



Teacher's page

Fun lesson plans from Learn Hot English

Unusual things you can buy online!

Level: Intermediate (B1) to Upper Intermediate (B2)

Audio: Yes

In this fun lesson, your students will discuss the topic of online shopping. This practical class will get your students using lots of useful language and all the essential skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing. Here are some ideas for doing it in class. Good luck!

1 Warm-up – scroll down for the student pages

Students look at the list of unusual things that you can buy on eBay – an online auction website where people sell things and buyers bid for those things. In pairs or small groups, students decide what each thing consists of and how much it might cost. In some cases, it's more obvious what the product is, but students should still try to describe it. Then, when they've done this, discuss students' ideas with the whole class and try to come to a consensus.

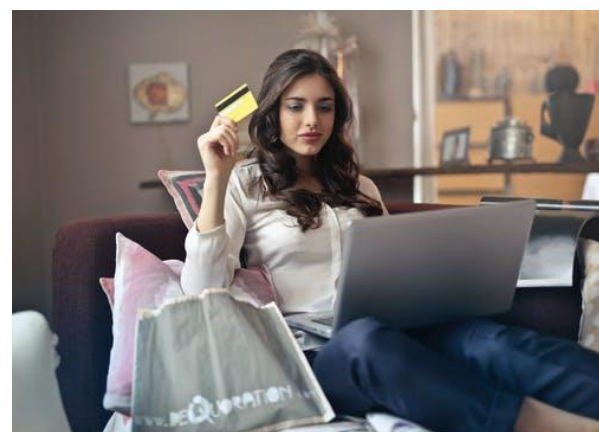
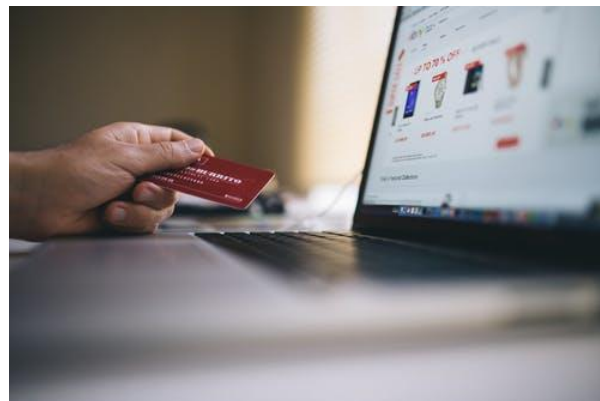
2 Lesson activities

Go through the activities for the lesson on the sheet: the Pre-reading, Reading I and Reading II activities. You could do this lesson as a *listening* activity. In order to do this, tell your students to turn over the sheet so they can't see the text as they do the exercises.

Remember, for the first listening you should play the recording once without stopping so students get the gist of it.

For the second listening, if your students' listening level is low, stop the recording after each paragraph and check their understanding.

After finishing that, and if you've done this as a listening activity (not a reading), let your students read the text as you play the recording again. This is good for developing their listening skills as they can see the connection between the written and spoken language.



3 Follow-up activities

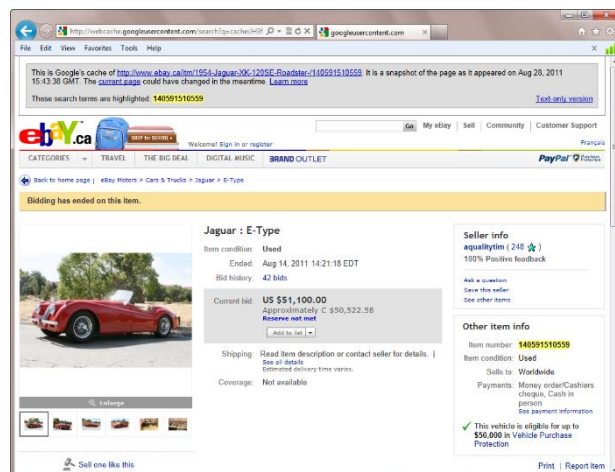
Retell it!

Assign a paragraph (or paragraphs) to each student. Students have a minute or two to try to remember the text. When they're ready, students try to recount the information, using as much of the language as possible. This works well in pairs, with you monitoring the language.

eBay product advert

In pairs or small groups (or individually), students create an advert for a product on eBay. The advert should be on an A4 sheet of paper, laid out horizontally. It should include an image of the product, the name of the product, and a description of the product: a list of its benefits and features, its price (which should be between £10 and £300), colour, age, condition, history, repairs, damage...

When students are ready, display the adverts. Other students look at them and choose the one they like the most.



The auction!

Using the products students prepared for the previous activity, hold a class auction. First, each student presents his/her product to the class, explaining everything about it. Then, tell students that they each have £1,000 to spend. Choose a product to start with, and let the bidding start. The winner is the student who buys the most products for the least amount of money.



Discussion: buying & selling

Ask and answer these questions.

- When was the last time you sold something? What was it? Where did you sell it? How much did you sell it for? How easy or difficult was it to sell?
- When was the last time you bought something? What was it? Where did you buy it? How much did you buy it for? How easy or difficult was it to buy?
- When was the last time you bought something and then regretted having bought it afterwards? What had you bought? Why did you regret having bought it?
- What was the last thing you bought that you were really pleased with? Why were you so pleased with it?
- What have been some of the best things you've bought in your life? Why were they so good?
- What items from home would you like to sell? Why? Where would you sell them? Why?





Student's page

Unusual things you can buy online!

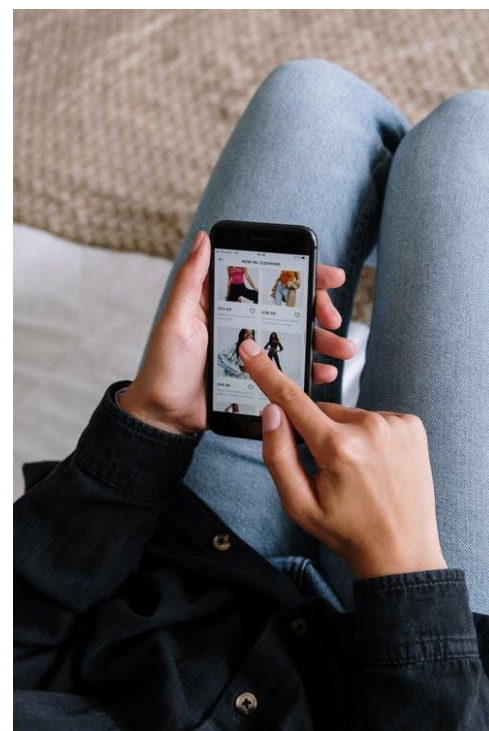
Level: Intermediate (B1) to Upper Intermediate (B2)

1 Warm-up

Look at the list of unusual things that you can buy on eBay – an online auction website where people sell things and buyers bid for those things. In pairs or small groups, decide what each thing consists of and how much each thing might cost.

For example: *“I think the ‘ghost in a jar’ is a little ghost the seller claims to have caught and placed into a glass jar. Of course, you won’t be able to see it because it’s transparent!”*

- A ghost in jar.
- An imaginary friend.
- A haunted rubber duck.
- A Dorito shaped like the Pope’s hat.
- The meaning of life.
- A piece of Britney Spears’ bubble gum.
- Unwanted Brussels sprouts.
- An unassembled snowman.
- Justin Timberlake’s half-eaten French toast.
- Green witch boots from the stage show *Wicked*.
- A grilled cheese sandwich with the face of Bono (of the group U2) on it.
- A voodoo carrot.
- Haunted dolls.
- A ghost town.



Objective To improve your reading and listening skills.

Think about it Have you ever sold anything online? What was it? Which of the objects from this page would you like to buy? Why? Which of your possessions would you like to put up for sale? How much would you sell them for?

Exams This reading and listening activity will help prepare you for English exams such as PET and TOEFL.

TRACK 11: ENGLISHMAN & US MAN



IT'S ONLY BEEN USED ONCE!

UNUSUAL THINGS SOLD ON eBAY

by Christian Olijve

eBay is one of the world's biggest online retailers. You can buy everything from clothes to toys to **antiques** to furniture and books. You can also get some unusual items. **Margaret Thatcher's** handbag once sold for £103,000. Justin Timberlake's half-eaten **French toast** went for \$3,154 in 2006, and J.D. Sallinger's un-cleaned toilet was **put up for auction** in 2011 at a starting price of \$1million. Here are some more unusual things that have been sold on eBay.



Product: A man's life
Sold for: Just over \$200,000

Ian Usher

was so sick and tired of his life and everyone in it that he decided to sell it. The sale included all his material possessions – his house, his furniture, his car, etc. – as well as the possibility of getting introduced to all his friends. Talk about a new beginning!

the superstar thought it would be a good idea to sell it for **charity**. And as she claims to have caught the cold from fellow-actor Samuel L. Jackson, the tissue has double celebrity value. ☆

VIDEO

YouTube

Watch a video about some unusual things sold on eBay. Search YouTube for “3 Weird Clothing Items That Sold On ebay”.

GLOSSARY

an online retailer *n*
a website business that sells things
an antique *n*
an object that is old and valuable
Margaret Thatcher *n*
a British prime minister from 1979 to 1990
French toast *n*
bread that is covered in an egg mixture and then fried
to put up for auction *exp*
if you “put an object up for auction”, you sell it at a public sale. The person who offers the highest price can buy it
a username *n*
a name you type in so you can access a website
an imaginary friend *n*
a friend who exists in your head
a bid *n*
an offer of a price for an object at an auction or public sale
short on cash *exp*
if you're “short on cash”, you don't have much money
a forehead *n*
the part of your head above your eyes and below your hair
snoring *adj*
if someone “snores”, they make a loud sound through their mouth or nose when they're sleeping. “Snoring” is the adjective
a remedy *n*
a cure for an illness
an association *exp*
if you have an “association” with someone, you do business or work with them
a CEO *abbr*
the chief executive officer – the most important person in a company
a tissue *n*
a thin piece of paper you can use to clean your nose
a charity *n*
an organisation that helps poor people (for example)

Answers on page 44

1 Pre-reading

Look at the product names in the article. What do you think the products consist of exactly? Why would someone pay for them?

2 Reading I

Read or listen to the article once. What's the most ridiculous or unusual product that was sold on eBay? Why?

3 Reading II

Read the article again. Then, answer the questions.

1. How much was “the meaning of life” sold for?
2. Who sold his imaginary friend?
3. What was the imaginary friend's name?
4. What did Ian Usher sell?
5. What part of his body did Andrew Fischer put up for sale?
6. Who gave Scarlett Johansson a cold?



Product: The meaning of life
Sold for: \$3.26 dollars

Have you ever wondered about the meaning of life? For a mere \$3.26, you could have had the answer.



Product: An imaginary friend
Sold for: \$3,082.15 dollars

A man with the **username** “thewildandcrazyol” felt he was getting a bit too old for his **imaginary friend** Jon Malipiemman so he put him up for sale. “He is really friendly and I will send you a list of things he likes and dislikes,” the seller explained. Amazingly Jon Malipiemman got 31 **bids**.



Product: a man's forehead
Sold for: \$37,375
When

Andrew Fischer was a little **short on cash** he decided to put his **forehead** up for sale as advertising space. He eventually got \$37,375 to advertise the **snoring remedy**, SnoreStop. “I look forward to an enjoyable **association** [with Andrew],” SnoreStop CEO Christian de Rivel said in an interview with NBC news.



Product: Used tissue
Sold for: \$5,300

Of course, this isn't just any **tissue** – this is Scarlett Johansson's. After blowing her nose once,