

Being Shopaholic: What Is in Your Control?

Let's Think!

1. How often do you shop?

2. What is your main consideration before purchasing?

5 'How's your weekend?' asked Dr Anderson in his fourth session with his patient Evelyn. 'I bought nine pairs of boots. I know I shouldn't have,' said Evelyn, guilty and ashamed. Working in a "shoppers' paradise" like Hong Kong, Dr Anderson has quite a number of shopaholic patients, but Evelyn has so far been the most worrying one. 'Shopaholics themselves are unable to stop making purchases, especially unnecessary ones,' he explained, 'It's easy to grasp. The very act of spending money delighted and excited Evelyn first, but

10 would later fill her with guilt, for she would realise she might never use what she'd bought. I believe Evelyn is not alone in this city.'

STEAM

One of the reasons why some people are greatly excited when they shop is that shopping prompts their brains to release endorphins, which are chemicals naturally released by the brain to ease pain and stress.

It has long been a popular belief that women are more prone to become shopaholics. Last month, Hong Kong Consumer Society carried out a survey among 2,000 women aged between 20 and 29. The results showed that, before buying an item, only 25% of the respondents would first evaluate its necessity and its pricing, while 75% tend not to think about their actual needs and financial ability. 'Our findings seem to suggest that most women shop not only for enjoyment, but also for stress relief,' said Harper Pang, chairman of the organisation.

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Harper's insight has been a noteworthy one. As a marketing executive at an international fashion company, Evelyn works overtime nearly every day and has once been overburdened with work and stress. Before she came to Dr Anderson, shopping was the medication for her stress. 'I felt extremely relieved when I paid. I didn't know I was addicted back then,' Evelyn recalled. Despite the 'spoils' she 'won' at the shopping malls, guilt took over her every time she returned home. Fortunately and unfortunately, she was deep in debt and was advised to consult a professional. 'I'm really grateful that Dr Anderson has saved me from this bottomless pit. Now, things get better after each session.'

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Looking into Grammar

Reflexive pronouns can be used to refer back to the subject of a clause (which could be a noun or a pronoun) for emphasis. They alone should not be used as the subject.

✗ Themselves (✓ The absent students themselves) will hand in their homework tomorrow.

🔍 Circle a reflexive pronoun used for emphasis in the feature article.

Having helped Evelyn with her addiction, Dr Anderson is now more convinced of the significance of timely diagnosis, 'Imagine what would have happened if she had sought professional help at an earlier stage: probably more money would've been saved, fewer unwanted luxuries stored at home and more time for rest secured. But what if she had decided to keep everything to herself? The consequences might have been even more disastrous. After all, it is a matter of will and choice.'

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~390 words

Part A Multiple Choice Questions

Answer the following questions based on the information provided in the feature article. Choose the best answer by blackening the appropriate circle.

1. Who is most probably a shopaholic?

- A. Jan, a girl who goes window shopping every day
- B. Leo, a man who likes collecting cartoon figures
- C. Lily, a woman who cannot help buying new clothing
- D. Mike, a boy who has a lot of clothes that no longer fit him



2. In line 12, 'are more prone to' can best be replaced by '_____'.
Strategy

- A. like to
- B. are more likely to
- C. are afraid to
- D. are not encouraged to



3. The writer thinks that Harper's interpretation of the survey's findings is _____.
Strategy

- A. serious and worthy of praise
- B. important and worthy of attention
- C. wonderful and worthy of praise
- D. silly and worthy of criticism

3 Pay attention to the writer's tone in line 18. Find an adjective which can give you hints.

4. In line 22, the words 'spoils' and 'won' can be replaced by '_____' and '_____' respectively.

- A. products...saw
- B. gifts...redeemed
- C. trophies...got
- D. goods...bought

5. Which of the following is TRUE about Evelyn?

- A. Her medical conditions worried Dr Anderson.
- B. She used to buy ten pairs of boots every week.
- C. She felt extremely relieved after every therapy session.
- D. She has been unable to stop herself from making necessary purchases.

6. Evelyn's colleague, Barbara, seems to be addicted to shopping too. What should she do according to Dr Anderson?

- A. pay off her debts first
- B. write down what she needs
- C. consult a psychologist
- D. evaluate her shopping habits

6 Note that some information provided in certain options can be misleading.

More to Take Away



Shopping addiction is recognised by psychologists as Compulsive Buying Disorder. To individuals suffering from the disorder, namely shopaholics, buying compulsively is a way to get away from negative emotions temporarily.

Self-evaluation Checklist (✓/x)

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. I understood most of the information provided in the passage. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. I guessed the meaning of unknown words or phrases correctly. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. I managed to answer questions by drawing inferences. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. I identified and understood the writer's / characters' feelings. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. I could identify and summarise the main idea of the passage. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. The two reading strategies taught in this module enabled me to read more effectively. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Part B Pre-HKDSE Questions

Answer the following questions based on the information provided in the feature article. For question 1, answer in a complete sentence.

1. Why did Evelyn feel ashamed when she told Dr Anderson that she had bought nine pairs of shoes?

1 Read what Evelyn confessed to Dr Anderson.

2. Look at the following pronouns and answer who/what they refer to in the feature article.

Pronoun	Line	Reference
his	line 2	(i)
its	line 15	(ii)
their	line 15	(iii)
her	line 20	(iv)

3. Look for words in the feature article to match the definitions below.

(i) _____ (para. 1-2)	(v.) to understand
(ii) _____ (para. 1-2)	(n.) the state of being needed strongly
(iii) _____ (para. 3-4)	(adj.) having too much to deal with
(iv) _____ (para. 3-4)	(n.) things that are expensive
(v) _____ (para. 3-4)	(n.) a large hole in the ground

4. Read lines 25-26. Circle the TWO literary devices that Evelyn uses when describing her addiction.

simile / exaggeration / personification / metaphor / alliteration / onomatopoeia

4 Refer to P.9 of this book for examples of the literary devices.

5. Match each of the statements in the left-hand column with the corresponding tone in which it is delivered in the right-hand column.

- | | | |
|---|---|------------|
| (i) 'Shopaholic personality is far from rare. Very often, it is associated with the lack of self-control.' | • | • thrilled |
| (ii) 'I can't wait to try on those newly arrived skirts! Which one should I pick first? I'm going crazy!' | • | • grateful |
| (iii) 'I'm lacking words to express my gratitude towards Dr Anderson. I dare not guess how my life would have been without his help.' | • | • neutral |

Part C Vocabulary Bank

Label the items below with the names of accessories, cosmetics and skincare products from the word box.

mascara

clutch

sunglasses

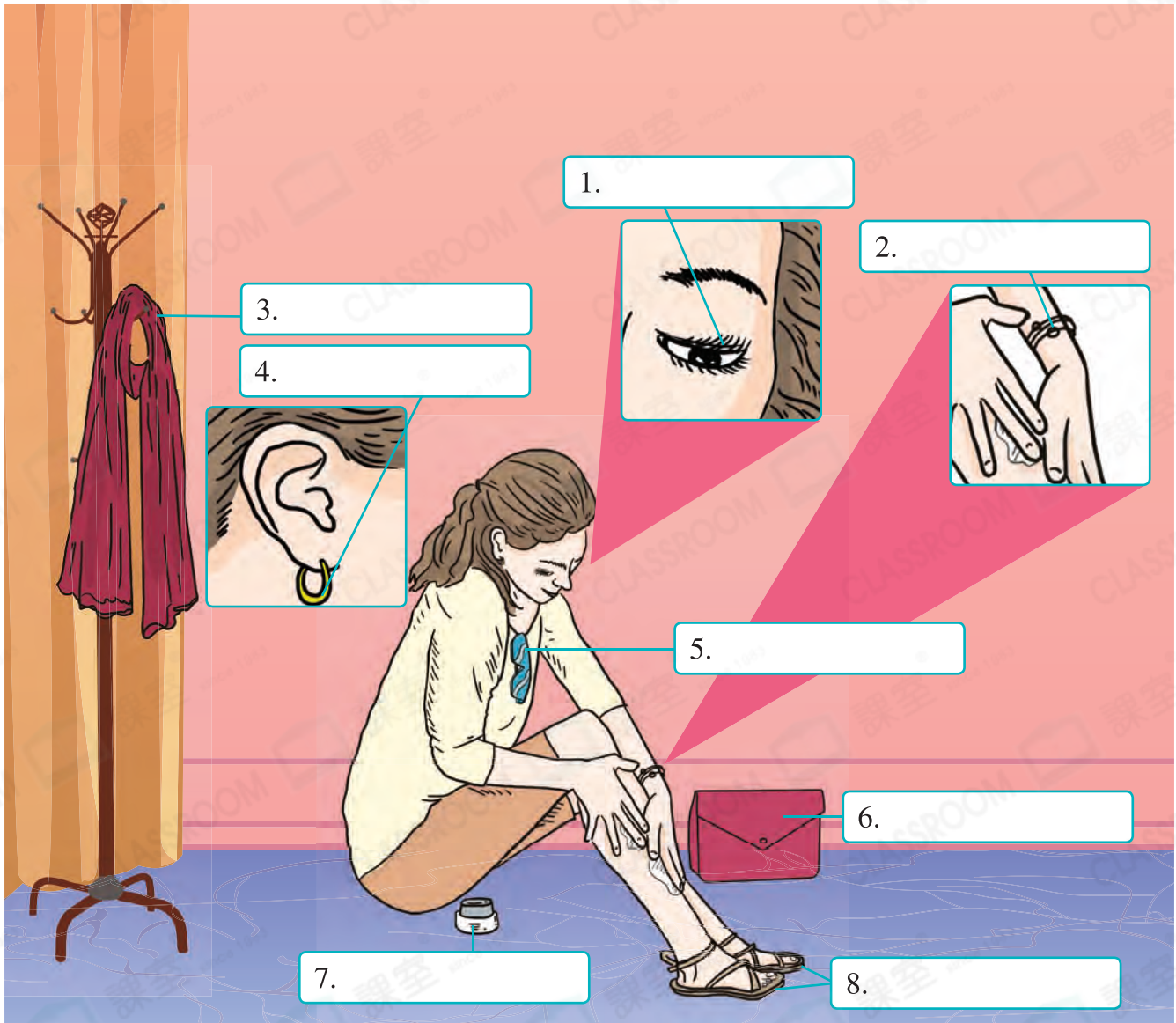
moisturising lotion

earrings

silk scarf

bracelet

sandals



Let's Discuss!

1. How much do you spend on a monthly basis?
2. Following the previous question, what is the money spent on?