

## **The sharing economy**

With the advent of the internet, online communities have figured out a way to generate profit from the sharing of underused assets everyone owns. Using websites and social media groups that facilitate the buying and selling of second-hand goods, it is now easier than ever for peer-to-peer sharing activities to take place. And this is known as the sharing economy. Businesses have also caught on to the profitability of the sharing economy and are seeking to gain from making use of those underutilised resources. A business model that has rapidly risen in popularity sees companies providing an online platform that puts customers in contact with those who can provide a particular product or service. Companies like Airbnb act as a middleman for people to cash in on their unused rooms and houses and let them out as lucrative accommodation. Another example is Uber, which encourages people to use their own personal cars as taxis to make some extra cash in their free time.

This move towards a sharing economy is not without criticism. Unlike businesses, unregulated individuals do not have to follow certain regulations and this can lead to poorer and inconsistent quality of goods and services and a higher risk of fraud. Nevertheless, in the consumerist society we live in today, the increased opportunities to sell on our unwanted and underused goods can lead to a lesser impact on our environment.

**The following statements are ALL wrong. Correct them according to the text.**

1. "Sharing economy" is the profit generated by selling goods online.
2. Businesses are not interested in "sharing economy".
3. Airbnb is a company that sells people's unwanted houses.
4. The lack of regulations in sharing economy is an advantage for customers.
5. The chance to buy other people's unwanted goods doesn't have any impact on the environment.

## China plans to reduce single-use plastics

China has unveiled ambitious plans to drastically reduce single-use plastics by 2025. China's National Development and Reform Commission is fast-tracking a number of measures designed to slash the production and use of plastics over the next five years. It announced that by the end of 2020, non-biodegradable plastic bags will be banned in supermarkets and shopping malls in major cities. The ban will also apply to food delivery services, which use vast amounts of the plastics. Single-use plastic straws and cutlery used by food takeaway services will be banned nationwide by the end of this year. China will encourage the use of alternative materials such as non-plastic products and biodegradable shopping bags.

Single-use plastics are one of the world's biggest sources of plastic pollution. They have become a ubiquitous part of daily life and a part of our throwaway culture. The Chinese authorities set a goal of reducing the "intensity of consumption" in order to reverse our reliance on single-use plastics. Previous regulations to curb plastic use, in 2008, led to an estimated cut in plastic bag production of 67 billion bags. The United Nations said it is urgent that all countries adopt policies similar to those China is introducing. It said: "We are already unable to cope with the amount of plastic waste we generate, unless we rethink the way we manufacture, use and manage plastics."

**The following statements are ALL wrong. Correct them according to the text.**

1. China will outlaw all single-use plastics by the year 2025.
2. China will measure things to slash single-use plastics.
3. Plastic cutlery used by takeaways won't be included in the ban.
4. The article said single-use plastics are very useful in everyday life.
5. The UN said we can cope with the amount of plastic waste.

*Celine  
Turber*

## Zero-carbon power bigger than fossil fuels in UK

The United Kingdom has said it is playing its part in striving for a cleaner and greener planet. For the first time since the Industrial Revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries, the UK is being powered more by zero-carbon fuels than fossil fuels. In each of the first five months of 2019, fossil fuels have produced less than half of the UK's electricity. Analysts say a "tipping point" has been reached and the trend of zero-carbon energy sources providing more power than fossil fuels will continue. Power from wind, solar, nuclear and hydro sources outstripped coal and gas-fired generation. A decade ago, three quarters (75.6 per cent) of the UK's electricity came from coal and gas, and only 22.3 per cent was zero carbon.

The switch to more zero-carbon power was described by the UK's energy chief executive as a "key milestone on the journey towards net zero". CEO John Pettigrew said the zero-carbon share should increase to 90 per cent by the 2030s. The UK's Prime Minister has made a commitment to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. This would make the UK the first major economy to do so. Energy analyst Tom Burke told the BBC: "We have cracked technical problems of dealing with climate change." He added: "As we move towards net zero, jobs will be lost in fossil fuel industries and created in low-carbon industries."

**The following statements are ALL wrong. Correct them according to the text.**

1. The UK stopped using fossil fuels for the first time since the Industrial Revolution.
2. Analysts say the UK has reached the top regarding zero-carbon energy, and now the trend should reverse.
3. Nearly half of the UK's power was zero carbon a decade ago.
4. An energy executive said net zero was an impossible goal for the UK.
5. An analyst said the UK has problems with cracks in its technology.

Felma Gu

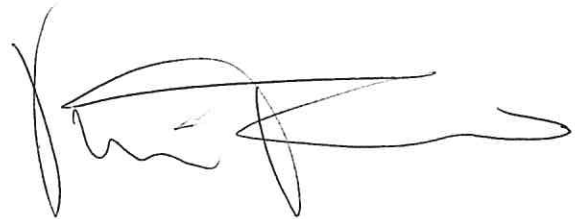
## Big education publisher to end printed textbooks

The world's largest education publisher, Pearson, has said it will gradually phase out printed textbooks. It has taken a decision to make all of its learning resources "digital first". Pearson said the future of the industry is in e-books and digital services. Pearson CEO John Fallon explained more about the company's future direction. He told the BBC: "We are now over the digital tipping point. Over half our annual revenues come from digital sales, so we've decided, a little bit like in other industries like newspapers or music or in broadcast, that it is time to flick the switch in how we primarily make and create our products." He added: "I am increasingly confident and excited about this."

Pearson said a huge advantage of digital books is that they can be continually updated, which means teachers will always have access to the latest versions of textbooks. Mr Fallon said Pearson would stop its current business model of revising printed course books every three years. He said this model has dominated the industry for over four decades and is now past its use-by date. Fallon said: "We learn by engaging and sharing with others, and a digital environment enables you to do that in a much more effective way." He added the digital books will appeal to the "Netflix and Spotify generation". Textbook writers are worried they will earn less from their books as digital products are sold on a subscription basis.

**The following statements are ALL wrong. Correct them according to the text.**

1. Nearly half of the publisher's earnings are from digital sales.
2. The publisher updates its printed textbooks continually.
3. The current textbook business model is still in step with the times.
4. The publisher thinks the "Netflix" generation is not interested in books.
5. Textbook writers are happy with the subscription service.

A large, stylized signature or scribble, possibly representing the name 'John Fallon' or a similar name, written in a cursive, flowing style.

## UK economy shrinks by 25 per cent

The UK economy has suffered its worst economic performance since a mini ice age over 300 years ago when the River Thames froze. The UK's Office for National Statistics reported that the economy was around 25 per cent smaller in April than it was in February. The Bank of England governor, Andrew Bailey, acknowledged there was a 20.4 per cent drop in GDP in April alone. He called this "a dramatic and big number". He was positive about the future and said there were "signs of the economy now beginning to come back to life". Much of the UK economy shut down in a bid to curb the spread of the coronavirus. The UK has seen the biggest economic collapse among the world's developed economies.

The United Kingdom's economy has seen nearly 20 years' worth of growth wiped out because of the coronavirus lockdown measures. This week, people are being encouraged to go shopping again as many stores have reopened. Many shoppers remain wary about venturing out to shops or commuting, as the number of daily deaths is still around 200. Talking about the economic collapse, Mr Bailey said: "It's not surprising. The economy clearly closed out substantially at the end of March into April. The big question is what happens next." The UK's 'Guardian' newspaper was pessimistic about a recovery. It wrote: "Britain's economy has fallen off a cliff. It will be a long climb back."

**The following statements are ALL wrong. Correct them according to the text.**

1. The UK economy is at its worst since a mini ice age 100 years ago.
2. The UK economy is not doing bad compared to other developed nations.
3. Over 50 years of growth has been wiped out in the UK.
4. Shoppers are looking forward to getting back in stores this week.
5. A newspaper said the UK economy has fallen from the sky.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. Bailey', written in a cursive style.

## Luxembourg's public transport revolution

After a lengthy process, Luxembourg's government has made public transport free. As of March 1, buses, trams, and trains in the country became completely free of charge. The small country has been working towards a vision of "free mobility" with the aim of alleviating constant traffic issues and finding a more suitable model for sustainability. According to the country's minister for transport, François Bausch, the goal is that Luxembourg will "transform into a mobility laboratory." However, the plan has been generating debates among politicians and the public alike. According to a report by the BBC, the price of the project will come to around \$46 million. The report also suggests there will be no layoffs; public transport staff members who are left without roles will be transferred to new positions.

Luxembourg's inhabitants are used to having their cars: on average, Luxembourg is the European country with the most cars per person. More than free incentives will be needed to persuade Luxembourgiens to change their ways. The plan also has a major hitch: with outdated buses, trains delays, and the construction of the country's tram network still underway, the country's infrastructure isn't built for this system as it currently is. If the aim is to get 20% of Luxembourgiens to start moving around with public transport, a bigger investment than was originally envisioned will be needed.

**The following statements are ALL wrong. Correct them according to the text.**

1. Luxembourg's government made public transport entirely electric.
2. The goal of this transport policy is to reduce Luxembourg's dependence on petrol.
3. The project won't involve any additional costs for the government.
4. The country's inhabitants are keen on using transport solutions alternative to cars.
5. Luxembourg's public transport fleet and its network are modern and fully developed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Bausch', is written in a cursive style.

### **Stop Hate for Profit campaign suspends social media ads**

A campaign group operating under the hashtag "Stop Hate For Profit" has severely dented the market value of Facebook and Twitter. The group is calling on advertisers to suspend advertising with the social media giants until they reform their practices. In particular, the group wants sites to be stricter in their moderation of posts the group deems to be hate speech and misinformation. The value of Facebook's stock plummeted by eight per cent last Friday as Unilever halted its advertising. A three per cent drop followed on Monday as major brands such as Starbucks and Coca Cola said they would pause spending on the social media platform. Facebook's value has nosedived by around \$60 billion.

The Stop Hate For Profit campaign got going on June the 17th after several civil rights groups and non-profit watchdogs collaborated. They formulated a campaign to get social media platforms to address problems and biases in the way they moderate content. They called for an advertising boycott and asked advertisers to, "hit pause on hate". They said: "We are asking all businesses to stand in solidarity with our most deeply held American values of freedom, equality and justice and not advertise on [these] services in July." Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg responded by announcing a series of new policies, including a ban on hateful content and on posts making false claims about voting.

**The following statements are ALL wrong. Correct them according to the text.**

1. A campaign group wants all advertisers to abandon Facebook forever.
2. Starbucks and Coca Cola are thinking about suing Facebook.
3. Facebook's value was not affected by the campaign.
4. The group is asking for advertisers to fund the stop hate for profit campaign.
5. Facebook said it would change its moderators.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Beatty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.