Giving presents at Christmas should be a real pleasure both for those who give and those who receive. Unfortunately, as nowadays we tend to have less and less time, Christmas shopping can become a source of stress. What can we do to avoid it? Here are some tips everybody can follow so as not to be caught in the traps laid by shop marketing specialists.

- The first thing which can help is making a list of the Christmas gifts we want to buy. If you take it with you when you go shopping, you will know exactly what you are looking for. It will make it easier to fight the impulse of buying unnecessary items.
- Plan your Christmas spendings carefully. You must know how much you are able to spend on each gift to avoid regretting what you have bought in the following year. Do not overuse your credit card – always be aware of how much money you actually have in your bank account. All debts must be paid for some day!
- Shops are always playing marketing tricks on customers. You must be aware that none of the products in any of the shops, especially in supermarkets, is placed randomly. Remember – the products that generate the biggest profits are always placed at eye level so that your attention is usually focused on them. Don’t let this technique influence your shopping – look for things YOU want to buy.
- Never try to buy everything at one time as it will probably be very tiring and discouraging. Try to combine your Christmas shopping with something that gives you real pleasure – going to the cinema or your favourite restaurant. Buying gifts with friends seems to be a good idea, too – while shopping you can also enjoy spending time together.
- To avoid crowds, feverish haste and long queues, it would also be a good idea to think about Christmas presents as early as possible. If your Christmas gifts list is ready early enough, you will also have a chance to save money as you will have time to search for some real bargains.

Task 1

Read the text quickly. Which title is the most suitable?

A. Giving Christmas presents to your family and friends
B. Be responsible and enjoy your Christmas shopping
C. Find out how much you can spend on Christmas

Task 2

Read the text again and answer the questions

1. How many pre-Christmas shopping tips are mentioned in the text?
2. Why is making a shopping list an essential part of the preparation?
3. Why should we carefully plan our shopping budget?
4. What tricks do shops usually play on customers?
5. Why shouldn’t we buy all our presents in one or two shopping trips?
6. What is the advantage of searching for bargains?
How much do you know about Christmas? Do the following quiz.

1. Every year millions of children write letters to Santa Claus. The special post code for Santa set up by Canadian postal workers is:
   a. H0H 0H0 (with zeros).
   b. HOH OHO (with a zero and capital O).
   c. HOH OHO (with capital O).

2. In the word “Xmas” the letter X refers to
   a. a cross.
   b. Christ.
   c. Christmas Day.

3. The song *Jingle Bells* was originally written
   a. for Christmas.
   b. for Thanksgiving.
   c. for Easter.

4. It is believed that Jesus was born in
   a. a meadow.
   b. a cave.
   c. a hut.

5. First artificial Christmas trees were made of dyed
   a. wood.
   b. plastic.
   c. goose feathers.

6. Contrary to popular belief, poinsettia – the popular Christmas plant is
   a. edible.
   b. non-toxic.
   c. poisonous.

7. Carols have been sung in churches since the
   a. 11th century.
   b. 12th century.
   c. 13th century.

8. The ringing of church bells on Christmas Day morning symbolises the
   a. warm hearts of people.
   b. birth of Jesus Christ.
   c. number of Christmas gifts.

9. The first Christmas cards were produced in
   a. 1843.
   b. 1918.
   c. 1786.

10. The famous red-nosed reindeer, Rudolph was
    a. a real animal.
    b. created in 1939.
    c. the oldest of all reindeer.

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**Task 4**

**Project:**
Make a survey – ask your schoolmates about their Christmas presents preferences. Make a poster presenting the results of a survey and discuss them with your class.
Teacher’s notes

Copy an appropriate number of worksheets for your students.

Warm up

Ask your students what they know about Christmas in the UK and the USA. While brainstorming write down the key vocabulary on the board. Then encourage them to find differences between Polish and British / American Christmas.

Task 1

Students follow the instruction for task 1.

Key: Answer B

Task 2

Pair work. Ask your students to read the questions given in the task and give them time to find the answers. Check the answers – ensure that the students refer to the correct section of the text when giving their answers.

Task 3

Competition: divide your students into groups of 3–4 people and ask them to do the quiz. The group with the largest number of correct answers are the winners.

Key:

1 A 2 B 3 B 4 B 5 C 6 B 7 C 8 B 9 A 10 B

Homework: Task 4

Project work.