

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

1123/21

Paper 2 Reading

May/June 2019

INSERT

1 hour 45 minutes



READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

This Insert contains the two reading passages.

This document consists of **3** printed pages and **1** blank page.

Passage 1

Shops and shopping in modern times

- 1 In the past, people always shopped in their own towns or villages, but modern times have seen the arrival of out-of-town shopping in retail parks. An attractive feature of out-of-town shopping is that these retail parks have plenty of parking spaces, which are generally free of charge. Drivers are not faced with as much congestion on the roads as they would be if they were heading for the town centre, and so the travelling experience is pleasant, with customers arriving at the shops in a relaxed frame of mind. 5
- 2 Because retail parks have many stores – perhaps a food store, a bookshop and clothes shops in close proximity and all in one venue – it is possible to shop for a wide range of goods in a single trip. Sometimes these out-of-town shopping opportunities are found in large, bright modern malls, and so shopping can be done in comfortable temperatures under one roof, with no need to keep the weather in mind when preparing for a shopping trip – simply get into your car and go! Because of the space available, and because the land tends to be cheaper than in town centres, retailers build bigger stores out of town than in town, thus offering a greater variety of goods for sale. These big stores often have longer opening hours than shops in towns; they will be open late into the evening, and every day, while town shops often close early in the evening and possibly one day a week. There is nothing more relaxing than late-night shopping after a busy day in school or at the office. 10
- 3 Because stores in retail parks and shopping malls are bigger than shops in town and have capacity for more shoppers, they are sometimes able to offer lower prices to their customers. This might be seen particularly in huge stores, sometimes known as hypermarkets, which sell mainly foodstuffs but also household items, electrical goods and clothing. Sometimes multi-national companies are attracted to build stores in out-of-town retail parks; these might well be big, internationally recognised furniture or electronics stores, which pop up across regions, entire countries and even entire continents. Because of the vast amount of manufacturing carried out by these multi-national companies, goods for sale may be considerably cheaper than the same sort of goods in smaller shops in town. 15
- 4 On the other hand, shops in town centres have many advantages over out-of-town retail parks and shopping malls. If a town is of historical interest, the shops there will generate income from tourists who arrive to explore its history. A town might achieve its own individual character by its types of shops. The features of a university town, a seaside town or a town in an agricultural area are all reflected in the distinctive range of shops to be found there. However, most out-of-town retail parks are boring and soulless because they are identical to each other. Sometimes income is derived for a town from occasional but planned events, from a weekly market to an annual fair or festival. When the circus comes to town, it's not wedged in between the computer superstore and the country's biggest furniture store! 20
- 5 It's wonderful to be part of a happy, settled community; in affording their residents the opportunity to take an interest in what goes on, lively town centres promote a sense of civic pride. People coming into town to shop will often spend more than simply the price of the items bought, as they may go for coffee or meet friends for lunch, thus increasing local income. Furthermore, this social dimension of town centres is also important because many people in our modern world with its fast-paced way of life need to take time out to relax, and cafes and restaurants in town provide that opportunity, especially at weekends. Small businesses – maybe belonging to a local jeweller, or dressmaker or lawyer – flourish in town centres. 25
- 6 Town centres have the advantage over out-of-town retail parks, in that, as the name suggests, they are central. This means that often local people can walk or cycle to do their shopping, or there might be local public transport such as a tram or bus. By comparison, getting to a retail park usually requires a car, with all the expense which that entails. 30
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Passage 2

Aunt Joan

- 1 Aunt Joan was frequently confused. Because she lived alone and was, I thought, often lonely, I regularly went to her small apartment to chat with her. Sometimes she was perfectly rational, while sometimes it was as though she were seeing the world through a mist. But she had enriched my life and I knew I would be greatly impoverished if her companionship were suddenly withdrawn. 5
- 2 One day I heard a disturbing story about Aunt Joan, which reached me through a well-intentioned friend. That morning she was in a local market and noticed my aunt examining several items at a stall, while glancing nervously over her shoulder from time to time. My friend then realised that the stallholder was also watching Aunt Joan, although he pretended he wasn't. So they both witnessed the moment when my aunt picked up a child's bracelet and stealthily dropped it into her pocket. Then, with a haughty expression, her head held high, she attempted to walk away. When the stallholder stopped her and asked to see what was in her pocket, she flung the bracelet across the stall with an arrogant gesture, crying: 'What do I want with your tawdry trinkets?' 10
- 3 When I visited Aunt Joan that same evening, she was unusually quiet; she just looked out of the window as though she had not even heard me. I went into the kitchen to make us both tea, but when I opened the cupboard, I was dismayed to find an ill-assorted collection of cheap objects, which were clearly unused: three egg cups, a great quantity of white ribbon, four children's colouring books and a necklace of gaudy beads, all with labels still attached to them. It had clearly been going on for some time. 15
- 4 A week later, when I called in to see Aunt Joan, she was sitting at the table, busy with notebooks and pencil. 'Fetch me my spare pair of glasses, Mary,' she said as I entered. 'They're in the second drawer in my bedside cabinet.' What made me pull open the third drawer? It was not intentional but the sight almost paralysed me; for several seconds I thought I would choke. The open drawer revealed several gold bangles, six diamond rings and a few pearl necklaces – a small fortune in jewellery. I was familiar enough with Aunt Joan's past life to know there were no riches like that in our family. 20
- 5 I had no concept of time passing until I became aware of Aunt Joan behind me in the bedroom; she saw the open drawer. An ominous silence developed that was broken when Aunt Joan hissed: 'How dare you meddle in my affairs?' It was so shocking I had to sit down on the edge of the bed. Gradually her old face assumed a tired, almost pathetic quality. She whimpered: 'Don't tell anyone. They'll take all my pretty things away and then they'll take me away.' Her eyes filled with tears, her lips trembled and the toll of ninety years descended on her as she crumpled into a sobbing wreck. 'Of course I won't tell anyone,' I said, unwisely. 'It's a secret, I promise.' The awfulness of the dilemma hit me when I went home. What on earth was I going to do? A promise is a promise, but theft is a crime – and that seemed to me to be the only possible reason for Aunt Joan having these valuables in her possession. 25
- 6 Somewhat anxiously, I went to visit Aunt Joan again the next day. This time she made the tea and, while she was in the kitchen, I took the opportunity to look in her bedside cabinet once more, but now it was empty. As she made no reference to my discovery of the evening before, I fondly imagined that she had forgotten about it. But now I knew that she had not forgotten a thing and had taken the precaution of hiding the jewellery elsewhere. But where? 'I wonder if it was there in the first place or did I dream the whole thing up?' I said to myself. 30
- 7 Later, the tea things cleared away, I was chatting with Aunt Joan, albeit nervously, and she was sewing. As she put her work away into her capacious sewing bag, she dropped the bag and a shower of gold bangles, rings, and necklaces rolled across the floor. An embarrassed silence followed. Neither of us knew what to say. What on earth would happen next? 35
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