

Fur flies as Christmas sales take off - Mark Townsend

LEVEL TWO - INTERMEDIATE

Pre-reading activities

1 Key Vocabulary

Match the words in the left-hand column with their opposites in the right-hand column:

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. to refuse | a. bored with |
| 2. to go up | b. to defend |
| 3. interested in | c. in private |
| 4. in favour of | d. to agree/to accept |
| 5. to attack | e. pro- |
| 6. in public | f. rejection |
| 7. anti- | g. opposed to |
| 8. acceptance | h. to fall |

2 What do you know about the fur trade? Choose the answer you think is correct.

1. Fur sales are currently ...
 - a. rising
 - b. falling
2. Stars such as Kate Moss and Madonna ...
 - a. wear fur in public
 - b. refuse to wear fur
3. Fur coats are now popular with ...
 - a. women in their twenties and thirties
 - b. women in the fifties and sixties

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4. What percentage of fur shops were forced to close in the 1990s?

- a. 50%
- b. 90%

5. According to anti-fur activists, how many animals are killed to make one fur coat?

- a. 30
- b. 50

Now read the text and check your answers:

Fur flies as Christmas sales take off

by Mark Townsend

After 20 years of falling sales, the fur trade in Britain is growing again. In the 1990s consumers who were conscious of their image refused to buy fur. But new industry figures show that sales went up by 35% in the UK last year - the biggest single increase since the early 1980s.

There has been so much demand for fur that some furriers have already sold out of stock, weeks before the Christmas shopping period reaches its peak. In London there has not been so much fur in shop windows for 20 years. Fur retailers believe that last month's shocking image of pop singer Sophie Ellis Bextor with a skinned fox will not have a negative effect on fur sales. They believe that its sudden popularity is due to a new generation of consumers who are rebelling against the anti-fur movement and the political correctness of the 90s.

Leading fashion houses have also been promoting mink and fox fur. So far this

year, there have been more than 300 appearances of fur products at fashion shows. Stars such as Jennifer Lopez, Madonna, P Diddy, and the model Kate Moss have worn fur in public. This is very different from the time when women wearing fur coats were in danger of having paint thrown at them in public while the world's supermodels said they would "rather go naked" than wear animal skins.

Fashion historian Judith Watt, who specialises in the history of fur, believes that women in their twenties and thirties have opened up a new market for fur. "A generation that grew up as children of the anti-fur movement are now rebelling against it", she says. "They are bored with being politically correct. It doesn't mean they haven't got a conscience; they just want to make up their own minds".

During the successful protests by the anti-fur movement in the mid-90s, about 90% of fur shops were forced to close down. But despite the growing acceptance of fur, the decision of 23-year-old Bextor to pose

for the photograph for the animal welfare charity People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (Peta), suggests that many people are still strongly opposed to fur. After the publication of the picture of her with the bloody remains of a fox last month, more than 50,000 people visited the Peta website in three days. Peta said that the fur trade was cruel, claiming that as many as 50 animals are killed by electrocution, poisoning or gassing just to make one single coat. "The fur industry wants to hide the cruelty; Sophie's picture shows the reality," says Dawn Carr, who is the director of Peta. "Cruelty will never be fashionable".

Last month the organisation was also in the news when a group of Peta activists attacked the fur industry's latest star, the supermodel Gisele Bundchen, at a New York fashion show. They were angry about Bundchen's decision to take part in an advertising campaign for the US fur company Blackglama in exchange for \$500,000 and two black mink coats.

The Guardian Weekly 5-12-2002, page 22

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3 Comprehension check.

Match the beginnings with the endings:5 Vocabulary – Word Building

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Fur sales are rising ... | a. ... because they are rebelling against the political correctness of the 90s. |
| 2. In the 1990s most fur shops closed down ... | b. ... led to more than 50,000 people visiting the Peta website. |
| 3. Younger women are buying fur ... | c. ... to make just one fur coat. |
| 4. Another factor in the increase in fur sales ... | d. ... because a new generation is buying fur. |
| 5. The photograph of Sophie Ellis Bextor with the dead fox ... | e. ... is the promotion of fur by leading fashion houses. |
| 6. The publication of the photograph ... | f. ... for taking part in an advertising campaign to promote fur. |
| 7. Gisele Bundchen was attacked ... | g. ... suggests that many people are still opposed to fur. |
| 8. As many as 50 animals are killed ... | h. ... because of successful protests by the anti-fur movement. |

4 Vocabulary Work – Phrasal Verbs

Fill the gaps using the following phrasal verbs from the text in an appropriate form:

close down	make up	go up
grow up	open up	rebel against

1. Sales _____ by 35% last year.
2. Experts believe younger women are _____ their parents.
3. Anti-fur protests forced many shops to _____.
4. A new market for fur is _____.
5. Many people are unable to _____ their minds about fur.
6. Some people who are now buying fur _____ in an anti-fur period.

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5 Complete the table

Verb	Noun
1. promote	_____
2. refuse	_____
3. appear	_____
4. rebel	_____
5. accept	_____
6. oppose	_____
7. believe	_____
8. specialise	_____
9. grow	_____
10. succeed	_____

6. Discussion

People have used animal skins to make clothes for thousands of years.

Do you agree that animals should be killed to make fur coats?

What are the arguments for and against the fur trade?

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KEY

1 Key Vocabulary

1 d; 2 h; 3 a; 4 g; 5 b; 6 c; 7 e; 8 f

2 What do you know ...?

1 a; 2 a; 3 a; 4 b; 5 b

3 Comprehension Check

1 d; 2 h; 3 a; 4 e; 5 g; 6 b; 7 f; 8 c

4 Phrasal Verbs

1. went up
2. rebelling against
3. close down
4. opening up
5. make up
6. grew up

5 Word Building

1. promotion
2. refusal
3. appearance
4. rebellion
5. acceptance
6. opposition
7. belief
8. specialisation
9. growth
10. success