



Just as there must be a balance in what a community produces, so there must also be balance in what the community consumes.



John Kenneth Galbraith

Overview

It is more apparent today than ever before that we are a consumer driven society. We are all consumers, and the economy offers us the latest trends, fashions, innovations and services.

Our personal values and attitudes are reflected in the choices we make. Unwise choices can have costly consequences. Before buying, smart consumers comparative shop. This allows a person to carefully consider price, features, quality, warranties, and store policies. Whether you shop on-line or at your local shopping mall, new technology can help you find the best deals. At the same time consumers must be cautious of scams, and frauds. Some businesses or individuals try to mislead consumers and trick them into buying inferior goods or services, simply to make money and maximize their profits. Government agencies and law enforcement bodies have advice on how to avoid such consumer scams, where to report them, and how to effectively handle consumer complaints.

Goal

Combine decision making methods with comparative shopping techniques, recognize common consumer scams, and provide the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively handle consumer complaints.

Time Frame

Four 75-minute periods

Lesson 04.02.01

Deciding to buy

Lesson 04.02.02

Practice comparative shopping

Lesson 04.02.03

Alternative buying methods

Lesson 04.02.04

Consumer scams, frauds and cons

End-of-unit quiz and answer sheet

Each lesson includes black-line print masters for overheads and activities.



Lesson 01
Deciding to buy

.01

Overview

“If you only spend money on the things you really need, you will always have money for the things you really want.” Wise consumer buying starts with a plan. Using a systematic purchasing strategy will provide students with an ability to make more effective purchases.

Goal

Analyze how needs, wants, and values affect what students decide to buy.

Objectives

Identify questions to ask before deciding to buy.
Identify key factors that influence what consumers buy.

Timeline

Classroom discussion	15 minutes
Activity A	30 minutes
Class discussion	15 minutes
Supplemental activity 1	15 minutes

(complete for homework)

Teacher Notes

Preparation of required materials, prior to lesson (overheads and activity).

Required Materials

Activity A, Why I make the choices I do
Overhead A, Deciding to buy
Overhead B, The real cost of a garment

Instructions

Classroom discussion

Before showing Overhead A, Deciding to buy, discuss with students what goes through their mind before they decide to spend their money. After they have decided to spend money on an item, how do they decide which one to buy of the competing products? How do they decide which store? Now show Overhead A and see how many of the students' ideas are on the overhead.

Show Overhead B, The real cost of a garment. Discuss "life-cycle cost," "cost/wear." Discuss the real cost of a garment.

Student Activity

Have students bring in pictures of four purchases that reflect different values, activities, or interests in their lives, and complete Activity A, Why I make the choices I do. When students have completed the activity have students share their answers in groups of three. Now, as a class discuss how personal values and attitudes influence clothing choices and how values are reflected in these choices. Discuss how personal values and attitudes affect other purchasing decisions such as buying cell phones or cars, and dining out.

Value—"what something is worth in terms of its usefulness or importance." Values are based on what you believe is important in life. Values differ from person to person. Discuss the need for cell phones, brand-name clothes, video games, cosmetics, health club memberships, golf clubs, sports equipment, etc. (e.g., want to look successful, want to get noticed, want to be popular, "chick magnet," sex appeal,

necessity in today's marketplace, helps me relax, helps me stay healthy, etc.). Discuss with students the "opportunity cost" of spending money rather than saving the money (loss of bank interest). Discuss with the students the cost of the item in terms of hours worked.

Have students complete Activity A.

Note taking

Hand out Overhead A.

Assessment and Evaluation

Students hand in Activity A for marking.

Supplemental Activity 1

Using *Consumer Reports* magazine from the school library, have students investigate an item they are considering buying. Prepare a brief outline of price, features, repair history, test results, *CR* "Best Buy," and things to consider before buying.

Supplemental Activity 2

Using the CD-ROM, Choices & Decisions select: MMI to become an agent at MMI and help your client achieve financial success.

Additional Web Resources

Consumers' Association of Canada
www.consumer.ca

Canada.com
www.canada.com/shopping



activity A

Why I make the choices I do

04.02.01

name: _____ date: _____

Purchasing decisions are made for many reasons. When deciding what to buy, you may be influenced by

- Your personal interests
- Your activities
- Your values (what something is worth in terms of its usefulness or importance) Values are based on what you believe is important in life. Values differ from person to person.
- Advertising

You may also want to send a message to other people. Think about these things as you complete the following exercise.

Directions

Cut out pictures of four outfits or other purchases that reflect different values, activities, or interests in your life. They should all be something you would enjoy owning. Label each picture: A, B, C, or D. In the spaces below, explain why you would choose each item, and the personal values each choice reflects. (e.g., want to look successful, want to get noticed, want to be popular, “chick magnet,” sex appeal, status, group identity, peer pressure, necessity in today’s marketplace, helps me relax, helps me stay healthy, etc.).

Staple the pictures to this page.

I would choose this item because...

A _____

B _____

C _____

D _____



overhead A

Overhead A
Deciding to buy

04.02.01

Deciding to spend your money

- **Do I really need this item?**
- **Is it worth the time I spend making the money to pay for it?**
- **Is there a better use for my money right now?**

Deciding on the type of item

- **What level of quality do I want (low, medium, or high)?**
- **What level of quality do I need (low, medium, or high)?**
- **How much can I afford?**
- **Should I wait until there is a sale on the item I want?**
- **Should I choose an item with a well-known name, even if it costs more?**
- **Do I know anyone who already owns this type of item?**
- **Is there a warranty and/or service contract on the item? If so, is it comparable to warranties and service contracts on similar items?**
- **What do consumer magazines say about the type of item I am thinking about buying?**



Overhead B

The real cost of a garment

04.02.01

An example

	Linen	Cotton/Poly	Silk
A. Initial Cost	\$110	\$85	\$170
B. Care	\$5.00/cleaning x 7 times=\$35 Iron each time	\$.30/wash x 22 times = \$6.60	\$6.00/cleaning x 6 times = \$36.00
C. Life Cycle Cost Cost (A+B)	\$110 +\$35 <hr/> \$145	\$85.00 +6.60 <hr/> \$91.60	\$170 +\$36 <hr/> \$206
D. When Worn	Spring and Summer	All year	Dressy/ Day/Evening
E. Times Worn/Year	36	108	18
F. Cost/Wear (C/E)	\$145/36= \$4.03	\$91.60/108= \$.85	\$206/18= \$11.44



Lesson 02
Practice comparative shopping

.02

Overview

The use of comparative shopping allows a person to carefully consider price, features, quality, warranties, and store policies. Before buying anything, smart consumers shop around and check out a number of sources. You can find almost every available product at more than one store. Comparison shopping doesn't always mean paying the lowest price. It means selecting the least expensive product that best suits your needs, wants, values, and attitude.

Goal

To encourage the use of comparative shopping in making effective purchasing decisions.

Objective

To have students do a comparative online-shopping analysis.

Timeline

Classroom discussion	10 minutes
Activity A	65 minutes

Instructions

Classroom discussion

Ask students if they have ever comparative shopped before buying an item. When, for what product, where, why? Did they feel it was worthwhile? Did they get a better deal, (e.g., price, quality, special features, service, warranty, discounts,)?

Student Activity

In groups of two, have students do a comparative-shopping analysis on-line for any two items of their choice. Select an item that could be bought from a variety of sources on-line. Obtain information to compare buying the items at three on-line sources. Use the chart provided in Activity A, Comparative shopping chart as an example to customize your own chart depending on the item chosen. Fill in a chart in point form for the three on-line sources for each item. Now write a report in complete sentences and paragraphs explaining your recommendation as to which Web site to purchase the item from. Your report will describe the item, which Web site you recommend, and why. Explain the reasons for your recommendation in detail. Also in the report compare the cost to benefits of the item and evaluate and prioritize the factors used to make the purchasing decision (this would include things listed on their comparative-shopping chart, as well as factors such as what need it fills, cost in terms of hours worked, values the item reflects.

Teacher Notes

Preparation of required materials, prior to lesson.

Required Materials

Activity A, Comparative shopping chart.

Assessment and Evaluation

Students hand in Activity A for summative evaluation.

Supplemental Activities

Have students report to the class their recommendation on one of the items researched. To enhance their presentation they could research on-line testimonials (user reviews) for the item and *Consumer Reports* test results.



activity A

Activity A

Comparative shopping chart

04.02.02

name: _____ date: _____

Directions

Customize this chart and use it when you go comparative shopping on-line

Item: _____

	On-line source 1	On-line source 2	On-line source 3
Store			
Brand name			
Price			
Your budget limit			
Basic features			
Special features			
Warranty			
Store return policy			
Refund policy			
Exchange policy			
Other (service, shipping charges, selection)			



Lesson 03
Alternative buying methods

.03

Overview

Bargains, sales, discounts, coupons, user reviews. . . whether you shop on-line or at your local shopping mall, new technology can help you find the best deals. This lesson covers a variety of buying methods, such as buying clubs, shopping by phone, shopping on the Internet, and shopping with your cell phone. Also we will look at what is called the, “cooling-off period”, if you buy an item that is not from the seller’s regular place of business, like buying from a door-to-door salesperson.

Goals

To introduce students to alternative buying methods made available through new technology.

To explain to students what they can do if they change their mind after purchasing an item from a door-to-door salesperson.

Objectives

Identify alternative buying plans.

Explain the “cooling-off period” rule.

Timeline

Classroom discussion (overheads A, B and C)	20 minutes
Activity A	15 minutes
Supplemental activity	40 minutes
(complete for homework)	

Instructions

Classroom discussion

Using Overhead A, Buying clubs and Overhead B, Shopping by phone, or on-line, discuss alternative buying methods. Ask students to share with the class experiences (good or bad) that they or someone they know has had with shopping by phone, or on-line, or from a door-to-door salesperson.

Using Overhead C, The cooling-off period discuss what is called the “cooling-off period,” if you buy an item in your home or at a location that is not the seller’s regular place of business. Discuss why the rule exists.

Note taking

Handout overheads A, B, and C

Activity

Have students complete Activity A, Solving consumer problems. Students decide what actions to take for these consumer concerns. Take-up and discuss in class emphasizing a step-by-step approach to solving the problem.

Teacher Notes

Preparation of required materials, prior to lesson (overheads and activity).

Required Materials

Overhead A, Buying clubs

Overhead B, Shopping by phone, or on-line

Overhead C, The cooling-off period

Activity A, Solving consumer problems

(and answer sheet)

Assessment and Evaluation

Activity A and notebook check.

Students hand in their supplemental activity, slideshow or report for summative evaluation.

Supplemental Activities

Using the Internet, research and prepare a slideshow or write a brief report on how you can use your cell phone to shop, research an item and comparison shop.

or

Using the Internet, research and prepare a slideshow or write a report on the advantages and disadvantages of shopping on-line.



activity A

Activity A

Solving consumer problems

04.02.03

name: _____

date: _____

Directions

For each of the following situations, put an X next to the action you would suggest to resolve these consumer concerns, and in your notebook give reasons for your responses.

1. **Keno has taken in his new car for similar repairs several times in a row since buying his car ten months ago.**
 - Return to store
 - Contact company
 - Contact consumer or government agency
 - Take legal action

2. **Ariana was injured and needed medical assistance when using a fan she recently purchased.**
 - Return to store
 - Contact consumer or government agency
 - Contact company
 - Take legal action

3. **Ellis keeps getting phone calls offering him investment opportunities after telling the company to no longer call him.**
 - Return to store
 - Contact company
 - Contact consumer or government agency
 - Take legal action

4. **Olaf was charged the wrong price for several items at a local discount store.**
 - Return to store
 - Contact company
 - Contact consumer or government agency
 - Take legal action

5. **Tannis received a late payment notice for a credit account that she had paid off several months ago.**
 - Return to store
 - Contact company
 - Contact consumer or government agency
 - Take legal action



activity A

Activity A

Solving consumer problems (answers)

04.02.03

Directions

For each of the following situations, put an X next to the action you would suggest to resolve these consumer concerns, and in your notebook give reasons for your responses.

- 1. Keno has taken in his new car for similar repairs several times in a row since buying his car ten months ago.**

 - Return to store
 - Contact company
 - Contact consumer or government agency
 - Take legal action
- 2. Ariana was injured and needed medical assistance when using a fan she recently purchased.**

 - Return to store
 - Contact consumer or government agency
 - Contact company
 - Take legal action
- 3. Ellis keeps getting phone calls offering him investment opportunities after telling the company to no longer call him.**

 - Return to store
 - Contact company
 - Contact consumer or government agency
 - Take legal action
- 4. Olaf was charged the wrong price for several items at a local discount store.**

 - Return to store
 - Contact company
 - Contact consumer or government agency
 - Take legal action
- 5. Tannis received a late payment notice for a credit account that she had paid off several months ago.**

 - Return to store
 - Contact company
 - Contact consumer or government agency
 - Take legal action



overhead A

Overhead A Buying clubs

04.02.03

Buying clubs don't always save you money

- Some require that you pay a large initiation fee. For example, a \$300 membership fee for a club that gives you a 10% discount on purchases means you have to spend \$3,000 to save enough to cover the cost of your membership fee.
- May need to make a large number of purchases before you begin to save money.
- May have to make purchases in larger quantities than you really need.
- Often can get goods for same price through discount stores and on-line stores (which don't require an initiation fee).
- Sometimes you can split the membership fee with a friend.
- Don't expect help when you shop.
- Not a lot of choice.

How to know whether you're getting a deal

- Comparison shop
- Check out the return policy

Watch out for

- Clubs that won't show their prices, catalogue, or showroom until after you join.
- Clubs that use high-pressure sales techniques.
- Often you will spend more than you intended, stick to a prepared list.

Advantages

- Lower prices
- Generous return policy
- Offer wide range of services (vision centers, roadside assist, cell phone plans, vacation packages, etc.)
- Low prices do not mean low quality goods; brand-name and designer items are often available
- Merchandise is constantly changing
- Sometimes features models not sold elsewhere



overhead B

Overhead B
Shopping by phone, or on-line

04.02.03

The Consumer Reporting Act

- Sets up a procedure for the quick correction of mistakes that appear on consumer credit accounts.
- Applies to any item bought and paid for with a credit card (including items bought by phone or on-line).

Precautions

- Investigate the reputation of the company.
- Ask about the company's refund and return policies.
- Ask about the availability of the product.
- Know the total cost of your order.
- When ordering by phone, send the payment in by mail.

When shopping on-line

- Use a secure browser.
- Shop with companies that you know.
- Keep your password private.
- Pay by credit card and keep a record of your transactions.
- Picking up our purchase at the local store can save a bundle on shipping fees.
- Watch for coupons and discounts on-line.
- Internet is a great place to comparison shop.

Cell phone

Your cell phone can be used to do a quick price check. Say you're in a store looking at a laptop and the salesperson is offering what sounds like a great deal. You could step outside, punch up a shopping-comparison site on your cell phone, and check to see if you can get the laptop cheaper somewhere else.

You can shop on-line with a Web-enabled cell phone and you can have text messages about sales sent to your cell phone.



overhead C

Overhead C

The cooling-off period

04.02.03

What it is

- If you buy an item in your home or at a location that is not the seller's regular place of business, you have two to ten business days (varies from province to province) to cancel purchases of \$50 or more.
- Seller must inform you of your cancellation rights at the time of sale.
- Only a letter is considered a legal request for cancellation. The letter must be personally delivered or sent by registered mail.

Some exceptions include

- Sales under \$50
- Sales made entirely by mail or telephone
- Sales made as a result of prior negotiation at seller's permanent place of business
- Emergency home repairs when you waive your right to cancel
- Real estate, insurance, or securities
- Automobiles, vans, trucks, or other motor vehicles sold at temporary locations, provided the seller has at least one permanent place of business.
- Arts or crafts sold at fairs or locations such as shopping malls, community centres, and schools.



Lesson 04
Consumer scams, frauds, and cons

.04

Overview

Frauds, scams, and cons are deceptions made for personal gain or to damage another individual. Defrauding people of money is the most common type of scam or fraud. Some businesses or individuals try to mislead consumers and trick them into buying inferior products or services simply to make money or maximize their profits. The Competition Act 2002 bans the types of fraud and deceptive business practices we will look at in this lesson. We will identify the lack of ethics and character behind this kind of behaviour. We will also look at how to solve your consumer complaints and handle your consumer problems.

Goals

To help students recognize common consumer scams and provide the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively handle consumer complaints.

To help students understand that ethical behaviour is based on values such as respect, honesty, compassion, empathy, and integrity.

Objectives

Identify various consumer scams, describe how they work, and explain what you can do if you find yourself caught in one.

Discuss the importance of cultivating strong character.

Understand how to handle a consumer complaint effectively.

Timeline

Classroom discussion (overheads A, B, C, D, E)	30 minutes
Classroom discussion (overheads F and G)	10 minutes
Classroom discussion (Overhead H)	10 minutes
Activity	15 minutes
Quiz	10 minutes

Instructions

Classroom discussion

Ask students to relate to the class any consumer scams or frauds they are aware of or have experienced.

Using overheads A, B, C, D, and E, discuss how consumers can be targets for various consumer scams and frauds.

Classroom discussion

Discuss with the students the lack of character of individuals who would take part in such scams and frauds often against the young, the elderly, and the poor. Define values and morals for the students. Take the opportunity to cultivate character with your class by discussing fairness, honesty, empathy, respect, courage, integrity, optimism, compassion, perseverance, and responsibility. See Overhead H, It's all about cultivating character and discuss what character traits the scammers are lacking. Go over with the students what each character trait means with examples. Can the students give you examples of people they know or people in history who have demonstrated the character traits? Ask the students if they think the new, National Do Not Call List will help to prevent fraud.

Classroom discussion

The teacher and students can share with each other how they have handled their consumer complaints. Some students who work part-time can share complaints they have dealt with while working in business and how the complaint was resolved. Now show Overhead F, How to handle a consumer problem and compare.

Using Overhead G, How to write a complaint letter discuss the do's and don't of writing a letter of complaint.

Activity

Go to www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/oca-bc.nsf/eng/ca01962.html and take the fraud quiz. How did you do? Check

out your "areas of high risk" and "areas of strength." Pair and share the results with your classmates.

Note taking

Hand out overheads.

Quiz

Have students complete the Consumer awareness quiz.

Teacher Notes

Preparation of required materials, prior to lesson (overheads and quiz).

Required Materials

Overhead A, Telemarketing fraud)

Overhead B, Common [and not-so-common] frauds

Overhead C, "900" numbers

Overhead D, Contest cons

Overhead E, Work-at-home schemes

Overhead F, How to handle a consumer problem

Overhead G, How to write a complaint letter

Overhead H, It's all about cultivating character

Quiz, Consumer awareness (and answer sheet)

Assessment and Evaluation

Quiz can be used as a formative evaluation.

Supplemental Activities

Have students go to the RCMP Web site below and read the scam scenarios in "Personal Information & Scam Protection: A Student Guide." Print a list of the titles of the scenarios and have students choose one to explain to the class. Scenarios are on the last page of the student guide (e.g., Phishing, Dumpster diving, Eavesdropping, Personal space intrusion, etc.).

Have students go to the, National Do Not Call List at www.innate-dncl.gc.ca/index-eng and answer the question, What is the national do not call list? Go to the "frequently asked questions" and find the answers to: Why was the National DNCL created? Will I be protected from telephone fraud if I register my telephone number on the National DNCL? If I register my telephone number on the National DNCL, will it stop all telemarketing calls? What can I do to reduce telemarketing calls that are exempt from the National DNCL Rules?

Additional Web Resources

Industry Canada (Government of Canada)

www.ic.gc.ca

Consumers' Association of Canada

www.consumer.ca

RCMP

www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/scams-fraudes/student-etudiant-guide-eng.htm

To report a fraud online.

www.recol.ca/intro.aspx?lang=en

Phonebusters (the Canadian Anti-Fraud Call Centre)

www.phonebusters.com

National Do Not Call List

www.innate-dncl.gc.ca/index-eng



overhead A

Overhead A Telemarketing fraud

04.02.04

Warning signs

- High-pressure sales techniques
- Insistence on an immediate action
- Offers that sound too good to be true
- A request for your credit card number for any purpose other than to make a purchase
- An offer to get your money quickly (i.e., pay for overnight mail, send someone to your home or office to pick it up)
- A statement that a product or service is free, followed by a request that you pay for something
- Claims of an investment that is “without risk”
- Inability or refusal to provide written information or references about the company, product, service, or investment
- Suggestions that you should make purchase or investment based on “trust”

How to avoid being a victim

- Don't be pushed into a decision.
- Request written information about organization and product or investment.
- Don't buy anything on terms you don't fully understand.
- Request the name of the government agency by/with whom the firm is regulated or registered.
- Investigate the company or organization.
- Find out about refund, return, and cancellation policies.
- Don't believe testimonials you can't verify.
- Don't provide any personal financial information.
- Don't be shy about hanging up.



Overhead B

Common (and not-so-common) frauds

04.02.04

Foreign scams

May involve a letter, e-mail, or phone call about a foreign investment that it is “too good to be true.”

Telemarketing scams

Commonly include sweepstakes, prize offers, travel packages, investments, charities, work-at-home schemes, magazine sales, lotteries, and business opportunities.

Advance-fee loans

Fraudulent loan brokers misrepresent the availability of credit with a guarantee to get you credit—but you must pay before you apply.

Credit repair

An appeal to clean up the credit report of consumers with poor credit histories.

Automatic debit scams

Fraudulent telemarketers use this technique to improperly take money from a chequing account. **DO NOT** give out chequing account information over the phone unless you are familiar with the company.

Fraudulent diets

Canadians spend millions of dollars a year on fraudulent diet products such as “The Amazing Skin Patch Melts Away Body Fat” or “Lose Weight While You Sleep.”

Magazine subscriptions scams

Beware of telephone sales pitches for “free,” “prepaid,” or “special” magazine subscription offers.

Toll-free scams

Calls to 800, 888, and 877 numbers are almost always free. However, there are some exceptions. Be careful.

International phone scams

scam artists confuse callers by promoting calls to “809” numbers; while these telephone numbers may look like domestic calls, international rates apply.

Prepaid phone card scams

Selling prepaid calling cards may involve a multilevel marketing scam with a large up-front fee.

On-line and high-tech scams

Common Internet scams are pyramid schemes, Internet-related services, equipment sales, business opportunities, and work-at-home offers.



overhead C

Overhead C
“900” numbers

04.02.04

What they are

- A kind of telemarketing pitch, with a flat per-minute fee

What to watch for

- Failure to disclose any cost upfront, or at later times
- Enticements to call for bogus products or services
- Product or service pitches aimed at children or teenagers

How to protect yourself

- Deal only with reputable companies.
- Know precisely what the “900” call will cost before making the call. Check with your phone company.
- Think twice before calling a “900” number for a “free” gift.
- Don’t confuse “900” numbers with toll-free “800,” “888,” and “877” numbers.
- Check your phone bill carefully for any “900” number charges.

If you’re caught in a scam

- Call or write your telephone company immediately.
- Dispute the charges with the “900”-number company.
- Contact the Better Business Bureau or the Consumer and Commercial Relations Department in your province.



overhead D

Overhead D Contest cons

04.02.04

What they are

- Promotions that use deceptively advertised prizes.

What to watch for

- Offers or notices announcing “fabulous” prizes (often used to attract customers to sales meetings for land, or for vacation “timesharing”)
- High-pressure sales techniques

How to avoid being a victim

- Consider any purchase carefully before signing a contract.
- Don’t be deceived by letters that look official or urgent.
- Read the letter carefully.
- Think carefully before you attend a sales meeting.
- If you attend a sales meeting, don’t sign a contract or give a salesperson a deposit right away.
- Find out about the seller’s reputation.
- If a salesperson makes claims that aren’t in the contract, don’t sign the contract.

To report a fraud if you live in Canada

Contact your local RCMP detachment or the police service jurisdiction in your area. go to the RCMP's Reporting Economic Crime On-Line (RECOL) Web site.



overhead E

Overhead E
Work-at-home schemes

04.02.04

Common schemes

- Envelope stuffing
- Assembly or craft work
- Secret shopper
- Reading books

To avoid being a victim, find out

- What task you will be required to perform
- If you will be paid on salary or commission
- Who will pay you
- When you will get your first paycheque
- The total cost of the work-at-home program (such as how much you will have to pay to get the materials)
- The company's reputation (check with a local, provincial, or federal consumer protection agency)



overhead F

Overhead F

How to handle a consumer problem

04.02.04

Collect records

- Start a file about your complaint.
- Keep copies of sales receipts, repair orders, warranties, cancelled cheques, and contracts.

Go back to where you made the purchase

- Contact the person who sold you the item or performed the service.
- Calmly and accurately explain the problem and what action you would like taken.
- Talk with the supervisor or manager, if necessary.
- Allow each person you contact time to resolve the problem before contacting another person.
- Keep a record of your efforts.

Don't give up

- Call or write the person responsible for consumer complaints at the company's headquarters.

Describe the problem

- Describe why you're unsatisfied.
- Detail what, if anything, you've done about it already.
- Describe what you think is a fair solution.



overhead G

Overhead G

How to write a complaint letter

04.02.04

Where to send it

- To the head of the company, or the person who handles consumer complaints

What to write

- Include your name, address, and account number, if appropriate.
- Describe your purchase (name of product, serial numbers, date and location of purchase).
- State problem and give history.
- Ask for a specific action.
- Enclose copies of documents regarding your problem.
- Allow time for action or response.
- Include how you can be reached.

Don't

- Write an angry, sarcastic, or threatening letter
- Send original documents

Do

- Type your letter, if possible (or make sure it is neatly handwritten)
- Keep copies of all letters to and from the company



overhead H

Overhead H
It's all about cultivating character

04.02.04

The Avon Maitland District School Board endorsed a list of 10 character attributes that the communities identified as the key qualities to good citizenship.

- **Fairness**—treating everyone in a just and accepting manner
- **Honesty**—being trustworthy, sincere, and truthful
- **Empathy**—understanding how someone else feels
- **Respect**—valuing self, others, and our world
- **Integrity**—doing what is right and honourable
- **Optimism**—choosing to be positive
- **Compassion**—showing care and consideration
- **Perseverance**—staying purposeful and committed
- **Courage**—facing the challenge, challenging your fears
- **Responsibility**—being reliable and accountable

“I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character.”

Martin Luther King Jr.



name: _____

date: _____

True/False (5 marks)

1. ____ Buying clubs are designed to help consumers compare prices at different stores.
2. ____ Comparison shopping helps you know if you're getting a good deal when you make a purchase.
3. ____ To report a fraud if you live in Canada, contact your local RCMP detachment.
4. ____ The cooling-off period generally applies to purchases of \$50 or more.
5. ____ Most consumer complaints require legal action to solve.

Multiple Choice (5 marks)

6. The most reliable source of consumer information would be from ____.
A. an advertisement
B. a salesperson
C. an executive of the company
D. a product label
7. A buying club commonly ____.
A. requires a minimum purchase
B. has a large initiation fee
C. wants the member to encourage others to join.
D. only allows a few people in an area to be members
8. A phone number beginning with ____ is not a toll-free number.
A. 800
B. 877
C. 888
D. 900
9. The right to cancel certain purchases of \$50 or more within 2-10 business days is known as the ____ period.
A. layaway
B. cooling-off
C. mail order
D. telemarketing
10. The first step a person with a consumer complaint should take is to ____.
A. obtain legal assistance
B. contact a consumer agency
C. write to the headquarters of the company
D. return to the place of purchase

Case Application (5 marks)

Zhong recently purchased a sweater for his wife over the telephone. When the item was received, it was slightly damaged. When he returned it he received another sweater, but also received another bill. The company says he owes for two sweaters.



True/False (5 marks)

1. f Buying clubs are designed to help consumers compare prices at different stores.
2. t Comparison shopping helps you know if you're getting a good deal when you make a purchase.
3. t To report a fraud if you live in Canada, contact your local RCMP Detachment.
4. t The cooling-off period generally applies to purchases of \$50 or more.
5. f Most consumer complaints require legal action to solve.

Multiple Choice (5 marks)

6. The most reliable source of consumer information would be from D.
A. an advertisement
B. a salesperson
C. an executive of the company
D. a product label
7. A buying club commonly B.
A. requires a minimum purchase
B. has a large initiation fee
C. wants the member to encourage others to join
D. only allows a few people in an area to be members
8. A phone number beginning with D is not a toll-free number.
A. 800
B. 877
C. 888
D. 900
9. The right to cancel certain purchases of \$50 or more within 2–10 business days is known as the B period.
A. layaway
B. cooling-off
C. mail order
D. telemarketing
10. The first step a person with a consumer complaint should take is to D.
A. obtain legal assistance
B. contact a consumer agency
C. write to the headquarters of the company
D. return to the place of purchase

Case Application (5 marks)

Zhong recently purchased a sweater for his wife over the telephone. When the item was received, it was slightly damaged. When he returned it he received another sweater, but also received another bill. The company says he owes for two sweaters.

Zhong should start by calling the company to explain the situation. Next, he should put an explanation of the situation in writing. If this doesn't work, he might contact a local, provincial, or federal consumer agency to assist him.