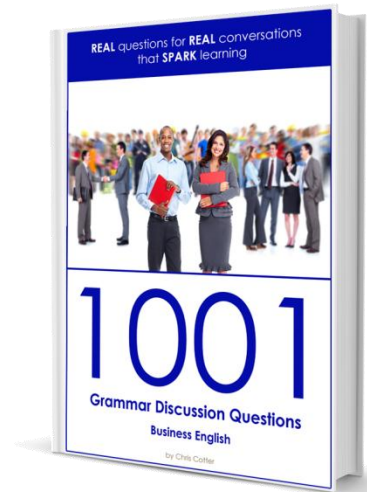
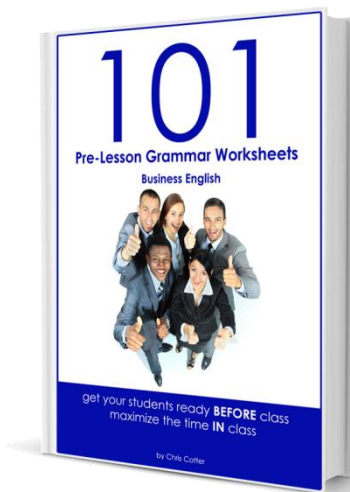
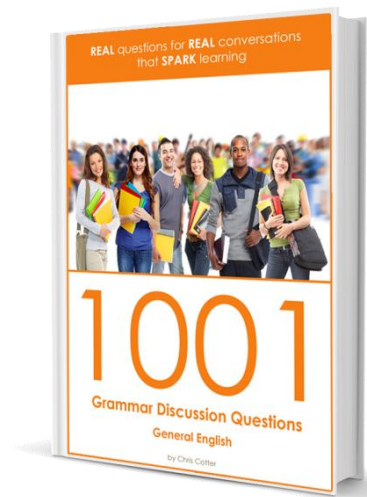
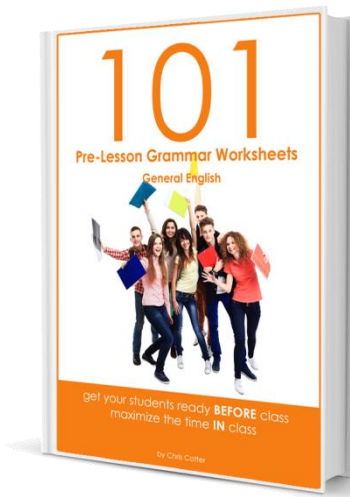
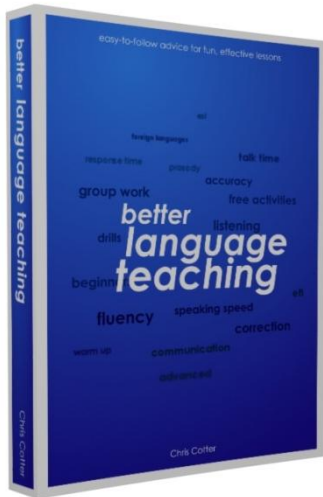


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the ARTICLE (for teachers)

Are You a Shopaholic?

The lives of some people revolve around shopping, as they repeatedly make purchases regardless of need or available money. Some of these people make impromptu purchases. Some of these people have closets with unopened purchases. Some of these people have racked up overwhelming amounts of credit card debt. If this sounds like you, then you may be a shopaholic.

A recently administered test to determine the predilection towards compulsive buying reveals that 9% of people fall into this category. Another recent test revealed a slightly smaller percentage of 6%. This new data concludes an increase in the number of shopaholics from just fifteen years ago, as well as determines that men remain just as prone to the shopping urge as women. The test consisted of six statements which people answered on a 7-point scale, from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Some statements included:

- Much of my life centers around buying things.
- I buy things I didn't plan to buy.
- Others might consider me a shopaholic.

Compulsive buying obviously leads to financial problems such as an empty bank account and maxed out credit cards. Yet these unneeded and unwanted purchases may be the manifestation of more serious problems, namely depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem. What's more, relationships and family harmony also deteriorate because of disagreements over the purchases. Shopaholics may then hide their purchases, as well as the accompanying costs, and thus add to the strain. It's a problem that affects people of all income brackets.

Researchers suggest that shopaholics felt better when they were shopping, even when they realized the associated harm.

Teacher's Notes:

* Underlined words in red typeface may be vocabulary unfamiliar to the students.

the Article (for students)

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Notes:

STEP ONE

Brainstorm: Brainstorm with a partner(s) words and ideas associated with "shopaholic" for 2 minutes. Spend another 5 minutes or less discussing the words and ideas together.

STEP TWO

Discuss: Do you agree or disagree? Why?

| | |
|----|---|
| a. | I love to go shopping. |
| b. | I often buy things that I don't really need. |
| c. | I often buy things that I didn't plan to buy. |
| d. | My friends would consider me a shopaholic. |
| e. | I have recently made a large purchase. |

STEP THREE

The Article: Read the article, and work with a partner to understand it. Lastly, summarize in your own words.

STEP FOUR

Discuss: Talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Remember to support your answers!

| | |
|----|---|
| a. | What was your general impression after reading this article? |
| b. | Based on the information in the article, would you consider yourself a shopaholic? Why/not? |
| c. | Based on the information in the article, do you know anyone who might be a shopaholic? Why/not? |
| d. | Do you agree that compulsive buying causes problems in the family and with relationships? Why/not? |
| e. | Why do you think the number of shopaholics has increased in the past fifteen years? Please explain. |
| f. | What solutions are there for people who are shopaholics? How can they be helped? |

STEP FIVE

Debate: Imagine possible supporting evidence for the following opinions on shopaholics and compulsive buying, then debate with a partner. Limit the debate on each question to two-minutes.

| |
|--|
| Statement #1: Shopaholics are addicted to shopping. It's problem just as serious as alcoholism. |
| Statement #2: Compulsive shopping is an addiction. There should be therapy and support groups to help. |
| Statement #3: Compulsive shopping is a medical condition. Insurance should help pay for treatment. |
| Statement #4: Shopaholics greatly help the economy. |