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Ethical Consumerism

Reading Test

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Student

Time: *Approximately 1hour*

Two types of lesson

Lesson#1: [Easy] ***** [B2/C1]

1. Predict the content of the text & write down the key terms & ideas.
2. Read the text. Check words & meanings with a dictionary.
3. Answer the questions.
4. Check your answers (pass mark is 70%).

Lesson #2: [Hard] ***** [C1]

1. Read text – no dictionary.
2. Answer the questions.
3. Check your answers (pass mark is 70%).

Teacher

Two types of lesson

Lesson#1: [easy] ***** [B2/C1]

1. Distribute **text 1 (without reference words underlined)** a week before the test. Students read, check vocabulary & meanings.
2. Test day. Distribute **text 2 (with reference words underlined)** & the **questions** (no dictionary or notes).
3. Set 1 hour to read the text & answer the questions.
4. Take in & correct or go through answers in class (pass mark is 70%).
5. Extra activity. Students write the *summary (add 30 minutes to the test).

Lesson #2: [hard] ***** [C1]

1. Test day. Distribute **text 2 (with reference words underlined)** & the **questions**.
2. Set 1 hour to read the text & answer the questions.
3. Take in & correct or go through answers in class (pass mark is 70%).
4. Extra activity. Students write the *summary (add 30 minutes to the test).

***Summary writing:** <https://www.academic-englishuk.com/summary>

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Ethical Consumerism (Text 1)

By A. Watson (2020)

Due to the growing global concern about climate change, environmental destruction and the increasing number of endangered species, ethical consumerism has become an extremely prominent topic. Bertrand and Regan (2008) describe ethical consumption as consciously identifying the links between a product, its origins and the context in which it has been produced. They define the term as awareness of how a consumer's lifestyle affects people, communities and the environment, and claim that "[an] ethically-informed consumer realises that when they buy something, they are not only buying the product". Hussain (2012, p112) outlines an example: "...when you walk into Starbucks and face an array of coffee choices, one of them might be fair trade. If you base your decision to buy the fair trade coffee at least partly on the fact that the growers were treated fairly in the manufacturing process, you engage in ethical consumerism". This definition and example are relevant, as they place the responsibility of ethical consumerism on the end user, the customer, which is an accurate depiction of the term. However, to understand ethical consumerism, it is important to identify what constitutes unethical consumerism.

Unethical consumerism is a challenging term to define due to the subjective nature of what constitutes 'unethical'. However, Hunt (2018) highlights certain factors as being key ethical indicators consumers should consider when deciding whether to purchase from a company: adherence to tax laws, treatment of workers, environmental considerations and sustainability. If a company performs poorly in any of these areas, the consumer should carefully consider whether purchasing from that company is 'unethical consumerism'. For example, Hunt (2018) highlights delivery giant Amazon's poor treatment of workers at their distribution centres as an example of unethical practice as well as the much publicised tax avoidance accusations (Fuller, 2012). Other companies have also come under scrutiny for worker's rights abuses: ASDA and Tesco have been accused of paying unfair wages as well as showing discrimination towards staff (Tatum, 2020). Other company's ethics have been questioned for environmental reasons, with Coca-Cola being accused of hoarding water supplies in rural communities (Vos et al., 2018).

The growing number of reports of unethical practices by large companies has led many shoppers to consider what they can do as individuals to become more ethical consumers. This has resulted in a significant rise in the practice, with the Co-op Ethical Consumer Report (2018) reporting a 400% increase in ethical consumerism since 1999. When compared against the fact that the average UK household expenditure has grown by only 2% over the same period, this represents a significant increase in the practice. The biggest rises have been in ethical food and drink consumption, which could include such practices as buying Fairtrade or more local products as well as green home expenditure. This includes trying to be more efficient with energy and installing solar panels amongst other initiatives. The large and continuously expanding range of methods of ethical consumption has led to discussion of what type of consumer is choosing to become more ethical. Park (2018) argues that the range of people who may become ethical consumers has grown due to an expanding range of factors. She argues that female consumers respond to 'ethical narratives', where a product is sold based on an emotional appeal. This sort of marketing has become much more achievable in recent years due to the rise in social media advertising. Park (2018) also argues that younger people may value ethical goods more highly due to an increased awareness of the damage unethical consumption can do to the planet and the potential long-term ramifications this could have.

It is important to question whether the rise in ethical consumerism will continue. It could revert to a marginal social movement, or it could become a mainstream movement, replacing price, speed and convenience as the main factors behind consumption. In 2007 Thompson and Coskuner-Balli argued that the emotional engagement and moral responsibility of the public as well as the rising awareness of our environment would lead to continuous growth in ethical consumerism. Thirteen years on this observation has proved to be correct, and the rise in ethical consumerism looks set to be a trend that will continue.

References

Bertrand, B. and Regan, C. (2008) *What is Ethical Consumption?*, Development Education.ie [Online] [Accessed 1st April 2020] <https://developmenteducation.ie/feature/ethical-consumption/>

Fuller, C. (2012) *Amazon tax-avoidance Will Hit UK Businesses*, Accountancy Age.ed [Online] [Accessed 2nd April 2020] <https://link-gale-com.mmu.idm.oclc.org/apps/doc/A308594368/ITOF?u=mmucal5&sid=ITOF&xid=f7641166>

Hunt, T. (2018) *Five Unethical Companies*, Ethical Consumer.org, [Online] [Accessed 1st April 2020] <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/retailers/five-unethical-companies>

Hussain, W. (2012) Is Ethical Consumerism an impermissible Form of Vigilantism? *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 40 (2). P.111-143

Park, K (2018) Understanding Ethical consumers: Willingness-to-pay by moral Cause, *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 35 (2). p.157-168

Tatum, M (2020) *Why the Modern Slavery Act hasn't Worked: the Complex Food and Drink Supply Chain is an Easy Target for Human Traffickers*, Grocer [Online] [Accessed 2nd April 2020] <https://link-gale-com.mmu.idm.oclc.org/apps/doc/A618123391/ITOF?u=mmucal5&sid=ITOF&xid=8a7c04b3>

Thompson, C. and Coskuner-Balli, G. (2007) 'Enchanting Ethical Consumerism: The case of Community Supported Agriculture', *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 7(3), p. 275–303

Vos, D. Rosanne. Kohne, M and Roth, D. (2018) We'll Turn Your Water into Coca-Cola: the Atomising Practices of Oil Palm Plantation Development in Indonesia, *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 18 (2). p. 385-405

Ethical Consumerism (Text 2)

By A Watson (2020)

1. Due to the growing global concern about climate change, environmental destruction and the increasing number of endangered species, ethical consumerism has become an extremely prominent topic. Bertrand and Regan (2008) describe ethical consumption as consciously identifying the links between a product, its origins and the context in which **it** has been produced. They define the term as awareness of how a consumer's lifestyle affects people, communities and the environment, and claim that "[an] ethically-informed consumer realises that when they buy something, they are not only buying the product". Hussain (2012, p112) outlines an example: "...when you walk into Starbucks and face an array of coffee choices, one of **them** might be fair trade. If you base your decision to buy the fair trade coffee at least partly on the fact that the growers were treated fairly in the manufacturing process, you engage in ethical consumerism". This definition and example are relevant, as **they** place the responsibility of ethical consumerism on the end user, the customer, which is an accurate depiction of the term. However, to understand ethical consumerism, it is important to identify what constitutes unethical consumerism.

2. Unethical consumerism is a challenging term to define due to the subjective nature of what constitutes 'unethical'. However, Hunt (2018) highlights certain factors as being key ethical indicators consumers should consider when deciding whether to purchase from a company: adherence to tax laws, treatment of workers, environmental considerations and sustainability. If a company performs poorly in any of **these** areas, the consumer should carefully consider whether purchasing from that company is 'unethical consumerism'. For example, Hunt (2018) highlights delivery giant Amazon's poor treatment of workers at **their** distribution centres as an example of unethical practice as well as the much publicised tax avoidance accusations (Fuller, 2012). Other companies have also come under scrutiny for worker's rights abuses: ASDA and Tesco have been accused of paying unfair wages as well as showing discrimination towards staff (Tatum, 2020). Other company's ethics have been questioned for environmental reasons, with Coca-Cola being accused of hoarding water supplies in rural communities (Vos et al., 2018).

3. The growing number of reports of unethical practices by large companies has led many shoppers to consider what they can do as individuals to become more ethical consumers. **This** has resulted in a significant rise in the practice, with the Co-op Ethical Consumer Report (2018) reporting a 400% increase in ethical consumerism since 1999. When compared against the fact that the average UK household expenditure has grown by only 2% over the same period, this represents a significant increase in the practice. The biggest rises have been in ethical food and drink consumption, which could include such practices as buying Fairtrade or more local products as well as green home expenditure. This includes trying to be more efficient with energy and installing solar panels amongst other initiatives. The large and continuously expanding range of methods of ethical consumption has led to discussion of what type of consumer is choosing to become more ethical. Park (2018) argues that the range of people who may become ethical consumers has grown due to an expanding range of factors. She argues that female consumers respond to 'ethical narratives', where a product is sold based on an emotional appeal. This sort of marketing has become much more achievable in recent years due to the rise in social media advertising. Park (2018) also argues that younger people may value ethical goods more highly due to an increased awareness of the damage unethical consumption can do to the planet and the potential long-term ramifications **this** could have.

4. It is important to question whether the rise in ethical consumerism will continue. It could revert to a marginal social movement, or **it** could become a mainstream movement, replacing price, speed and convenience as the main factors behind consumption. In 2007 Thompson and Coskuner-Balli argued that the emotional engagement and moral responsibility of the public as well as the rising awareness of our environment would lead to continuous growth in ethical consumerism. Thirteen years on **this** observation has proved to be correct, and the rise in ethical consumerism looks set to be a trend that will continue.

References

Bertrand, B. and Regan, C. (2008) *What is Ethical Consumption?*, Development Education.ie [Online] [Accessed 1st April 2020] <https://developmenteducation.ie/feature/ethical-consumption/>

Fuller, C. (2012) *Amazon tax-avoidance Will Hit UK Businesses*, Accountancy Age.ed [Online] [Accessed 2nd April 2020] <https://link-gale-com.mmu.idm.oclc.org/apps/doc/A308594368/ITOF?u=mmucal5&sid=ITOF&xid=f7641166>

Hunt, T. (2018) *Five Unethical Companies*, Ethical Consumer.org, [Online] [Accessed 1st April 2020] <https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/retailers/five-unethical-companies>

Hussain, W. (2012) Is Ethical Consumerism an impermissible Form of Vigilantism? *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 40 (2). P.111-143

Park, K (2018) Understanding Ethical consumers: Willingness-to-pay by moral Cause, *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 35 (2). p.157-168

Tatum, M (2020) *Why the Modern Slavery Act hasn't Worked: the Complex Food and Drink Supply Chain is an Easy Target for Human Traffickers*, Grocer [Online] [Accessed 2nd April 2020] <https://link-gale-com.mmu.idm.oclc.org/apps/doc/A618123391/ITOF?u=mmucal5&sid=ITOF&xid=8a7c04b3>

Thompson, C. and Coskuner-Balli, G. (2007) 'Enchanting Ethical Consumerism: The case of Community Supported Agriculture', *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 7(3), p. 275–303

Vos, D. Rosanne. Kohne, M and Roth, D. (2018) We'll Turn Your Water into Coca-Cola: the Atomising Practices of Oil Palm Plantation Development in Indonesia, *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 18 (2). p. 385-405

Comprehension Questions

1. Headings: Choose a subheading for each paragraph. One title is not needed.

1	<i>E (Example)</i>	A	Unscrupulous behaviour
2		B	Measuring ethical consumption
3		C	A tendency to continue along a more moral path
4		D	Ethical consumption in emerging nations
		E	Definition of ethical consumption

___ / 3

2. True / False / Not Given: One question per paragraph.

		T / F / NG
Paragraph 1		
i.	Ethical consumers are usually unaware their choice is ethical.	
Paragraph 2		
ii.	Some supermarkets were accused of unethical environmental practises.	
Paragraph 3		
iii.	Spending on ethical consumerism has increased more than the household income over the last twenty years.	
Paragraph 4		
iv.	Thompson and Coskuner-Balli are ethical consumers.	

___ / 4

3. Open answer questions.

Paragraph 1

What is ethical consumption consciously identifying connections between?

i)	<i>A product (Example).</i>
ii)	
iii)	

___ / 2

Paragraph 2

Name three types of company the author highlights as unethical.

i)	
ii)	
iii)	

___ / 3

Paragraph 3

Which two types of people does the author say are likely to be ethical consumers?

<i>i)</i>	
<i>ii)</i>	

___ / 2

Paragraph 3

What reasons are given that the above people might choose to be ethical consumers?

<i>i)</i>	
<i>ii)</i>	

___ / 2

Paragraph 4

What do Thompson and Coskuner-Balli argue are the two reasons ethical consumption will continue to grow?

<i>i)</i>	
<i>ii)</i>	

___ / 2

4. Sources: Match the source to the function in the text.

	Source		Function
<i>i.</i>	Hunt (2018) (Example)	a	Argument that ethical consumerism will continue to rise.
<i>ii.</i>	Bertrand and Regan (2008)	b	Discussion of types of ethical consumer.
<i>iii.</i>	Tatum (2020)	c	Key ethical indicators
<i>iv.</i>	Park (2018)	d	Example of supermarkets' unethical practices
<i>v.</i>	Thompson and Coskuner-Balli (2007)	e	Definition of ethical consumerism

<u>i.</u>	<u>c</u>	<u>ii.</u>		<u>iii.</u>		<u>iv.</u>		<u>v.</u>	
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___ / 4

5. Author's stance?

Does the author think ethical consumerism will continue to grow? Why?	
For	Against (choose one)
Why?	

___ / 2

6. Reference words: Explain what these words connect to (underlined in the text).

Paragraph	Word	Connection
1	<i>it</i>	<i>a product (Example)</i>
1	<i>them</i>	
1	<i>they</i>	
2	<i>their</i>	
3	<i>this</i>	
3	<i>this</i>	
4	<i>it</i>	

___ / 6

7. Vocabulary: Search for a word in the paragraph that means:

Paragraph	Explanation	Word
1	The action causing so much damage to something that it no longer exists or cannot be repaired.	<i>Destruction (Example)</i>
1	Something that is noticeable or well-known.	
1	Closely connected or appropriate to what is being done or considered.	
2	Based on or influenced by personal feelings, tastes, or opinions.	
2	The sharing out of something among a group or over an area.	
2	The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, on the grounds of some kind of difference.	
3	The use of energy, time or other resources.	
3	An action taken to improve something, in this case ethical consumerism.	
3	Achieving maximum productivity with minimum wasted effort or expense.	
4	Minor or not important. Not central in a society	
4	The ideas, attitudes or activities shared by most people and regarded as normal or conventional.	

___ / 10

Overall Total: ___ / 40

Comprehension Questions **Answers**

1. Headings: Choose a subheading for each paragraph. One title is not needed.

1	<i>E (Example)</i>	A	Unscrupulous behaviour
2	<i>B</i>	B	Measuring ethical consumption
3	<i>A</i>	C	A tendency to continue along a more moral path
4	<i>C</i>	D	Ethical consumption in emerging nations
		E	Definition of ethical consumption

___ / 3

2. True / False / Not Given: One question per paragraph.

		T / F / NG
Paragraph 1		
i.	Ethical consumers are usually unaware their choice is ethical. [“[an] ethically-informed consumer realises that when they buy something, they are not only buying the product”]	F
Paragraph 2		
ii.	Some supermarkets were accused of unethical environmental practises. [ASDA and Tesco have been accused of paying unfair wages as well as showing discrimination towards staff (Tatum, 2020)]	F
Paragraph 3		
iii.	Spending on ethical consumerism has increased more than the household income over the last twenty years.	T
Paragraph 4		
iv.	Thompson and Coskuner-Balli are ethical consumers.	NG

___ / 4

3. Open answer questions

Paragraph 1: **What is ethical consumption consciously identifying connections between?**

i)	<i>A product (Example).</i>
ii)	<i>A product's origins.</i>
iii)	<i>The context in which a product has been produced.</i>

___ / 2

Paragraph 2: **Name three types of company the author highlights as unethical.**

i)	<i>A delivery company.</i>
ii)	<i>Supermarkets.</i>
iii)	<i>A soft drink company.</i>

___ / 3

Paragraph 3: Which two types of people does the author name as likely to be ethical consumers?

i)	Women.
ii)	Younger people.

___ / 2

Paragraph 3

What reasons are given that the above people might choose to be ethical consumers?

i)	Marketing.
ii)	Environmental concerns.

___ / 2

Paragraph 4

What do Thompson and Coskuner-Balli argue are the two reasons ethical consumption will continue to grow?

i)	Emotional engagement and moral responsibility of the public.
ii)	Rising awareness of the environment.

___ / 2

4. Sources: Match the source to the function in the text.

	Source		Function
i.	Hunt (2018) (Example)	a	Argument that ethical consumerism will continue to rise.
ii.	Bertrand and Regan (2008)	b	Discussion of types of ethical consumer.
iii.	Tatum (2020)	c	Key ethical indicators.
iv.	Park (2018)	d	Example of supermarkets' unethical practices.
v.	Thompson and Coskuner-Balli (2007)	e	Definition of ethical consumerism.

i.	C	ii.	E	iii.	D	iv.	B	v.	A
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___ / 4

5. Author's stance?

Does the author think ethical consumerism will continue to grow? Why?	
For	Against (choose one)
<p>Why? The author introduces evidence, such as the Co-op Ethical Consumer Report, which shows there is a rise in ethical consumerism. Also, in the conclusion she states that the rise is set to continue.</p>	

___ / 2

6. Reference words- explain what these connect to (underlined in the text)

Paragraph	Word	Connection
1	it	<i>A product (Example).</i>
1	them	Coffee choices.
1	they	Definition and example.
2	their	Amazon.
3	this	Shoppers' consideration of how to become more ethical consumers.
3	this	Damage to the planet & long-term ramifications.
4	it	Ethical consumerism.

___ / 6

7.Vocabulary: search for a word in the paragraph that means:

Paragraph	Explanation	Word
1	The action causing so much damage to something that it no longer exists or cannot be repaired.	<i>Destruction (Example)</i>
1	Something that is noticeable or well-known.	Prominent
1	Closely connected or appropriate to what is being done or considered.	Relevant
2	Based on or influenced by personal feelings, tastes, or opinions.	Subjective
2	The sharing out of something among a group or over an area.	Distribution
2	The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, on the grounds of some kind of difference.	Discrimination
3	The use of energy, time or other resources.	Expenditure
3	An action taken to improve something, in this case ethical consumerism.	Initiatives
3	Achieving maximum productivity with minimum wasted effort or expense.	Efficient
4	Minor or not important. Not central in a society	Marginal
4	The ideas, attitudes or activities shared by most people and regarded as normal or conventional.	Mainstream

___ / 10

Overall Total: ___ / 40