

Reading 2: "the importance of colors"

PREVIEW READING 2

This is an article from a business magazine. The article talks about color psychology and describes how colors can affect the way people think about specific companies. Preview the article and circle the names of seven companies. What do you already know about these companies?

Read the magazine article.

The Importance of Color in Business

- 1 If you walk into a McDonald's restaurant, what colors will you see? Probably yellow and red. And when you think about McDonald's, you will think about those two bright and cheerful colors. Every year large companies spend millions of dollars on **advertising**. They want you to buy their products and use their **services**, and they want you to remember their company name. Companies use color so that you will notice them and so that you will think about them when you see their colors. One research project showed that color helps people remember company names. Colors are very important to businesses.
- 2 Blue is often used by computer companies. IBM, Microsoft and Dell all use the color blue to show that their companies are serious and **dependable**. Like the sky and the ocean, blue can be both peaceful and powerful. To show that their computers are for serious people, many companies used to make their computers black or gray. But Apple computer company decided that they wanted computers to be fun instead of serious. For that reason, they made their iMac computers in a variety

of different colors in the late 1990s. Today, their iPods come in a **variety** of colors.

- 3 BP uses green and yellow for its colors. It is the only large oil company to use green. Green is the color of nature. Yellow is the color of the sun. Both colors are bright and cheerful. BP hopes that people will think of it as a friendly company. In addition, green may make you think of the **environment**. BP wants people to think of it as a company that cares about the environment.

- 4 United Parcel Service (UPS) is a big delivery company. Its company color is brown. When UPS started in the 1920s, brown was a good color for a safe, reliable



A UPS delivery man

company. From the beginning, UPS used brown trucks and brown uniforms. In today's world,

brown may seem like a boring color choice for a company. But UPS decided to make it a positive symbol of its business. Their ads ask, "What can brown do for you?" When people see the big brown UPS trucks, the company hopes they will think of excellent, dependable service.

- 5 All over the world, companies use color to **establish** their brand¹ and to encourage people to buy their products. Companies believe that customers respond strongly to their colors. It isn't surprising that companies carefully **consider** the colors for their products and their advertising.

READING 2 | The Importance of Color in Business

VOCABULARY

Here are some words from Reading 2. Read the sentences. Circle the answer that best matches the meaning of each bold word.

1. **Advertising** in newspapers and on the radio helped the restaurant increase its business.
 - a. writing articles
 - b. telling people about products
 - c. talking to customers
2. Choosing a college is difficult. I have to carefully **consider** all my choices.
 - a. think about
 - b. be worried about
 - c. measure
3. My car is not very **dependable**. My battery died three times this month!
 - a. important
 - b. forceful
 - c. reliable
4. I'm going to **encourage** Jorge to apply for the new job at the radio station. I think it's the perfect job for him.
 - a. convince
 - b. research
 - c. command
5. Our family recycles paper and plastic to help protect the **environment**.
 - a. machines
 - b. natural world
 - c. people

6. She left her job at the advertising company and wants to **establish** her own company.
 - a. create
 - b. sell
 - c. research
7. A **service** that many hotels offer is helping with luggage.
 - a. relationship between companies
 - b. thing that a company does for you
 - c. rule that a company follows
8. These new cell phones come in a **variety** of colors. I don't know which one to choose!
 - a. large selection
 - b. small choice
 - c. very tiny group

MAIN IDEAS

Check (✓) the main idea of the article.

___ 1. Companies don't care if you remember their colors, as long as you

B. Write one or two sentences to describe each company, their colors, and the meaning of the colors. Use your answers from Activity A.

1. McDonald's: McDonald's uses red and yellow because they are bright and cheerful colors
2. UPS: _____
3. computer companies: _____
4. BP: _____