**Unit 5: Are you materialistic?**

Oh shame. I admit it, I’m materialistic. Money and the things it can buy make me happy. I like new things. That directly affects my mood. In fact, I worked out a math formula for it: more money = more happiness. Can I copyright that? Anyway, I like nice things and that requires finding them, and buying them. I even like movies about shopping and fashion, such as ***The Devil Wears Prada*** and ***Shopaholic***. I totally understand the importance they place on fashion. My shopping can be placed into three categories: on line, on foot and on vacation.

Shopping online is always my Plan A. I can surf and find the biggest selection and the best price. I can also read reviews. Online is especially great for electronics. With electronics, there’s no fabric or colors or sizes to worry about, and I can make sure that I’m getting the newest model. In addition, there’s no heavy holiday traffic, no endless walking, and no carrying heavy packages. I love having stuff delivered. It’s like a stranger is bringing me stuff for free.

Of course, shopping on foot can be fun. I’m a people person so I like the crowds, actually. When people are shopping, it’s like they’re on a mini-vacation, and people are happy on vacations. There’s kind of an excitement in a big department store. A vibration. Also, I appreciate knowledgeable salespeople. I think that’s a skill. It’s easy to tell the experienced people from the part-timers. The main advantage of shopping in person is that I can try stuff on. A lot of times what looks great on the model does not look great on me.

Finally, vacations involve a lot of shopping, even before you leave the house. For this, the Internet is absolutely essential. For my plane tickets, I go to Orbitz. They are reliable, and they have a really good search engine, and it’s real easy to pick your seats on the plane. For hotels, I use Bookings.com. They have tons of hotels and I especially like their maps, which also show the hotel prices. They have hotel ratings which makes it easy to get good value. Finally, I love buying souvenirs in tourist shops wherever I go. I like to get a coffee cup, so I remember the vacation every time I have coffee. And, I like to get a t-shirt, so everyone will know that I have been to Rome or wherever.

What can I say? This is the age of mass consumption and that requires shopping before consuming. Honestly, any form of shopping is great for me: online, on foot, or on vacation. Buying things just puts me in a happy place. I guess everybody has their own addiction, some alcohol, some food, some sports, some computer games. Me, I like new things. And that requires shopping. (474 words)

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