**Reading Lesson 6**

**Description**

The topic of this lesson is the fashion industry. Practice of vocabulary and structures used to give facts and opinions about sustainable fashion is used to give guidance on completing cross-text matching tasks, one of the task-types in the Linguaskill Business Reading Test.

**Teacher’s Notes**

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| **Aims of the lesson** | * to raise awareness of the requirements of cross-text matching tasks * to develop techniques and strategies for this task-type based on practice of a sample task * to identify and practise language for describing attitudes to fashion and sustainability |
| **Time required** | * 50–60 minutes |
| **Level** | * Suitable for C1–C2 level |
| **Materials required** | * Student’s Worksheet 1: Sustainable fashion – questions * Student’s Worksheet 2: Sample Linguaskill Business Reading task(Sustainable fashion) |

**Procedure**

1. Explain that the lesson will focus on language related to the topic of the fashion industry and on language and techniques which are useful for the cross-text matching task in the Linguaskill Business Reading test. This task-type is only available for C1 and C2 levels.
2. Show a selection of images from magazines which illustrate different fashion styles to elicit the topic of clothing and fashion. Then ask learners to discuss in small groups how important fashion is to them. Give them two minutes to discuss, then write Numbers 1 to 5 on the board and ask learners to come up and put a tick next to the number which most closely matches their opinion (1 = not at all important, 5 = very important). Ask some learners who ticked numbers 1 or 5 to explain the reasons for their choices.
3. As a whole class, talk about the experience of choosing and buying clothes. Brainstorm which factors learners consider when they are deciding which clothes to buy and note these on the board. Possible suggestions may include *price, quality, style, availability*.

If learners do not suggest the topic of sustainability, elicit this by asking questions such as *Does it matter where or how the clothes are made? Are cheap clothes always a good thing?* Check understanding by asking learners for one or two examples of what people concerned about sustainable fashion might think about, such as recycling or working conditions for manufacturers.

1. Give learners **Student’s Worksheet 1** and ask them to look at Exercise 1. Learners talk to a partner and decide which aspect of sustainable fashion each statement illustrates. Check responses as a whole group and write the answers on the board as headings. [**KEY:** Possible headings could be: 1. Second-hand clothing; 2. Raising public awareness; 3. Cost; 4. Pressure on clothing manufacturers.]
2. Explain that the statements in Exercise 1 are adapted from the questions in a Linguaskill Business Listening cross-text matching task on the topic of sustainable fashion. Explain or elicit what this task-type involves. [**KEY:** there are four paragraphs or short texts which express different opinions on one topic, and four questions. Each question focuses on one aspect of the topic. To answer the questions, learners need to identify similarities and differences in opinions expressed in the different paragraphs/texts.] Explain that identifying the main focus of each of the questions, as they have just done, is a useful technique for this task-type.
3. Ask learners to look at Exercise 2 on **Student’s Worksheet 1**, which has extracts from the four texts in the ‘Sustainable fashion’ cross-text matching task. Learners work on their own to read the extracts and match them with the topic headings written on the board in the previous stage of this lesson. Learners compare with a partner before checking with the whole class. Note that it is possible to match a few of the extracts with more than one topic.
4. In whole-class feedback, discuss how the activity learners have just done is a useful approach for cross-text matching tasks, i.e. learners should identify and highlight the parts of the paragraphs which cover the main topic from each of the questions. Discuss how learners should look for synonyms and paraphrases of the questions to make the matches, i.e. *clothes that have been used before = second-hand clothing*.
5. As a whole class, ask learners to look at Extracts b and h on **Student’s Worksheet 1** Exercise 2. Ask: *Do these comments express the same or different opinions?* Give learners one minute to read the extracts and then discuss together. [**KEY:** They express different opinions. Extract b says *it is doubtful that young activists will have a great deal of success in pressuring retailers to shift to greener suppliers,* so the writer does not believe that young people put any real pressure on clothing companies. Extract h says *young consumers whose changing shopping behaviour is forcing clothing retailers to make a determined effort to supply only sustainable fashion to the consumer,* so the writer’s opinion is that the actions of young buyers are having an impact on clothing companies.] Discuss how this is a useful strategy for completing cross-text matching tasks: Once learners have identified where the relevant information is in each short text, they need to read more carefully to identify similarities and differences in the opinions expressed.
6. Give learners **Student’s Worksheet 2**. Explain that this is the full sample task from which the extracts they have been working on were taken. The texts are comments from four fashion journalists about how young people feel about sustainable fashion, and the questions focus on the opinions expressed by the journalists. Ask learners to look at the questions first and highlight the key information. They should highlight: the opinion (same or different), which other text(s) they need to compare with, and the focus of the question. They also need to focus on the question words used: Question 1 is about *why* young shoppers are buying second-hand clothing; Question 2 is about *how much* young people comment about the issue on the internet; Question 3 is about *whether* young people are willing to pay for sustainable clothes; Question 4 is about *the extent to which* young people influence clothing companies. Discuss with learners that these small details can make the difference between a correct answer and an incorrect one.
7. Divide the class into four groups (or multiples of four, if you have a large class) and nominate each group to focus on one of the questions. In their group, learners should read all four texts and highlight the relevant information for their question and then agree on an answer. Monitor while learners are working to offer support where needed.
8. When all groups have agreed on an answer, re-group learners so that in each new group there is at least one learner who has worked on each question. Learners share their answers and use the highlighted text to explain how they decided on their answer.
9. Check the answers as a whole group. [**KEY:** 1. B; 2. D; 3. D; 4. A.] If any answers are incorrect, discuss why and direct learners to the correct answer.

**Student’s Worksheet 1**

**Exercise 1**

**The statements below are all about sustainable fashion.**

**What is the main focus of each statement?**

1. Young shoppers buy clothes that have been used before.
2. Young people use the internet to comment on sustainability in fashion.
3. Young people are willing to pay more for sustainable clothes.
4. Young people can influence how clothing companies make clothes.

**Exercise 2**

**Look at the quotes from texts about sustainable fashion. Which of the topics from Task 1 does each quote relate to? You may be able to match some quotes with more than one topic.**

1. … they are more than willing to use their social media channels to make their views public.
2. … it is doubtful that young activists will have a great deal of success in pressuring retailers to shift to greener suppliers unless these views are accompanied by a change in young spending habits.
3. … when the average price of one new eco-friendly item is the same as several outfits in a typical high street store …, young shoppers simply have no choice but to go for the cheaper items.
4. Fashion discussion forums are crammed full of young activists’ opinions …
5. … today’s young shoppers are prepared to spend 10–15% more on clothes from an eco-conscious brand.
6. Clothing resale is also becoming popular, ….
7. … the opportunity to obtain second-hand designer clothing to curate their own look without the high price tag.
8. Sustainability is redefining the fashion industry, primarily being driven by young consumers whose changing shopping behaviour is forcing clothing retailers to make a determined effort to supply only sustainable fashion to the consumer.
9. … a growing desire for eco-friendly fabrics, and an explosion in the number of young people that are leaving supportive comments on the websites of clothing retailers that work with these materials …
10. … there is a limit to how instrumental young people are in bringing about such a shift in practices.
11. … they are buying fewer clothes and throwing fewer items away, and purchasing more second-hand items.
12. … they are happy to hand over more cash for clothes which are produced according to high ethical standards.
13. … some items – however beautiful and ethically made they are – are simply beyond the budgets of most young people.
14. There is some indication that clothing retailers are taking action in response to today’s young shoppers’ apparent preference for sustainable clothing …
15. They are fans of recycling and acquiring second-hand clothing, but this has more to do with creating a unique style than anything else.
16. … a desire for sustainably produced clothing on the one hand and getting a good bargain on the other.
17. … they would only purchase these items if they were comparable in price to their less eco-friendly equivalents.

**KEY**

**Exercise 1**

The statements below are all about sustainable fashion. What is the main focus of each statement?

1. Young shoppers buy clothes that have been used before. **Second-hand clothing**
2. Young people use the internet to comment on sustainability in fashion. **Raising public awareness**
3. Young people are willing to pay more for sustainable clothes. **Costs**
4. Young people can influence how clothing companies make clothes. **Pressure on clothing companies**

**Exercise 2**

Look at the quotes from four texts about sustainable fashion. Which of the topics from Task 1 does each quote relate to? You may be able to match some quotes with more than one topic.

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| --- | --- |
| 1. … they are more than willing to use their social media channels to make their views public. 2. … it is doubtful that young activists will have a great deal of success in pressuring retailers to shift to greener suppliers unless these views are accompanied by a change in young spending habits. 3. … when the average price of one new eco-friendly item is the same as several outfits in a typical high street store … young shoppers simply have no choice but to go for the cheaper items. 4. Fashion discussion forums are crammed full of young activists’ opinions …. 5. … today’s young shoppers are prepared to spend 10–15% more on clothes from an eco-conscious brand. 6. Clothing resale is also becoming popular, …. 7. … the opportunity to obtain second-hand designer clothing to curate their own look without the high price tag. 8. Sustainability is redefining the fashion industry, primarily being driven by young consumers whose changing shopping behaviour is forcing clothing retailers to make a determined effort to supply only sustainable fashion to the consumer. 9. … a growing desire for eco-friendly fabrics, and an explosion in the number of young people that are leaving supportive comments on the websites of clothing retailers that work with these materials …. 10. … there is a limit to how instrumental young people are in bringing about such a shift in practices. 11. … they are buying fewer clothes and throwing fewer items away and purchasing more second-hand items. 12. … they are happy to hand over more cash for clothes which are produced according to high ethical standards. 13. … some items – however beautiful and ethically made they are – are simply beyond the budgets of most young people. 14. There is some indication that clothing retailers are taking action in response to today’s young shoppers’ apparent preference for sustainable clothing …. 15. They are fans of recycling and acquiring second-hand clothing, but this has more to do with creating a unique style than anything else. 16. … a desire for sustainably produced clothing on the one hand and getting a good bargain on the other. 17. … they would only purchase these items if they were comparable in price to their less eco-friendly equivalents. | **Raising public awareness**  **Pressure on clothing companies**  **Cost**  **Cost**  **Raising public awareness**  **Cost**  **Second-hand clothing**  **Second-hand clothing**  **Raising public awareness**  **Pressure on clothing companies**  **Raising public awareness**  **Pressure on clothing companies**  **Second-hand clothing**  **Cost**  **Cost**  **Pressure on clothing companies**  **Second-hand clothing**  **Cost**  **Cost** |

**Student’s Worksheet 2**

**Sample Linguaskill Business Reading task**

**Questions**

1. Which journalist expresses the same opinion as Journalist D on why young shoppers are buying clothes that have been used before?
2. Which journalist has a different opinion to Journalist A regarding how much young people use the internet to comment on sustainability in fashion?
3. Which journalist has a different view to the other journalists regarding whether young people are willing to pay for sustainable clothes?
4. Which journalist shares an opinion with Journalist C about the extent to which young people are influencing how clothing companies make clothes?

**Texts**

Journalist A

Sustainability and ethical clothing are quickly becoming a part of the modern young shopper’s value set and they are more than willing to use their social media channels to make their views public. Yet it is doubtful that young activists will have a great deal of success in pressuring retailers to shift to greener suppliers unless these views are accompanied by a change in young spending habits. Naturally, a commitment to ethically sourced fabrics and garments, improved factory conditions and pay for workers means higher production and retail costs. So, when the average price of one new eco-friendly item is the same as several outfits in a typical high street store or second-hand clothing retailer, young shoppers simply have no choice but to go for the cheaper items. Many of these young proponents are eager to support eco-friendly clothes producers but feel unable to.

Journalist B

The most successful clothing brands know that earning a reputation as a sustainable clothing producer requires going beyond one-ad campaigns; they need to show shoppers that they are sewing ethical practice, quite literally, into the very fabric of what they do. Fashion discussion forums are crammed full of young activists’ opinions, and studies show that today’s young shoppers are prepared to spend 10–15% more on clothes from an eco-conscious brand. It seems clear, therefore, that a significant number are interested in getting new sustainable fashion products. Clothing resale is also becoming popular, with young people welcoming the opportunity to obtain second-hand designer clothing to curate their own look without the high price tag. Bottom line? Sustainability is redefining the fashion industry, primarily being driven by young consumers whose changing shopping behaviour is forcing clothing retailers to make a determined effort to supply only sustainable fashion to the consumer.

Journalist C

With a growing desire for eco-friendly fabrics, and an explosion in the number of young people that are leaving supportive comments on the websites of clothing retailers that work with these materials, we might expect to see a greater proportion of products in the shops made with more ecological production methods. Yet, there is a limit to how instrumental young people are in bringing about such a shift in practices. Yes, they are buying fewer clothes and throwing fewer items away, and purchasing more second-hand items. It’s also true that they are happy to hand over more cash for clothes which are produced according to high ethical standards. But some items – however beautiful and ethically made they are – are simply beyond the budgets of most young people. It seems unthinkable, therefore, that cheap, mass-produced high street fashion will disappear altogether.

Journalist D

There is some indication that clothing retailers are taking action in response to today’s young shoppers’ apparent preference for sustainable clothing, but these companies also know that young people love to buy clothes and tend to show off what they are wearing on photo-sharing websites instead of vocalising their complaints. They are fans of recycling and acquiring second-hand clothing, but this has more to do with creating a unique style than anything else. All of this appears to give rise to a contradiction; a desire for sustainably produced clothing on the one hand and getting a good bargain on the other. Indeed, a recent youth survey backs up this view. Whilst the majority of those surveyed said they preferred clothes that did not harm the environment, those same respondents said they would only purchase these items if they were comparable in price to their less eco-friendly equivalents.