

PRUEBA/PROVA: BRAND FANS

EXAM and ANSWERS including SMART TIPS

BRAND FANS

One look at the logo on your T-shirt and people know that you 'just do it'. The three stripes on your trainers tell everyone that 'impossible is nothing' for you. But those signs send another message to the world: you're a brand fan.

In the past, advertising focused on product quality, but advertisers discovered that people don't discuss what their sports gear is made of. They talk about Nadal's victories and Ronaldo's goals: in other words, experiences. As a result, some companies stopped making products and started creating experiences.

Today, factories in the developing world make the products, while the companies make sure that consumers associate their brands with success. This involves using marketing techniques that appeal to their biggest customers: teenagers.

Today's teenagers are relatively wealthy and, consequently, companies work hard to attract their custom through the internet and by sponsoring special events. There are Facebook pages to visit, and events such as pop concerts that provide the 'lifestyle experiences' the company wants customers to associate their brand with. In fact, companies want teenagers to see their brands as celebrities, not as products.

But a celebrity image can have negative consequences for a brand. News about brands, good or bad, is now celebrity news, not business news. When some companies were discovered using workers in sweatshops, it was headline news. As a result, if companies want people to love their brands, they will have to behave ethically. Otherwise, their fans might stop feeling proud of wearing their logos and take their custom elsewhere.

1. Read the text. Indicate whether the following statements are TRUE or FALSE and write down which part of the text justifies your answer. [2 POINTS]

- a) Companies used to talk about sporting achievements in their advertisements.
False. Suggested answer: Companies used advertisements to say how good the materials were in their products.
- b) Companies create advertising that they hope teenagers will like.
True. Suggested answer: Companies try and sell a lifestyle experience and use the social media channels that teenagers use.
- c) News about brands has less impact these days.
False. Suggested answer: News about brands is now celebrity not business news, so it appears on the front page.
- d) Brand loyalty depends less on the quality of the product than it used to.
True. Suggested answer: Years ago the success of a product was due to the quality of the product but nowadays this has changed and the focus is on the lifestyle rather than the quality.

2. Answer the following questions in your own words according to the text. [2 POINTS]

a) What do the logos you wear clearly tell people?

Suggested answer: They tell everyone that you like buying branded products.

b) What did advertisers discover about people's conversations?

Suggested answer: Advertisers found out that people prefer to talk about sport and popular entertainment rather than what their trainers are made of.

SMART TIP: using linkers and time expressions

You may need to include several ideas in your answer. Try to organize your ideas with linkers, such as *because* or *so that*, or time expressions, such as *before* or *after*. Read your answer carefully afterwards to make sure it has the correct grammar, spelling and punctuation.

3. Find words or phrases in the text that correspond to the words and definitions given.

[1,5 POINTS]

a) equipment (paragraph 2) *gear*

b) make a connection between two things in your mind (paragraph 3) *associate (their brand) with (success)*

c) as a result (paragraph 4) *consequently*

d) a place where people work for low wages in poor conditions (paragraph 5) *sweatshop*

e) in a moral or correct way according to your beliefs and principles (paragraph 5) *ethically*

4. Choose the correct option, a, b, c or d for each question and COPY the sentence onto your answer sheet. [1,5 POINTS]

1. Factories in the developing world ...

a) create advertising for brands.

b) make products for companies.

c) have stopped making products for companies.

d) make marketing messages for companies.

2. Companies organize pop concerts so that teenagers ...

a) will associate their brands with cool activities.

b) will spend a lot of money on products available at these events.

c) can meet celebrities.

d) can meet other teenagers.

3. Today, news about brands ...

a) is found in the business section of newspapers.

b) always increases sales.

c) could produce a negative reaction from a brand's customers.

d) is always positive.

5. Write 120–150 words on the following topic. [3 POINTS]

Shopping at shopping centres is fun. Discuss.

Suggested answer:

For most families, shopping for necessities is a daily routine. However, shopping centres do their best to make shopping entertaining.

People often visit shopping centres to buy non-essential goods. This is the kind of shopping people enjoy. Furthermore, there are restaurants and cinemas so a trip to a shopping centre can become a day out.

Unfortunately, these facilities attract enormous crowds. Moreover, you find the same shops in every centre and it's impossible to find anything original.

In my opinion, shopping centres are great if you like buying from well-known chain stores, eating fast food and watching blockbuster films. However, if you want something different, you'd better stay away!

SMART TIP: using paragraphs

You will receive points for the way you organize your writing, as well as for the accuracy of your work. Each time you talk about a new subject, use a new paragraph. The model essay above is organized as follows:

paragraph 1) introduction

paragraph 2) first main argument (shopping at a shopping centre can be a fun day out)

paragraph 3) second main topic (large crowds and lack of originality)

paragraph 4) conclusion, summarizing the writer's opinion.