

Mom-and-Pop Shops

Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Where do you do most of your shopping?
2. Do you pay more for better quality goods?
3. Do you support local businesses?
4. What is your favorite shop in your nearest downtown area?



B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.

Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| ___ 1. far-fetched | a) only liking or selecting certain items |
| ___ 2. chain store | b) going from store to store to find the best prices and products |
| ___ 3. comparison shopping | c) exactly the same |
| ___ 4. match | d) a family or locally run small business |
| ___ 5. mom-and-pop shop | e) not likely to happen |
| ___ 6. stay afloat | f) to remain in business in difficult times |
| ___ 7. identical | g) a well-known shop found in many major cities and towns |
| ___ 8. mass-produced | h) the least expensive |
| ___ 9. picky | i) made in large amounts at one time |
| ___ 10. economical | j) to offer something equal |

Reading

MOM-AND-POP SHOPS

Is “shopping local” worth it?

1. Can you imagine doing all of your shopping in one store? This is not as **far-fetched** as it sounds. **Chain stores** such as Walmart make this possible. You don't even need to do **comparison shopping**. These big box stores offer the lowest prices. In other words, they will **match** any price you could get at a **mom-and-pop shop**.
2. Small businesses have a difficult time **staying afloat** in today's marketplace. When a new store like Walmart opens, a nearby shop often closes down. Local bookstores are a prime example. Would you pay more for an **identical** book at an independent bookstore?
3. It's a different story when it comes to handmade products. Some consumers prefer one-of-a-kind products over **mass-produced** goods. They refuse to support organized retail regardless of the prices. These shoppers want better quality goods and would rather spend their hard-earned money to keep a local shop in business.
4. Others cannot afford to be **picky**. One-stop shopping is more convenient and **economical** for modern families.

“The history of retail is one of prices getting lower in exchange for fewer and fewer steps between producer and consumer.”

—Alex Marshall, author

Comprehension

Discuss these questions in pairs, and write the answers in your notebook.

1. In this reading, what is the opposite of a chain store?
2. How do chain stores make consumers' lives easier?
3. Why does the reading mention independent bookstores?
4. Why do some people refuse to shop at big box stores?
5. How does the reading conclude?

Vocabulary Review

A. Complete the Sentences

Complete the sentences using vocabulary from page 1.
You may need to change the word forms.

1. Do some _____ before you buy an expensive item like a TV.
2. The price at the counter did not _____ the ticket price.
3. Toys that are _____ may lack in quality.
4. _____ are very common in the suburbs of a big city because this is where families live.
5. If you want your shop to _____ in this town, you need to provide products for the elderly.

B. Choose the Correct Word

Choose the word or phrase with the closest meaning to the underlined word or phrase in the following sentences.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>1. My <u>picky</u> child will not eat fruits or vegetables unless they are well blended.</p> <p>a) troublesome
b) angry
c) delicious
d) selective</p> | <p>3. The chairs are <u>identical</u>, but they are much cheaper at the department store.</p> <p>a) ideal
b) overpriced
c) very comfortable
d) exactly the same</p> | <p>5. Our downtown core is full of <u>mom-and-pop shops</u> that have been passed on from generation to generation.</p> <p>a) ice cream parlors
b) eateries
c) family businesses
d) chain stores</p> |
| <p>2. It is <u>far-fetched</u> to think that the small bookstore will be able to compete with the discount depot.</p> <p>a) high
b) impractical
c) unfair
d) long-distance</p> | <p>4. The most <u>economical</u> way to buy groceries is to buy in bulk when items are on sale.</p> <p>a) logical
b) common
c) convenient
d) inexpensive</p> | |

Discussion

1. If there was only one store in the world, what would you want it to be? Why?
2. Do chain stores offer poor quality goods in your country?
3. Would you rather work in a mom-and-pop shop or a chain store? Why?
4. Do chain stores pay workers a fair salary in your country?
5. Is Amazon more of a threat to big box stores or small businesses?

Class Opinion

Walk around the class and ask your classmates questions.
Write their answers in the chart below.

Classmate's name:	Will independent book and music stores become non-existent?	What do you sometimes buy from mom-and-pop shops?	Where do you get the best shopping deals in your hometown?

Listening

Fill in the blanks as you listen to the recording.

MOM-AND-POP SHOPS

Is it worth it to support local businesses?

1. Can you imagine doing all of your shopping in one store? This is not as _____ as it sounds. _____ such as Walmart make this possible. You don't even need to do comparison shopping. These big box stores offer the lowest prices. In other words, they will match any price you could get at a mom-and-pop shop.
2. Small businesses have a difficult time staying _____ in today's marketplace. When a new store like Walmart opens, a nearby shop often closes down. Local bookstores are a prime example. Would you pay more for an _____ book at an independent bookstore?
3. It's a different story when it comes to handmade products. Some consumers prefer one-of-a-kind products over _____ goods. They refuse to support organized _____ regardless of the prices. These shoppers want better quality goods and would rather spend their hard-earned money to keep a local shop in business.
4. Others cannot afford to be _____. One-stop shopping is more convenient and _____ for modern families.

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

Students read about and compare mom-and-pop shops and big box stores. They discuss the pros and cons of shopping at both types of retailers. They also discuss the role of Amazon.

TEACHING TIPS:

See *Discussion Starters Teaching Guide* (<https://esllibrary.com/courses/72/lessons/>) for a variety of ways to use the reading.

LEVEL: Int

TIME: 1.5–2 hours

TAGS: discussion, shopping, mom-and-pop shop, mom and pop shop, retail, big box, Amazon, Walmart, consumerism

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Have students work in small groups or as a class.

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. e | 3. b | 5. d | 7. c | 9. a |
| 2. g | 4. j | 6. f | 8. i | 10. h |

Reading (and/or Listening)

Read individually, in small groups, or as a class. Discuss the quote. You can also play the listening as your students read along. A gap-fill version of the reading is available on page 5. Help your students with vocabulary and expressions that they are unfamiliar with.

Comprehension

1. A mom-and-pop shop is described as the opposite of a chain store or big box store.
2. Chain stores make consumers' lives easier because shoppers do not have to do comparison shopping.
3. The reading mentions independent bookstores as an example of small businesses that have difficulty competing with chain stores.
4. Some people refuse to shop at large chain stores because they want goods that are of a higher quality.
5. The reading ends by mentioning that modern families often choose chain stores because these are more convenient and economical.

(continued on the next page...)

Answer Key cont.

Vocabulary Review

A. COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

1. comparison shopping
2. match
3. mass-produced
4. Chain stores
5. stay afloat

B. CHOOSE THE CORRECT WORD

1. d
2. b
3. d
4. d
5. c

Discussion

Answers will vary. Can be done in pairs, small groups, or as a class. Alternatively, assign one or more questions as a writing task.

Class Opinion

Have students walk around the class and ask their classmates questions. They should record their answers in the chart.

Listening

1. far-fetched, Chain stores
2. afloat, identical
3. mass-produced, retail
4. picky, economical

SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the word *Favorite*. Most other English-speaking countries spell it this way: *Favourite*. Make it a challenge for your students to find this word in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spelling.