

Award Winning: Consumerism Video

Before you listen to Bee San:

Do you think that shopping is an important activity for Malaysians?

Comprehension Questions

1. Is parking at a shopping centre easy on a weekend?
2. What 4 leisure activities are inside most shopping centres?
3. How many shops will a Malaysian survey before making a major purchase?
4. Do Malaysians have to feel they are getting the best deal before purchasing?
5. Is haggling common in Malaysia?
6. Who are the only 2 major Pharmacies left in Malaysia?
7. What does Bee San think monopolies will lead to?

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think it is important to get the best price when shopping?
Will you spend extra time to find the right deal?
2. Do you like shopping? Why / Why not?
3. Do you think there are ways to stop monopolies?
4. Do you think there are other things that Malaysians could spend their free-time doing?

Follow-up Writing

Is consumerism something that is beneficial for mankind or something that distracts people from more important goals and pastimes?

Consumerism in Malaysia - Script

Consumers in Malaysia love to go shopping and every weekend the malls are packed to the point where parking can be very difficult. Shopping is the number 1 activity in Malaysia.

There is a joke in Kuala Lumpur that people go for the free aircon.

Malls are the focus of leisure activities here and normally have a cinema, bowling alley, fair ground rides and a plethora of restaurants.

The malls make a lot of effort to attract people and they pass on these costs to the retailers.

When you look closer, you realise that although people may have come to mall itself, it doesn't mean they have to purchase from a particular retailer.

Most Malaysians do a lot of window shopping and will normally survey at least 5 shops before making any major purchase. There is no sense of urgency when shopping.

Retailers know that consumers won't purchase unless they feel they're getting the very best deal. Haggling is common even in up-market boutiques.

This combination may be good for consumers in the short term, because there is a lot of pressure on retailers to reduce prices. But in the long term, smaller retailers will go out of business. For example there are now only 2 major pharmacies left in Malaysia, Watson and Guardian. These monopolies will lead to higher prices and little choice for the consumer.

Teacher's Notes

Possible Lead-ins

- A. Elicit from students if they like shopping, what they like to buy and where they like to go.
- B. Bring in some bags from famous shops and ask the students what the shops sell.
- C. Go around the class and ask them to name a shop, until the class runs out...

Difficult vocabulary

- Plethora – A lot of.
- Window-shopping – Looking in shops without buying anything.
- Haggling – Negotiating on the price.
- Upmarket – Higher priced shops with designer or luxury goods.
- Boutique(s) – Small shop often selling designer clothes
- Monopolies – When you only have one choice for a good or service. In Business, it's when any one company has more than 25% market share.

Comprehension answers:

1. Is parking at a shopping centre easy on a weekend? *No*
2. What 4 leisure activities are inside most shopping centres?
Cinema, bowling alley, fair ground rides and restaurants
3. How many shops will a Malaysian survey before making a major purchase? *5*
4. Do Malaysians have to feel they are getting the best deal before purchasing?
Yes
5. Is haggling common in Malaysia? *Yes*
6. Who are the only 2 major Pharmacies left in Malaysia? *Watson and Guardian*
7. What does Bee San think monopolies will lead to? *Higher prices and little choice.*

Follow up Writing

This could be turned into an IELTS style question with word limit of 250 words and 40 minutes to do it in, A CAE style question or general writing.