



WINDOW SHOPPING

Level: Intermediate (B1)

Age: Teenagers / Adults

Time: 45 minutes

Language summary: Expressions related to shopping, language of discussion / negotiation

Image work: Looking at an image from different perspectives; using an image as a stimulus for discussion

PROCEDURE:

1 Ask students to discuss the question in pairs and then conduct feedback as a group, drawing out their thoughts on their own patterns of behaviour and that of their fellow students. (*Window shopping = looking at goods in shop windows without buying anything.*) You could extend this activity by asking if they think window shopping is a useful activity or a waste of time. You could also ask about virtual window shopping (on the internet) – how long do students spend doing this each week, if at all?

2 The picture shows a collection of market stalls. The location could be in various parts of Asia or Africa. It is unlikely to be in Europe or North America (but accept any answers that show engagement with the landscape and image). Encourage students to draw comparisons with their (likely) experience of shopping in modern, indoor shops and shopping centres or on the internet, from the comfort of their own homes. Find out if any of them either shop or have shopped at market stalls. Encourage them to share these experiences and describe the products they bought.

3 **Key:** 1. d; 2. g; 3. a; 4. f; 5. b; 6. c; 7. e

None are relevant to the picture as they arise from a modern consumer-centred approach to shopping and shopping behaviour. Allow students time to discuss this and consider the implications before moving on to exercise 4.

4 This discussion leads on from the idea of shopping for necessity and shopping for pleasure (using disposable income). It is anticipated students will consider food, clothes and central heating essential and the other items desirable. Some may consider smartphones and laptops essential and it is worth exploring how each student defines this difference. Food and clothes may be

available from market stalls similar to those in the picture. You could extend this activity by asking questions like:

- Is there a difference between what we need and what we want?
- Will we ever be satisfied with the number of products we buy or will we always want more?
- Do students know people who don't have smartphones or mobile phones? What are their reasons?

5 In this activity students are asked to think about a problem from different perspectives and to role play thoughts and ideas. Spend some time with students as they select their roles and help them to prepare some notes on how they would see things if they were that person. Monitor their discussion and help with language and to move ideas forward. You could then ask the four students who conduct the most interesting discussion (in each of the roles) to repeat this as a group for the whole class or you could discuss any issues raised.



WINDOW SHOPPING

- 1** What do you think the expression *window shopping* means? With a partner, write a definition and discuss the last time you went window shopping. Did you buy anything? Do you think we shop too much these days?
- 2** Look at the picture with your partner. What kinds of shopping does this picture show? Where do you think it was taken? Have you ever shopped in a place like this? Is the picture different from your experience of shopping?
- 3** Do you know what these expressions associated with shopping mean? With a different partner, match the expressions (1–7) with their definitions (a–g). Talk about when you might use the expressions. Do any of them apply to the picture? Why or why not?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1. <i>bull in a china shop</i> | a. <i>to end an activity, often permanently</i> |
| 2. <i>shop till you drop</i> | b. <i>to go to different shops comparing prices / quality of products</i> |
| 3. <i>shut up shop</i> | c. <i>someone who is addicted to shopping</i> |
| 4. <i>talk shop</i> | d. <i>someone who is careless in movement or behaviour</i> |
| 5. <i>shop around</i> | e. <i>the act of buying to feel better</i> |
| 6. <i>shopaholic</i> | f. <i>to talk about one's work</i> |
| 7. <i>shopping therapy</i> | g. <i>to go from shop to shop buying products until you are too tired to do it any more</i> |

- 4** In groups of three, decide which of the following items are essential and which are desirable. Discuss the reasons why. Could you buy them from the 'shops' in the picture? Be prepared to share your answers with the rest of the class.

| | | | | | |
|------|--------|------------|---------|-----|-----------------|
| food | laptop | smartphone | clothes | car | central heating |
|------|--------|------------|---------|-----|-----------------|

- 5** In the same groups, consider the following situation and possible ways that the company concerned could be encouraged to change their practices.

A famous technology company has just produced a new smartphone. The production of this smartphone is outsourced to a poorer country where the cost of paying workers is cheaper. A recent report shows that the workers in the factories there are paid very low wages.

Discuss this from the point of view of:

- *the factor workers;*
- *a smartphone owner;*
- *the managing director of the technology company;*
- *a charity called 'Fight Global Poverty'.*