

A Day at the Mall



METACOGNITIVE POINT



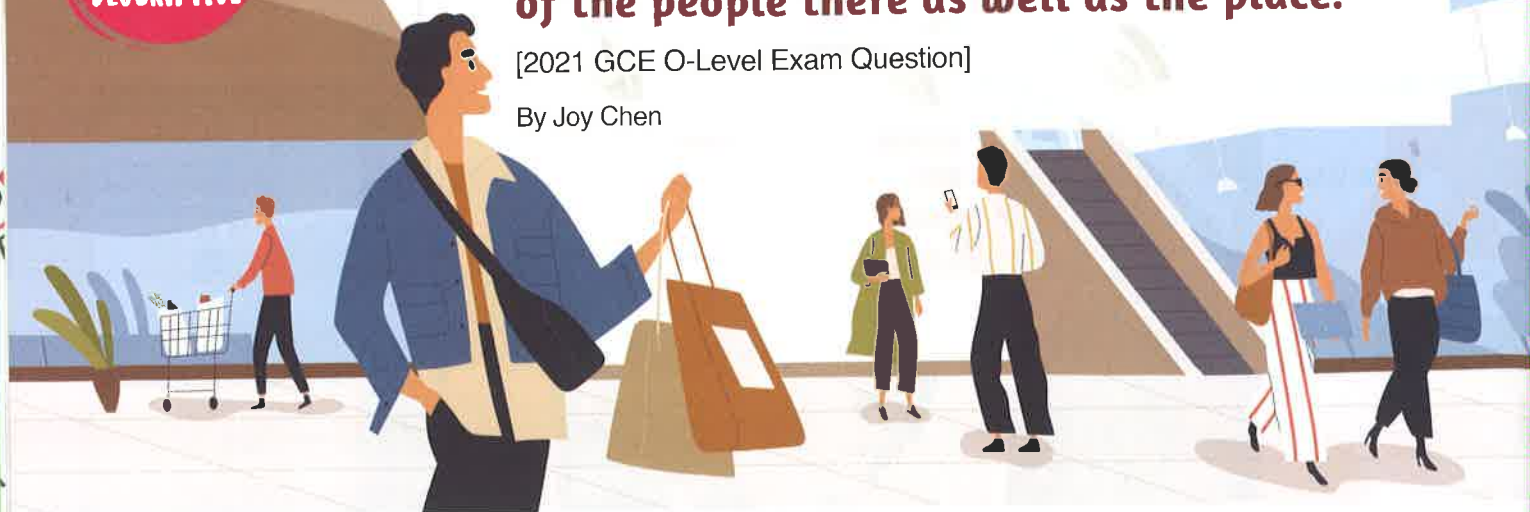
What is my experience like in a busy shopping mall?



Describe the sights and sounds at a busy shopping mall. Remember to describe some of the people there as well as the place.

[2021 GCE O-Level Exam Question]

By Joy Chen



The Emporium mega mall had just been completed in our town with great fanfare, and I, along with a ¹throng of shopaholics, flocked there last week-end to hunt for some great promotional deals. The crowd was abuzz with the murmur of excited chatter, and looking around, I could make out people of all ages, from teenagers dressed to the nines on a day out, to bored retirees, and young families with their toddlers in tow. With the grand opening ²serendipitously dated just after my end-of-year exams, I was eager to indulge in some retail therapy.

Exploring new shopping malls has always been a guilty pleasure, and I often savour how the combination of bold architecture, novel shopping outlets and gastronomical offerings can ³culminate in a sense of wonder. In this regard, the Emporium mega mall, conceptualised as a futuristic lifestyle mall, did not disappoint. Upon entering, I found myself in a grand ⁴atrium, with an open floorplan and ample sitting area where shoppers

could congregate, chit-chat or rest. Above, the skylight dome, lined with gleaming glass panels, overlooked the ground floor plaza, filling the inner space with a warm glow from the natural sunlight. All around, the dazzling promotional signs lined the perimeter of each level, filling one's view with a panoramic smorgasbord of colourful logos and eye-catching sales. The chorus of piped-in music from different stores blended into a raucous cacophony. The mall was also brimming with state-of-the-art technology, including interactive digital signboards for visitors and automated robot concierges that patrolled the grounds, ready to serve any customer's queries.

The mall boasted a unique element anchored at its core: a ⁵colossal indoor rock-climbing wall that seemed to sprout out of the ground to nestle itself between the upper floors. From higher up, visitors could observe up close the climbers arduously making their way to the top, seeing their faces ⁶glistening with sweat and hearing them grunting



METACOGNITIVE
checkPOINT

Is there anything
surprising about what
I have read so far?



with effort to ascend one foothold at a time. One would occasionally hear words of encouragement from the gawking crowds, shouting “Come on, you can do it!” and “You’re almost there, keep going!” They cheered as the climbers finally reached the summit, before they abseiled down, panting with exhaustion.

One other aspect I liked about the mall was the diversity of items on offer. In addition to the typical shops and expensive luxury brands, there were also spaces carved out for local entrepreneurs to sell their unique wares. These were situated along the various elevated walkways connecting the upper levels, which criss-crossed in the air. Along these pavilions were quirky pop-up stalls and cart vendors selling everything from novelty gadgets to artisanal wares. I had an interesting time admiring the intricate craftsmanship of handmade ceramics, sampling the delectable fragrances of specialty tea imported from China, and trying on eco-friendly jewellery made from sustainably sourced materials. Moreover, chatting with the storeowners was a delightfully unique experience as I learnt more about their products directly from the source itself.

Having now accumulated multiple bags of shopping, I was ready to call it a day and rest my weary feet. Thankfully, the mall’s high-tech food court made ordering food a breeze. With a series of simple swift taps on the online app through my phone, I was able to pre-order my meal and collect it as I arrived with hardly any waiting time nor queue. At the end of the day, I left the mall with a full belly as a satisfied customer, looking forward to my next retail outing.

Word Bank:

- 1 **throng:**
a crowd or large group of people
- 2 **serendipitously:**
occurring or discovered by chance in a happy or beneficial way
- 3 **culminate:**
to have as a result or be the final result of a process

- 4 **atrium:**
a very large room, often with glass walls or roof, especially in the middle of a large shop or office building
- 5 **colossal:**
extremely large
- 6 **glistening:**
to shine by reflecting light from a wet or smooth surface

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METACOGNITIVE POINT:
REFLECTION

What are two interesting aspects of this essay?



Describing Activities and Objects

Qn: Describe the sights and sounds at a busy shopping mall. Remember to describe some of the people there as well as the place.

When describing an experience in a location such as in a busy mall, there can be a slew of activities and sights that one will encounter. In this essay, we will examine how the writer describes an activity and an object.

How to Describe an Activity

Ask yourself the following questions.

- What is an activity that would likely take place in a mall?
- Where is the location of the activity?
- Who are the people involved in the activity? What are they doing? How do they feel?
- Besides sight, what other senses (eg. sound or smell) can you use to describe the activity?

While there is no need to address every question, it is important to offer a detailed description so as to give your readers a vivid image of the activity.

Paragraph 3:

The mall boasted a unique element anchored at its core: a colossal indoor rock-climbing wall that seemed to sprout out of the ground to nestle itself between the upper floors. From higher up, visitors could observe up close the climbers arduously making their way to the top, seeing their faces glistening with sweat and hearing them grunting with effort to ascend one foothold at the time. One would occasionally hear words of encouragement from the gawking crowds, shouting "Come on, you can do it!" and "You're almost there, keep going!" They cheered as the climbers finally reached the summit, before they abseiled down, panting with exhaustion.

the location of the activity

the people involved in the activity and what they are doing

From the descriptions about the climbers, one can infer that the climbers are exhausted but still determined to reach the top.

sounds that are related to the activity

In this essay, the writer describes the encouraging words from the crowds.



How to Describe an Object

Ask yourself the following questions:

- What is this object? What is unique about it? What are some characteristics?
- How does the writer engage your senses (sight, smell, taste, hearing, touch)?
- Where is it found?

Paragraph 4:

One thing I liked about the mall was the diversity of items on offer. In addition to the typical shops and expensive luxury brands, there were also **spaces carved out for local entrepreneurs to sell their unique wares**. These were situated along the various elevated walkways connecting the upper levels, which criss-crossed in the air. Along these pavilions were quirky pop-up stalls and cart vendors selling everything from novelty gadgets to artisanal wares. I had an interesting time admiring the intricate craftsmanship of handmade ceramics, sampling the delectable fragrances of specialty tea imported from China, and trying on eco-friendly jewellery made from sustainably sourced materials. Moreover, chatting with the storeowners was a delightfully unique experience as I learnt more about their products directly from the source itself.

A specific location is given: along elevated walkways

Object(s): unique wares - novelty gadgets to artisanal wares like ceramics, tea, jewellery.

Note the use of adjectives and details to describe these objects, eg. intricate craftsmanship, handmade ceramics, the delectable fragrances of specialty tea imported from China and eco-friendly jewellery from sustainably sourced materials.