



## *Las compras: Purchases, Practices, and Perspectives*

### Objectives:

Students will be able to . . .

- Give the Spanish names for various businesses
- Discuss differences between shopping practices in the U.S. and in Spanish-speaking countries
- Discuss the cultural perspectives that underlie these differences

### National Standards addressed:

- 1.1 Students engage in conversation in Spanish (if the lesson is conducted in Spanish)
- 2.1 Students discuss the relationship between shopping practices and perspectives
- 4.2 Students compare U.S. shopping practices with those of Spanish-speaking countries.

Materials: A copy of the matching activity for each student

### Activities:

Ask students to work in groups of three or four to respond to the following questions. Have them make a summary sheet listing their group's answers to each question.

¿Adónde van tú y tu familia para . . .

- comprar pan?
- conseguir medicinas con receta médica (*fill a prescription*)?
- comprar ropa?
- comprar frutas y verduras?
- comprar periódicos o revistas?
- comprar carne?
- sacar dinero?
- comprar CDs?



Have a spokesperson from each group report back to the class, and summarize the findings orally or on the board. If the class tends to perform more than one of the actions in the same place (e.g., buying clothes, fruit, bread, and meat at Wal-Mart, filling a prescription at the pharmacy there and getting money out of the ATM), point this out.

Explain that a generation or two ago, Americans would have had to go to different places to perform most of the above actions (e.g., a bank, the butcher, a newsstand, etc.). Nowadays, however, there is a trend for more and more services to be consolidated under one roof, such as in a big-box-type store.

Explain that in Spanish-speaking countries, although there are beginning to be more large big-box stores and malls, there still exist many individual businesses that perform only one of the above services. Have students quickly complete the following matching activity individually.

___ 1. Tienda donde que se vende pan	a. banco
___ 2. Tienda en la que se vende carne	b. carnicería
___ 3. Lugar en donde se deposita y se saca dinero	c. frutería
___ 4. Pequeño puesto en la esquina donde se venden periódicos y revistas	d. quiosco
___ 5. Lugar en donde se venden frutas	e. panadería
___ 6. Tienda en la que se vende ropa	f. supermercado
___ 7. Tienda en donde se venden medicinas	g. tienda de ropa (confecciones)
___ 8. Tienda en donde se vende una gran variedad de comidas	h. farmacia

Briefly review the correct answers. Explain to students that many of the above businesses, such as *panaderías*, *farmacias*, and *fruterías*, exist in nearly every neighborhood within walking distance. For example, many people go to the bakery daily to buy freshly baked bread hot out of the oven. Rather than buying sliced loaves as we do, most bread in Spanish-speaking countries is similar to what we might call French bread: unsliced, generally smaller than our loaves of bread, and without the preservatives, so that the bread gets hard after a day or two but is wonderfully soft and flavorful when fresh out of the oven.

Now ask students to return to their groups and have them make two lists comparing the advantages of making all of one's purchases in a large superstore versus going to different local stores and businesses to buy different things, as follows:

Ventajas de comprar todo en un gran supermercado

Ventajas de ir a pequeñas tiendas y negocios diferentes





Have students report back and summarize their answers on the board. The first column will probably mention convenience and saving time, among other things. The second column may include the following (you may want to add items that students neglect to mention):

- Food items such as fruit, vegetables, meat, and bread are fresher
- It's not necessary to own a car, thereby saving on gas and maintenance expenses, as well as cutting down on traffic and air pollution
- The employees are knowledgeable about what they sell
- You get to know the people who run these businesses, many of whom are your neighbors, and you have the chance to talk with them regularly

Ask students what these lists reveal about what is important to Americans versus what is important to people in Spanish-speaking countries. As you discuss these cultural perspectives, emphasize that they do not apply to all Americans or all Spanish speakers; for example, there are Americans who like to buy fresh bread in a bakery, just as there are Spanish speakers who prefer the convenience of doing most of their shopping in once place. These lists are merely generalizations that help us begin to think about patterns of cultural difference.

Conclude by telling students that as they visit Españolandia, they will have opportunities to visit simulations of these different businesses, and that in the upcoming days and weeks you will be practicing the specific expressions and vocabulary that they will need in each place.

#### Assessment:

- Observe students' participation in group and class discussions and listen to their comments
- If desired, have groups turn in their lists of ideas, and/or ask individual students to turn in the matching activity.

