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UK mums protest over pink girls' toys

http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0912/091209_pink_toys.html

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THE ARTICLE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0912/091209_pink_toys.html

Two mothers in England are angry at a toy shop for selling too many pink toys. They have called for a boycott of the store because of the 'pinkification' of girls' Christmas presents. They say the pink gifts are overly cute and can hold girls back in later life. Twin sisters Abi and Emma Moore have started a Facebook page to let people know that pink toys send "narrow and damaging" messages. Abi Moore told reporters that encouraging shoppers to buy pink means "beauty is valued over brains". Their Facebook campaign is called 'Pink Stinks'. They point out that there are educational toys for boys on everything from action and adventure to science. They contrast this with the 'much more limited - and limiting' choices for girls.

The sisters' criticism of pink toys has started a nationwide debate in Britain. They have been supported by British Justice Minister Bridget Prentice. She agreed that the Early Learning Centre encouraged sexist ideas that little girls must like pink things. A spokeswoman for the Early Learning Centre rejected the criticism. "Customers can choose a red kitchen, a blue kitchen, a blue cash register, a yellow dolls house or a gorgeous farm," she said. Britain's Daily Telegraph rubbished the campaign, saying: "It really is difficult to think of a sillier cause. Little girls like pink; it is part of their innocent charm, not an indication that they plan to waste their lives in "pretty-pretty jobs", whatever they might be."

WARM-UPS

1. PINK: Walk around the class and talk to other students about the colour pink. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

mothers / being angry / boycott / gifts / damaging messages / educational toys / criticism / debates / sexist ideas / pink things / silly causes / wasting your life

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. COLOUR: What's the best and worst colour for these things? Complete this table and show it to your partner(s). Change partners and share what you heard.

	Best	Why?	Worst	Why?
A computer				
A car				
Lipstick				
Shoes				
A house				
An ice cream				

4. SEXIST: Students A **strongly** believe pink for girls is sexist and holds girls back in life; Students B **strongly** disagree. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. PINKIFICATION: What if these things were pink? Rate them with your partner(s): 10 = fab idea; 1 = oh dear. Change partners and share your ratings.

- pets
- fridges
- roads
- water
- the sky
- newspapers
- money
- eyes

6. STINK: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'stink'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0912/091209_pink_toys.html

1. TRUE / FALSE: Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- | | |
|---|-------|
| a. Two British mothers are angry at the lack of pink toys in shops. | T / F |
| b. The women say pink toys do not help girls to get ahead in life. | T / F |
| c. The mums believe pink toys belittle girls' intelligence. | T / F |
| d. The women point out that there is a huge choice of toys for boys. | T / F |
| e. The mothers have the support of a British politician. | T / F |
| f. The politician disagreed that making pink toys for girls was sexist. | T / F |
| g. A toy store agreed with the mothers and apologized to them. | T / F |
| h. A newspaper said it was natural for girls to like pink. | T / F |

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article.

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. angry | a. negative |
| 2. called for | b. beautiful |
| 3. damaging | c. options |
| 4. brains | d. discussion |
| 5. choices | e. furious |
| 6. debate | f. promoted |
| 7. encouraged | g. more stupid |
| 8. gorgeous | h. demanded |
| 9. sillier | i. appeal |
| 10. charm | j. intelligence |

3. PHRASE MATCH: (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. They have called for a boycott | a. choose a red kitchen |
| 2. hold girls back in | b. Facebook page |
| 3. started a | c. ideas |
| 4. encouraging shoppers | d. charm |
| 5. much more limited – and limiting | e. to buy pink |
| 6. started a nationwide | f. of the store |
| 7. sexist | g. sillier cause |
| 8. Customers can | h. later life |
| 9. difficult to think of a | i. choices |
| 10. part of their innocent | j. debate in Britain |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0912/091209_pink_toys.html

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Two mothers in England are _____ at a toy shop for selling too many pink toys. They have called for a _____ of the store because of the 'pinkification' of girls' Christmas presents. They say the pink gifts are overly cute and can hold girls _____ in later life. Twin sisters Abi and Emma Moore have started a Facebook page to let people know that pink toys _____ "narrow and damaging" messages. Abi Moore told reporters that encouraging shoppers to buy pink _____ "beauty is valued _____ brains". Their Facebook campaign is called 'Pink Stinks'. They _____ out that there are educational toys for boys on everything from action and adventure to science. They contrast this with the 'much more limited - and limiting' _____ for girls.

means

send

angry

back

choices

point

boycott

over

The sisters' _____ of pink toys has started a nationwide debate in Britain. They have been _____ by British Justice Minister Bridget Prentice. She _____ that the Early Learning Centre encouraged sexist ideas that little girls must like pink things. A spokeswoman for the Early Learning Centre _____ the criticism. "Customers can choose a red kitchen, a blue kitchen, a blue cash register, a yellow dolls house or a _____ farm," she said. Britain's Daily Telegraph _____ the campaign, saying: "It really is difficult to think of a sillier _____. Little girls like pink; it is part of their innocent charm, not an indication that they plan to _____ their lives in "pretty-pretty jobs", whatever they might be."

cause

supported

rubbished

waste

criticism

rejected

agreed

gorgeous

LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0912/091209_pink_toys.html

Two mothers in England _____ shop for selling too many pink toys. They have called for a boycott of the store because of the 'pinkification' of girls' Christmas presents. They say the _____ cute and can hold girls back in later life. Twin sisters Abi and Emma Moore have started a Facebook page _____ that pink toys send "narrow and damaging" messages. Abi Moore told reporters that encouraging shoppers _____ "beauty is valued over brains". Their Facebook campaign is called 'Pink Stinks'. They _____ are educational toys for boys on everything from action and adventure to science. They contrast this with the 'much more limited - and _____.

_____ pink toys has started a nationwide debate in Britain. They have been supported by British Justice Minister Bridget Prentice. She agreed that the Early Learning Centre encouraged _____ girls must like pink things. A spokeswoman for the Early Learning Centre _____. "Customers can choose a red kitchen, a blue kitchen, _____, a yellow dolls house or a gorgeous farm," she said. Britain's Daily Telegraph rubbished the campaign, saying: "It really is difficult to think _____. Little girls like pink; it is part of their innocent charm, not an indication that they plan _____ in "pretty-pretty jobs", whatever they might be."

AFTER READING / LISTENING

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0912/091209_pink_toys.html

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionary / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'pink' and 'toy'.

pink	toy
-------------	------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• angry• gifts• messages• brains• point• limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• started• ideas• spokeswoman• choose• cause• waste
---	--

STUDENT PINK SURVEY

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0912/091209_pink_toys.html

Write five GOOD questions about the colour pink in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

THE COLOUR PINK DISCUSSION

STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'pink'?
- c) Are you ever a pink person? What colour describes your personality?
- d) What do you think of the 'pinkification' claims?
- e) Do you think people should boycott the stores?
- f) Is there really so much wrong with buying little girls pink things?
- g) How do you think pink toys hold girls back in life?
- h) Do pink toys really mean "beauty is valued over brains"?
- i) Are toys for boys better than those for girls?
- j) Is there a wider choice when buying boys' toys?

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THE COLOUR PINK DISCUSSION

STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What were your favourite toys when you were a child?
- c) Do you like the colour pink?
- d) What would you say in the nationwide debate on this issue?
- e) Is associating pink with girls sexist? How about blue for boys?
- f) Is the Daily Telegraph right in saying this is a silly cause?
- g) What is wrong with buying pink presents if little girls like pink?
- h) What three adjectives would you use to describe this story?
- i) What's the best present for a little girl?
- j) What questions would you like to ask Abi and Emma Moore?

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LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/0912/091209_pink_toys.html

Two mothers in England are (1) ____ at a toy shop for selling too many pink toys. They have called for a (2) ____ of the store because of the 'pinkification' of girls' Christmas presents. They say the pink gifts are overly cute and can hold girls back (3) ____ later life. Twin sisters Abi and Emma Moore have started a Facebook page to let people know that pink toys send "(4) ____ and damaging" messages. Abi Moore told reporters that encouraging shoppers to buy pink means "beauty is (5) ____ over brains". Their Facebook campaign is called 'Pink Stinks'. They point out that there are educational toys for boys (6) ____ everything from action and adventure to science. They contrast this with the 'much more limited - and limiting' choices for girls.

The sisters' (7) ____ of pink toys has started a nationwide debate in Britain. They have been supported by British Justice Minister Bridget Prentice. She (8) ____ that the Early Learning Centre encouraged sexist ideas that little girls must like pink things. A spokeswoman for the Early Learning Centre (9) ____ the criticism. "Customers can choose a red kitchen, a blue kitchen, a blue cash register, a yellow dolls house or a gorgeous farm," she said. Britain's Daily Telegraph (10) ____ the campaign, saying: "It really is difficult to think of a sillier (11) _____. Little girls like pink; it is part of their innocent charm, not an indication that they plan to (12) _____ their lives in "pretty-pretty jobs", whatever they might be."

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| 1. | (a) anger | (b) angrily | (c) angers | (d) angry |
| 2. | (a) boycott | (b) boyish | (c) boys | (d) boyhood |
| 3. | (a) at | (b) in | (c) of | (d) to |
| 4. | (a) narrowed | (b) narrows | (c) narrow | (d) narrowly |
| 5. | (a) valuable | (b) values | (c) valued | (d) valueless |
| 6. | (a) at | (b) on | (c) to | (d) by |
| 7. | (a) critic | (b) critical | (c) critically | (d) criticism |
| 8. | (a) agreed | (b) agreement | (c) agreeing | (d) agree |
| 9. | (a) rejection | (b) rejected | (c) reject | (d) rejecting |
| 10. | (a) litter | (b) garbage | (c) trashes | (d) rubbished |
| 11. | (a) course | (b) coarse | (c) cause | (d) because |
| 12. | (a) waste | (b) paste | (c) baste | (d) haste |

HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find out more about this story. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. THE COLOUR PINK: Make a poster about the colour pink. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. SEXIST: Write a magazine article about the colour pink and sexism. Include imaginary interviews with one person who thinks it is sexist and another who thinks it isn't.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to the sisters. Ask them three questions about the colour pink. Give them three ideas on what they can do to succeed. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. F b. T c. T d. F e. T f. F g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. angry | a. furious |
| 2. called for | b. demanded |
| 3. damaging | c. negative |
| 4. brains | d. intelligence |
| 5. choices | e. options |
| 6. debate | f. discussion |
| 7. encouraged | g. promoted |
| 8. gorgeous | h. beautiful |
| 9. sillier | i. more stupid |
| 10. charm | j. appeal |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. They have called for a boycott | a. of the store |
| 2. hold girls back in | b. later life |
| 3. started a | c. debate in Britain |
| 4. encouraging shoppers | d. to buy pink |
| 5. much more limited – and limiting | e. choices |
| 6. started a nationwide | f. Facebook page |
| 7. sexist | g. ideas |
| 8. Customers can | h. choose a red kitchen |
| 9. difficult to think of a | i. sillier cause |
| 10. part of their innocent | j. charm |

GAP FILL:

UK mums protest over pink girls' toys

Two mothers in England are **angry** at a toy shop for selling too many pink toys. They have called for a **boycott** of the store because of the 'pinkification' of girls' Christmas presents. They say the pink gifts are overly cute and can hold girls **back** in later life. Twin sisters Abi and Emma Moore have started a Facebook page to let people know that pink toys **send** "narrow and damaging" messages. Abi Moore told reporters that encouraging shoppers to buy pink **means** "beauty is valued **over** brains". Their Facebook campaign is called 'Pink Stinks'. They **point** out that there are educational toys for boys on everything from action and adventure to science. They contrast this with the 'much more limited - and limiting' **choices** for girls.

The sisters' **criticism** of pink toys has started a nationwide debate in Britain. They have been **supported** by British Justice Minister Bridget Prentice. She **agreed** that the Early Learning Centre encouraged sexist ideas that little girls must like pink things. A spokeswoman for the Early Learning Centre **rejected** the criticism. "Customers can choose a red kitchen, a blue kitchen, a blue cash register, a yellow dolls house or a **gorgeous** farm," she said. Britain's Daily Telegraph **rubbished** the campaign, saying: "It really is difficult to think of a sillier **cause**. Little girls like pink; it is part of their innocent charm, not an indication that they plan to **waste** their lives in "pretty-pretty jobs", whatever they might be."

LANGUAGE WORK

1 - d 2 - a 3 - b 4 - c 5 - c 6 - b 7 - d 8 - a 9 - b 10 - d 11 - c 12 - a