

READING

# Sharing economies

**LEVEL**

Upper-Intermediate  
(B2)

**NUMBER**

EN\_B2\_2121R

**LANGUAGE**

English



## Learning outcomes

- I can read and understand the main points of a text about sharing economies.
- I can discuss and express my opinion on sharing economies and support my views.





## Warm-up

**Have you ever asked a neighbour if you could borrow something?**

**Share your answer with the rest of the class!**





# Matching

**Match** the words and phrases to their definition. *You will come across them in the text!*

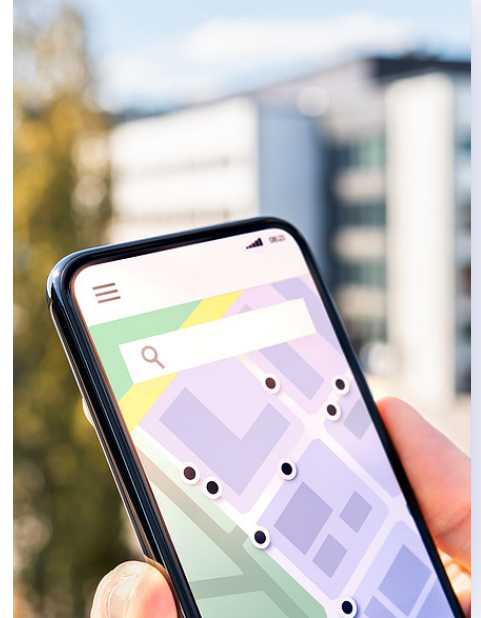
- |   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| 1 | <b>close-knit<br/>(community/family)</b> | a | to make something possible                                   |
| 2 | <b>to enable</b>                         | b | two or more people working together to achieve the same goal |
| 3 | <b>to alleviate</b>                      | c | to force a rule, tax, or punishment to be obeyed             |
| 4 | <b>collaboration</b>                     | d | to make something that is bad less severe                    |
| 5 | <b>to abide by something</b>             | e | groups of people in which everyone helps each other          |
| 6 | <b>to impose</b>                         | f | to accept or follow a rule, decision, or agreement           |

# Sharing economies (1/4)

1. **Read** the first part of the text.
2. Then **answer** the questions below.

Have you ever participated in the sharing economy? If you've ever asked your neighbour if you can borrow some milk or sugar to make your morning coffee, then the answer is yes. When you live in a close-knit community, sharing resources is often a part of the way of life. In rural communities, sharing may extend to collective ownership of farm equipment or even buildings, which enables the community to pool its resources for the profit of everyone's business.

But nowadays, the term sharing economy has acquired a different meaning. It no longer just refers to the physical act of sharing resources, but to the sharing of resources through online networks. The internet has enabled a greater number of people to communicate across distances and even borders.



1. Are there any online networks in your country that allow people to share resources?
2. How do these online networks work?





Sharing enables the community **to pool** its resources together.

If a community **pools** its resources together, it collects something together—such as money or equipment—for shared use.

Have you ever **pooled** something together with someone?

# Sharing economies (2/4)

**Read** the second part of the text.

Many cities are trying to alleviate inner-city pollution by reducing the number of cars on the roads. As cities grow, individual car parking spaces are becoming more difficult to find. Rather than having to travel to a car hire company, car sharing services enable locals to rent out their own car to people in the area. Additionally, companies can rent out cars that have council approval to be parked in local streets.

Online sharing programmes don't just stop with cars; many cities have also started bike sharing services in the hope that by providing easy-to-access bicycles, individual car use will be reduced. This will also make cities more enjoyable for tourists who need flexible transport options, allowing them to fully experience the city.





# Summarise

**Complete** the sentences below by summarising what you've read in the text.

1 Bike sharing services in cities help...

2 The term sharing economy no longer just refers to the physical act of sharing, but...

3 Many cities are trying to reduce the number of cars on the roads by...







# Prediction

In breakout rooms or together as a class, **answer** the questions below.

**What do you think are some benefits of sharing platforms?**



**How might sharing platforms encourage collaboration?**

# Sharing economies (3/4)

1. **Read** the text.
2. Then **answer** the question below.

Sharing platforms mean that underused property can be used more frequently. For example, empty apartments can be shared for the short-term profit of their owners. Secondly, services can be offered at a lower price, meaning more people can use them. In this way, the sharing economy provides people with cheaper, but no less valuable, experiences whilst also supporting economic growth at the local level.

Another benefit is that sharing platforms encourage collaboration and real sharing, which can lead to new ideas and projects. The start-up scene, for example, often takes place in shared offices, where people with different skills and experiences have the opportunity to meet each other, collaborate, and exchange ideas.



1. How collaborative is your workplace?



# Prediction

**Answer** the question below.

**What might be some potential problems of sharing platforms?**

**Share your ideas with the rest of the class!**



# Sharing economies (4/4)

**Read** the final part of the text.

Critics argue that whilst sharing platforms increase economic activity, they don't necessarily improve the conditions of workers in the economy. Sharing platforms also expose consumers to a greater amount of risk if the sharing platforms don't abide by local laws. Take the sharing of local cars. Critics argue that such services may have a negative impact on taxi drivers and hire car businesses, which rely on their jobs to make a living. If sharing platforms are able to offer car rides at a cheaper cost because they have less taxes to pay, does this mean they are putting taxi drivers out of work? And what happens if the shared car breaks down or has an accident? Will the sharer be appropriately insured?

Critics of shared house rentals argue that by allowing individual people to turn their flats into small hotels, they are reducing the amount of affordable flats available to rent by local people. Many cities have started to impose tighter restrictions on sharing platforms to protect local communities, but there is still a lot of uncertainty about what the future of online sharing platforms will look like.





# Categorise

Based on what you've read in the text, **categorise** the statements into one of the two pink boxes.

- 1 Exposes consumers to a greater amount of risk.
- 2 Underused property can be used more often.
- 3 Might put taxi drivers out of work.
- 4 Reduces the number of affordable flats for locals to rent.
- 5 Encourages collaboration.
- 6 Supports economic growth at the local level.

**benefits of using sharing platforms**

**potential problems of using sharing platforms**





## Discuss

Answer the questions below.

**What's your opinion on sharing economies?**

**What do you regularly share with other people?**

**Do you think sharing economies are more popular in certain countries than in others?**

**How does sharing play a role in urban waste?**



# End of the lesson

Idiom

***to burn a hole in (one's) pocket***

**Meaning:** very eager to spend money

**Example:** My work bonus is burning a hole in my pocket. I can't wait to buy something!



# Additional practice



# Sharing economies

1. **Read** the text.
2. Then **answer** the questions below.

Critics of sharing economies argue that there is essentially nothing new about the sharing economy, except that it uses the internet to gain business, which leads to lower running costs. Some economists even go so far as to say that the name sharing economy is misleading. If you are paying for a service, they argue, you are not participating in a sharing platform.

Rather, marketing techniques are being used to make a product appealing and personalised. The internet has definitely made doing business more efficient and online sharing platforms provide opportunities to see efficiency continue to grow. However, some people say that online platforms can be just as inefficient as face-to-face transactions when there are problems.

1. Why do some economists say that the name 'sharing economy' is misleading?
2. What are some ways online platforms can be as inefficient as face-to-face transactions?



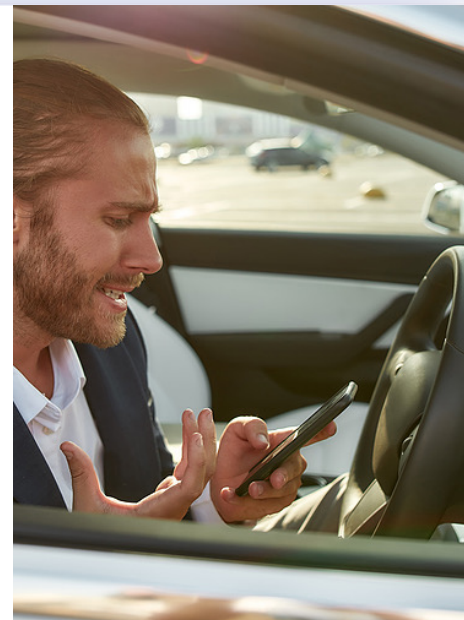




# Sharing economies

1. **Read** the text.
2. Then **answer** the questions below.

Supporters of sharing platforms argue that there aren't any disadvantages because, in the longer term, sharing platforms just increase the possibilities for economic activity. On the customer side, they argue that consumers demand flexibility and choice and that sharing platforms diversify the opportunities available to them. If you can rent a Ferrari from your neighbour for a day and avoid the cost of buying one for yourself, why wouldn't you? If you can save rent on an apartment by giving up your parking space to a shared community car, what is there to lose?



Why do supporters of sharing platforms argue that there aren't any disadvantages?

Do you agree more with the critics or the supporters of sharing platforms?

Do you use sharing platforms?  
Why or why not?



# Discuss

**Answer** the questions below.

**Do you think the sharing economy could rival the traditional economy in the future?**



**Can you think of any other examples of sharing economies not mentioned in the text?**



# Answer key

**P.4:** 1.) e 2.) a 3.) d 4.) b 5.) f 6.) c

**P.13:**

*benefits of using sharing platforms: 2, 5, 6*

*potential problems of using sharing platforms: 1, 3, 4*



# Summary

## Sharing economies

- *close-knit; to enable' to alleviate; collaboration; to abide by something; to impose; to pool*
- *When you live in a **close-knit** community, sharing resources is often a part of the way of life.*
- *The community can **pool** its resources for the profit of everyone's business.*



# Vocabulary

close-knit

to enable

to alleviate

collaboration

to abide by something

to impose

to pool





## Notes

