

Great Value.

These days(1) everybody seems to be trying to(2) save money. On the television, we hear about sales, discounts, and 'cash back'(3) on things that we buy. Most receipts now give opportunities to win money, or products. And the shops do the same. Have you noticed generic brands in your local shops? A generic brand is a line of products made for that shop, not a famous brand name. They are always cheaper than other brands. The question is, "Are they good quality, or of the same quality as(4) the brand name products?" Over the past few years, I have shopped almost exclusively(5) at Walmart, and I have got to know(6) some things about generic brands. Great Value is a brand name made for Walmart. The boxes, packets, and bottles(7) of products are simple to look at, and stand out from the rest. In my opinion, the basic products like detergents(8), paper products, and simple house items are worth buying. However, when it comes to eating, the cheaper product often doesn't taste as good. Pastas, bread, dairy products, and canned goods are not quite as good as(9) the brand name ones. I'm fussy about what I eat, and so cheaper ingredients are not always the best option(10). It might be better to spend a few more pennies, to taste good quality food. However, you can always save your money on the non-edible(12) items.

1. 'These days' can be replaced with 'now-a-days'. They are interchangeable.
 - a. These days, we spend a lot of time in the car.
 - b. Now-a-days, people drive a lot.
2. 'Everybody seems to be trying to save money'. Notice there are 3 verbs in a row. This isn't complicated, you just have to decide how you wish to follow 'seems to be'.
 - a. The cat seems to be trying to climb the tree.
 - b. They seems to be walking very fast.
 - c. The clouds seem to be getting dark over the mountains.
3. 'Cash back' is a very common thing over here. When you buy something with a credit card, sometimes, if it is a big purchase, like a car or a computer, you might get 'cash back', meaning a check from your credit card company in a few months or at the end of the year.
 - a. I will get my cash back at the end of the year; I have bought a lot of things, so I should get a big check.
 - b. With the cash back from buying my car, I bought an iPad.
4. '...of the same quality as..'.
 - a. That material is of the same quality as the more expensive one.
 - b. That sofa is made of the same leather as the chair.
5. 'Exclusively' means 'only' when excluding other options. It is a great word to practice as, when used correctly, gives the impression of fluency.
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6. 'To get to know' is the same as 'to come to know', and 'to become familiar with'.
 - a. When I stayed with my grandmother in the summer, I really got to know her.
 - b. Let's get to know each other before we go on a date.
7. 'Boxes, packets and bottles' are some of the containers of products. Others are 'cans, jars, tubes, bags, containers and tubs'.

- a. We need a packet of cookies and a large container of icecream, like a tub.
- b. I have jars of spaghetti sauce and cans of soup on the shelf.
- 8. 'Detergent' is the name of a soap that is not used for the body.
 - a. I like the new laundry detergent; all the clothes smell really nice.
 - b. That detergent makes me itchy.
- 9. '...are not quite as good as..' is an effective use of comparison, but in the negative.
 - a. The second and third films were not quite as good as the first.
 - b. The painting is not quite as colorful as the photo.
 - c. My new gloves are not quite as comfortable as my old ones.
- 10. 'The best option' could be replaced by 'the best choice', 'the best idea', 'the best decision'.
 - a. I think that the cheaper hotel is the best option.
 - b. He recently broke his leg so I don't think that night skiing is the best option.

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