Charity Shops - Teachers Notes

Objectives
For: Students or young adults  
Level: Intermediate +  
Time: 1 hour approx.  
Aim: To introduce the topic of charitable giving with particular reference to students or people on tight budgets and to stimulate debate about giving to particular causes.

Lead in
On the board write, in no particular order, the words:-

The Environment  Sick People
Old People  Animals
Children  The Poor

Elicit from the students the connection between these groups. They are all in need of assistance from the community from time to time and are supported by charities.

Reading
Before reading the article review the list of lexical items taken from the reading.
After the review and feedback continue with the reading and answer the comprehension questions.
After completing the reading and reviewing the questions continue by summarising the article using the sentences provided.

Group Presentation
Students are put into small groups of 3 to 4 and given a charity to represent and a notional sum of money, say £100, which they can donate. Before the lesson print out pages from various charities from the Internet and distribute them, one to each group.

The groups then read the material from the Internet and decide which charity they are representing. Students find and highlight the most important points that the organisation is making. They then decide which points they are going to concentrate on. Students then plan and give a presentation on behalf of their charity.

After the presentations each group can donate their money in any way they decide. The charity that receives the most can be declared the winner.

Answers
Vocabulary: 1h, 2d, 3g, 4a, 5b, 6f, 7e, 8c
Comprehension questions
1. Out of town shopping malls.
2. Charity shops.
3. A sexy top, fancy accessory, plates, knives, forks, candles, wall hangings.
4. People with a little more money.
5. Meet people and make friends and help your favourite cause.

Summary
c, e, b, a, d

Suggested Websites
The following websites can be used as material for the discussion. Students could do this research outside the classroom if they have access to the Internet or the teacher could print out the material and bring it to the lesson.

Help the Aged at www.helptheaged.org.uk/
Terrence Higgins Trust at www.tht.org.uk/
Greenpeace at www.greenpeace.org/international/
Oxfam at www.oxfam.org.uk/
World Wildlife Fund at www.panda.org/
Match these words or phases on the left with the meanings on the right

1. swanky new pad  a. people who help others particularly if the help is unwanted
2. middle class suburb  b. the rich get richer and the poor get poorer
3. metamorphosed  c. the area where you live and feel at home in
4. do-gooders  d. the outskirts of town where affluent people live
5. society gets polarised  e. untidy things that you don't like anymore
6. fancy accessory  f. beautiful thing to wear
7. unwanted clutter  g. changed into another form
8. your patch  h. smart new home

Answer these questions on the article.

1. Where are the shops moving to?
2. What is taking the place of useful shops?
3. Name 3 things that you can buy in a charity shop.
4. Who takes discarded items to charity shops?
5. What are the two main advantages of working in a charity shop?
Charity Shops

What is happening to the landscape of the traditional British high street these days? As more and more retail outlets are decamping to the out-of-town shopping malls and super centres gaps are left, like rotting teeth, in our once thriving streets. It’s a sad sight to see boarded up shop fronts where once thrived grocers, butchers, hardware merchants and bakers. But hang on a moment, what is this that I see moving in to take their place? Charity Shops!!!

In my very own pleasant middle class suburb, in recent years we have said good bye to an excellent delicatessen only to say hello to Cancer Research, and watch as a butcher metamorphosed into a ‘Help the Aged’ shop.

Can this be a good thing, our local necessities being replaced by do-gooders? Well in some ways yes because charity shops fulfil two very important needs in modern society. As the economy booms, house prices soar and people get rich they need to throw out their old stuff and replace it with something new. But as society gets polarised, the government chips away at the Welfare State and some people get poorer they need to stretch their meagre budgets and buy the second-hand goods that others have dispensed with and this is where charity shops come in.

Let’s say you are a poor student, you have little money but need a new outfit to attract a new boy or girlfriend at the Student Union party that you are going to at the weekend. All you need to do is pop along to your local charity shop and buy, for just a few pounds, that sexy top or fancy accessory that somebody else has become bored with. Or maybe you want to stay in at the weekend and have some special friend around to your apartment for dinner. You can just nip round to the charity shop and buy a few extra plates, knives and forks and maybe pick up a wall hanging or a candle or two to add to the ambience. All this can be done at a fraction of the price of a new item and will often be of a better quality.

What if you are no longer a poor student but have some money and have moved into a swanky new pad? Do you really want all that old rubbish that you have accumulated over the years? No of course not but somebody might and it’s not that bad. Why not take it round to the charity shop and get rid of it. You feel virtuous for giving to others and you get rid of unwanted clutter at the same time!

How about if you have just arrived in town and want to meet new people and help one of your favourite causes at the same time? Well, you can volunteer some of your spare time to work at the charity shop. Oh yes, and get the first chance of snatching up that cast-off Armani jacket before the regular customers get it!!

So, do you want to see Help the Aged, Cancer Research, Oxfam or Scope opening up and providing a useful service or some overpriced and bland chain of American coffee shops moving into your patch?
Rearrange these sentences to provide a summary of the article on charity shops.

a) More affluent people can benefit too in ways that are other than simply financial.

b) These changes are advantageous for the poor and especially for students.

c) The nature of retailing and the suburban landscape is changing.

d) These changes effect social interaction for the better.

e) But amongst the general economic progress and social change that is occurring a new market is being created for second hand goods.