



Unit 12 Shopping

Before you read

Imagine you are starting a new business tomorrow. Think about these questions. What are you going to sell? Who do you think will buy your product?

Read the story

A Business in the Bag

Companies often spend a lot of money trying to learn about what people want to buy. Then they try to make the things they think people want. But sometimes regular people have ideas that become big businesses, too.

In the late 1990s, Mary Norton of Charleston, South Carolina, wasn't thinking about starting a business; in fact she already had a very busy job. She was the mother of two children. But one night she had a dream that changed everything. Her dream was about three very beautiful handbags all covered with flowers. The next morning, Mary kept thinking about her dream. So she sat at her table and made the three handbags she dreamed about the night before. She didn't know it then, but she had just started a new business and a new career.

Mary's friend Lauren managed a boutique in downtown Charleston. When she saw the new bags, she asked Mary if she could sell the bags in her store. Mary was surprised, but she agreed. The three bags sold in less than an hour. Lauren also gave the new product its name. She combined the nicknames of Mary's children, Micah and Reilly, and created the name *Moo Roo* bags.

The Moo Roo bags were unique, and they quickly became very popular. People wanted to match them with their favorite skirts, pants, and suits. Soon it was too much work for one person. Mary hired 10 workers. Later she opened a store and offices in downtown Charleston. Now you can buy the bags in more than 350 different stores all over the U.S. Mary is planning to open her own Moo Roo stores soon in New York City and Beverly Hills, California.

Moo Roo's have become more and more popular. For the Academy Awards, held each year in the U.S., famous stars and celebrities want the perfect bag to match their special outfit and shoes—and they want a Moo Roo.

Mary laughs when she talks how her life has changed since the night she had her dream. She had never thought about having her own business. She had never thought of herself as creative or as a businessperson. But now she enjoys designing new styles of handbags and running a successful business.



Build your reading skills: Distinguishing between facts and opinions

Read the article again. Write *F* if the sentence is a fact. Write *O* if the sentence is an opinion.

1. *Moo Roo* handbags are very popular. *F*
2. Mary Norton's company grew a lot.
3. Mary Norton's bags are beautiful.
4. *Moo Roo* is a very good name for Mary Norton's bags.
5. Mary Norton loves designing handbags.

Check your comprehension

Circle the letter of the answer that completes each sentence.

1. Mary got the idea for the handbags _____.
 - a. walking to work
 - b. talking to her friend Lauren
 - c. in a dream
2. People bought Mary's first handbags _____.
 - a. in Charleston
 - b. at the Academy Awards
 - c. in a *Moo Roo* store
3. _____ created the name *Moo Roo* for the bags.
 - a. Lauren
 - b. Mary
 - c. Mary's children
4. Mary needed to hire workers because _____.
 - a. she didn't want to work alone
 - b. so many people wanted to buy the bags
 - c. celebrities liked her bags
5. Before she started her company, Mary _____.
 - a. wanted to quit her job
 - b. hadn't thought about starting a business
 - c. had a successful boutique