

Open C1 English · Unit 10

Economy, Money & Consumption

Grammar: Nominalisation and academic register

Pronunciation: Minimal pairs: /ɪ/-/i:/, /æ/-/ʌ/, /ɒ/-/əʊ/

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How to use this study pack

- Study the grammar and vocabulary before attempting the output tasks.
- Use the public site for audio playback; this PDF is the printable study companion.
- Mark answers directly on paper, then return to the online lesson for media-rich practice.
- Keep a separate C1 notebook for rewritten answers, useful collocations and pronunciation notes.

Unit workflow

Input: reading, listening and media exposure.

Language focus: grammar, vocabulary, idioms and Use of English.

Output: writing, speaking, mediation and realistic everyday communication.

¿De qué va esta unidad?

En esta unidad, nos adentraremos en el complejo mundo de la economía, las finanzas y los hábitos de consumo. Para un estudiante de nivel C1, este tema es fundamental porque el vocabulario relacionado con el dinero y los mercados suele aparecer con frecuencia en contextos académicos, artículos de opinión de medios como The Economist o The Guardian, y en las secciones de actualidad de los exámenes de Cambridge. No se trata solo de saber decir "comprar" o "vender", sino de ser capaz de discutir conceptos abstractos como la inflación, el crecimiento sostenible o las tendencias del mercado con precisión y sofisticación.

El principal reto de esta unidad radica en el registro. Pasar de un lenguaje coloquial sobre dinero a un registro formal y académico requiere un control preciso de la estructura gramatical. A lo largo de las lecciones, trabajaremos la nominalización para transformar verbos y adjetivos en sustantivos, una técnica esencial para lograr la densidad léxica y la objetividad que se espera en un nivel avanzado. Además, perfeccionaremos la pronunciación de pares mínimos para asegurar que su fluidez no se vea interrumpida por errores de claridad en sonidos vocálicos críticos.

Objetivos de aprendizaje

- Utilizar la nominalización para transformar oraciones simples en estructuras académicas y formales de nivel C1.
- Ampliar el léxico especializado sobre economía, finanzas y patrones de consumo para debates complejos.
- Desarrollar la capacidad de comprender textos de opinión y reportes económicos densos en la sección de Reading.
- Identificar y extraer información específica en audios con diferentes acentos sobre temas financieros (Listening).
- Redactar ensayos académicos y propuestas formales utilizando un registro profesional y preciso (Writing).
- Demostrar destreza en el Use of English mediante la manipulación de estructuras gramaticales complejas y el uso de idioms financieros.

Lo que vas a encontrar

- Introduction: Una visión general de los conceptos económicos clave que exploraremos.
- Grammar: Un estudio profundo sobre la nominalisation y cómo elevar tu registro académico.
- Vocabulary: Vocabulario avanzado sobre mercados, finanzas personales y tendencias de consumo.
- Idioms: Expresiones idiomáticas relacionadas con el dinero y el éxito profesional.
- Reading: Análisis de artículos de actualidad sobre economía global y comportamiento del consumidor.
- Listening: Práctica de comprensión auditiva con debates y reportajes económicos.

- Use of English: Ejercicios de transformación de frases y rellenado de huecos enfocados en el nivel C1.
- Writing: Guía para redactar ensayos argumentativos sobre temas socioeconómicos.
- Speaking: Práctica de debate y expresión oral para defender puntos de vista económicos.
- Mediation: Ejercicios para sintetizar información de diferentes fuentes sobre temas financieros.

Tiempo estimado

Total: 6 horas

- Introduction: 15 min
- Grammar: 45 min
- Vocabulary: 30 min
- Idioms: 30 min
- Reading: 45 min
- Listening: 45 min
- Use of English: 45 min
- Writing: 45 min
- Speaking: 30 min
- Mediation: 30 min

Lesson 2: Grammar Focus

Explicación (en español)

La nominalización es el proceso de transformar verbos o adjetivos en sustantivos. En el nivel C1 Advanced, este es uno de los cambios más importantes para pasar de un lenguaje coloquial a un registro académico o profesional. En lugar de centrarse en la acción (verbo), el foco se desplaza hacia el concepto o el fenómeno (sustantivo). Por ejemplo, en lugar de decir "The prices rose" (Los precios subieron), decimos "The rise in prices" (El aumento de los precios). Esto permite condensar información y sonar más objetivo.

En contextos de economía y negocios, la nominalización es esencial para crear frases complejas pero precisas. Permite agrupar ideas complejas en un solo sujeto. En lugar de usar frases largas con cláusulas relativas ("Because the inflation increased, people bought less"), podemos usar estructuras más elegantes ("The increase in inflation led to a decrease in consumer spending"). Esto otorga una mayor densidad de información, algo muy valorado en los exámenes de Cambridge. Un error típico de los hispanohablantes es la "sobre-verbalización". En español tendemos a usar verbos para todo, pero en inglés académico, abusar de los verbos puede hacer que el texto parezca infantil o poco profesional. Otro error común es la mala colocación de preposiciones tras

la nominalización. Mientras que un verbo suele llevar una preposición específica, el sustantivo derivado puede requerir otra (ej. to decide on \rightarrow the decision **on**).

Para dominar esta técnica, debes aprender los sufijos de nominalización (-tion, -ity, -ment, -ance, -ence) y, lo más importante, aprender a manejar la estructura que sigue al sustantivo. La clave es ver el sustantivo como el núcleo de la frase y construir la información a su alrededor mediante complementos.

Form – estructura

Original Form (Verb/Adjective) |

Nominalised Form (Noun) |

Example Context |

To fluctuate (Verb) |

Fluctuation (Noun) |

Market volatility |

To consume (Verb) |

Consumption (Noun) |

Household spending |

Profitable (Adjective) |

Profitability (Noun) |

Business success |

To expand (Verb) |

Expansion (Noun) |

Economic growth |

To invest (Verb) |

Investment (Noun) |

Capital allocation |

Examples

- The rapid expansion of the tech sector boosted the national GDP. (La rápida expansión del sector tecnológico impulsó el PIB nacional.)
- There has been a significant fluctuation in oil prices this quarter. (Ha habido una fluctuación significativa en los precios del petróleo este trimestre.)
- The implementation of new tax laws caused widespread confusion. (La implementación de nuevas leyes fiscales causó una confusión generalizada.)
- High levels of unemployment often lead to reduced consumer demand. (Los altos niveles de desempleo a menudo conducen a una reducción de la demanda de los consumidores.)
- The company's profitability depends on effective cost management. (La rentabilidad de la empresa depende de una gestión de costes eficaz.)
- We need to analyse the distribution of wealth across the population. (Necesitamos analizar la distribución de la riqueza entre la población.)
- An increase in interest rates can discourage borrowing. (Un aumento en los tipos de interés puede desincentivar los préstamos.)
- The failure of the merger was due to poor strategic planning. (El fracaso de la fusión se debió a una mala planificación estratégica.)

Contrast

-

□ Because the economy grew, more jobs were created. / □ Economic growth led to job creation.
(Error: La primera frase es demasiado simple para C1. La segunda usa la nominalización para crear un sujeto sólido).

-

□ It is important that we invest more. / □ Increased investment is essential for long-term stability.
(Error: La primera es una cláusula subjetiva. La segunda es un enunciado de estilo académico).

-

□ They decided to merge, which was a surprise. / □ The decision to merge surprised the market.
(Error: El uso de "which" es correcto pero débil. La nominalización permite integrar la acción directamente en el sujeto).

-

□ If inflation rises, it affects purchasing power. / □ A rise in inflation affects purchasing power.
(Error: La primera usa una estructura condicional básica. La segunda es más directa y formal).

Mini-quiz — 10 preguntas

Part 1: Sentence Transformation (Rewrite the sentence using the noun in brackets to make it more formal/academic).

- The company expanded quickly, which surprised everyone. (EXPANSION)
- We need to analyse how much people consume. (CONSUMPTION)
- Because the market is volatile, investors are nervous. (VOLATILITY)
- The government decided to tax sugar, which caused protests. (DECISION)

Part 2: Multiple Choice (Choose the correct option).

-

The ___ of the new trade agreement will take several months.

- a) implement
- b) implementation
- c) implemented

-

There is a growing ___ regarding the stability of the currency.

- a) concern
- b) concerning
- c) concerned

-

The ___ of the budget was handled very poorly.

- a) allocate
- b) allocation
- c) allocative

Part 3: Fill in the blanks (Complete the sentence with the correct form of the word in brackets).

-

The ___ (competitive) of the market has forced prices down.

-

A sudden ___ (decrease) in demand led to a surplus of goods.

-

The __ (availability) of credit is crucial for small businesses.

Respuestas:

1. The rapid expansion of the company surprised everyone.
2. We need to analyse levels of consumption. / An analysis of consumption is required.
3. Market volatility has made investors nervous.
4. The decision to tax sugar caused protests.
5. b) implementation
6. a) concern
7. b) allocation
8. competitiveness
9. decrease
10. availability

Lesson 3: Vocabulary Lab

Vocabulario C1 – Economy, Money & Consumption

30 palabras con definición, traducción, ejemplo y audio.

fluctuate //

/flʌktʃueɪt/v

Definition: To rise and fall irregularly in number or amount.

Traducción: fluctuar

Example: Interest rates are expected to fluctuate significantly throughout the 2025 fiscal year due to global instability.

Collocation: fluctuate wildly

- ### disparity //

/dɪ'spærəti/n

Definition: A great difference, especially one that is unfair.

Traducción: disparidad

Example: The growing economic disparity between urban and rural sectors remains a primary concern for policymakers.

Collocation: economic disparity

- ### exacerbate //

/ɪg'zæsəbeɪt/v

Definition: To make a problem, bad situation, or negative feeling worse.

Traducción: exacerbar / agravar

Example: The sudden rise in inflation threatens to exacerbate existing social inequalities.

Collocation: exacerbate the crisis

- ### stagnation //

/stæg'neɪʃn/n

Definition: A period of little or no growth in an economy.

Traducción: estancamiento

Example:Economists are warning that prolonged wage stagnation could lead to a drop in consumer confidence.

Collocation:economic stagnation

- ### mitigate //

/ˈmɪtɪɡeɪt/v

Definition:To make something less severe, serious, or painful.

Traducción:mitigar

Example:The government introduced new subsidies to mitigate the impact of rising energy costs.

Collocation:mitigate the risk

- ### surplus //

/sɜːpləs/n

Definition:An amount of something left over when requirements have been met.

Traducción:superávit / excedente

Example:The nation achieved a trade surplus for the third consecutive quarter in 2025.

Collocation:trade surplus

- ### deficit //

/ˈdefɪsɪt/n

Definition:The amount by which something, especially money, is too small.

Traducción:déficit

Example:Reducing the budget deficit is essential to maintaining long-term fiscal stability.

Collocation:budget deficit

- ### incentivise //

/ɪnˈsentɪvaɪz/v

Definition:To provide someone with an incentive for doing something.

Traducción:incentivar

Example:New tax breaks are designed to incentivise investment in green technologies.

Collocation:incentivise growth

- ### volatile //

/ˈvɒlətaɪl/adj

Definition:Liable to change rapidly and unpredictably, especially for the worse.

Traducción:volátil

Example:Investors are wary of the volatile stock market in the current geopolitical climate.

Collocation:volatile market

- ### ubiquitous //

/juːˈbɪkwɪtəs/adj

Definition:Present, appearing, or found everywhere.

Traducción:ubicuos / omnipresente

Example:Digital payment methods have become ubiquitous in modern consumer societies.

Collocation:ubiquitous presence

- ### lucrative //

/lu:kɹətɪv/adj

Definition:Producing a great deal of profit.

Traducción:lucrativo

Example:The tech startup secured a lucrative deal with a major global conglomerate.

Collocation:lucrative deal

- ### feasibility //

/fɪ:zə'bɪləti/n

Definition:The state or degree of being easily or conveniently done.

Traducción:viabilidad

Example:The board is currently assessing the economic feasibility of the proposed merger.

Collocation:economic feasibility

- ### dividend //

/dɪvɪdend/n

Definition:A sum of money paid regularly by a company to its shareholders.

Traducción:dividendo

Example:Shareholders were pleased to receive a higher dividend than previously anticipated.

Collocation:pay a dividend

- ### fiscal //

/fɪskl/adj

Definition:Relating to government revenue, especially taxes.

Traducción:fiscal

Example:The government's fiscal policy aims to curb inflation without triggering a recession.

Collocation:fiscal policy

- ### unprecedented //

/ʌn'presɪdɪntɪd/adj

Definition:Never done or known before.

Traducción:sin precedentes

Example:The market experienced an unprecedented surge in demand for AI-driven services.

Collocation:unprecedented growth

- ### streamline //

/stri:mleɪn/v

Definition:To make an organization or system more efficient and effective.

Traducción:optimizar / agilizar

Example:The company plans to streamline its operations to reduce overhead costs by 2026.

Collocation:streamline processes

- ### procure //

/prə'kjʊə(r)/v

Definition:To obtain something, especially with care or effort.

Traducción:adquirir / obtener

Example:The firm had to procure expensive raw materials due to supply chain disruptions.

Collocation:procure resources

- ### benchmark //

/bentʃmɑ:k/n

Definition:A standard or point of reference against which things may be compared.

Traducción:punto de referencia / estándar

Example:The annual report serves as a benchmark for the company's performance in the sector.

Collocation:industry benchmark

- ### compliance //

/kəm'plaiəns/n

Definition:The action or fact of complying with a law, most important rule, or command.

Traducción:cumplimiento

Example:Strict compliance with new financial regulations is mandatory for all fintech firms.

Collocation:regulatory compliance

- ### leverage //

/levəridʒ/v

Definition:To use something to maximum advantage.

Traducción:aprovechar / potenciar

Example:We need to leverage our current assets to expand into the Asian market.

Collocation:leverage resources

- ### break the bank //

/breɪk ðə bæŋk/phrase

Definition:To cost too much money; to be prohibitively expensive.

Traducción:costar un ojo de la cara / arruinar a alguien

Example:With the new subscription models, you can enjoy premium content without breaking the bank.

Collocation:N/A

- ### cost of living //

/kɒst əv 'lɪvɪŋ/n

Definition:The amount of money needed to cover basic expenses such as food, housing, and clothing.

Traducción:coste de vida

Example:The rising cost of living in major cities is forcing young professionals to move to the suburbs.

Collocation:high cost of living

- ### splurge //

/splɜ:dʒ/v / n

Definition:To spend a lot of money on something, often impulsively.

Traducción:darse un capricho / gastar mucho

Example:After receiving her annual bonus, she decided to splurge on a luxury weekend getaway.

Collocation:splurge on something

- ### budget-friendly //

/bʌdʒɪt 'frendli/adj

Definition:Not expensive; suitable for someone with a limited amount of money.

Traducción:económico / que se ajusta al presupuesto

Example:The brand is targeting Gen Z with its new range of budget-friendly tech accessories.

Collocation:budget-friendly options

- ### value for money //

/vælju: fə 'mʌni/phrase

Definition:Something that is well worth the amount of money spent on it.

Traducción:relación calidad-precio

Example:Consumers in 2026 are increasingly looking for value for money rather than just brand names.

Collocation:N/A

- ### side hustle //

/saɪd 'hʌsl/n

Definition:A job or way of making money that is done in addition to one's main job.

Traducción:trabajo secundario / 'curro' extra

Example:Many university students rely on a side hustle to supplement their monthly income.

Collocation:N/A

- ### rip-off //

/rɪp ɒf/n

Definition:A thing that is not worth the amount of money that you pay for it.

Traducción:estafa / timo

Example:Charging twenty pounds for a bottle of water at the airport is a total rip-off.

Collocation:N/A

- ### payday loan //

/peɪdeɪ ləʊn/n

Definition:A short-term, high-interest loan that is intended to be repaid when the borrower receives their next salary.

Traducción:préstamo de día de pago / microcrédito

Example:Financial experts warn against the dangers of falling into the cycle of payday loans.

Collocation:N/A

- ### guilt-free consumption //

/ɡɪlt fri: kən'sʌmpʃn/phrase

Definition:Buying products that do not cause moral or environmental regret.

Traducción:consumo sin remordimientos

Example:Sustainable packaging has enabled a trend of guilt-free consumption among eco-conscious shoppers.

Collocation:N/A

- ### cash cow //

/kæʃ kaʊ/n

Definition:A business, product, or service that regularly generates a large amount of profit.

Traducción:mina de oro / producto estrella

Example:The company's software division has become a massive cash cow, funding all their other research.

Collocation:N/A

-

Lesson 4: Idioms & Natural Expressions

Idioms & expressions – Economy, Money & Consumption

To break the bank · neutral

neutral

Meaning:To cost more money than one can afford or more than is reasonable.

Significado:Costar un ojo de la cara / dejarte en la quiebra.

Example:We can upgrade our home office setup without breaking the bank if we opt for refurbished hardware.

- ### To tighten one's belt · neutral

neutral

Meaning:To spend less money than usual due to financial difficulties.

Significado:Ajustarse el cinturón.

Example:With inflation remaining high, many households are having to tighten their belts this quarter.

- ### To be in the red · neutral

neutral

Meaning:To owe money to the bank or to be in a deficit.

Significado:Estar en números rojos.

Example:After the unexpected legal fees, the startup found itself heavily in the red.

- ### To cost an arm and a leg · informal

formal

Meaning:To be extremely expensive.

Significado:Costar un riñón / un ojo de la cara.

Example:The subscription fees for these premium AI tools can cost an arm and a leg for freelancers.

- ### To make ends meet · neutral

neutral

Meaning:To have just enough money to pay for the things that you need.

Significado:Llegar a fin de mes.

Example:Despite the rising cost of living, they manage to make ends meet through careful budgeting.

- ### To be flush with cash · informal

formal

Meaning:To have a lot of money available at a particular time.

Significado:Estar forrado / tener mucho efectivo.

Example:After receiving her annual bonus, she was feeling quite flush with cash and decided to book a holiday.

- ### To pay through the nose · informal

formal

Meaning: To pay much more than a fair price for something.

Significado: Pagar un precio desorbitado.

Example: You shouldn't have to pay through the nose just to access basic digital services.

- ### To be in a liquidity crunch · formal

formal

Meaning: A sudden shortage of cash or easily accessible funds within an economy or company.

Significado: Sufrir una crisis de liquidez.

Example: Small businesses are struggling to survive as they face a sudden liquidity crunch due to delayed payments.

- ### To optimize for micro-transactions · formal

formal

Meaning: To design a business model or product to maximize small, frequent digital payments.

Significado: Optimizar para microtransacciones (modelo de ingresos digitales).

Example: The new gaming platform is designed to optimize for micro-transactions, targeting casual mobile users.

- ### To be caught in a subscription trap · neutral

neutral

Meaning: To be stuck paying for recurring services that are difficult or inconvenient to cancel.

Significado: Estar atrapado en una trampa de suscripción.

Example: Many consumers feel they are caught in a subscription trap with so many monthly recurring fees.

-

Lesson 5: Reading Practice

Unit 10: Economy, Money & Consumption

The Ghost in the Machine: The End of the Ownership Era

The global economic landscape of 2025 has undergone a seismic shift, moving away from the tangible accumulation of assets towards a nebulous, subscription-based existence. For decades, the hallmark of financial stability was the ownership of property, vehicles, and physical goods. However, as we navigate the mid-2020s, a new paradigm of 'access over ownership' has moved from a niche trend to a dominant economic force.

This transition is not merely a change in consumer preference; it is a structural overhaul driven by the rise of the 'as-a-service' model. From software and cloud computing to furniture and even high-end electric vehicles, the concept of permanent ownership is being eroded by the convenience of recurring monthly fees. Proponents argue that this model democratizes luxury, allowing individuals to access premium products that would otherwise be financially out of reach. By eliminating the burden of maintenance and the depreciation of assets, consumers can enjoy the latest technology without the heavy upfront costs that once characterized major purchases.

Yet, critics warn of a more insidious consequence: the permanent erosion of personal wealth. In a

world where every necessity is tied to a subscription, the ability to build equity—the cornerstone of generational wealth—is being systematically dismantled. If you do not own your home, your car, or even your household appliances, you are essentially renting your life. This creates a precarious cycle of dependency on corporations, where a sudden price hike or a change in terms of service can leave a consumer stranded.

Furthermore, the environmental implications are profoundly complex. On one hand, the circular economy—where products are designed to be refurbished and reused within a subscription loop—could significantly reduce waste. On behalf of the planet, this could mean fewer raw materials are extracted. On the other hand, the constant cycle of upgrading to the 'latest version' inherent in subscription models could lead to an unprecedented surge in electronic waste.

The psychological impact is equally significant. The shift from 'possessing' to 'using' alters our relationship with the material world. While it offers a sense of freedom and flexibility, it also fosters a transient lifestyle. The stability that comes from owning a piece of the world around you is being replaced by a temporary lease on existence.

As we look toward the late 2020s, the central tension of the global economy will likely be this struggle between the flexibility of access and the security of ownership. Will we become a society of permanent tenants, or will we find a way to integrate these new digital models with traditional stability? The answer will define the financial autonomy of future generations.

Comprehension – Multiple Choice

1. What is the writer's primary purpose in the first paragraph?
 - A. To lament the loss of traditional economic values.
 - B. To describe a fundamental change in how the economy functions.
 - C. To argue that ownership is no longer necessary for stability.
 - D. To predict the total disappearance of physical assets by 2025.
2. According to the second paragraph, how does the 'as-a-service' model benefit consumers?
 - A. It allows them to bypass the need for maintenance entirely.
 - B. It provides a way to accumulate more assets over time.
 - C. It makes high-quality goods more accessible through lower initial costs.
 - D. It ensures that products never lose their value.
3. What is the main concern raised by critics in the third paragraph?
 - A. The rising cost of monthly subscriptions.
 - B. The difficulty of switching between different service providers.
 - C. The potential loss of long-term financial security and equity.
 - D. The legal complications of renting essential goods.
4. How does the author view the environmental impact of the subscription economy?
 - A. As a purely positive development for the circular economy.
 - B. As a purely negative driver of electronic waste.
 - C. As a settled issue that has already been resolved.
 - D. As a double-edged sword with both potential benefits and risks.
5. In the fifth paragraph, what does the writer suggest about the psychological shift?
 - A. People are finding more freedom through the lack of possessions.
 - B. The transition may lead to a sense of instability in one's life.
 - C. Consumers are becoming more attached to the products they use.
 - D. The feeling of 'using' rather than 'owning' is entirely positive.
6. What is the tone of the conclusion?
 - A. Dismissive of the new economic trends.
 - B. Overwhelmingly optimistic about the future.
 - C. Reflective and questioning about the future implications.

D. Certain that the era of ownership is officially over.

Gapped Text – Missing Sentences

Instructions: Read the text again and decide which sentence (A-E) fits each gap. Note: There is one extra sentence that you do not need.

- A. This constant influx of new models threatens to undermine the very concept of sustainability.
- B. This shift represents a move from capital accumulation to a state of perpetual usage.
- C. Such a lifestyle could lead to a profound sense of rootlessness among the younger generation.
- D. This creates a barrier to entry that prevents many from entering the middle class.
- E. This would allow for a more equitable distribution of wealth across the globe.

Glossary

- Seismic shift: cambio sísmico/radical
- Nebulous: nebuloso/difuso
- Paradigm: paradigma
- Eroded: erosionado/debilitado
- Insidious: insidioso/engañoso
- Precarious: precario
- Circularity: circularidad (economía circular)
- Transient: transitorio/fugaz

Answers

Comprehension

1. B
2. C
3. C
4. D
5. B
6. C

Gapped Text

(Note to student: In a real exam, you would match these to the gaps in the text. Since the gaps were not marked in the text per the instructions, here is the intended placement for your self-study: Gap 1 [Para 1/2 transition] = B; Gap 2 [Para 3] = D; Gap 3 [Para 4] = A; Gap 4 [Para 5] = C. Distractor = E)

Correct sequence for study purposes:

1. B
2. D
3. A
4. C

(Distractor: E)

The Cost of Convenience: Navigating the Subscription Economy

Esta actividad de comprensión auditiva se divide en tres partes para poner a prueba tu nivel C1. Deberás responder a preguntas de opción múltiple, completar frases con palabras exactas del audio y analizar opiniones complejas en un debate.

Part 1 – Conversation (questions 1–6)

|

Question |

Options |

1 |

What is the speaker's main concern regarding their recent bank statement? |

They have made several large, unplanned purchases. / Small, frequent expenses are draining their funds. / They have lost track of their physical cash. / They are struggling with high interest rates. |

2 |

According to Speaker 2, why do people overspend on subscription services? |

Because they are too expensive to maintain. / Because they sign up for multiple platforms without thinking. / Because they forget to cancel them after the trial period. / Because they want to own more digital content. |

3 |

How does the 'one-click ordering' process affect consumer behaviour? |

It encourages people to budget more effectively. / It makes the act of spending feel more tangible. / It makes the financial loss feel less real. / It helps people control their impulsive urges. |

4 |

What does Speaker 2 mean by the term 'gamification of spending'? |

Retailers use games to distract customers from prices. / The ease of transactions reduces the psychological barrier to spending. / Shopping has become a hobby for many people. / Consumers are being rewarded with points for every purchase. |

5 |

Why did Speaker 1 purchase a high-end espresso machine? |

Because they had been saving specifically for it. / Because the smooth checkout process made it easy to decide. / Because it was a necessary tool for their daily routine. / Because they wanted to show off their wealth. |

6 |

What strategy does Speaker 2 use to manage their spending? |

They avoid all online shopping entirely. / They only buy items that are on sale. / They implement a mandatory waiting period for non-essential items. / They use a strict weekly budget for all subscriptions. |

Part 2 – Monologue: sentence completion (questions 7–12)

Complete each sentence with 1–3 words from the recording.

1. The speaker felt like they were bleeding money through a thousand _____.
2. The ease of digital payments makes spending feel so _____.
3. Retailers have become adept at removing any _____ from the purchasing process.
4. The speaker suggests that the constant psychological nudges are almost _____.
5. Convenience is a hallmark of modern life, but it can erode _____ consumption.
6. The economy is geared towards constant, immediate _____.

Part 3 – Panel discussion (questions 13–18)

13. What is the primary shift described in 'The Macro Perspective'?

- A move from digital to physical ownership.
- A transition from ownership to access-based models.
- A decrease in the global trade of consumer goods.
- A rise in the cost of traditional retail products.

14. Why is the subscription model attractive to corporations?

- It allows them to sell more physical goods.
- It creates a predictable and recurring revenue stream.
- It eliminates the need for customer loyalty.
- It reduces the need for accurate forecasting.

15. What is a major risk for consumers in the subscription economy?

- The initial cost of entry is too high.
- They may face subscription fatigue and overwhelming outgoings.
- They will own too many products they cannot control.
- The products will become obsolete too quickly.

16. What does the narrator imply about the loss of consumer rights?

- Consumers have more power than ever before.
- The lack of agency is a new but rapidly growing norm.
- Terms of service are becoming easier to understand.
- Ownership is becoming more secure through digital means.

17. How does Speaker 1 describe 'conspicuous consumption' in the digital age?

- As a way to satisfy basic utility needs.
- As a method to signal status through social media.
- As a way to democratize luxury for everyone.
- As a response to economic volatility.

18. What is Speaker 3's view on 'Buy Now, Pay Later' schemes?

- They are a helpful tool for managing cash flow.
- They represent the true democratization of luxury.
- They are predatory and target vulnerable demographics.
- They are necessary due to unpredictable economic shifts.

Vocabulario clave

- to bleed money — perder dinero de forma constante/insensible - seamless — sin interrupciones / fluido - double-edged sword — arma de doble filo - seismic shift — cambio sísmico / cambio radical - staggering — asombroso / abrumador - recourse — recurso / medio para arreglar algo - conspicuous consumption — consumo ostentoso - benign — benigno / inofensivo ###
Respuestas

Part 1: 1. A · 2. B · 3. A · 4. A · 5. B · 6. A

Part 2: 1. little cuts · 2. abstract · 3. friction · 4. predatory · 5. mindful · 6. gratification

Part 3: 13. A · 14. C · 15. A · 16. A · 17. A · 18. A

Transcript

Ver transcript completo

SEGMENT 1 — CONVERSATION

Speaker 1: I was just looking at my bank statement, and honestly, it's a bit of a wake-up call. I feel like I've been bleeding money through a thousand little cuts lately.

Speaker 2: Oh, I know the feeling. It's those subscription services, isn't it? You sign up for one streaming platform, then another, and before you know it, you're paying a small fortune every month for things you barely even use.

Speaker 1: Exactly! And it's not just the subscriptions. It's the sheer convenience of it all. Tap-to-pay, one-click ordering... it makes spending feel so abstract. It doesn't feel like I'm actually parting with hard-earned cash when it's just a digital blip on my phone.

Speaker 2: That's a very insightful way of putting it. It's essentially the gamification of spending. Retailers have become incredibly adept at removing any "friction" from the purchasing process. If you have to physically take out a wallet and count notes, you might pause and think, "Do I really need this?" But when it's seamless, that impulse control just... evaporates.

Speaker 1: Precisely. It's almost predatory, wouldn't you say? I mean, I'm not suggesting they're doing anything illegal, but the psychological nudges are everywhere. I found myself buying a high-end espresso machine last week—something I definitely didn't budget for—just because the checkout process was so incredibly smooth.

Speaker 2: Well, it's a bit of a double-edged sword. On one hand, convenience is a hallmark of modern life, but on the other, it's certainly eroding our ability to practice mindful consumption. I've actually started implementing a 'forty-eight-hour rule' for myself. If I want to buy something non-essential, I have to wait two full days.

Speaker 1: That sounds like a sensible way to curb the impulse. I might have to adopt something similar. It's getting harder to stay on track when the economy is so geared towards constant, immediate gratification.

Speaker 2: It really is. It's a constant battle between our immediate desires and our long-term financial stability.

SEGMENT 2 — MONOLOGUE

Narrator: Welcome back to 'The Macro Perspective'. Today, we are delving into a phenomenon that has fundamentally altered the landscape of global trade and individual wealth: the rise of the 'Subscription Economy'. For decades, the traditional model of commerce was simple: you buy a product, you own it, and the transaction ends there. However, we have seen a seismic shift towards access over ownership. We are no longer just buying goods; we are essentially renting our lives.

Narrator: From software and music to even heated car seats and premium grocery deliveries, the subscription model is pervasive. From a corporate standpoint, this is a masterstroke of financial engineering. It provides companies with a predictable, recurring revenue stream, which is much

more attractive to investors than the volatile highs and lows of traditional retail. It allows for more accurate forecasting and creates a much higher degree of customer loyalty—or, if we are being more critical, a much more captive audience.

Narrator: However, this shift carries significant implications for the consumer. While the initial cost of entry is often much lower than a lump-sum purchase, the cumulative cost over time can be staggering. We are essentially entering a state of perpetual indebtedness to service providers. Furthermore, there is the issue of 'subscription fatigue'. As more sectors of the economy adopt this model, consumers are becoming increasingly overwhelmed by the sheer number of monthly outgoings they must manage.

Narrator: There is also the subtle erosion of consumer rights to consider. When you don't own the product, you don't truly control it. If a service provider decides to change the terms of service, hike the prices, or discontinue a product entirely, the consumer has very little recourse. We are essentially at the mercy of the provider's whims. This lack of agency is a relatively new concept in the history of consumption, yet it is rapidly becoming the norm.

Narrator: As we move forward, it will be vital to examine whether this model is sustainable in the long term. Can an economy built on recurring micro-transactions maintain the same level of growth as one built on significant capital investment? Or are we simply creating a fragile ecosystem of continuous, low-level spending? It is a question that economists and sociologists alike will be grappling with for years to come.

SEGMENT 3 — PANEL DISCUSSION

Speaker 1: To kick things off, I'd like to touch upon the concept of 'conspicuous consumption' in the digital age. We're seeing a massive surge in spending driven by social media influence. People aren't just buying products for utility anymore; they're buying them to curate an aesthetic or to signal status online.

Speaker 2: I see your point, but I think it's a bit of an oversimplification to blame social media entirely. It's more about the democratization of luxury. In the past, high-end goods were reserved for the elite. Now, through various retail models, a much broader demographic can participate in luxury consumption. It's not necessarily about status; it's about accessibility.

Speaker 3: I have to disagree with that characterization. While 'accessibility' sounds like a benign term, it's often just a way of masking the fact that we are being driven toward debt-fueled consumption. We are seeing a rise in 'Buy Now, Pay Later' schemes, which are essentially predatory. They target younger demographics who may not fully grasp the long-term implications of their credit arrangements. It's not democratization; it's targeted exploitation.

Speaker 1: That's a valid concern, Speaker 3. The ease of credit is definitely a double-edged sword. However, we must also acknowledge the role of economic volatility. For many, these flexible payment options are not a luxury, but a necessity to manage cash flow in an increasingly unpredictable economy.

Speaker 2: Exactly. We can't ignore the economic realities. The cost of living has skyrocketed, and for many households, the ability to spread the cost of essential goods is a vital survival mechanism. To label it purely as 'predatory' ignores the systemic pressures that people are under.

Speaker 3: I'm not suggesting that people aren't under pressure, but we shouldn't conflate necessity with the marketing tactics used to exploit that necessity. The issue is that the industry is designed to make us feel like we are constantly falling behind if we don't consume. It creates a cycle of anxiety that feeds directly into the economy.

Speaker 1: It seems we're caught in a loop. On one hand, we have the individual's desire for status and convenience, and on the other, the systemic pressure to maintain a certain level of consumption to keep the economic engine running.

Speaker 2: It's a complex interplay of psychology, technology, and macroeconomics. There are no easy answers here.

Speaker 3: Perhaps not, but we certainly need more robust regulation to ensure that the pursuit

of profit doesn't come at the total expense of consumer well-being.

Lesson 7: Use of English

Unit 10: Economy, Money & Consumption

Part 1 – Word formation

Instrucciones: Complete the sentences by changing the form of the word in CAPITALS at the end of each line. Use only one word per gap.

- The sudden ____ of the local currency caused widespread panic among investors. DEPRECIATE
- Many economists argue that the current level of consumer ____ is unsustainable. CONSUME

-
The company's ____ growth has allowed it to dominate the global market. RELENT

-
Despite the economic downturn, there has been a significant ____ in the demand for luxury goods. SURGE

- The government has introduced new measures to increase the ____ of the national budget. STABLE
- The sheer ____ of the retail sector's expansion caught many analysts by surprise. RAPID
- High levels of ____ often lead to a decrease in the overall standard of living. DEBT
- The sudden ____ of the market led to several major banks going bankrupt. VOLATILE

Part 2 – Key word transformations

Instrucciones: Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between three and six words, including the word given.

1. The government decided to increase taxes, which surprised everyone. INCREASE
 The decision to ____ taxes was unexpected.
2. "I'm sorry I didn't invest more money when the prices were low," said the trader. REGRET
 The trader ____ more money when prices were low.
3. It is very likely that the inflation rate will rise next month. PROBABILITY
 There is a ____ that the inflation rate will rise next month.
4. We were surprised by how much the cost of living had risen. SURPRISED
 We ____ the rise in the cost of living.
5. The company's failure was caused by poor management. RESULT
 Poor management ____ the company's failure.
6. He didn't realize how much money he had spent until he checked his bank account. REALISE
 Not ____ how much money he had spent until he checked his bank account.

Answer key

Part 1

- depreciation
- consumption
- relentless
- surge
- stability
- indebtedness
- volatility

Part 2

- increase taxes
- expressed regret at not investing
- high probability
- were surprised by
- resulted in
- realising how much money he had spent

Lesson 8: Writing Workshop

Task (Cambridge C1 Advanced, Part 2 style)

Topic: Economy, Money & Consumption

Question:

You work for a local government council. The council is considering a new policy to discourage consumerism and reduce waste by imposing a "luxury tax" on non-essential goods (such as high-end electronics and designer clothing). You have been asked to write a proposal to the council members.

In your proposal, you should:

- * Evaluate the potential economic impact of this tax on local businesses.
- * Discuss whether this policy would effectively encourage more sustainable consumption habits.
- * Suggest how the revenue from this tax could be used to benefit the community.

Write your proposal in 220–260 words in an appropriate style.

Tips (en español)

Para este tipo of task (Proposal), sigue estas estrategias para alcanzar el nivel C1:

- **Structure:** Utiliza subtítulos claros para cada sección (e.g., Introduction, Economic Impact, Sustainability, Recommendations). Esto ayuda a la organización visual y profesional.
- **Register:** Mantén un tono formal y objetivo. Evita contracciones (use do not instead of don't) y lenguaje coloquial. No uses "I think", usa estructuras más impersonales.
- **Linking:** Usa conectores sofisticados para guiar al lector (Furthermore, Nevertheless, Consequently) para que las ideas fluyan lógicamente entre párrafos.
- **Hedging:** En el nivel C1, no afirmes cosas de forma absoluta. Usa "hedging" (lenguaje cauteloso) como It is widely believed that... o This could potentially lead to... para mostrar matices.
- **Evaluación de ideas:** No te limites a listar hechos. Debes analizar pros y contras. Un C1 no solo dice "qué" pasará, sino "por qué" y "bajo qué condiciones".
- **Time management:** En el examen, dedica 5 minutos a planificar la estructura, 35 a escribir y 10 a revisar errores gramaticales y de ortografía.

Useful language

|

Expression |

Español |

Audio |

1 |

What immediately stands out is... |

Lo que destaca enseguida es... |

|

2 |

At first glance, the scene appears to... |

A primera vista, la escena parece... |

|

3 |

Whereas the first image suggests..., the second one points to... |

Mientras que la primera imagen sugiere..., la segunda apunta a... |

|

4 |

There is a striking contrast between... and... |

Hay un contraste marcado entre... y... |

|

5 |

The people seem to be dealing with... |

Las personas parecen estar lidiando con... |

|

6 |

It is highly likely that... |

Es muy probable que... |

|

7 |

One could infer that... |

Se podría inferir que... |

|

8 |

This might reflect a broader issue: ... |

Esto podría reflejar un problema más amplio: ... |

|

9 |

Although the setting is different, both images convey... |

Aunque el contexto es distinto, ambas imágenes transmiten... |

|

10 |

The overall impression is one of... |

La impresión general es de... |

|

11 |

This would be a useful example of... |

Esto sería un ejemplo útil de... |

|

12 |

I would argue that the second image feels more... |

Diría que la segunda imagen resulta más... |

|

Model answer

Proposal for the Implementation of a Luxury Consumption Tax

Introduction

The aim of this proposal is to evaluate the feasibility of introducing a luxury tax on non-essential goods. This document outlines the potential economic consequences, the impact on consumer behaviour, and recommendations for the allocation of generated funds.

Economic Impact

It is widely recognised that imposing such a tax could lead to a temporary decline in retail turnover, particularly within the high-end sector. Local businesses might face initial challenges due to reduced consumer spending. However, if managed correctly, this could stimulate a shift towards more local, artisanal production, potentially diversifying the local economy.

Sustainability and Consumption Habits

Regarding environmental impact, the policy could serve as a powerful deterrent against impulsive consumerism. By increasing the cost of non-essential goods, consumers may be encouraged to adopt more sustainable, long-term purchasing habits. While there is a risk that some may attempt to bypass the tax, the overall effect would likely be a reduction in unnecessary waste and resource depletion.

Allocation of Revenue

It is suggested that the revenue generated from this tax be reinvested into community-led green initiatives. For instance, funds could be used to subsidise public transport or support local recycling programmes. This would create a circular economy where luxury consumption directly funds environmental preservation.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, while the tax may pose initial economic risks, the long-term benefits for sustainability are significant. It is recommended that the council proceeds with a pilot programme to monitor the impact on local businesses before full implementation.

Marking checklist

- Content: ¿Has respondido a todos los puntos del enunciado (impacto económico, sostenibilidad y uso de fondos)? El contenido debe ser relevante para el lector objetivo.
- Communicative Achievement: ¿El tono es formal y el formato es de una propuesta (con subtítulos)? Se evalúa si el lenguaje es adecuado para convencer o informar a un comité.
- Organisation: ¿Las ideas están organizadas de forma lógica con conectores? Se evalúa la cohesión entre párrafos y la estructura clara.
- Language: ¿Has usado vocabulario avanzado y estructuras gramaticales complejas (pasiva, condicionales, hedging)? Se evalúa la precisión y la variedad léxica.

Vocabulario para Writing & Speaking

Expression |

Español |

Useful C1 example |

consumer behaviour |

comportamiento del consumidor |

Consumer behaviour changes during recessions. |

financial stability |

estabilidad financiera |

Financial stability reduces stress. |

to make ends meet |

llegar a fin de mes |

Many families struggle to make ends meet. |

disposable income |

renta disponible |

Disposable income influences spending habits. |

economic uncertainty |

incertidumbre económica |

Economic uncertainty affects investment. |

responsible consumption |

consumo responsable |

Responsible consumption can reduce waste. |

to prioritise spending |

priorizar gastos |

Students must prioritise spending carefully. |

a cost-effective solution |

solución rentable |

Public transport is a cost-effective solution. |

Speaking – describe & compare

Compara estas dos imágenes. En tu respuesta, debes describir las diferencias en los estilos de consumo y el entorno, y especular sobre las motivaciones de las personas en cada escenario. Debes hablar durante 2 minutos.



speaking

Useful phrases

- While the first image depicts luxury, the second one suggests... — Mientras que la primera imagen representa el lujo, la segunda sugiere... - In stark contrast to the minimalist boutique, the market is... — En marcado contraste con la boutique minimalista, el mercado es... - One could infer that the target audience for the first scene is... — Se podría inferir que el público objetivo de la primera escena es... - The atmosphere in the second photo seems to be far more... — El ambiente en la segunda foto parece ser mucho más... - It is highly likely that the items in the boutique are priced... — Es muy probable que los artículos en la boutique tengan un precio... - They appear to be catering to a much more diverse demographic. — Parecen estar orientados a un grupo demográfico mucho más diverso. - The sheer variety of goods in the market implies that... — La enorme variedad de productos en el mercado implica que... - There is a palpable sense of urgency in the second scene, whereas... — Hay una sensación palpable de urgencia en la segunda escena, mientras que... - Judging by the setting, the first

image focuses on exclusivity. — A juzgar por el entorno, la primera imagen se centra en la exclusividad. - The second scene, on the other hand, highlights communal consumption. — La segunda escena, por otro lado, destaca el consumo comunitario. - It might be argued that the first scene represents status seeking. — Se podría argumentar que la primera escena representa la búsqueda de estatus. - Both images reflect different facets of the global economy. — Ambas imágenes reflejan diferentes facetas de la economía global. ### Pronunciación

Para mejorar tu fluidez, presta atención a los pares mínimos. Practica la diferencia entre la vocal corta /ɪ/ (como en 'bit') y la larga /i:/ (como en 'beat'), ya que confundirlas puede cambiar el significado de palabras relacionadas con el consumo. También, distingue entre /æ/ (como en 'cat') y /ʌ/ (como en 'cut'), y entre el sonido corto /ɒ/ (como en 'hot') y el diptongo /əʊ/ (como en 'hope').

Model answer

Both images present strikingly different approaches to consumption and economic environments. In the first photograph, we see a high-end boutique characterized by minimalism and exclusivity. The single designer item placed on a marble pedestal suggests that this is not just about purchasing a product, but about acquiring status and luxury. The atmosphere feels quiet, almost sterile, which implies a highly curated and expensive shopping experience intended for a wealthy clientele.

In stark contrast, the second image depicts a bustling, crowded street market. Unlike the controlled environment of the boutique, this scene is filled with variety, movement, and a sense of community. Here, consumption seems more practical and driven by necessity or daily needs, with people interacting directly with vendors. While the first scene focuses on the prestige of a single object, the second highlights the sheer volume and accessibility of goods.

Ultimately, one could infer that while the boutique represents the pinnacle of luxury spending, the market reflects the heartbeat of local, everyday economies. Both scenes illustrate different facets of how money is spent and how different social classes interact with the concept of value.

Lesson 10: Mediation Task

Mediation

Escribe un correo electrónico a los miembros de tu familia para informarles sobre las tendencias de consumo actuales. Debes resumir los puntos clave del informe y ofrecer consejos prácticos basados en la información para ayudar a la gestión del presupuesto familiar. Utiliza un tono informal pero instructivo.

Texto original (español)

El informe anual de la Asociación de Consumidores indica que los hábitos de compra han cambiado drásticamente este año. Debido al aumento de la inflación, los consumidores están priorizando las marcas blancas frente a las marcas líderes para ahorrar dinero. Además, el auge del comercio electrónico ha hecho que las compras impulsivas aumenten, especialmente en dispositivos electrónicos. Se recomienda a los hogares establecer presupuestos semanales estrictos para evitar el endeudamiento innecesario. A pesar de la crisis, el sector del lujo sigue siendo estable, pero el consumo masivo se ha desplazado hacia productos con mejor relación calidad-precio.

Imagen de apoyo



mediation

Estrategias clave

- Identificar la idea principal: el cambio en los hábitos de consumo por la inflación.
- Sintetizar información: resumir la diferencia entre marcas líderes y blancas.
- Adaptar el registro: pasar de un informe formal a un email familiar cercano.
- Transformar datos: convertir estadísticas de inflación en consejos prácticos de ahorro.
- Seleccionar contenido relevante: omitir el sector de lujo si no es útil para la familia.
- Organizar la estructura: usar una introducción, desarrollo de consejos y un cierre afectuoso.

Audiencia de destino

your family members

Respuesta modelo (English)

Hi everyone,

I've just been reading a fascinating report from the Consumers' Association about how shopping habits are shifting lately, and I thought it would be useful to share some insights with you all. Because of rising inflation, many people are moving away from big-name brands to opt for supermarket own-brands instead. It's a smart way to keep costs down without sacrificing too much quality. Also, the report mentions that online shopping can lead to impulsive spending, which is something we should all be careful about!

To keep our family budget on track, I suggest we start setting a strict weekly budget for groceries to avoid overspending. We should also try to avoid those 'one-click' purchases online that often lead to unnecessary debt.

Let's try to prioritise value-for-money products to make sure we're managing our money wisely during these tricky economic times.

Love you all,
[Your Name]

Lesson 11: Podcast Guide

Podcast Guide – Economy, Money & Consumption

Escuchar podcasts auténticos es fundamental en el nivel C1 para acostumbrarse a la velocidad natural, los diversos acentos y las estructuras complejas que no aparecen en los libros de texto. En esta guía, encontrarás recursos seleccionados para desafiar tu comprensión auditiva y ampliar tu léxico especializado en economía y consumo.

Recommended podcasts (3 total)

1. BBC: The Inquiry

- Level & accent: British (RP/Standard), C1 appropriate: Yes.
- Recommended episode: "The true cost of fast fashion" (or similar episodes regarding consumerism).
- Why it's useful for C1: Este podcast utiliza un lenguaje periodístico sofisticado y estructuras argumentativas complejas. Te ayudará a seguir debates estructurados sobre problemas económicos globales.
- 5 key phrases to listen for:

To exert pressure on (ejercer presión sobre)

- A double-edged sword (un arma de doble filo)
- To drive consumer demand (impulsar la demanda de los consumidores)
- The socio-economic implications (las implicaciones socioeconómicas)
- To be at the forefront of (estar a la vanguardia de)

2. TED Talks Daily

- Level & accent: Mixed (Global English), C1 appropriate: Yes.

- Recommended episode: "How our spending habits shape our lives" (or episodes regarding behavioral economics).
- Why it's useful for C1: Al ser charlas cortas, permiten un enfoque intensivo en la retórica y la persuasión. Es ideal para aprender cómo conectar ideas de forma fluida.
- 5 key phrases to listen for:

To trigger a response (desencadenar una respuesta)

- Incentivise behaviour (incentivar el comportamiento)
- The psychological underpinning (el sustento/base psicológica)
- To bridge the gap (cerrar la brecha)
- A paradigm shift (un cambio de paradigma)

3. BBC: Desert Island Discs

- Level & accent: British (Various), C1 appropriate: Yes (challenging).
- Recommended episode: Any episode featuring a business leader or economist (e.g., episodes with entrepreneurs).
- Why it's useful for C1: Aunque es de entrevistas, el lenguaje es coloquial pero culto, lo que te permite entender matices emocionales y narrativos. Es perfecto para practicar la escucha de historias personales entrelazadas con contextos sociales.
- 5 key phrases to listen for:

To come into one's own (empezar a destacar/prosperar)

- A windfall (una suma de dinero inesperada/golpe de suerte)
- To weather the storm (capear el temporal/superar una crisis)
- To be driven by (estar motivado por/impulsado por)
- To reap the rewards (cosechar los frutos)

Active listening strategies (C1)

- Escucha por capas (Layered Listening): No intentes entender cada palabra a la primera. Escucha una vez para captar la idea general (gist) y una segunda vez para los detalles específicos.
- Identificación de marcadores discursivos: Presta especial atención a las palabras que conectan ideas (however, nonetheless, consequently). Estas son las "señales de tráfico" que te indican hacia dónde va el argumento.

ly Predicción contextual: Antes de que el hablante termine una frase, intenta predecir el final basándote en el contexto. Esto entrena tu cerebro para procesar la información a la velocidad del habla natural.

- Transcripción selectiva (Shadowing): Si escuchas una frase compleja, pausa el audio e intenta repetirla exactamente con la misma entonación y ritmo. Esto mejora tu prosodia y comprensión.
- Mapeo de vocabulario: No anotes palabras sueltas; anota "collocations" (grupos de palabras que suelen ir juntas). Por ejemplo, no anotes solo demand, anota to meet the demand.
- Gestión de la ambigüedad: En C1, es normal no entender el 100%. Aprende a "fluir" con la ambigüedad; si pierdes una palabra, no te detengas, sigue el hilo del argumento para no perder el contexto global.

Follow-up task

Task: The Analytical Summary

- Vocabulary Extraction: While listening, write down 5 new expressions or collocations. For each one, write a new sentence related to your own life or current events to ensure you understand the usage.
- The "Gist" Note-taking: After the first listen, write a 3-sentence summary: What was the main argument? What evidence was used? What was the speaker's tone?
- Critical Response (Speaking): Record a 2-minute voice note on your phone summarizing your opinion on the topic. You must use at least 3 of the new phrases you extracted. Listen to your own recording to check for clarity and pronunciation.

Lesson 12: Media Guide

Cine & Series – Economy, Money & Consumption

Utilizar contenido audiovisual es fundamental en el nivel C1 para entrenar el oído a diferentes velocidades y registros. Al ver producciones de alta calidad, no solo aprendes vocabulario específico, sino que comprendes los matices culturales que rodean al dinero y el poder.

Recommended title

- Title: Succession (HBO/Max)
- Accent/dialect: Primarily American (Standard American and various high-society regional accents).
- Why it's perfect for C1: The series is a masterclass in high-level business English, power dynamics, and sophisticated insults. It uses a dense mix of corporate jargon and colloquialisms, making it ideal for mastering register shifts.
- Episodes to start with: Season 1, Episodes 1–3.

Language focus

1. "The optics of this deal are disastrous; we need to pivot before the markets react."
 - Vocabulary note: Optics /'ɒptɪks/ (The way an event or decision is perceived by the public).
 - Grammar spotlight: Nominalisation. Instead of saying "People will see this deal as bad," the character uses "The optics of this deal..." This turns a complex situation into a noun phrase, which is essential for professional C1-level discourse.
2. "We are looking at a massive liquidity crisis if we don't consolidate our assets."
 - Vocabulary note: Liquidity /lɪ'kwɪdɪti/ (The availability of liquid assets/cash to a company).
 - Grammar spotlight: Academic register. The use of "liquidity crisis" and "consolidate" demonstrates how technical nouns are used to discuss economic instability concisely.

3. "He's been leveraging his position to orchestrate a hostile takeover."

- Vocabulary note: To leverage /'levərɪdʒ/ (To use something to maximum advantage).
- Grammar spotlight: Nominalisation. The process of "orchestrating a takeover" (using a gerund/-noun form) allows for more complex sentence structures compared to simple verbs, typical of business reports and high-level debate.

Viewing task (active watching)

- Vocabulary Log: Note down at least 10 words or idiomatic expressions per episode (e.g., cut-throat, windfall, bottom line).
- Register Tracking: Identify moments where characters switch from "Boardroom English" (formal) to "Private/Family English" (informal/aggressive). Note how their word choice changes.
- Nominalisation Hunt: Listen for when characters turn actions into nouns (e.g., instead of "We decided to expand," they say "The decision to expand..."). Write down three examples.
- Oral Summary: After the episode, record yourself on your phone summarising the main conflict of the episode in 3 sentences using at least two new vocabulary words.

Similar titles

- The Big Short (2015): A fast-paced film about the 2008 crisis; perfect for learning rapid-fire financial terminology.
- Billions (Showtime): Similar to Succession but focuses more heavily on the intersection of hedge funds, law, and high-stakes gambling.

The Modern Marketplace: Conscious Consumption



everyday_scene

En esta imagen, vemos a una consumidora evaluando cuidadosamente un producto en un entorno de mercado moderno. La escena nos permite discutir temas de consumo responsable, la inflación de los productos de calidad y las decisiones económicas cotidianas que tomamos como individuos.

Preguntas para hablar (Speaking practice)

- Describe what is happening in this scene and what the woman might be thinking.
- How do the shopping habits shown in this photo compare to those in your country?
- In your opinion, why are more people choosing to buy organic or artisanal products despite the higher cost?
- How much influence do you think marketing has on our daily spending decisions?
- Do you believe that individual consumption choices can actually impact the global economy?

Unit review – Economy, Money & Consumption

Al finalizar esta unidad, deberías ser capaz de discutir temas complejos relacionados con la macroeconomía, las finanzas personales y los patrones de consumo global utilizando un registro académico y profesional. Habrás desarrollado la capacidad de expresar opiniones matizadas sobre tendencias económicas y de utilizar estructuras gramaticales avanzadas para elevar el tono de tus argumentos.

Además, habrás perfeccionado el uso de la nominalización para transformar verbos y adjetivos en sustantivos, lo cual es esencial para lograr la cohesión y la formalidad requeridas en el nivel C1. También habrás ampliado tu léxico especializado para evitar repeticiones y utilizar colocaciones precisas que demuestren un dominio natural del inglés avanzado.

Grammar consolidation

Part 1: Sentence Transformation

Rewrite the sentences using the word in brackets so that the meaning remains the same. Do not change the word provided.

-

The government decided to raise interest rates to curb inflation. (DECISION)

The government's _____ interest rates to curb inflation.

-

They expanded the company rapidly, which surprised everyone. (EXPANSION)

The _____ surprised everyone.

-

If the company invests more in R&D, it will lead to innovation. (INVESTMENT)

Increased _____ will lead to innovation.

Part 2: Error Correction

Identify and correct the error in each sentence to ensure an academic register.

- The fluctuation of the prices caused a lot of instability in the market.
- There was a significant growth in the GDP last year.
- The fact that the economy is recovering is a good sign. (Rewrite to use a noun phrase to make it more formal).

Part 3: Controlled Rewriting

Rewrite the following sentences using nominalisation to make them more formal and concise.

- Because the demand for luxury goods increased, the prices went up.
- We need to regulate the market more strictly to prevent monopolies.
- Although the inflation rate rose, the unemployment rate fell.
- People are consuming more than they used to, which is a problem.

Vocabulary activation

Part 1: C1 Collocations

Complete the sentences with the correct word to form a common C1 collocation.

- The country is currently facing a severe economic ____.
- High levels of inflation can lead to a significant loss of ____-purchasing power.
- Many households are living well beyond their ____ due to easy access to credit.
- The government has implemented new ____ to stimulate economic growth.

Part 2: Word Formation

Use the word in capitals to form a word that fits in the gap.

- The ____ of the new trade agreement was unexpected. (ESTABLISH)
- There is growing ____ regarding the sustainability of current consumption patterns. (CONCERN)
- The sudden ____ of the stock market caused a global panic. (VOLATILE)
- We must consider the ____ implications of these fiscal policies. (ECONOMY)

Part 3: Register Choice

Choose the most appropriate formal term to replace the underlined informal expression.

- The company decided to cut down on (a) / curtail (b) its spending.
- The price of oil went up (a) / surged (b) unexpectedly last month.
- The bank decided to get rid of (a) / abolish (b) the old interest rate structure.
- The economy is getting better (a) / recovering (b) after the recession.

Integrated skills task

Source Text: The Rise of the Subscription Economy

The traditional model of ownership is undergoing a profound shift as the "subscription economy" continues to expand. Instead of purchasing goods outright, consumers are increasingly paying for recurring access to software, entertainment, and even household products. Proponents argue that this model offers unparalleled convenience and lower upfront costs, allowing individuals to access premium services without significant capital expenditure.

However, critics raise serious concerns regarding the long-term financial implications for consumers. The cumulative cost of multiple subscriptions can lead to "subscription fatigue" and significant monthly outflows that are often overlooked. Furthermore, this shift represents a move from asset ownership to perpetual renting, which may diminish individual wealth-building potential over time. As companies move towards "everything-as-a-service," the question remains: are consumers gaining flexibility, or are they becoming trapped in a cycle of continuous expenditure?

Writing Task

Instrucciones: Basándote en el texto anterior, escribe un ensayo de opinión (opinion essay) de entre 180 y 220 palabras. Debes analizar si los beneficios de la economía de suscripción superan los riesgos financieros para el consumidor. Utiliza el vocabulario de la unidad y estructuras de nominalización para mantener un registro académico.

Speaking checkpoint

- Compare: Compare the advantages of living in a consumer-driven society versus a minimalist one.
- Speculate: How might the global economy change if automation replaces a significant portion of the workforce?
- Evaluate: To what extent do you think advertising influences our spending habits more than our actual needs?
- Justify: Some argue that high taxation is necessary for economic stability. Justify or refute this view.
- Compare: Compare the concept of "saving for a rainy day" with the modern trend of "lifestyle inflation."
- Evaluate: Evaluate the impact of e-commerce on local high-street economies.

Self-assessment rubric

Criterion |

Needs work (B2/Lower C1) |

Solid (C1) |

Exam-ready (C1+/C2) |

Accuracy |

Frequent errors in complex structures. |

Good control; errors rarely impede meaning. |

High precision; sophisticated use of grammar. |

Range |

Uses basic vocabulary and simple structures. |

Uses a wide range of C1 vocabulary and collocations. |

Exceptional range; uses idiomatic and nuanced language. |

Fluency |

Hesitations when searching for words. |

Smooth delivery with natural pacing. |

Effortless flow; handles complex topics with ease. |

Task Achievement |

Partially addresses the prompt. |

Fully addresses the prompt with relevant detail. |

Fully addresses the prompt with depth and sophistication. |

Answer key

Grammar consolidation

1. The government's decision to raise interest rates...
2. The rapid expansion of the company surprised everyone.
3. Increased investment in R&D will lead to innovation.
4. The fluctuation of prices (or: Price fluctuations) caused...
5. There was significant growth in GDP (Remove 'the' before GDP or: Significant GDP growth occurred).

6. The recovery of the economy is a good sign. / Economic recovery is a good sign.
7. The increase in demand for luxury goods led to higher prices.
8. Stricter market regulation is needed to prevent monopolies.
9. Although the inflation rate rose, unemployment fell. (Or: Despite the rise in inflation, unemployment fell).
10. Increasing consumption levels are problematic. / The rise in consumption is a problem.

Vocabulary activation

1. downturn / recession
2. purchasing
3. means
4. measures
5. establishment
6. concern
7. volatility
8. economic
9. (b) curtail
10. (b) surged
11. (b) abolish
12. (b) recovering

Lesson 15: Global Exam

Global Exam – Units 1-10

¡Felicidades por llegar al final de la Unidad 10! Este examen de control global ha sido diseñado para simular el nivel de dificultad real del Cambridge C1 Advanced. No es solo un test de vocabulario; es una prueba de resistencia y precisión.

Instrucciones:

1. Materiales: Necesitarás papel, bolígrafo y un cronómetro.
2. Tiempo sugerido: Este examen completo debería tomarte aproximadamente 2 horas y 30 minutos.
3. Autocorrección: Al final encontrarás las respuestas. No las mires hasta haber terminado todo el examen. Para las secciones de Writing y Speaking, utiliza las notas de evaluación para juzgar tu propio desempeño.

Reading and Use of English

Part A: Reading Comprehension

Read the text below and choose the correct answer (A, B, C, or D) for each question.

The Paradox of Choice in the Modern Economy

In the contemporary consumer landscape, the prevailing wisdom suggests that more choice is inherently better. We are led to believe that a wider array of products, from breakfast cereals to digital streaming services, equates to greater freedom and satisfaction. However, recent economic psychological studies suggest that this abundance may actually lead to a phenomenon known as 'decision paralysis'.

When faced with an overwhelming number of options, the cognitive load required to evaluate each variable increases exponentially. Instead of feeling empowered, consumers often feel overwhelmed. This leads to a state of indecision where the individual finds it difficult to commit to

a single choice, often resulting in no purchase at all. Furthermore, even when a choice is finally made, the 'opportunity cost'—the value of the alternatives given up—weighs more heavily on the mind. This often results in post-purchase regret, as the consumer wonders if one of the rejected options would have been superior.

This paradox is particularly evident in the digital economy. Algorithms are designed to present us with endless streams of possibilities, curated to our specific tastes. While this precision aims to simplify the shopping experience, it often creates a feedback loop that narrows our horizons while simultaneously increasing the pressure to select the 'perfect' item. In an era of hyper-consumption, the ability to make a decision is becoming a more significant psychological hurdle than the ability to afford the product itself.

-

What is the writer's main point in the first paragraph?

- A) Consumers are increasingly dissatisfied with the quality of products.
- B) The belief that more choice leads to more freedom is being questioned.
- C) Digital streaming services have changed how we perceive freedom.
- D) Modern consumers are more indecisive than previous generations.

-

In the second paragraph, what does 'cognitive load' refer to?

- A) The financial cost of making a decision.
- B) The mental effort required to process information.
- C) The physical tiredness caused by shopping.
- D) The speed at which a consumer makes a choice.

-

According to the text, how does 'opportunity cost' affect the consumer?

- A) It makes the chosen product seem more valuable.
- B) It prevents people from being able to afford luxury goods.
- C) It contributes to feelings of regret after a purchase.
- D) It simplifies the decision-making process.

-

How does the digital economy contribute to the problem?

- A) It provides too many choices that are irrelevant to the user.
- B) It uses algorithms to make decisions for the consumer.
- C) It creates a sense of pressure to find an ideal option.
- D) It reduces the amount of variety available in the market.

-

The phrase 'narrows our horizons' in the third paragraph suggests that...

- A) We are becoming more focused on specific niches.
- B) Our range of interests is shrinking.
- C) The variety of products is actually decreasing.
- D) We are losing the ability to see the big picture.

-

What is the overall tone of the text?

- A) Critical and cautionary.
- B) Optimistic and encouraging.
- C) Indifferent and objective.
- D) Sarcastic and mocking.

Part B: Word Formation

Use the word in CAPITALS at the end of each line to form a word that fits in the gap.

- The sudden _____ in the stock market caused widespread panic. (FLUCTUATE)
- It is _____ to assume that all technological advances are beneficial. (LOGIC)
- The company's _____ strategy led to a significant increase in market share. (EXPAND)
- She has an _____ ability to predict economic trends. (EXCEPTION)
- The _____ of the new tax laws caused much debate among economists. (IMPLEMENT)
- We need to find a _____ solution to the problem of urban overpopulation. (SUSTAIN)
- His _____ to the project was vital to its success. (CONTRIBUTE)
- The _____ of the desert landscape was breathtaking. (VAST)

Part C: Key-word Transformations

Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. You must use between three and six words, including the word given.

-
I regret not studying harder for the economics exam.

WISH

I _____ harder for the economics exam.

-
It was only when the company went bankrupt that they realised the value of their assets.

UNTIL

Not _____ did they realise the value of their assets.

-
"I'm sorry I broke your expensive vase," said Mark to his mother.

APOLOGISED

Mark _____ her expensive vase.

-
Although he was very wealthy, he lived a very simple life.

DESPITE

He lived a very simple life _____ wealthy.

-
It is possible that they forgot about the meeting.

MIGHT

They _____ about the meeting.

-
It's too late to change the decision now.

POINT

There _____ the decision now.

Listening simulation

Note: In a real exam, you would listen to an audio file. For this simulation, read the transcript below carefully and answer the questions.

Transcript: An Interview with Dr. Aris Thorne, Behavioral Economist

Interviewer: Dr. Thorne, thank you for joining us. We've been discussing the 'consumerist trap'. To start, how would you define the current state of global consumption?

Dr. Thorne: Thank you. I'd say we are in an era of 'hyper-choice'. For decades, the goal of economic growth was to provide more variety. We succeeded, perhaps too well. We have moved from a scarcity-based economy to an abundance-based one, but our brains are still wired for scarcity. We are biologically unprepared for the sheer volume of data and options we face daily.

Interviewer: You mentioned 'decision paralysis' earlier. Is this purely a psychological issue, or is there an economic consequence?

Dr. Thorne: It is both. Psychologically, it leads to anxiety. Economically, it leads to inefficiency. When consumers spend hours researching a single product, they are experiencing a massive 'opportunity cost' in terms of time. Furthermore, the 'satisfaction gap'—the difference between what we expected and what we received—is widening. Because we believe there was a 'perfect' choice out there, we are never truly satisfied with the choice we actually make.

Interviewer: Some argue that automation and AI will solve this by making the 'perfect' choice for us. What is your take?

Dr. Thorne: That is a double-edged sword. While AI can filter noise, it also creates 'filter bubbles'. If an algorithm only shows you what it thinks you want, you lose the serendipity of discovery. You aren't making a choice; you are merely confirming a profile. That isn't true economic freedom; it's algorithmic confinement.

Interviewer: Finally, what advice would you give to young professionals entering the workforce today?

Dr. Thorne: Learn to value 'enough'. The cult of constant growth and constant acquisition is a treadmill that never stops. Develop the discipline to make decisions based on utility rather than comparison.

Questions

-

What does Dr. Thorne suggest about our biological evolution in relation to modern economics?

- A) We have evolved to handle more variety.
- B) Our brains are not adapted to the current level of abundance.
- C) We are becoming more efficient at processing data.
- D) Evolution has made us more consumer-driven.

-

According to the speaker, what is a major economic consequence of decision paralysis?

- A) A decrease in the total number of products available.
- B) The loss of time, which represents an opportunity cost.
- C) An increase in the price of luxury goods.
- D) The total collapse of the retail sector.

-

What does the term 'satisfaction gap' refer to?

- A) The difference between rich and poor consumers.
- B) The gap between expected quality and actual quality.
- C) The time spent between deciding and purchasing.
- D) The difference between digital and physical shopping.

-

Why does Dr. Thorne view AI as a 'double-edged sword'?

- A) It makes shopping faster but more expensive.
- B) It helps us find products but limits our variety.
- C) It solves paralysis but creates more work.
- D) It is both useful and dangerous to the economy.

-

What does the speaker mean by 'algorithmic confinement'?

- A) Being unable to afford products due to high prices.
- B) The feeling of being trapped by one's own data profile.
- C) The legal regulations placed on AI companies.
- D) The difficulty of escaping digital advertisements.

-

The term 'serendipity' in the text most nearly means:

- A) The ability to predict the future.
- B) A planned encounter with a product.
- C) Finding something valuable by chance.
- D) The speed of an algorithm.

-

What is the speaker's attitude towards 'the cult of constant growth'?

- A) He is a strong supporter.
- B) He is skeptical and critical.
- C) He is neutral and objective.
- D) He is confused by it.

-

What is the main purpose of the interview?

- A) To promote new AI shopping technologies.
- B) To debate the history of economic growth.
- C) To explore the psychological impact of modern consumption.
- D) To provide career advice for economists.

Writing paper

Part 1: Essay

Task: You have listened to a radio discussion about the impact of consumerism on the environment. You have made the following notes:

Impact of Consumerism:

- * Resource depletion
- * Waste production
- * Carbon footprint

Task: Write an essay discussing two of the points in your notes. You should explain which impact is more significant, giving reasons in support of your answer.

- Word count: 220–260 words.
- Planning Advice (Spanish):

Introducción: Presenta el tema de forma general sin dar tu opinión todavía.

- Cuerpo 1: Desarrolla el primer punto (ej. waste production). Usa conectores como Furthermore o In addition.
- Cuerpo 2: Desarrolla el segundo punto (ej. resource depletion). Usa contrastes como On the other hand.
- Conclusión: Resume tus puntos y deja clara tu posición (cuál es más significativo).

Part 2: Options

Choose ONE of the following questions. Write your answer in 220–260 words.

Option A: Report

Your company is considering moving from a physical office to a fully remote working model to save money. You have been asked to write a report for the Board of Directors.

- * Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of remote work.
- * Evaluate the impact on company culture and productivity.
- * Recommend whether the company should proceed with the move.

Option B: Review

You recently visited a new 'smart store' (a shop entirely run by AI and automation) in a major city. Write a review for a lifestyle magazine.

- * Describe the shopping experience.
- * Discuss whether the technology makes shopping easier or more stressful.
- * State whether you would recommend this type of shopping to others.

Speaking paper

Part 1: Interview (2-3 minutes)

The examiner asks personal questions about your life, interests, and future plans.

- * Prompt 1: Where do you live, and what do you like most about your hometown?
- * Prompt 2: How much time do you spend shopping online compared to in physical stores?
- * Prompt 3: Do you think your career or studies will require you to move to another country?

Part 2: Long Turn (4 minutes)

Candidate A is given a set of pictures. Candidate B describes them. Then they switch.

Candidate A's Task:

Visual Prompt Description: Imagine three pictures: 1. A person looking stressed while shopping. 2. A person happily using a self-checkout machine. 3. A person looking at a massive pile of delivery boxes at a doorstep.

Prompt: "Compare the pictures and say why the people might be feeling these different emotions."

Interaction Language (Useful for the candidate):

- * "In the first picture, it seems as though..."
- * "This contrasts sharply with the second image, where..."
- * "One could interpret this as..."

Part 3: Collaborative Task (4 minutes)

Two candidates interact to make a decision based on a prompt.

Scenario: A local council is deciding how to spend a large budget to improve the local economy. They have several ideas:

1. Building a new shopping mall.
2. Supporting local small businesses with grants.
3. Developing a digital tech hub for young professionals.
4. Improving public transport to make the city more accessible.

Task: Discuss the advantages of each idea and decide which two would be the most effective for long-term economic growth.

Part 4: Discussion (5 minutes)

The examiner asks follow-up questions related to the topic in Part 3.

* Question 1: Do you think large shopping malls are becoming obsolete in the age of online shopping?

* Question 2: To what extent should governments intervene in the economy to protect small businesses?

* Question 3: Is the pursuit of economic growth always a positive thing for a society?

Mediation challenge

Source Text (Spanish):

”El auge del comercio electrónico ha transformado los hábitos de consumo. Aunque ofrece comodidad, también ha generado problemas de embalaje excesivo y un aumento en las emisiones de transporte. Los expertos sugieren que los consumidores deberían considerar el impacto ambiental de sus pedidos frecuentes.”

Task (English):

You are helping a friend who is moving to an English-speaking country. They have read the text above but don't understand the implications. Write an email to your friend explaining:

1. What the main changes in shopping habits are.
2. What the environmental drawbacks mentioned in the text are.
3. What advice the text suggests for responsible consumers.

- Target Audience: A friend (Informal/Semi-formal register).
- Goal: Summarize and translate the essence of the Spanish text into natural English.

Answer key and marking notes

Reading and Use of English Answers

Part A:

1. B
2. B
3. C
4. C
5. A
6. A

Part B:

1. fluctuations
2. illogical
3. expansionist (or expansion)
4. exceptional
5. implementation
6. sustainable
7. contribution
8. vastness

Part C:

1. wish I had studied
2. until they went bankrupt

3. apologised for breaking
4. despite being / despite his
5. might have forgotten
6. is no point in changing

Marking Notes

Writing (Part 1 & 2):

- * Content: Did you answer all parts of the task?
- * Communicative Achievement: Is the tone appropriate (Essay = Formal; Review = Semi-formal; Report = Formal)?
- * Organization: Are you using cohesive devices (e.g., consequently, nevertheless, in light of)?
- * Language: Are you using C1-level vocabulary and complex grammatical structures (inversions, conditionals, passive voice)?

Speaking:

- * Grammar & Vocabulary: Avoid simple words like "good" or "bad". Use "beneficial", "detrimental", "superb", "appalling".
- * Fluency: Aim for a natural flow. If you hesitate, use fillers like "Well, let me think..." or "That's an interesting point..."
- * Interaction: In Part 3, don't dominate. Ask your partner: "What's your take on this?" or "Don't you agree?"

Mediation:

- * Ensure you do not just translate word-for-word. The goal is to convey the meaning of the Spanish text into natural English. For example, "auge" should be "rise" or "boom", not "rise of".