

Black Friday



The day after Thanksgiving has become America's biggest shopping day. Closed all day on Thursday, shopping centres all across the nation open early on Friday. Some of them open at 12:01 Friday morning, while others open at 4 a.m. Some "sleepyhead" shopping centres, like Target this year, don't open their doors on Friday until 6 a.m. From Friday to the day before Christmas, this is the season when businesses make nearly 25 per cent of what they earn in a year. This season puts many businesses "in the black", that is, they make the money they need for the year.

Reporters from local TV stations interview people who sleep in tents in front of the shops a day or two before the doors open on Friday. These people patiently wait in queue to get products that are 50 per cent cheaper or more.

"Oh, we have fun," said one of the persons queuing. "We sometimes bring games to play, we watch TV and order lots of pizza, and we often meet interesting people. And, most important of all, we save a lot!" The problem, of course, is that only a very small number of products have big reductions in their prices. Apart from a few big discounts, each shop has other things that are reduced from 10 to 50 per cent, saving shoppers from \$10 to \$400 per item, and so Americans want to go shopping.

Not all Americans enjoy shopping. Reverend William Graham wants to change Black Friday's name. "We want to call it Remember Jesus Friday. People should start the season with the right attitude. Christmas has become a Season of Shopping. We want to make it a Season of Giving. And we don't mean giving material things. We mean giving your back, your mind, and your hands. Help an old lady clean up her house. Teach a kid how to read. Visit sick people in the hospital or in nursing homes. Give food to the Red Cross. Celebrate Christmas by remembering Jesus and forgetting Santa Claus."

Test

1. According to the text, the expression "sleepyhead" refers to shops that ...
 - a. open later than others
 - b. open early in the morning
 - c. don't open until late in the morning
2. On these days some businesses make ... for the rest of the year.
 - a. half the money
 - b. enough money
 - c. nearly all the sales

3. Which of these sentences is TRUE?
- a. Most products are reduced nearly half price
 - b. In general, most discounts in prices are quite big
 - c. Just a few selected products have large discounts
4. Reverend William Graham thinks shopping so much at this time of the year ...
- a. is not right
 - b. is the right attitude
 - c. needs a new name
5. According to the text, Black Friday is ...
- a. the Friday before Christmas
 - b. the beginning of a shopping period
 - c. an important holiday in The United States