

PASSAGE 1

Writing in The Times newspaper, Carol Midgley considers the attraction of shopping and the power of “consumerism”.

ADDICTED TO SHOPPING

This is a story about modern consumerism; it is being written inside a mall. From my vantage point on a wooden bench purposely designed to be uncomfortable and placed alongside a digital screen pulsing ever-changing adverts selling other outlets, other products, other ways here to spend, spend, spend, I can watch shoals of people

5 hurrying in and out of stores honouring the creed of the turbo-consumer: live to shop. A young woman rushes by at a semi-trot. On her shoulder is an eco tote-bag bearing the slogan “All You Need is Love”. But she evidently doesn’t subscribe to this ideology; she is laden with branded carrier bags. What she really needs, it seems, are more shoes, skirts, scarves, belts. How often do you go clothes shopping, I ask when

10 I catch her up. “Most lunch breaks and every weekend ideally,” she says. Why? She eyes me dubiously: “Because I love it.”

How did we get here? How did we get to a point where shopping became the premier leisure activity, where we gladly boarded the work-to-spend treadmill, the insatiable pursuit of “more”, which resulted in there being, for example, 121 mobile phones for

15 every 100 people in the UK? Does it even matter? Shopping doesn’t kill anyone, it keeps the economy going and provides one in six jobs. If it makes people happy, why not leave them to it?

Well, that’s just it. Turbo-consumerism—the age of instant gratification and voracious appetite for “stuff”—cannot make us happy and it never will. Every time we

20 are seduced into buying one product, another appears that is “new”, “improved”, better than the one you have. Turbo-consumerism is the heroin of human happiness, reliant on the fact that our needs are never satisfied. A consumer society can’t allow us to stop shopping and be content because then the whole system would die. Instead it has to sell us just enough to keep us going but never enough that our wants are

25 satisfied. The brief high we feel is compensation for not having a richer, fuller life. For years, shops, retail centres, giant malls have been taking over public spaces worldwide, creating a mainstream monoculture. The pedestrianisation of city centres, though largely regarded as pro-citizen, is in fact primarily to maximise “footfall” and shoppers’ “grazing time”. This retail creep has ensured that increasingly there’s

30 not much else to do but shop. The more we consume, the less space there is to be anything other than consumers. The space to be citizens and make decisions equally and collectively about the world around us is diminished. It may be a free country, but we simply have the freedom to shop. Kings as consumers, pawns as citizens.

Am I over-catastrophising the consumer phenomenon? In the Liverpool One shopping

35 “experience”, where I am sitting, a place teeming with shoppers despite the credit crunch, and punctuated by Massive Reductions! signs, people don’t look particularly disempowered or depressed. Purposeful, I suppose, but also strangely distracted, as if they do not notice the environment around them, merely the magnetic shop signs. I understand the siren call of TK Maxx and how a £3 top can mend a bad

40 day. But the question is, why does it?

We can answer this question from the basis of evolutionary psychology. The human body is a practical tool for reproduction and survival, but it is also the advertising and packaging for our genes and our “fitness indicators”. When a modern woman buys a new dress or a man a Rolex watch, they are really self-marketing, saying: “Look at

45 me, I’m attractive, successful, fertile, healthy—mate with me.” It isn’t that we are materialistic; in a marketing-dominated culture we just don’t know any other way to do it. But here’s the thing: much of this is simply not true. In reality, consumerism is a poor means of self-advertising because the vast majority of people don’t notice or care what you are wearing. The fundamental consumerist delusion is that branded goods are the

50 most effective way of signalling to others our “fitness”. But even in a turbo-consumer world
it’s a fallacy that we care more about the artificial products displayed by people than their
conversation, their wit, or their affection. Yet when mineral water advertised with a photo of
a nearly nude Jennifer Aniston sells for 870 times the price of tap water, then marketing
55 sizzle not the steak.
Back at the mall, I speak to two young shoppers staggering under the weight of their carrier
bags. Will they go home now and put their feet up? “No, we’re taking these bags home in a
taxi,” says one. “Then we’re coming back to do another hour before the shops close.”

PASSAGE 2

Writing in The Guardian newspaper, Will Hutton considers the same topic from a different point of view.

THE GENIUS OF SHOPPING

My two daughters have been addicted to shopping for years. From big city luxurious
shopping mall to idiosyncratic old clothes shop, they fall upon it greedily. Sometimes they
strike gold; but, even if they come away empty-handed, the experience of just sizing up and
calibrating what’s on offer seems reason enough to have invested an irrational
5 number of hours.
They are fully paid-up members of the allegedly futile and empty materialist culture:
rootless, obsessive shoppers for whom filling up their shopping bags is a substitute for
politics, community participation, family or faith. Critics of this culture indulge in a collective
mass tut-tutting: shopping and everything that goes with it are apparently
10 symbolic of what is wrong with the modern age. Serious shoppers are “slaves to the
market”, enemies of collective action, whose individualistic appetite is helping to
homogenise our high streets while destroying our moral wellbeing.
Critics also deplore the outcome—industrialised shopping malls, mass advertising, the
manipulation of desire by producers and retailers—as if the consumers at the other end
15 of all this effort were just brainwashed dolts colluding unwittingly in the destruction of their
spiritual life and the interpersonal relationships which are central to their happiness.
Shopping on this scale and with this degree of commitment, critics believe,
is a form of psychosis.
There is a partial truth in this condemnation, but it too quickly casts the individual
20 shopper as an empty vessel morally corroded by the dark forces of anonymous markets.
Critics of shopping are so busy delivering their views that they rarely have the time to
surrender to savouring that moment when they might unexpectedly enhance their lives
by finding another diverting item on which to spend money—in short, by shopping. My
experience of shopping in Hong Kong recently has made me realise that shopping
25 is enormous fun and profoundly satisfying. I’d dashed in to buy cheap gifts for my family
and had intended to spend no more than 30 minutes. Instead, I found myself drawn into the
heady delights of shopping. Choosing between a cornucopia of famous watch brands, not
one of which costs more than £4, is an experience I defy anybody not to enjoy. And on top
of that, you can pick and mix every detail: case, colour, buckle, strap. I was shopping as
30 my daughters shop—giving myself over to the minutiae of the
experience.
On three floors almost every shop you pass excites another taste or way you might express
yourself. Binoculars and telescopes; pocket DVD players; walking sticks; silk wall hangings;
leather belts; mirrors; porcelain figurines—it was endless. The bargain
35 prices were an invitation to the recognition that individuals have an infinity of wants, some
of which we don’t even know about or have forgotten; I fell upon the binoculars with all the
delight of a child. Much of the pleasure is not even the buying; it is acquiring the knowledge

of the immense range of goods that exist that might satiate your possible wants. Shopping, as my daughters tell me, is life-affirming.

- 40 I would even extend the argument to the shopping mall—the quintessential expression of the alleged degradation of shopping. Hong Kong proclaims itself the shopping capital of the world; its malls are marble-floored temples to consumption that make their British counterparts look tawdry. But instead of recoiling from the excess, I found it attractive. The effort made to present the goods well is an act of creativity in its own
- 45 right. The collective impact throbs with vitality. To condemn shopping as somehow degrading to those who take it seriously as a cultural expression of themselves is to obscure an important dimension of our lives. True happiness may be about the quality of our interpersonal relationships and wanting to belong to a just society; but it is also about the opportunity to express how we want to
- 50 live through what we buy. The genius of shopping is that it offers ordinary people the chance both to generate and to satisfy their multiple wants—as well as propelling our economy. Instead of the denigration of shopping culture it is time to recognise that the millions who love it are not stupid, being manipulated or slaves to the market—they are doing something important.

Passage 1 Questions

Marks

1. Re-read lines 1-6

- (a) In what ways does the mall seem to encourage consumerism? 2
- (b) Analyse how the writer’s use of language in lines 9-14 emphasises the intensity of consumerism in the mall. You should refer in your answers to such features as sentence structure, word choice, imagery, contrast, tone... 4

2. Explain what the writer means, in the context of 7-12, when she says the young woman “doesn’t subscribe to this ideology”. 1

3. Re-read lines 13-27.

- (a) Why, according to the writer in lines 13-18, might consumerism be considered harmless? 2
- (b) Why, nevertheless, does she believe consumerism “cannot make us happy”? 2
- (c) Show how the writer uses imagery in lines 19-27 to emphasise her criticism of consumerism. 2

4. Re-read lines 28-36

Analyse how the writer’s use of language in these lines conveys her disapproval of the large amount of space that is now devoted to shopping. You should refer in your answers to such features as sentence structure, word choice, imagery, contrast, tone... 4

5. By referring to at least two examples of word choice in lines 37-43, show how the writer’s description of the shoppers demonstrates her belief that she may be “over-catastrophising the consumer phenomenon.” 2

6. Re-read lines 44-59.
- (a) According to the writer in lines 44-51, how can “evolutionary psychology” explain our need for materials goods? 2
- (b) What does the writer mean by “selling the sizzle not the steak”? 2
7. Evaluate the final paragraph’s reference to the “two young shoppers” as a effective conclusion to the passage as a whole. 2

(25)

Passage 2 Question

Marks

8. Consider the attitude displayed by each writer towards shopping. Identify key areas of disagreement. In your answer you should refer in detail to both passages. 5

(5)

[END OF PAPER]

MARKING SCHEME

Question		Expected Response	Max Mark	Additional Guidance
1	a	<p>Candidates should identify two ways in which the mall seems to encourage consumerism.</p> <p>Candidates should use their own words as far as possible. No marks are awarded for verbatim quotations from the passage.</p> <p><i>Any two points from the “Additional Guidance” column for one mark each.</i></p>	2	<p>Possible answers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Retailers do not want consumers to sit down and take a break from shopping (“wooden bench purposely designed to be uncomfortable”) 2. Positioning of bench to maximise marketing opportunities (“placed alongside a digital screen”) 3. Use of technology to market products and to tempt consumers (“screen pulsing ever-changing adverts”) 4. The mall offers diverse / seemingly endless methods for consumers to buy goods (“other outlets, other products, other ways”)

<p>1</p>	<p>b</p>	<p>Candidates should analyse how the language emphasises the intensity of consumerism in the mall.</p> <p>Marks will depend on the quality of comment on appropriate language feature(s).</p> <p>2 marks may be awarded for reference plus detailed/insightful comment; 1 mark for reference plus more basic comment; 0 marks for reference alone.</p> <p><i>Possible answers shown in the “Additional Guidance” column.</i></p>	<p>4</p> <p>Possible answers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “purposely designed”: suggests drive and focus on the part of retailers • “pulsing”: suggests screen is full of life, constantly moving; a heartbeat which energises consumers • “ever-changing”: suggests incessant activity on the screen, vast numbers of items on offer • list (“other...ways”): emphasises the many options available to consumers • repetition of “other”: highlights the many ways in which consumers can spend / vast range of shopping choices • juxtaposition of repeated options (“other...other...”) and repetition of a single course of action (“spend”): it could be argued that the juxtaposition of choice and single activity highlights the narrowing focus / determination of consumers as they shop in the mall • “shoals”: suggests the vast number of people who are in the mall / suggests that consumers move in a darting , uniform, unquestioning manner similar to that of a shoal of fish • “hurrying (in and out)”: suggests pressurised, frenetic activity • “honouring”: suggests that consumers view shopping as a duty to be carried out with devotion • “creed”: just as a creed is a set of religious beliefs or principles, so the consumers in the mall place great faith in shopping • “turbo-consumer”: suggests the activity of the shopper is super-charged • “live to shop”: suggests a fundamental importance, as if a motto of the “creed”; climactic, summative statement
<p>2</p>		<p>Candidates should show an understanding of the ironic contrast between the anti-consumerist slogan “All you need is love” (on an eco tote-bag) and the materialistic desire for “more shoes, skirts, scarves, belts”.</p> <p>Candidates must use their own words. No marks are awarded for verbatim quotations from the passage.</p> <p><i>Possible answer shown in the “Additional Guidance” column.</i></p>	<p>1</p> <p>Possible answers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The young woman is more interested in buying things than in looking after others / the environment • The young woman’s purchases demonstrate that she feels she needs more than just love

3	a	<p>Candidates should identify two ways in which consumerism might be seen as harmless.</p> <p>Candidates should use their own words as far as possible. No marks are awarded for verbatim quotations from the passage.</p> <p><i>Any two points from the “Additional Guidance” column for one mark each.</i></p>	<p>2</p> <p>Possible answers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is not detrimental to one’s health (“doesn’t kill anyone”) 2. It contributes to the national wealth (“keeps the economy going”) 3. Many people are employed in the retail industry (“it...provides one in six jobs”) 4. It creates contentment / pleasure (“it makes people happy”)
	b	<p>Candidates should identify two ways in which the writer believes consumerism cannot make us happy.</p> <p>Candidates should use their own words as far as possible. No marks are awarded for verbatim quotations from the passage.</p> <p><i>Any two points from the “Additional Guidance” column for one mark each.</i></p>	<p>2</p> <p>Possible answers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There will always be new products which we crave (“Every time...better than the one you have”) 2. Consumerism acts like an addictive drug (“the heroin of human happiness”) 3. Consumerism can never fulfil our wishes (“...our needs are never satisfied”) 4. The happiness offered by consumerism is only temporary (“the brief high we feel...”) or (“...just enough to keep us going...”) 5. Consumerism distracts us from what is really important (“...compensation for not having a richer, fuller life”) 6. Acceptable reference could be made to aspects of lines 13-16, e.g. the implications of “treadmill”

	<p>c</p>	<p>Candidates should analyse how their chosen image emphasises the writer’s criticism of consumerism.</p> <p>Marks will depend on the quality of comment. A detailed/insightful comment will be worth 2 marks; a more basic comment will be worth 1 mark. Mere identification of an image will be 0 marks.</p> <p>When dealing with imagery answers must show recognition of the literal root of the image and then explore how the writer is extending it figuratively.</p> <p><i>Possible answers shown in the “Additional Guidance” column.</i></p>	<p>4</p>	<p>Possible answers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Turbo-consumerism”: just as a turbo is a supercharger which gives an engine or mechanical system much more power, so the writer suggests that consumerism has become overpowering, having the potential to overwhelm other more meaningful aspects of life • “voracious appetite”: just as a voracious appetite describes an insatiable desire to consume food greedily / ravenously, so consumerism encourages an over-indulgent approach to shopping • “seduced”: to seduce is to tempt an individual, possibly into a sexual liaison or an unwise deed, so the writer suggests that the temptations of consumerism are hard to resist and may corrupt us • “heroin”: just as heroin is a highly addictive narcotic, so the writer suggests that we can become dependent on consumerism • “(brief) high”: just as a high is a temporary feeling of extreme happiness, so the writer suggests that consumerism offers only fleeting pleasure
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<p>4</p>	<p>Candidates should analyse how the language conveys the writer’s disapproval of the large amount of space that is now devoted to shopping.</p> <p>Marks will depend on the quality of comment on appropriate language feature(s).</p> <p>2 marks may be awarded for reference plus detailed/insightful comment; 1 mark for reference plus more basic comment; 0 marks for reference alone.</p> <p><i>Possible answers shown in the “Additional Guidance” column.</i></p>	<p>4</p> <p>Possible answers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • list of different types of retail space (“shops...malls”): emphasises the relentless expansion of shopping areas • escalating nature of retail outlets within a list (“shops, retail centres, giant malls”): suggests an evolutionary process / growth which is difficult to stop or inevitable • “giant”: suggests that malls are an overwhelming or frightening presence • “taking over”: has connotations of conquest / invasion, suggests that retail space is a hostile force winning a war • “worldwide”: suggests global domination • “mainstream”: associates the vast amount of retail space with the humdrum, mediocre, unadventurous • “monoculture”: just as a monoculture is a crop of a single species, often grown in vast fields, so the enormous amount of shopping space lacks variety and restricts the growth of other activities which we could pursue • “footfall”: suggests that so much retail space depersonalises us / shoppers become mere statistics • “grazing time”: suggests that exposure to more retail space has lessened our ability to think for ourselves: we become like animals, following the herd / latest trend • “(retail) creep”: to creep is to move forward stealthily, possibly with the intention of causing harm, suggesting that the growth of shopping space has been insidious and may be harmful to society • “...there’s not much else to do but shop”: creates a despairing, frustrated tone by using basic vocabulary in a matter-of-fact statement • balanced structure / contrast of “The more...the less...”: allows the writer to highlight the spiralling negative consequences of increasing retail space • “citizens...make decisions...equally and collectively...world”: rather elevated language suggests that increased shopping space removes our higher values, leaving us intellectually poorer and deprived of our basic rights • “diminished”: suggests reductive properties of increasing retail space
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5		<p>Candidates should analyse how the word choice used by the writer demonstrates her belief that she may be “over-catastrophising the consumer phenomenon”.</p> <p>Because of the use of the word may in the question, it is possible to argue either way or both ways, that she is over-catastrophising or that she is not.</p> <p>Marks will depend on the quality of comment on appropriate language feature(s).</p> <p>2 marks may be awarded for reference plus detailed/insightful comment; 1 mark for reference plus more basic comment; 0 marks for reference alone.</p> <p><i>Possible answers shown in the “Additional Guidance” column.</i></p>	<p>2</p> <p>Possible answers include:</p> <p>Is over-catastrophising -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “teeming with shoppers despite the credit crunch”: suggests it’s not a problem, because so many are still shopping and benefitting the economy (even in financially strained times) • “people don’t look...disempowered”: suggests it’s not a problem, because these shoppers still have the right to make their own decisions • “people don’t look...depressed”: suggest it’s not a problem, because the shoppers do not appear to be unhappy • “purposeful”: suggests it’s not a problem, because the shoppers are clear-sighted in their aims <p>Is not over-catastrophising -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “teeming with shoppers despite the credit crunch”: suggests it is a problem, because large numbers are shopping even though they can ill afford to • use of qualifying adverb “particularly” before “disempowered or depressed”: suggests that the writer cannot be whole-heartedly positive in her description of the shoppers • “I suppose”: suggests a reluctance on the part of the writer to see consumers in a positive light • “strangely distracted...magnetic shop signs”: suggests it is a problem, because the shoppers are not in control of their own actions, are in an almost hypnotic state
6	a	<p>Candidates should show an understanding of how evolutionary psychology explains our need for material goods.</p> <p>Candidates must use their own words. No marks are awarded for verbatim quotations from the passage.</p> <p>Clear explanation: 2 marks; less assured explanation: 1 mark.</p> <p><i>Possible answer shown in the “Additional Guidance” column.</i></p>	<p>2</p> <p>Possible answer:</p> <p>We think our outward appearance, as represented by a display of our material goods, has become the means by which we can indicate our suitability as a mate</p>

6	b	<p>Candidates should explain what the writer means by “selling the sizzle not the steak”.</p> <p>Candidates should use their own words as far as possible. No marks are awarded for verbatim quotations from the passage.</p> <p><i>Both points from the “Additional Guidance” column needed for one mark each.</i></p>	2	<p>1. It is the image, style, presentation, promise, anticipation...</p> <p>2. Not the substance / the reality that matters</p>
7		<p>Candidates should evaluate the final paragraph’s effectiveness (through reference to the “two young women” as a conclusion to the passage as a whole.</p> <p>Marks will depend on the quality of comment. For full marks there must be appropriate attention to the idea of a conclusion. A more basic comment may be awarded 1 mark.</p> <p><i>Possible answers shown in the “Additional Guidance” column.</i></p>	2	<p>Possible answers include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The attitude and behaviour of the “two young shoppers” are the embodiment of “modern consumerism” as mentioned in the opening sentence; they follow the creed of “live to shop”, illustrating the idea behind the title • The “two young shoppers”, as a device, allow the writer to return to the physical setting of the mall which is used at the beginning, in the middle and at the end, illustrating the scale of the shopping phenomenon • The “two young shoppers” provide a circular structure to the passage because the writer introduces “a young woman” near the beginning who is also laden with purchases and engaged in “turbo-consumerism”
8		<p>Candidates should identify key areas of disagreement in the two passages by referring in detail to both passages.</p> <p>There may be some overlap among the areas of disagreement. Markers will have to judge the extent to which a candidate has covered two points or one.</p> <p>Candidates can use bullet points in this final question, or write a number of linked statements.</p> <p>Evidence from the passage may include quotations but these should be supported by explanations.</p> <p><i>Approach to marking shown in the “Additional Guidance” column.</i></p> <p><i>Key areas of disagreement shown in the grid below. Other answers are possible.</i></p>	5	<p>The mark for this question should reflect the quality of response in two areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identification of the key areas of disagreement in attitude/ideas • level of detail given in support <p>The following guidelines should be used:</p> <p>Five marks – comprehensive identification of three or more key areas of disagreement with full use of supporting evidence</p> <p>Four marks – clear identification of three or more key areas of disagreement with relevant use of supporting evidence</p> <p>Three marks – identification of three or more key areas of disagreement with supporting evidence</p> <p>Two marks – identification of two key areas of disagreement with supporting evidence</p> <p>One mark – identification of one key area of disagreement with supporting evidence</p> <p>Zero marks – failure to identify any key area of disagreement and/or total misunderstanding of task</p>

	Area of Disagreement	Carol Midgley	Will Hutton
1	General	Damages individuals and society - an addiction	Actually benefits individuals and society (a problem only in the minds of the minority)
2	Happiness	Gives short term pleasure but longer term unhappiness as consumers can never be satisfied	Is fun and gives continuous pleasure through seeing and/or acquiring new things
3	Architecture	Makes towns and city centres look the same	Can (at its best) create attractive buildings
4	Public Space	Restricts public space where people can meet to participate in the democratic process	Creates public space where people so something imaginatively and economically important
5	Motivation	Is motivated by people's need to attract a mate (but is not effective in that respect)	Is motivated by people's need to express themselves through what they buy/own
6	Values	Makes people superficial, obsessed with appearance rather than things that really matter	Provides people with the opportunity to do something important for themselves as individuals and for society as a whole
7	Manipulation	The market is all-powerful, manipulative, degrading to shoppers	Consumers as individuals have free will, retain autonomy