



### Activity: Smart Shopping

**Materials needed:** Access to web pages or photocopies of web pages featuring product comparison charts.

**Description:** Students “shop” for products comparing multiple features by studying some websites that offer side-by-side product comparison charts. (While there are many websites that provide comparisons, not all are formatted as a chart.)



This realia-based activity is a great way for students to practice the important skill of careful consumerism. Not only does the exercise require authentic use of comparative and superlative forms in addition to other vocabulary of comparison, but this real-life task also introduces new immigrants to the Internet as a valuable resource for consumers.

Using product comparison charts gives students practice in thinking about points of comparison, which points are essential to their needs, and which are not.

Here are some links to product and service comparison charts:

1. PDAs and Cell Phones

[http://www.pcmag.com/compare\\_products/0,1943,,00.asp?a=136901,154880,143647,162382&pt=0&sid=1566](http://www.pcmag.com/compare_products/0,1943,,00.asp?a=136901,154880,143647,162382&pt=0&sid=1566)

2. Types of TVs

[http://www.crutchfieldadvisor.com/ISEO-rgbtcsdp/learningcenter/home/TV\\_chart.html](http://www.crutchfieldadvisor.com/ISEO-rgbtcsdp/learningcenter/home/TV_chart.html)

3. Lodging Choices at Yosemite National Park

<http://www.yosemitepark.net/ylchart.htm>

4. Hybrid Cars

<http://www.consumersearch.com/www/automotive/hybrid-cars/comparison.html>

5. Juicers

<http://www.harvestessentials.com/juco.html>



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In addition to charts, a large quantity of information about individual products can be found online in text format. A related, more complex activity would be for students to make their own chart comparing two item brands or types. Students can think of common items people need to consider carefully before buying, like a refrigerator, a computer, or a child car seat. Students decide what features should be compared and then research the products and fill in their chart, set up like a matrix, with one axis being the products and the other axis being the points to compare.