

John Lewis Christmas advert 2015

Level 2 • Intermediate

1 Warmer

Watch the advert that is the subject of this lesson and talk about what you see.

www.theguardian.com/media/2015/nov/06/john-lewis-christmas-advert-age-uk

2 Key words

Match the key words from the article with the definitions below. Then, find them in the article to read them in context. The paragraph numbers are given to help you.

animated	brand	charity	competitors	echo	glow
hype	mark	seasonal	shack	teaser	telescope

- the use of a lot of advertisements and other publicity to influence or interest people _____ (para 2)
- available only during a particular time of year _____ (para 2)
- show that something is happening _____ (para 2)
- an organization to which you give money so that it can give money and help to people who are poor or ill, or who need advice and support _____ (para 2)
- shine with a soft light _____ (para 3)
- a small plain building, usually made of wood or metal _____ (para 4)
- a piece of equipment shaped like a tube that you look through to make distant objects look closer and larger _____ (para 4)
- express the ideas or feelings that someone else has expressed _____ (para 5)
- a very short piece of film advertising a forthcoming film, TV programme etc, designed to create interest before it is released _____ (para 9)
- a character or scene that is made up of a series of images that are shown quickly one after another so that they look as if they are moving _____ (para 10)
- the image that a company presents of itself to the public _____ (para 11)
- companies that sell the same goods or services as another company _____ (para 12)

3 Find the information

Scan the article to find the answers to these questions.

- What is John Lewis?
- What, for many people, marks the beginning of the Christmas shopping season in the UK?
- Who is John Lewis teaming up with this Christmas?

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John Lewis Christmas advert 2015: raising awareness for Age UK

Sarah Butler

6 November, 2015

- 1 A lonely old man living on the moon is the unusual focus of John Lewis's 2015 Christmas advert.
- 2 There is increasing hype around John Lewis's seasonal ad, which has come to mark the beginning of the Christmas shopping season for many. The department store will aim to raise hundreds of thousands of pounds for Age UK. It will also encourage staff and customers to join up with their local branch of the charity to care for elderly people who might be alone over the holiday.
- 3 The department store has spent £7m on a campaign that ranges from the TV ad to a smartphone game and merchandise, including glow-in-the-dark pyjamas, as well as making areas that look like the surface of the moon in 11 of their stores.
- 4 After two years of successful ads with cuddly animals – a bear and hare, then a penguin – this time, the store is tugging at the heartstrings with a story of a young girl, Lily, who spots an old man living in a shack on the moon through her telescope. The determined child tries sending him a letter and firing a note via bow and arrow, before floating him a present of a telescope tied to balloons, which finally allows them to make contact.
- 5 The ad's message is: "Show someone they're loved this Christmas", which echoes Age UK's own campaign: "No one should have no one at Christmas". Profits from three products – a mug, gift tag and card – will go to the charity.
- 6 Rachel Swift, head of marketing at John Lewis, said that people talk about the charity at this time of year and the ad makes you think about someone who lives on your street that might not see anybody.
- 7 The campaign features the Oasis track *Half the World Away* reinterpreted by Norwegian artist Aurora.
- 8 The ad cost £1m to make. The moon scenes were shot at the Warner Bros Studios, where the Harry Potter films were made, and the specially built set was created by one of the team behind the latest Star Wars film, *The Force Awakens*.
- 9 As in the last few years, John Lewis has drummed up interest in their most recent ad with a teaser campaign on TV and social media using the hashtag #OnTheMoon. A full moon will fall on Christmas Day 2015 – a complete coincidence, according to Swift.
- 10 In 2014, the retailer also spent £7m on a campaign with a realistic animated penguin and a young boy playing together to the tune of John Lennon's *Real Love*, sung by British singer-songwriter Tom Odell. It had drummed up 22m views on YouTube by the first week of January – more than the 16.6m views of Sainsbury's ad with First World War soldiers sharing a bar of chocolate, the UK's second most popular ad of 2014.
- 11 Swift said that, despite the hype, John Lewis had kept the same strategy for the last five years. "It's all about thoughtful gifting and going the extra mile for someone you love at Christmas," she said. "We don't go into it thinking, 'This is going to be huge,' just getting something right for the brand at this time of year and something we hope customers really love."
- 12 Sarah Vizard, news editor of trade journal *Marketing Week*, said John Lewis appeared to have simplified efforts this time, with a lower-key presence in stores despite a growing number of competitors. "There are definitely a lot more brands doing Christmas ads this year but I think a lot of those brands who tried to compete with John Lewis by doing something emotional and creative have gone back to what you can buy in store," she said. "John Lewis still does the emotional piece the best. This campaign is another great way of communicating that in a way that customers can relate to. I think people will think it is really cute."

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First published in *The Guardian*, 06/11/15

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4 Comprehension check

Are these statements true (T) or false (F) according to the article? Correct any that are false.

1. The Age UK charity will receive money from the sale of items connected to the John Lewis Christmas ad.
2. The advert's title is 'No one should have no one at Christmas.'
3. The ad was made using the Harry Potter set.
4. The ad cost £22m to make.
5. John Lewis ran a social media campaign to get people interested in the ad even before it was shown on TV.
6. The moon topic was chosen because, in 2015, there is a full moon at Christmas.
7. John Lewis's 2014 ad with a boy and a penguin was that year's most successful Christmas advert.
8. John Lewis's Christmas ads are more factual than those of its competitors.

5 Expressions

a. Complete the expressions from the article. The first letter of each missing word is given to help you.

1. raise a _____ for something
2. ranges f ___ ... to ...
3. tugging at the h _____
4. drum up i _____ in something
5. going the extra m _____

b. Match the expressions with their meanings below.

- a. make someone feel a lot of love or sympathy
- b. get people interested in something
- c. provide people with information so that they have a better understanding of a situation
- d. make a special extra effort in order to achieve something
- e. included in a group of items, starting with one and ending with another

c. Now, use the expressions in sentences of your own.

6 Discussion

Complete the sentence below using your own ideas, choosing the best preposition to fit your sentence. Then, discuss what everyone has written.

Christmas is a time for/of/when ...

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7 Webquest

Watch the advert again and answer the questions.

- Do you feel differently about the ad now that you have read the article from the *Guardian*?
- Does it succeed in getting its message across?

Find out more about John Lewis and Age UK from their official websites.

www.johnlewis.com

www.ageuk.org.uk

Watch the other British Christmas ads shown below and discuss ...

... which message is communicated most clearly and which is not obvious at first;

... which shows a traditional British Christmas;

... which clearly shows the things it wants to sell;

... which one you like best.

Sainsbury: www.youtube.com/watch?v=kuRn2S7iPNU

Boots: www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJgTd4L1UTI

Marks and Spencer: www.youtube.com/watch?v=OrYZEepTQ5M

Waitrose: www.youtube.com/watch?v=AljiO2uxkCM

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KEY

2 Key words

1. hype
2. seasonal
3. mark
4. charity
5. glow
6. shack
7. telescope
8. echo
9. teaser
10. animated
11. brand
12. competitors

5 Expressions

24. awareness – c
25. from – e
26. heartstrings – a
27. interest – b
28. mile – d

3 Find the information

13. a British department store
14. the release of the John Lewis Christmas ad
15. the UK charity, Age UK

Teacher's tip: Try to find a comparable department store that your students know so that they have a comparison for John Lewis. For example, Breuninger or KaDeWe in Germany, Galeries Lafayette in France, El Corte Inglés in Spain, La Rinascente in Italy, Macy's in the US.

4 Comprehension check

16. T
17. F – That's Age UK's slogan. John Lewis's is: 'Show someone they are loved at Christmas.'
18. F – It was made at the studios where some of the Harry Potter films were made.
19. F – It cost £1m.
20. T
21. F – The full moon is just a coincidence.
22. T
23. F – They are more emotional and creative.