

'A swipe at fashion capitalism': Telfar's experiment lets customers set prices

Level 3: Advanced – Teacher's notes

Article summary: The article describes how one fashion brand changed its prices and why it makes their items more accessible.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Phrasal verbs

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

NOTE: Before students read the article, you should point out that *taking a swipe at* is an idiom that means *criticising or insulting someone or something*. So, in the context of this article, Telfar is drawing attention to the problems of pricing in fashion and showing a more inclusive alternative with its experiment.

3. Comprehension check

- a. The answers given are only suggested answers, and students may correctly answer the questions in different ways, e.g., in item 1, they may say, 'Telfar is famous for their shopping bags' or similar.

Key:

1. *their shopping bags*
2. *38*
3. *50 dollars*
4. *80 dollars*
5. *Because they would have cost 320 dollars full price.*
6. *Clemens is the founder of Telfar, and Radboy is the company's creative director.*
7. *It lets customers decide the price.*
8. *They start the price at the wholesale amount, and the wholesale price goes up in small amounts until stock is sold out.*
9. *It helps them collect data about what customers want the most and helps them know how much of each product to order.*
10. *That it doesn't have to be expensive.*

4. Key language

- a. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and compare their answers in pairs. The phrasal verbs are used in the text. As an extension activity, you could ask students to go back to the text and find them.

Key:

1. *b*
2. *d*
3. *a*
4. *c*

- b. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and compare their answers in pairs.

1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to get students to think about their opinions on fashion and whether spending a lot of money is a good idea. Encourage students to share situational reasons why they might make exceptions to their usual spending habits.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups.

Key:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. <i>unisex</i> | 9. <i>mark up</i> |
| 2. <i>inclusive</i> | 10. <i>faux</i> |
| 3. <i>cropped</i> | 11. <i>accessory</i> |
| 4. <i>wholesale</i> | 12. <i>ethos</i> |
| 5. <i>full price</i> | 13. <i>synonymous</i> |
| 6. <i>arbitrary</i> | 14. <i>working-class</i> |
| 7. <i>pricing model</i> | 15. <i>motto</i> |
| 8. <i>affordable</i> | |

- b. Before reading the article carefully, students use some of the key words to fill the gaps in the sentences to ensure that they understand and know how the words are used in other contexts.

Key:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. <i>faux</i> | 6. <i>unisex</i> |
| 2. <i>full price</i> | 7. <i>affordable</i> |
| 3. <i>motto</i> | 8. <i>accessory</i> |
| 4. <i>pricing model</i> | 9. <i>synonymous</i> |
| 5. <i>arbitrary</i> | 10. <i>working-class</i> |

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Key:

1. *sell out*
2. *speak out against*
3. *mark up*
4. *come up with*

- c. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and compare their answers in pairs.

Key:

1. *were speaking/spoke out against*
2. *came up with*
3. *sold out*
4. *marked up*

- d. Allow the class to personalise the phrasal verbs they have just covered. Monitor and assist students as you walk around the class. Allow time for feedback, so students can share some of the sentences they have written.

5. Discussion

- a. Students discuss the statements related to the article and give their reasons and justifications for each answer, referring to their own experiences wherever possible.

6. In your own words

- a. Students use an internet search engine to find more information about pricing in fashion. Ask them to compare a luxury brand with a discount brand. After they've chosen two brands, have them consider these questions:
- What are their similarities?
 - What are their differences?
 - Why might someone buy one or the other?

Encourage students to give reasons and cite personal examples.

- b. Students could then present their reports to the class.