

## Giving power to the people

Level 1 | Elementary

### 1 Pre-reading | Key Vocabulary

Fill the gaps using one of these words from the text

**boycott**      **campaign**      **dump**      **sweatshop**      **owe**

- 1• If you \_\_\_\_\_ someone money, you have to give them a particular amount of money because you have bought something from them or borrowed money from them.
- 2• If you \_\_\_\_\_ something, you throw it away because you don't need it any more.
- 3• A \_\_\_\_\_ is a factory where people work very hard for very little money.
- 4• If you \_\_\_\_\_ a company's products, you don't buy or use them because you are angry about something the company has done.
- 5• A \_\_\_\_\_ is a number of actions to produce political or social change.

### 2 Find the Information

- 1• How much money did Nestle ask Ethiopia to pay back?
- 2• When did Greenpeace ask people to boycott Shell?
- 3• How much was the fall in sales of Shell products in some countries?
- 4• When was the National Union of Students boycott of Barclays Bank?
- 5• How many people were in favour of the Esso boycott?

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Ethiopia is a very poor country. It owes millions of dollars and many people there are dying of hunger. Recently the multi-national company Nestle asked Ethiopia to pay back \$6 million dollars. This made a lot of people very angry. Some shoppers decided not to buy their usual KitKat chocolate bars or Perrier mineral water, both products made by Nestle. In other words, they decided to boycott Nestle products. Boycotts have been very successful in the past. In June 1995 Greenpeace asked people to boycott Shell because Shell wanted to dump an old oil platform in the Atlantic Ocean. As a result of this boycott, sales of Shell products fell by 70% in some countries. A few days later Shell changed its decision to dump the oil platform.

During the 1980s, many people were angry about the apartheid government in South Africa. After a boycott by Britain's National Union of Students a lot of students moved their bank accounts from Barclays Bank to other banks. People were also asked not to buy South African oranges or South African wine and this boycott caused a lot of problems for the South African economy.

British comedian and activist Mark Thomas has made two television programmes about Nestle. He says that boycotts must have a clear aim and they must also be morally correct. "Each person has to feel that if they do not buy something they will make a difference", he says. "Boycotts can make companies really angry. You can

boycott all kinds of products and this can give the company a negative image."

Scott Clouder, research manager of Ethical Consumer magazine says that boycotts are not always the best solution. "Groups campaigning against sweatshops, for example, do not ask people to boycott companies like Gap or Nike. They prefer to ask the companies to improve conditions for their workers. If you boycott their products, the companies will close the factories and the workers will lose their jobs". Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth organised the Stop Esso campaign. This began because people were angry when President Bush did not sign the Kyoto Agreement. Many people thought that Esso was the most active anti-Kyoto company. Sales of Esso petrol fell by 7% in Britain as a result of the Stop Esso campaign and 47% of people said they were in favour of the boycott.

The Guardian Weekly 20-1-2003, page 21

### 3 Comprehension check

Choose the best answer

- 1• Why are people boycotting Nestle products?
  - a• Because Nestle makes chocolate bars and mineral water.
  - b• Because Nestle wants Ethiopia to pay \$6 million.
  - c• Because Nestle is a multi-national company.
- 2• Why did Greenpeace ask people to boycott Shell products?
  - a• Because boycotts have been very successful in the past.
  - b• Because sales of Shell products fell by 70% in some countries.
  - c• Because Shell wanted to dump an oil platform in the Atlantic Ocean.

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- 3• Why did the National Union of Students ask people to stop buying South African wine?
  - a• To protest against the apartheid government in South Africa.
  - b• To protest against Barclays Bank.
  - c• To help the South African economy.
  
- 4• Why is a boycott of Nike or Gap a bad idea?
  - a• Because they will improve conditions for their workers.
  - b• Because they might close their factories and the workers might lose their jobs.
  - c• Because it would be very expensive.
  
- 5• Why did the Stop Esso campaign begin?
  - a• Because people thought Esso was the most active anti-Kyoto company.
  - b• Because President Bush signed the Kyoto Agreement.
  - c• Because many people were in favor of the boycott.

### 4 Vocabulary: Word Building

Complete the table

VERB	NOUN
1• decide	_____
2• solve	_____
3• produce	_____
4• sell	_____
5• agree	_____
6• boycott	_____
7• campaign	_____
8• work	_____

### 5 Vocabulary: Opposites

Find the words in the text that are the opposites of these words

- 1• rich \_\_\_\_\_
- 2• unsuccessful \_\_\_\_\_
- 3• new \_\_\_\_\_
- 4• wrong \_\_\_\_\_
- 5• positive \_\_\_\_\_
- 6• worst \_\_\_\_\_

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### Key

#### 1 Key Vocabulary

- 1 owe
- 2 dump
- 3 sweatshop
- 4 boycott
- 5 campaign

#### 2 Find the Information

- 1 \$6 million
- 2 In June 1995
- 3 70%
- 4 During the 1980s
- 5 47%

#### 3 Comprehension Check

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

#### 4 Word Building

- 1 decision
- 2 solution
- 3 production
- 4 sale
- 5 agreement
- 6 boycott
- 7 campaign
- 8 worker

#### 5 Opposites

- 1 poor
- 2 successful
- 3 old
- 4 correct
- 5 negative
- 6 best