

Good ideas

Level: Intermediate +

Time: 90 minutes +

Summary: This lesson is about two innovative ideas that help people as well as the environment. In this lesson, students:

1. study a text on a cyclist information programme and ski suit rental;
2. compare and contrast the two ideas in the article;
3. discuss both their experiences of hiring rather than buying and their daily commute;
4. present an innovative idea they have read or heard about.

Materials: One copy of the worksheet per student

Group size: Any

Note: This lesson plan is for both pre-experience and in-work business students based on an original article first published in *Business Spotlight* issue 6/2017.

Warmer

Students answer the questions alone, then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. Find out from the class what the most popular answers were.

Possible answers:

1. bike lanes; wearing a helmet; reflective gear
2. ski suit; gloves; goggles

Collocations

Students should do tasks a and b **before** reading the article.

- a. Students read the definitions and create the corresponding collocations by choosing one word from each box. Check the collocations are correct before moving onto part b of this task.
- b. In pairs, students decide in which part of the article they would expect to find each collocation and write either *B* or *S* next to each of their answers. They then check their answers by reading the article and underlining each collocation.

Key:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. environmentally sustainable S | 6. rush hour B |
| 2. growing children S | 7. shared economy S |
| 3. growing number B | 8. ski apparel S |
| 4. improved accessibility B | 9. strategic locations B |
| 5. information boards B | 10. travel light S |

Key words

Students match the key words with the definitions, then find the words in the article to read them in context.

Key:

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

Making comparisons

In pairs, students prepare answers to the questions about the article using the structures from the language box and some of the collocations and key words from the two previous tasks. Then, hold a class discussion in which students offer their opinions.

Discussion

Students discuss the questions related to the article.

More good ideas

Alone or in pairs, students make notes about a new scheme or product that they know about, have already used or would like to use if it existed! Have them explain and present the idea to the class. After everyone has presented, hold a discussion comparing the ideas and voting for the class's favourite.

Related topics on onestopenglish

The following *Business Spotlight* lesson is based on the related topic of sustainable travel:

www.onestopenglish.com/business/business-spotlight/ecotourism/554586.article

This set of news lessons looks into how the city of Oslo banned parking in an effort to discourage car use:

www.onestopenglish.com/skills/news-lessons/weekly-topical-news-lessons/2017-weekly-news-lessons-archive/17th-august-2017-oslos-car-ban-and-the-backlash/556205.article

Good ideas

1 Warmer

Answer the questions. Then compare your answers in pairs or small groups.

1. Name three things that can help make cycling safer.
2. Name three things you would need to take on a skiing holiday.

2 Collocations

a. Read the definitions and choose one word from each box to make collocations from the article.

Box 1

strategic information	growing ski	improved travel	environmentally shared	rush growing
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Box 2

accessibility hour	apparel light	boards locations	children number	economy sustainable
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1. does not harm the natural world _____
2. young people who are getting older _____
3. a figure that is increasing _____
4. allowing people get where they want to be more easily _____
5. flat, wide surfaces for providing information _____
6. the time of day when there are a lot of people on the roads because most people are travelling to or from work _____
7. a system based on the idea that people can share or hire items rather than buying them

8. clothes that you wear when you go skiing _____
9. places that are carefully chosen to best achieve a goal _____
10. go on a journey with minimal bags or cases _____

k. In which part of the article would you most expect to find each collocation?
Next to each one, write **B** for *bike lanes* or **S** for *ski suits*.

l. Now, check your answers by reading the article.

Good ideas

The two ideas presented here have one thing in common: they should improve our lives or at least make them easier.

1 Full marks to **Copenhagen's cyclist information programme** for making the city's 390 kilometres of bike lanes safer for cyclists. The Danish capital now has more bikes than cars in its city centre so traffic on the bike lanes can be heavy, especially during rush hour. That's why Copenhagen is installing electronic information screens at strategic locations.

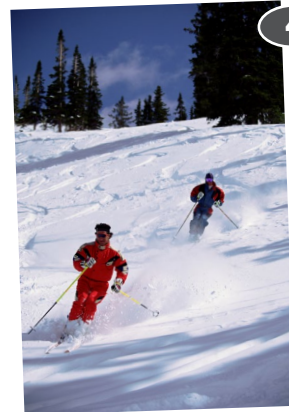


2 "There's a need for improved accessibility for the growing number of cyclists who, unfortunately, in many places, are now having to fight for space on the bike lanes," says Morten Kabell, head of the technology and environment department. "We're hoping, with these new information boards, to give cyclists the opportunity to choose the least congested route through the city," Kabell told *The Guardian*.

3 The first five information boards, which are being installed at a cost of €565,000, will warn cyclists of roadworks and provide information on distances to destinations. "With the number of cyclists in Copenhagen now, we have a congestion problem," says traffic researcher Niels Agerholm. "If there is an easier way through, signs like these could get people to change direction," Agerholm told Danmarks Radio. The city also has a route-planning app, I Bike Cph. It was recently updated to include a "green" route.

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Full marks to **Ski Suit Rental in Vienna** for making the sport of skiing more environmentally sustainable. Ski suits are expensive, especially if you have growing children who need a new suit every season. And ski suits take a lot of space in your luggage, making it harder to travel light. Wouldn't it be better just to hire skiwear when you need it?



That's why experienced skiers – and parents – Wendy Williams and Googie Gundolf founded SkiSuitRental in 2016. "I teach sustainable development at university and the idea of renting rather than owning ski apparel really taps into the concept of the shared economy," Canadian Williams told *The Local*. "If you only ski once a year and don't want to travel with a lot of luggage, there is no need to buy your own kit."

Customers can order ski suits, trousers, gloves and goggles via the company website, with the apparel then directly delivered to their hotels. The company delivers to all hotels at ski resorts in Austria. It also ships to any ski resort in Europe.

So far, SkiSuitRental has served clients from Germany, Malaysia and the UK, among others. "Customers love the business," Williams says. "It will take a few seasons to reach sufficient volume in sales but I am confident it will flourish."

Good ideas

3 Key words

Match the key words with the definitions. Then find the words in the article to read them in context.

Text 1

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 1. traffic | a. the path that someone or something moves along when going towards a place |
| 2. congested | b. the vehicles that are travelling in an area at a particular time |
| 3. installed | c. with so many vehicles or people that it is difficult to move around |
| 4. direction | d. put somewhere and made ready for use |

Text 2

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 5. tap into | e. as much as is needed |
| 6. concept | f. send goods to customers |
| 7. kit | g. be very successful |
| 8. ship | h. an idea of something that exists |
| 9. sufficient | i. exploit or use something to bring positive results |
| 10. flourish | j. clothes and equipment needed for a sport |

4 Making comparisons

Answer the questions about the article using the language in the box below and some of the collocations and key words from tasks 2 and 3.

Comparing and contrasting

This idea ..., while the other idea ...

On the one hand, ... On the other hand, ...

In my opinion, both ideas ...

It's true that this idea ... but I still think the other idea ...

1. Which idea benefits more people?
2. Which idea most helps the environment?
3. Which idea is the most innovative?
4. Which idea could most easily be introduced in other areas?

Good ideas

5 Discussion

- Brainstorm some things you can hire. Which have you hired?
- Why and when did you hire them? How much did it cost?
- How much money do you think you saved by hiring rather than buying?
- Do you always travel to work using the same route and form of transport?
- Do you often experience delays? What causes the delays?
- Do you check traffic information updates before and while you travel?

6 More good ideas

What life-improving and sustainable idea would you like to give 'full marks' to? Present one of the following ideas to the class.

- an idea of your own
- an idea you've heard or read about
- a service that you have tried