

Agreeing and disagreeing

8 Look at B's responses in the examples below. Decide if they are agreeing or disagreeing with A.

Agreeing and disagreeing

- A: *I really don't like the idea. The tags look ugly.*
B: *Yes, and they're not cheap.*
- A: *We can't afford it.*
B: *Yes, it's too expensive.*
- A: *We could just put tags on expensive items.*
B: *Yes, but they don't always work.*
- A: *The employees won't agree.*
B: *No, they won't like the idea.*
- A: *A digital system's better. You can store more data.*
B: *And the pictures are clearer.*

Yes commonly signals agreement in English.

A: *We can't afford it.*

B: *Yes, it's too expensive. (Yes = I think you're right.)*

But with negative statements like this, we can commonly signal agreement with *no* as well.

A: *We can't afford it.*

B: *No, it's too expensive. (No = No, we can't afford it.)*

9 Discuss these questions.

- The most common way English speakers disagree is by saying 'Yes, but ...' and raising an objection. Find an example in the table above. Do people say anything similar to 'Yes, but ...' in your language?
- When English speakers agree, they sometimes repeat or add to ideas. Look at the examples where B is agreeing with A. Is B repeating A's idea or adding to it?

10 Match these opinions to the correct agreements.

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| 1 It costs too much. | a No, it's too much effort. |
| 2 That's impossible. | b No, it'll take too long. |
| 3 We won't have time. | c Yes, it's really expensive. |
| 4 It isn't worth it. | d Yes, we can't do that. |
| 5 They won't like it. | e Yes, that'll work. |
| 6 That'll solve the problem. | f No, they'll complain. |

11 Work in pairs. Practise disagreeing and agreeing with your partner. Read the problem and take turns to argue for the proposals 1–4 below. Your partner should raise some objections with 'Yes, but ...' After one or two objections, agree with one another.

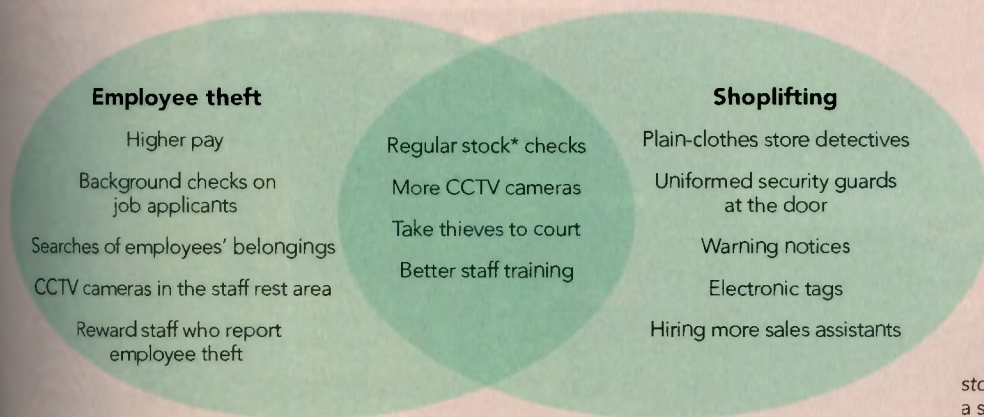
Problem:

You work together in an office where things have disappeared recently. Someone has stolen money from employees' bags and desk drawers and a computer disappeared the other day. You don't know if an employee is responsible or visitors.

- We should ask the management to install video cameras in the office.
- We could put electronic tags on all our belongings and equipment.
- Why don't we search visitors' bags and belongings before they leave the building?
- How about leaving some trick money on a desk? If you pick it up, it goes BANG! and covers you with red dye (colouring you can't wash away).

Speaking: Preventing theft

12 Look at some ways to prevent theft in a department store. Can you add more ideas?



stock: a supply of things that a shop has available to sell

13 Work in pairs. You are the managers of a department store that needs to reduce theft. Discuss ways to prevent theft by employees or discuss ways to prevent theft by shoplifters.

- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the ideas in exercise 12.
- Decide on the three best actions to take.

14 Join with another pair. Explain what you plan to do. Do they think you have made the best decisions or do they have any objections?