



Pre-Reading Activities

A: Discussion

Answer these questions in small groups.

1. When do you receive gifts from people? (E.g. On your birthday? During special festivals or religious days?)
2. Think of one time when you were given something you really liked. **What** were you given? **When** were you given it? (E.g. Was it your birthday or was it a special festival day etc?)
3. Have you ever received a gift that you really didn't like? If you have, what was it?
4. Which do you prefer: buying gifts for other people or making gifts for other people? Why?
5. How do you choose the right gift for someone?



B: What Would You Do?

Work alone and choose the best answer for each question. (The words in **bold** are from today's article.)

1. You open a gift from your parents. You told them what you wanted, but when you open it, it isn't what you asked for. (It's a nice gift, but what you wanted was cheaper, so you feel angry that they didn't buy it for you.)

Would you...

- a. smile and thank them. You don't like it, but it is still kind of them to give you a gift.
 - b. say, "Thanks for this. It's very nice, but would you mind if I **exchanged** it for something else?"
 - c. cry, stamp your foot and then shout, "This is not what I asked for! Why didn't you buy me what I wanted!" You then walk out of the room, banging the door behind you.
 - d. Other.
2. Your aunt gives you a **sweater**, hat and gloves. She has knitted them for you and you don't like them. (They are too big and make you look like a woolly elephant.) You are going skiing soon. **Would you...**
 - a. tell her they are too big and ask her to knit you something smaller.
 - b. smile and thank her. You say, "They're just what I wanted." You immediately put them on and show her how great they look. (You won't wear them skiing, but she doesn't need to know that!)
 - c. say nothing to her and then decide to give them to someone you don't like.
 - d. Other.
 3. It's your friend's birthday today. You have forgotten to buy her a gift. You look in your closet and see three things that you were given last year but didn't like. You were planning to throw them away, because you don't want them. You don't have time to buy her anything before you see her. **Would you...**
 - a. give her one of your **unwanted** gifts.
 - b. tell her you are going to take her shopping today to buy something special.
 - c. sing her 'Happy Birthday' and thank her for being your friend.
 - d. Other.
 4. You have some things in your bedroom that you don't like. Relatives gave them to you but you know you won't use them. **Would you...**
 - a. **swap** them with friends.
 - b. throw them away.
 - c. sell them.
 - d. Other.

Now work in pairs and compare your answers for the four questions. Can you think of any times when one of the things above has happened to you? If you can, tell your partner what happened.



Reading Activities

A: Predicting From The Headline

Read the headline and then answer the questions.

Web Auctioneers Promote Post-Holiday Gift Swapping

LOS ANGELES, Tue December 30, 2003

BY LISA BAERTLEIN

Glossary: *post* - after

1. What is an auctioneer? (Use your dictionary if you need to.) What is the Web?
2. What do some people want to do after the holidays?
3. Look at the date of the article. (This shows you when the article was written.) Which holiday had just been celebrated in the United States when this article was written?
4. What do you think this article is about?

B: Meanings From Context

Read today's article and choose the best meaning for each of the following words or phrases (also shown in the article in **bold**):

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. put the wraps on
a. sold wrapping paper
b. finished
c. began | 2. bazaars
a. strange places
b. advertisements
c. marketplaces |
| 3. geared up
a. ready
b. relaxing
c. have a lot of equipment | 4. fraught with
a. frightened of
b. happy about
c. full of |
| 5. highlighted
a. lit with colored lights
b. made more noticeable
c. expensive | 6. spike
a. increase slowly
b. increase quickly
c. decrease |
| 7. pitching
a. advertising
b. operating
c. opening | 8. driven by
a. helped by
b. wanted by
c. caused by |

LOS ANGELES Tue Dec 30 (Reuters) - Didn't get what you wanted this holiday season? You aren't alone.

As Internet retailers **put the wraps on** what is shaping up to be their best year yet, Web **bazaars** like **eBay** Inc. are **geared up** for the great gift swap.

While the off-line world of "regifting" is **fraught with** the potential of hurt feelings or other **blunders** of proper etiquette, online gift "recycling" promises profits to sellers looking to simply find good homes for ugly sweaters or other cast-off gifts.

On Thursday, eBay will launch its first ever week-long "Get What You Really Wanted" campaign that directs shoppers to various **highlighted** categories from jewelry to electronics.

Traditionally, eBay has seen listings of items for sale

spike in early January as people return from their travels and begin recycling gifts, company spokeswoman Jennifer Caukin said.

"January tends to be a strong month due to post-holiday activity," she said.

Just up the road from eBay, Palo Alto, California-based LiveDeal.com this week began **pitching** itself as a venue for unloading unwanted gifts.

The startup online auction house, which specializes in local trades, has seen listings rise throughout the month of December **driven by** holiday shoppers and gift exchange, founder and Chief Executive Rajesh Navar said.

"The number of items listed this month has doubled from last month to 3,500," Navar said.

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Glossary: **eBay** - an online auction site where private individuals can sell to the public **blunders** - stupid mistakes



C: Scanning

Read the article again and answer these questions:

1. Which company was promoting gift swapping?
2. What two different words are used instead of the term 'swapping'?
3. How long would the swapping campaign last?
4. When is there a big increase in listings of items for sale?
5. Who is Jennifer Caukin?
6. Who is Rajesh Navar?

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D: True or False

Decide whether these statements are **True** or **False** according to the article:

1. 2003 was not a very good year for online retailers.
2. A lot of people receive Christmas gifts that they don't want.
3. LiveDeal.com concentrates on trades in its local area.
4. Live Deal.com has been encouraging gift swapping for several years.
5. The listings on LiveDeal increased by 3,500 in December, 2003.

E: Thinking Carefully

Answer the questions using the article and your own ideas.

1. Why is swapping gifts off-line 'fraught with the potential of hurt feelings'? What could happen?

2. Why could swapping gifts online be better?

Post-Reading Activities

You may do one or more of these.

A: What Would You Say?

If someone asks you what you think of something and you lie and tell them that it's great when in fact it isn't, this is called a **'white lie'**. 'White lies' are lies told by people when they don't want to hurt another person's feelings.

Work in pairs and **discuss what you would say** in the following situations.

1. Your mother has just had a haircut and it looks terrible. What would you say?
2. Your friend has cooked you a meal but it tastes awful. She asks if you like it. What would you say?
3. Your brother is overweight. He asks you, "Do you think I'm fat?" What would you say?
4. A teenage friend of yours wants to become a professional singer but you don't think she has a very good voice. What would you say?

B: Jigsaw Reading

Your teacher will give you some sentences that have been cut into pieces. Work in pairs and put them together correctly. They summarize the main ideas of today's article.

C: Choose The Right Gift

1. Work in groups of five. You are going to help Rebekah, a woman in her forties, choose some gifts for her friends and family. *Read this:*

My name is Rebekah. I'm a divorced mother of three. I don't have much money to spend on gifts and it's always hard to decide what to buy. I need to choose birthday presents for my sister, my children, my neighbor and my nephew. They all have birthdays in the next few months.

2. Your teacher will give each person in your group a card with some information describing one of Rebekah's family members or friends. Each person needs to fill in the table below. In your group, take it in turn to read out the information on your card and help everyone in your group complete their tables. Do not try to complete 'My Group's Gift Idea' or 'Reason(s)' yet. You will use these in 3. below.

Name of person:
Age:
Relationship to Rebekah:
Hobbies, likes and dislikes:
My Group's Gift Ideas:
Reason(s):

3. When you have completed the table, your teacher will then give you some cards with pictures. These are of recyclable gifts that Rebekah has seen on the Internet. Work in your groups and choose an appropriate gift for each of Rebekah's family or friends. You can only choose from the gift cards. Complete the 'My Group's Gift Idea' or 'Reason(s)' on your table from 2. above.
4. When you have finished choosing, your teacher will ask you to tell the class what you chose for each person and give reasons for your choice.

D: Language

1. Look at these sentences below. What is the name of the verb form in each sentence?
 - a. *The startup online auction house **has seen** listings rise throughout the month of December.*
 - b. *January **tends** to be a strong month due to post-holiday activity.*
2. **Sentence 1a** talks about something that has happened in the recent past which has a result now. The news article is reporting new information.
Sentence 1b gives true information about something. These facts won't change. (January is usually a strong month for listings. This is always true.)
3. Look at the sentences below and decide which tense to use: the **present simple** or **present perfect simple**. (All of these sentences are written at the time of the article.)
 - a. Christmas **is / has been** a time when people always **try / have tried** to find the right presents for family members and friends.
 - b. The increase in trades **occurs / has occurred** this December because of a rise in sales to holiday shoppers.
 - c. eBay **decides / has decided** to launch a gift swapping campaign.
 - d. In January every year a lot of people **want / have wanted** to recycle their unwanted Christmas gifts by exchanging or selling them.
 - e. Web bazaars **prepare / have prepared** for an increase in post-Christmas gift swapping.
 - f. LiveDeal.com **specializes / has specialized** in trades in the California area.
 - g. People **exchange / have exchanged** gifts off-line for many years.
 - h. Since its beginnings in 1995 eBay **becomes / has become** extremely popular as an online marketplace.



TEACHERS' NOTES AND ANSWER KEY

Pre-Reading Activities

A: Predicting - Notes

Give the students a short time to answer the questions. Ask some students to share their answers for question 4. with the class.

If your students are quite advanced, you could ask them to predict the content of the article using the headline without the questions.

A: Predicting - Answers

1. An **auctioneer** is someone who supervises a public event where items are sold to the people who offer the highest prices (bid) for them. The **Web** refers to the World Wide Web, part of the Internet. It is the visual part of the Internet with linking web pages containing pictures and words. It is not e-mail.

2. Swap gifts (that they have been given).

3. Christmas.

4. Answers will vary. Students may say that auctioneers on web sites are encouraging people to swap unwanted Christmas gifts they have received.

B: Meanings From Context - Answers

1. b, 2. c, 3. a, 4. c, 5. b, 6. b, 7. a, 8. c.

C: Scanning - Answers

1. eBay.

2. Giftgiving, recycling.

3. One week.

4. Early January.

5. A spokeswoman for eBay.

6. The founder and Chief Executive of LiveDeal.com.

D: True or False - Answers

1. F (It has been their best year yet.)

2. T

3. T

4. F (It began pitching itself as a venue 'this week'.)

5. F (They doubled to 3500.)

E: Thinking Carefully - Sample Answers

1. People have some chance of finding out that someone has swapped their gift off-line if they live in the same community. They may see an acquaintance etc. wearing or using their gift and this could make them hurt and upset.

2. By doing it online there is much less chance they could find out, as the people involved in the swap will probably be complete strangers. The whole process will be more anonymous as the seller and buyer only have each other's names and addresses and are not dealing face to face.

Post-Reading Activities

B: Jigsaw Reading - Notes

Make a set of the sentences below for each pair. Cut the strips up and mix them up. Students work in their pairs to put the sentences back together to complete a short summary of today's article.

B: Jigsaw Reading - Sentences To Be Cut Up And Given To Students

...months for gift recycling.

People often get gifts...

...in business in January 2004.

...that they don't want.

If they swap them off-line,...

...they may hurt their friends or families.

...and web bazaars were expecting a big increase...

However, they can now swap unwanted gifts at...

December and January are the busiest...

websites such as eBay and LiveDeal...

...after their holiday travels.

...and nobody will know about it.

People are shopping for Christmas gifts or exchanging gifts...

2003 was a good one for Internet retailers...

B: Jigsaw Reading - Answers

People often get gifts that they don't want. If they swap them off-line, they may hurt their friends or families. However, they can now swap unwanted gifts at websites such as eBay and LiveDeal and nobody will know about it.

December and January are the busiest months for gift recycling. People are shopping for Christmas gifts or exchanging gifts after their holiday travels.

2003 was a good one for Internet retailers and web bazaars were expecting a big increase in business in January 2004.

C: Choose The Right Gift - Notes

Read the instructions for 1. as a class. For 2. students need to be in groups of five students (you can also have pairs if you wish, with students having extra cards to read out). Give each student in a group one of the cards below with the profile of one of Rebekah's family or friends. Each student takes turns to read the description aloud while everyone in the group fills in the table.

For 3. give each group a set of gift cards (there are five in total). They can each hold one or put them out in front of them. They read the descriptions and match each gift with one of Rebekah's family or friends. They must agree on their group's choice of a gift and then write the group's answers in the spaces on the table, giving a reason for their choice.

4. Go over the answers as a class, asking students (don't ask for volunteers but instead choose students to answer as everyone should have done the work) to tell the class what gift their group chose for someone. If answers vary, choose more than one student for each person. Then read aloud the answers below, telling the class what Rebekah chose and her reasons for this choice.

C: Choose The Right Gift - Worksheets

These are on the next page.

3. Gift Cards To Be Given To Students

These are on the next page

C: Choose The Right Gift - Answers

- Name of person: **Helen**
Age: **44**
Relationship to Rebekah: **sister**
Hobbies, likes and dislikes: **hang-gliding, canoeing, hiking, gardening, visiting exotic places**
Gift Idea: **Book 'Adventure Travel Down Under'**
Reason(s): **Helen has plenty of money and enjoys visiting different places. She loves adventure sports and this book might tempt her to try somewhere new. I think she'll love it.**
- Name of person: **Daniel**
Age: **5**
Relationship to Rebekah: **son**
Hobbies, likes and dislikes: **Anything scary--ghosts, monsters, sharks etc. Likes playing with his toys.**
Gift Idea: **Tyrannosaurus Rex toy**
Reason(s): **Daniel loves scary things and he will be really pleased with this dinosaur toy. He can make a very realistic roar!**
- Name of person: **Luisa**
Age: **8**
Relationship to Rebekah: **daughter**
Hobbies, likes and dislikes: **Sport, particularly ball sports, computers.**
Gift Idea: **Basketball hoop and net**
Reason(s): **Luisa loves ball sports and I think she'll be very happy with the hoop and net because then she can practice shooting at home. It doesn't look too difficult for me to install.**
- Name of person: **Joanna Redbank**
Age: **in her 60s**
Relationship to Rebekah: **neighbor**
Hobbies, likes and dislikes: **keeps a cat, watches television.**
Gift Idea: **Fern in a pot**
Reason(s): **Joanna isn't very active and stays at home a lot. She can put this fern on her windowsill and look at it. It was hard to think of a present for her, but I think this is the most suitable thing.**
- Name: **Jack**
Age: **9**
Relationship to Rebekah: **nephew**
Hobbies, likes and dislikes: **math, science, reading mystery stories. Doesn't like playing sport.**
Gift Idea: **'The Mystery of the Howling Ghost'**
Reason(s): **Jack likes mystery stories and this one looks suitably exciting.**

D: Language - Answers

1a. present perfect simple, b. present simple.

3a. is, try, b. has occurred, c. has decided, d. want, e. have prepared, f. specializes, g. have exchanged, h. has become.



2. Cards To Be Given To Students

My sister, Helen, is 44. She's single and is a corporate lawyer. Her hobbies include hang-gliding, canoeing, hiking and gardening. She loves visiting exotic places, but also enjoys staying home and working in her flower garden.

Daniel is my five-year-old son. He loves anything scary-ghosts, monsters, sharks.... He has just started school and likes it, but he would rather be at home playing with his toys.

My daughter Luisa is 8 years old. She is crazy about sport, particularly ball sports. She goes to school and enjoys every subject, especially anything to do with computers.

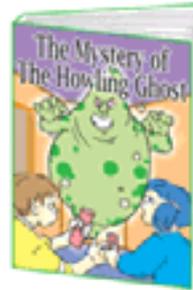
Jack is my 9-year-old nephew. He loves subjects like math and science and also reading mystery stories. He prefers staying in his room reading to playing sport. He is certainly the opposite of Luisa!

Joanna Redbank is my neighbor. She is in her sixties. She has a cat and stays at home most of the time. She watches a lot of television. She has been very kind to me over the last few months when I was ill.

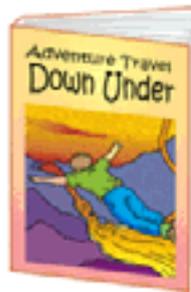
3. Gift Cards To Be Given To Students



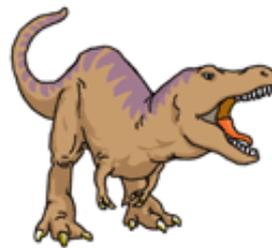
This beautiful easy-care fern has striking green foliage. It grows best in warm, damp conditions and will thrive on a windowsill.



The Mystery of The Howling Ghost: A 90-page paperback. Brad and Rose are on another adventure. They find an old, deserted mansion that has a strange secret. Warning: Don't read this late at night! Suitable for 8 years and over.



Adventure Travel Down Under: A paperback book for people planning to travel to Australia and New Zealand. Crammed with maps, anecdotes and facts, this book will help make your holiday memorable and exciting!



This **Tyrannosaurus Rex toy** will thrill you. It is made of durable plastic and is extremely lifelike. Provides hours of fun. Use it to scare your friends. Suitable for children 3 years and over.



Basketball Hoop and Net: Made of galvanized steel, the hoop and net come ready to be bolted on the wall. Ideal for children and teenagers.