

2 READING

EXAM PREPARATION

- Exercise 2: Cambridge B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading Part 4
- Exercise 4: Cambridge B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading Part 3

Have you ever swapped a game, a book or any of your possessions with a friend? ¹ D

Thousands of years ago, before money was used to trade things, bartering was popular and had many advantages. If one person had too many eggs and another had more milk than he or she needed, then it made sense for them to barter the items before they went off. *In the winter, when many communities were cut off from each other, it was also much more useful to barter goods in exchange for fresh food than for gold or silver.* ²

However, bartering only works when the things wanted and offered by two people are the same. When three or more traders are required, it becomes complicated and needs more discussion. So as transport and communication became more reliable and the use of money more common, bartering became less important and popular. ³

But in this century, bartering has returned. Many websites and apps have been set up to enable people to exchange goods, services and even their homes. *TradeMade* is a popular app in the USA. ⁴ For example, someone could offer French lessons in exchange for some concert tickets, or trade some home-made jewellery for some gardening work.

There is little doubt that the new barter economy has been made both popular and possible by social media and phone apps. But that isn't the whole story. ⁵ Increased unemployment has also led to people having less income, but more time to offer to others. But it could also be argued that bartering nowadays gives people something they have been missing: a chance to connect with one another, to share their skills and to feel a part of a community. ⁶

An article

1 ★★★ Read the article. Choose the best title.

- A A new way to trade
- B How ancient people traded
- C The return of an ancient way of trading
- D Trading on social media

2 ★★★ Read the article again and complete it with the sentences below. There is one sentence that you do not need to use.

- A *People have been using it since it launched to trade both their possessions and their skills.*
- B After all, no one can feed their family with gold through the long winter months.
- C Its popularity has been linked to the environmental movement and people's desire to consume less.
- D ~~This is called 'bartering' and it is one of the earliest forms of trading.~~
- E People have been exchanging goods for as long as they have been producing them.
- F In the 20th century, it almost entirely disappeared.
- G And that's worth more than any amount of money!





You don't need to know every word in a text to understand it. When you see a word you don't know, decide if it's necessary. Is there a question on this part of the text? If not, you can ignore it and move on.

3 ★★★ Read the *Skill UP!* and read the article again. Choose the correct answers.

1 Bartering involves ...

- A selling your own possessions.
- B exchanging something you own with something that someone else owns.
- C paying the lowest price for something.
- D buying something that your friend owns.

2 Bartering was useful ...

- A for people who lived far away from each other.
- B when you needed to save money during the winter months.
- C for people who had food that wouldn't last long and they wanted to exchange it for something else.
- D for farmers who wanted to turn their produce into gold.

3 According to the article, one of the main problems with bartering is ...

- A the difficulty with transporting the goods.
- B the limited amount of goods you can get with it.
- C the need to have three or more people involved.
- D that it becomes difficult when more than two people are involved.

4 On *TradeMade*, you can ...

- A swap your home with someone in your neighbourhood.
- B swap things with people around the world.
- C offer to help someone with something in return for something they have.
- D find people to go to concerts with.

5 Which of these things isn't mentioned as an explanation for the popularity of bartering today?

- A People don't trust buying products online.
- B People don't want to buy as many products as they used to.
- C New technology has made it easier to barter goods and services.
- D People are poorer and can't afford to buy so much.

4 ★★★ Answer the questions. Write complete sentences.

1 What type of people do you think would benefit most from the barter economy in the past?

It is likely that people who lived in rural communities and grew lots of food would benefit most from bartering.

2 Why do you think using money to buy and sell things replaced bartering?

3 How do you think technology has made it easier to barter?

4 How do you think bartering can be a social activity?

5 What could you barter with your friends, family and neighbours? What would you like to receive in return?

