

Go where the smart money is

Level: Advanced (C1–C2)

Time: Approximately 90 minutes

Business topics: Stocks, dividends, investment

Business language: Useful business vocabulary, collocations, investment language, defining an investment portfolio

Activities: Discussing investments, key words, understanding the text, business collocations, discussion, building an investment portfolio

Groups: Whole class, one-to-one, small groups

Overview: This article discusses how Meta's move to start paying dividends could signal an upcoming switch in investor mindset after two decades of very meagre payouts.

1. Warmer

- a. Ask students to discuss the questions in pairs or small groups. Elicit the main ideas that arise from the discussion from the whole class.

2. Key words

- a. Have students scan the article, find the key words individually, and compare their answers in pairs. Elicit answers from the whole class.

Key:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. prevailing | 8. equity |
| 2. yield | 9. slender |
| 3. grinding | 10. nadir |
| 4. shareholder, shareholders | 11. bond |
| 5. disbursement | 12. feeble |
| 6. buyback | 13. bolster |
| 7. payout | 14. alluring |

3. Understanding the article

- a. Ask students to scan the article individually to complete this activity and compare their answers. Remind them that they don't need to read the whole article each time but that they should rather look over it very quickly to locate the information and then read it carefully.

Key:

1. False. They will receive a "piddling 50 cents per share each quarter".
2. True
3. True
4. False. It intends to buy much more.
5. True
6. True
7. False. They have hit an all-time low.
8. True
9. False. He thinks that it is not rational, and it eases an investor's sense of loss when making an investment.
10. True
11. False. He believes that more companies will be doing so.
12. True

4. Business language – collocations

- a. Students use the verbs to complete collocations from the article. Then they find and circle each collocation in the article to check their answers.

Key:

- | | |
|----------------|-------------|
| 1. pay/receive | 7. put up |
| 2. buy back | 8. have |
| 3. provide | 9. overcome |
| 4. create | 10. manage |
| 5. deliver | 11. hop |
| 6. plough | |

- b. Ask students to first work in pairs or individually to come up with questions. Then, regroup them into groups of four to ask and answer their questions. You can elicit and write a few questions on the board to get students started.

5. Discussion

- a. Put the students in pairs or small groups and ask them to discuss the questions. When students have covered all the questions, bring the whole class back together so that they can share their answers and any interesting information that arose from their discussions. Make a note of good examples of vocabulary and language on the board, as well as incorrect usage that needs to be corrected. Ask the class to identify which is which and help you with corrections.

As an extension or homework activity, students can write an email to the wider team contextualising what was discussed in the meeting, as well as the final outcome and action points. They can brainstorm in their original group if needed but can be asked to complete the writing activity individually.

When they are finished, get them to peer edit. You can ask them to focus on the structure and clarity of ideas and use new language from the lesson.

6. Wider business theme – building an investment portfolio

- a. For this first step, ask students to work individually (or in pairs if they need peer support) to read through all the investment options. They do not need to provide any opinions at this stage.

Assign each student a letter from A to D. Ask students to work individually now (or with the same letters to work together if peer support is required) to process the information about the companies and their role cards. Ask them to make notes on their opinions.

First, go over useful language with the class and elicit any phrases that might be useful for this meeting. For example:

Agreeing: *You're absolutely right. Absolutely. No doubt about it. I couldn't agree more.*

Interrupting: *Can I just say that ... I'd like to comment on that ... Can I add something here? Is it okay if I jump in for a second?*

Disagreeing: *I don't think that's true because ... I see your point, but ... I'm sorry, but I have to disagree because ... That's not always the case. Not necessarily.*

Now, divide the students into groups of four, so you have students A, B, C, and D working together. Let them have a meeting to make a decision together. Ask them to take minutes.

If time allows, get someone from each group to summarise their meeting outcome to the class briefly.