

There's probably an app for that – new solutions for old problems

Level: Intermediate (B1-B2)

Time: Approximately 90 minutes

Business topics: logistics, technology, business solutions, innovative ways of working

Business language: useful business vocabulary, phrases and expressions, language to describe apps, Venn diagrams

Activities: key words, understanding the text, business language, discussion, talking about apps and describing them and their usages by means of Venn diagrams

Groups: Whole class, one-to-one, small groups

Overview: This article discusses innovative business solutions to problems, as well as the gig economy in general.

1. Warmer

- a. On a shared screen or board, collect all the feasible suggestions that students come up with about ways you to safely and humanely transport a pet dog across a country or continent, before they scan the article to find out how the author transported her dog across the USA.
- b. **Key:** she employed a young couple to drive her dog across the country.

2. Key words

a.

Key:

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. dilemma | 7. gig |
| 2. ferry | 8. decline |
| 3. dubious | 9. compensated |
| 4. side hustle | 10. innovative |
| 5. soared | 11. boundaries |
| 6. trivial tale | 12. fluid |

3. Understanding the article

- a. Ask students to read the sentences tick (✓) the ones that are correct and rewrite the others to make them correct. They should include as many details as possible into any statements that they rewrite.

Suggested Key:

1. *False. She and her daughters had to unexpectedly fly to Denver for a long period of time.*
2. *True*
3. *False. The friend told her that there must be an app for pet transport services and after searching the internet on her phone, Tett found an app called Citizenshipper.*
4. *False. Although it cost more than she expected, she decided to accept the high costs to make her daughters happy.*
5. *True*
6. *False. They have ferried other dogs from place to place, especially during the pandemic.*
7. *True*
8. *False. Most of them are young, relatively poor and non-white. Only a tenth of wealthy Americans are gig workers.*
9. *False. Many say they like it because it gives them more freedom.*
10. *False. In history, fluid boundaries between work and home were normal. To people from the past, working a nine to five job would have seemed unusual.*

4. Business language

- a. Students find multi-word expressions and phrases in the article that match the meanings. The section numbers are given to help them.

Key:

1. *at short notice*
2. *swallow the cost*
3. *spend quality time (with someone)*
4. *main source of income*
5. *on the contrary*

- a. Next, they decide which ones are going to be useful for them in their business lives and write more than one sentence of their own for each.

5. Discussion

- a. Put the students in pairs or small groups and ask them to discuss the questions. When students have gone through all the questions, bring the whole class back together so that they can share their answers and any interesting information that arose from their discussions.

6. Wider business theme – Venn diagrams

- a-c. Students work through the 3-part task according to the instructions with a partner or in small groups wherever possible.

Ask students to share any information about useful apps they have found out by listening to their partners and to discuss the challenges they came across when creating and describing their Venn diagrams.

Key:

A Venn diagram usually has two or three overlapping *circles* that show how things relate to each other. They are often used in business presentations and *reports* to clearly show how the items are *similar* and different.

A Venn diagram could be used, for example, to *compare* two companies within the same *industry*. Items both companies make are written in the overlapping circles, and *products* that only one or the other company make are written into the outer circles.