



UNIT

8

## Consumer Society

# Comparatives and Superlatives

1 READ the article about consumer societies. Notice the words in **bold**.

## What is a Consumer Society?

A *consumer* is a person who buys things, and a *consumer society* is a society that encourages people to buy and use goods.<sup>1</sup> Some people think that a consumer society provides people with **better** lives. People in consumer societies tend to live **more comfortably**. They eat a **wider** variety of food. They go to restaurants **more often**. They also buy a lot of products, maybe more than they need.

Products such as TVs, cell phones, and computers used to be luxuries.<sup>2</sup> Today people can buy these things **more easily than** ever before. The market for these goods is growing **faster** all the time. Consumer societies encourage people to buy **bigger** and **better** products. For example, "**smarter**" phones come out every year. In a consumer society, people are often buying **newer** and **more advanced** products. This creates a lot of waste. Nowadays, many people are thinking **more seriously** about the effects of consumer societies on the environment, and they are trying to become **more responsible** consumers.

<sup>1</sup> **goods**: items that can be bought or sold

<sup>2</sup> **luxury**: something that is expensive but not necessary

**2 CHECK.** Read each statement. Circle **T** for true and **F** for false.

- |  |          |          |
|--|----------|----------|
| 1. Everyone agrees that consumer products improve their lives. | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| 2. These days, consumer goods are hard to find.                | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| 3. Many people want luxury products these days.                | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| 4. Consumer societies help the environment.                    | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |

**3 DISCOVER.** Complete the exercises to learn about the grammar in this lesson.

**A** Find these sentences in the article from exercise 1. Write the missing words.

- They eat a \_\_\_\_\_ variety of food.
- ..., and they are trying to become \_\_\_\_\_ consumers.

**B** Look at the words you wrote in exercise A. Then circle the correct word to complete each rule.

- For **long / short** adjectives, put *more* before the adjective to form the comparative.
- For **long / short** adjectives, add *-er* to the end of the adjective to form the comparative.

\*See page A3 for more information on spelling rules for comparative adjectives.

**REAL ENGLISH**

Words such as *a little*, *a lot*, *much*, and *not much*, are often used to quantify comparative adjectives.  
*Tina is a little taller than Nick.*

**4** Complete each sentence with the correct comparative form of the adjective in parentheses. Add *than* when necessary.

- New cars are much more quiet than / quieter than (quiet) old cars.
- Do you think money is \_\_\_\_\_ (important) good health?
- This coat is \_\_\_\_\_ (nice) that one.
- My old laptop was a lot \_\_\_\_\_ (big) my new one.
- Gas is so expensive! I want a \_\_\_\_\_ (efficient) car.
- Many people think modern life is \_\_\_\_\_ (good) life in the past.
- Communication is a lot \_\_\_\_\_ (easy) it was 50 years ago.
- The pollution in my city is much \_\_\_\_\_ (bad) it used to be.
- I prefer \_\_\_\_\_ (hot) temperatures. That's why I love summer.
- My new school is a little \_\_\_\_\_ (far) my old one.

**5** Complete the sentences with the comparative form of the adverbs in parentheses + *than*.

- My new oven works a lot better than (good) my old oven. It heats up much \_\_\_\_\_ (quick) my old oven, but it also burns food \_\_\_\_\_ (often) my old one!
- Now that he's a manager, Gerry works a lot \_\_\_\_\_ (hard) he used to. He also travels \_\_\_\_\_ (frequent) he did before, and his trips last \_\_\_\_\_ (long) they used to.
- People are creating garbage \_\_\_\_\_ (rapid) they used to. They are throwing away their old things because they can buy new goods \_\_\_\_\_ (easy) before. In the past, people treated their belongings \_\_\_\_\_ (careful) they do now.

**6** Use the words in parentheses to complete each sentence. Use the comparative form of the adverb and the correct form of the verb.

- This computer works more efficiently than (work / efficiently) that computer.
- My new watch \_\_\_\_\_ (keep time / accurately) my old watch.
- My sister \_\_\_\_\_ (call / often) my brother.
- My phone \_\_\_\_\_ (ring / loudly) your phone.
- Tara \_\_\_\_\_ (shop / frequently) Lori.
- Brad \_\_\_\_\_ (type / quickly) Lynn.
- Kate \_\_\_\_\_ (sing / badly) Deb.
- Lila \_\_\_\_\_ (study / hard) Nora.

7 Circle the correct word(s) to complete each sentence.

1. My computer is more efficient **than your** / **(than yours)**.
2. The white coat is warmer **then** / **than** the gray one.
3. Ellen buys nicer clothes **than I do** / **than I am**.
4. Cars are expensive, but houses are **more expensive** / **more expensive than**.
5. Does your new stereo play music more loudly than your old one **was** / **did**?
6. Harry's motorcycle is newer than **my** / **mine**.
7. Cho's package arrived more quickly **than Kelly's did** / **than Kelly's was**.
8. Dave is 27 years old. His sister is older **than he is** / **than he does**.

8 Complete each comparison using the information in parentheses. Do not repeat the same noun.

1. Irina's car is bigger than mine (is) (my car).
2. Tom takes better photos \_\_\_\_\_ (his father).
3. Miguel's suit is more fashionable \_\_\_\_\_ (Chad's suit).
4. You finished your shopping more quickly \_\_\_\_\_ (she).
5. Jeff's kitchen is larger \_\_\_\_\_ (our kitchen).
6. This printer prints more quickly \_\_\_\_\_ (your printer).
7. My apartment is more comfortable \_\_\_\_\_ (their apartment).
8. Alison studies harder \_\_\_\_\_ (her sister).

## Online Reviews: ★ or ★★★★★?

**Professor:** So, Dennis, what changes have you seen in marketing recently?

**Dennis:** Well, as you know, customers love to post online reviews of products these days. These reviews are now just **as important as** traditional advertising. Maybe even more important. TV advertising is **as useful as** it was before, of course. On the other hand, newspaper ads<sup>1</sup> are much **less effective than** they used to be.

**Professor:** Hmm. That's interesting. . . . I've spoken to some marketing people who **aren't as positive as** you are about online reviews.

**Dennis:** Really? I'm surprised. There are certainly some concerns with online reviews. For example, satisfied customers are **less likely** to write reviews **than** people who have had a problem. This means there might be more negative reviews than positive ones. But online shoppers are wiser now. A few negative opinions are **not as harmful as** they used to be. Also, the positive reviews can be **as valuable as** ads. If a customer loves a product, he or she will endorse<sup>2</sup> it just **as enthusiastically**<sup>3</sup> as a TV ad does!

<sup>1</sup> **ad:** short for advertisement

<sup>2</sup> **endorse:** to say that you support or approve of someone or something

<sup>3</sup> **enthusiastically:** to do something in a way that shows a lot of interest and excitement

**2 CHECK.** Read each statement. Circle **T** for true or **F** for false.

- |   |          |          |
|---|----------|----------|
| 1. Dennis thinks that online reviews are not very important in marketing. | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| 2. Newspaper ads used to be more effective.                               | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| 3. Some marketing people have a negative opinion of online reviews.       | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| 4. Customers with problems are more likely to write online reviews.       | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| 5. Online shoppers won't buy a product if they see a negative review.     | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |
| 6. Positive online reviews aren't very valuable.                          | <b>T</b> | <b>F</b> |

**3 DISCOVER.** Complete the exercises to learn about the grammar in this lesson.

**A** Look at each phrase from the discussion in exercise 1 on page 213. Does the phrase mean equal or not equal? Circle the correct answer.

- |                           |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. as useful as           | <u>equal</u> / not equal |
| 2. less effective than    | equal / not equal        |
| 3. aren't as positive as  | equal / not equal        |
| 4. not as harmful as      | equal / not equal        |
| 5. as valuable as         | equal / not equal        |
| 6. as enthusiastically as | equal / not equal        |

**4** Complete each sentence with as... as and the adjective or adverb in parentheses.

- Magazine ads are as effective as (effective) newspaper ads.
- Mark plays the guitar \_\_\_\_\_ (well) Nancy does.
- Online reviews are \_\_\_\_\_ (useful) asking friends about products.
- I read online reviews \_\_\_\_\_ (carefully) he does.
- The coat was just \_\_\_\_\_ (warm) it looked.
- Your sofa is just \_\_\_\_\_ (comfortable) Diane's.
- My computer is \_\_\_\_\_ (fast) the newer models.
- He shops online \_\_\_\_\_ (frequently) I do.

**5** Use the words to make comparisons with as... as.

- Desktop computers / be / popular / laptops  
Desktop computers are as popular as laptops (are).
- Microwave ovens / work / well / regular ovens  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Motorcycles / go / fast / cars  
\_\_\_\_\_
- This hotel room / be / big / my apartment  
\_\_\_\_\_
- A smartphone / send messages / quickly / a laptop  
\_\_\_\_\_
- My mother / speak English / well / my father  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Gabi / go shopping / often / Linda  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Trains / be / comfortable / airplanes  
\_\_\_\_\_

**6** Complete the conversations with less or not as... as and the words in parentheses. Do not use not unless it is included in the parentheses. Use than and the second as only where necessary.

- 1. Anita:** The clothes in this store (1) aren't as nice as (not be / nice) they used to be. Look at this coat! It's much (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (fashionable) the coat I bought here last year.
- Jackie:** Well, that's true. It (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (not be / stylish), but it's also (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (expensive).
- 2. Chris:** Check out this new coffee machine! It looks great! Ours (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (not be / fancy) this new one.
- Mike:** Well, it's definitely fancier than ours, but it (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (not be / efficient). It (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (not make coffee / quickly), and the coffee (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (not taste / good).