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## PREVIEW | The Wise Buyer

■ How much do you already know about the material in this unit? Circle letters or words to correctly complete the sentences. Answers are upside down at the bottom of the page.

1. You'll usually find lower prices at ( discount / retail ) stores.
2. Prices on seasonal items drop ( before / after ) the season is over.
3. The main reason businesses run ads is to ( provide the facts / convince you to buy ).
4. An estimate shows the ( exact / approximate ) cost of a repair job.
5. Great bargains on used items can often be found at ( outlet malls / garage sales ).
6. You can look up nearby thrift stores in the yellow pages of a ( phone or online business directory / buyers' guide ).
7. What can help you make wise buying decisions?
  - a. learning about the product and comparing different brands
  - b. believing everything the ad says about the product
  - c. rushing to buy any new product as soon as it's introduced
8. Which of these ads states a fact?
  - a. *Naturally good and delicious, too!*
  - b. *Hurry! Hurry! Sale ends tomorrow!*
  - c. *You won't believe our low prices!*
9. Which of these tips can help you control costly repair bills?
  - a. Ask more than one company to give you a price estimate.
  - b. Let the repair service decide what needs to be fixed.
  - c. Never accept rebuilt parts if new parts are available.
10. Where might you shop for bargains on used household items?
  - a. discount warehouses
  - b. flea markets
  - c. department stores

Answers: 1. discount 2. after 3. convince you to buy 4. approximate 5. garage sales 6. phone or online business directory 7. a 8. b 9. a 10. b

## LESSON

# 1 Principles of Smart Shopping

Three simple steps can help you make wise buying decisions:

- **Learn about the product before you buy it.** Read a label to find out what's inside a package. Ask people who own similar products for their recommendation and note any complaints. Ask if they got a good buy and where they purchased the product.

Newspaper, magazine, and online ads or professional reviews can also give you facts about different brands. Compare prices using ads. Articles and customer reviews tell you more about how the product performs. Consumer or buyers' reports are also helpful. Buyers' reports or guides often test and grade products, showing which you can trust to last.

- **Compare what you've learned about different brands.** List the advantages/disadvantages of the different brands. This will help you compare. Tom is a lifeguard. He's looking for a lightweight, waterproof watch. He made a list to help him decide.
- **Consider your wants and needs.** Your wants and needs are as important as the amount you pay for something. Tom ended up choosing the watch that had fewer features and cost more because it was waterproof—a critical feature for his line of work.

## WHERE TO SHOP

Where you shop can make a big difference on how much you pay.



Discount chains and buyer warehouses usually offer the lowest prices. It pays to know how much things cost before you shop at such stores. You won't get much customer service or advice. You often can't try on clothes there. These stores may sell a mix of high- and lower-quality brands.

Retail and specialty stores charge the highest prices. But they usually sell top-quality brands and offer good service. If you shop at retail stores, ask about upcoming sales. You can save a lot by waiting until then, when prices are lower.

## WHEN TO SHOP

When you go shopping can be as important as where you shop. Don't rush to buy a new type of product the minute it's introduced. Several months later the price usually goes down. It often pays to wait!

Prices on seasonal items change, too. You'll pay less for a swimsuit at the end of summer. And you'll save money on a heater if you buy it in summer, not winter. Smart shoppers also wait for sales that occur after holidays like the Fourth of July. You can often learn about special sales through newspaper or TV ads or mailers.

■ **Thinking It Over:** Circle the number of each tip that can help you find the best buys.

1. Rush to buy the newest product the minute it's introduced.
2. Wait until the season is over to save on seasonal items.
3. Ask friends if they like owning similar products or brands.
4. Always buy the cheapest brand.
5. Read ads to learn facts about products, prices, and sales.
6. Compare different brands before making a purchase.
7. Even if they cost more, choose products that fit your needs.
8. Ask when a retail store is planning to have a sale.
9. Never shop at a retail store.
10. Read buyers' guides to learn how certain brands are rated.

■ **Key Vocabulary:** Match the **boldface** words with their definitions.

1. \_\_\_ **advantages**
  2. \_\_\_ **seasonal**
  3. \_\_\_ **discount**
  4. \_\_\_ **brand**
  5. \_\_\_ **quality**
  6. \_\_\_ **consumers**
- a. related to a certain time of the year
  - b. buyers
  - c. a product type or name
  - d. how well something is made
  - e. a low or marked-down price
  - f. good points or benefits

■ **Everyday Math**

Julian decided he should buy a second pair of glasses. The glasses and frame cost \$161.50 at his regular store. Then Julian saw this newspaper ad:

Super Savings at The Eye Site!  
Glasses and Frame Sale  
2 for \$299  
(regular price \$169 each)  
Save \$70 with purchase of two.

Julian needs only one pair of glasses. How much more would he pay if he bought just one pair at The Eye Site? \$\_\_\_\_\_

Would Julian really save \$70 if he bought two pair of glasses at The Eye Site instead of his regular store? \_\_\_\_\_

Explain your answer.

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■ **On Your Own**

Think of an item you're planning to purchase. List the advantages and disadvantages of one brand.

NAME OF ITEM: \_\_\_\_\_

BRAND: \_\_\_\_\_

ADVANTAGES: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DISADVANTAGES: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## LESSON

## 2 Interpreting Ad Copy

Ads try to convince you to buy or do something. First, ad writers try to get your attention:

**WAIT! READ THIS . . .**  
**HURRY! LIMITED TIME ONLY**

Then they try to sell you a “deal”:

**DON'T MISS OUT! SUPER SAVINGS!**  
**UNBELIEVABLY LOW PRICES!**

If an ad says “All items now on sale for half price,” that’s a fact. “Unbelievably low prices” is not a fact. It’s an opinion. An opinion is an idea or feeling that some may agree with, others may not.

See if you can tell the difference between fact and opinion. Read the six ads below. Find the three ads that state a fact (a provable truth).

**LIMITED OFFER. ACT NOW!**  
**ALL ITEMS ON SALE TILL MAY 31**  
**ALL SHOES UNDER \$25.00**  
**SHOES PRICED FOR EVERY BUDGET**  
**HOT BUYS FOR SUMMER**  
**60-QUART ICE CHEST - ONLY \$26.99**

Why is it important to interpret ads correctly? Ads can help you compare prices and locate the best buys. You can use ads to find a service you might need or learn about special sales or new products. Just ignore the opinions. Look only for the facts.

**Misleading Words.** Ad writers use words like *new*, *fresh*, *natural*, *improved*, or *healthy* to make their products sound good. Don’t be misled. Look for facts to help you decide if these words are true.

“Forever Fresh,” for example, is an appealing name for butter. But butter doesn’t stay fresh forever. Smart shoppers use expiration dates to determine how fresh something is.


**Comparatives.** Nearly all ads use comparatives. These are words that end in *-er*, like *brighter*, *faster*, *smoother*. Always ask: “Brighter than what?” “Smoother than what?” If the ad doesn’t say, it’s simply someone’s opinion.

**Exaggerations.** Ad writers tend to exaggerate or overstate the facts. They do this to get your attention, and to urge you to act right away. Here’s one example:

Every morning the people  
in *your* town wake up to  
billions of allergens.

PROTECT YOURSELF NOW!

**Allergy-Free**  
is on the job!



You should question ads that exaggerate. Do these billions of allergens really bother people? Is this a problem that you need to solve? The ad doesn’t say.

■ **Thinking It Over**

1. The main purpose of ads is to
  - a. give facts about the product.
  - b. get you to buy or do something.
  - c. share their opinions.
2. Smart shoppers question ads and pay attention only to the
  - a. opinions.
  - b. comparatives.
  - c. facts.
3. Ads can be useful if they help you
  - a. exaggerate.
  - b. compare prices.
  - c. spend your money.
4. Ads can also help you
  - a. learn about special sales.
  - b. prove something to someone.
  - c. learn what's good for you.

■ **Key Vocabulary:** Use the first letters as clues.

1. A *fact* is information you can p\_\_\_\_\_.
2. An opinion simply states what someone thinks or f\_\_\_\_\_.
3. Ads often use words like *fresher*, *brighter*, or *smoother*. These words are called c\_\_\_\_\_.
4. Ads often overstate or e\_\_\_\_\_ a need.
5. Words like *fresh* or *healthy* can be m\_\_\_\_\_ if you don't know the facts.

■ **Everyday Math**

Men's boots at Shoe City regularly sell for \$59.99. This weekend they will be on sale for \$32. How much will Evan save if he buys the boots on Saturday instead of Wednesday?                    \$\_\_\_\_\_

■ **Fact vs. Opinion:** Write **O** or **F** to tell whether the ad is an *opinion* or *fact*.

1. \_\_\_ *Save on Our Huge Selection of Top Name Brands!*
2. \_\_\_ *Don't Delay! Sale Ends Tomorrow.*
3. \_\_\_ *Nobody Does It Better!*
4. \_\_\_ *Naturally Fresh. Picked with Loving Care.*
5. \_\_\_ *Labor Day Super Sale—All School Supplies Half Off!*
6. \_\_\_ *Perk Up! The perfect way to start your day.*
7. \_\_\_ *Buy Two for \$4.50 (Individual Price: \$3.99)*
8. \_\_\_ *Fresh Strawberries Picked Today—Only 99¢ a Carton*

■ **On Your Own**

Imagine you have invented a product. Then, on a piece of paper, write an ad to convince someone to buy it. Use words that make the product sound great. Use comparatives. Exaggerate. Include only one small fact. See if your classmates can ignore your opinions and find the one little fact.