8 What does the writer mean by 'as clichéd as it sounds' in line 30?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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- 9 What are the TWO reasons that the writer prefers to shop second-hand?

i) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 ii) \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

iv) The surprising benefits of shopping

v) Brainwashed by the media


- 10 Match the following subheadings to each paragraph. Write the paragraph number next to each subheading. One subheading is NOT used and should be left blank.

SubheadingParagraph no.

- i) The problems with overspending  
 ii) Some advice for moving forward  
 iii) Why people keep buying things they do not need


- 11 What is the purpose of the article?


- 12 What is the writer's message?

- ☐ A We should not believe the media.  
☐ B We should think for ourselves.  
☐ C We should be happy with our lives.  
☐ D We should stop buying things without thinking.

- 13 Proofread the following summary using words from the opinion article. Cross out the mistakes and write the correct words above them. Make sure the words are grammatically correct.

The writer thinks that we are living in a society where the environment encourages us to buy less than we need. People with high self-esteem are more likely to overspend and save their money at shops to make themselves feel worse. As a result, they get more content because they have no money to pay off their credits. To avoid overspending, the writer advises people to spend before they think and to understand that money cannot buy confidence.

- 14 Find phrases from Text 1 with these meanings.

i) difficulty in controlling the need to shop (paragraph 2)	
ii) an easy solution that is often temporary (paragraph 2)	
iii) the position or rank of a person within a society (paragraph 2)	