

BRAZILIAN UMBRELLA SERVICE SPREADS

Feb 16th, 2022

WARM-UP QUESTIONS: *Discuss the following questions with your partner(s).*

1. How's the weather now? What will it be like later this evening? Is it easy to predict?
2. Read the headline above. Have you heard this news story? If so, say what you know. If not, can you guess what it's about?

VOCABULARY: *Match the following vocabulary words with a description. Use a dictionary if you need to.*

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|---------------|---|
| 1. Novel | a) a small store or machine that provides services or information |
| 2. Automated | b) thrown away |
| 3. Kiosk | c) separate, particular |
| 4. Respective | d) a bottle made from a recyclable plastic |
| 5. Downpour | e) able to last for a long time |
| 6. Discarded | f) new and different |
| 7. Durable | g) sudden heavy rain |
| 8. PET bottle | h) done by machines or computers, without human control |

LISTEN: *Listen to the audio track on eslnewsstories.com or to a reader of the text. Try to fill in the missing words. Then check your answers with the full text.*

A novel rental service from Brazil has established itself in New York and will _____ spread to Europe. *Rentbrella*, first available in São Paulo in 2018, allows people to borrow an umbrella for free as long as they return it within 24 hours. The umbrellas can be found and returned at automated kiosks _____ located throughout their respective cities.

Umbrellas are the latest entry in the trend of sharing services in big cities. Over the last few years, bicycle and ride sharing services have become _____ in many places. Sharing services often have reasonable fees that make them attractive to users. However, in the case of *Rentbrella*, charges are only applied if the umbrella is kept longer than a day. Users in New York can keep their umbrella for a second and third day at the cost of \$2 per day. After three days, they are _____ the

permanent purchase price of \$16. Rentbrella keeps the costs down by selling advertising space on the umbrellas.

In addition to providing _____ during sudden downpours of rain, Rentbrella serves an environmental function. Previously, unexpected rain caused some people to buy cheap umbrellas that quickly broke and added to the discarded plastic polluting the streets and _____. Rentbrella umbrellas, in contrast, are durable enough to last for years. Furthermore, they are made from recycled PET bottles, and when the umbrella is retired, its materials are recycled once again.

The service is expected to be _____ in London soon.

WORD FORMS: Fill in different forms for the vocabulary from the article. Use a dictionary if you need to. Where there is an **x**, the word is uncommon, has a different meaning, or doesn't exist. Sometimes there are multiple possible answers, and sometimes the adjective form is a past or present participle.

VERB	ADJECTIVE	ADVERB	NOUN
x	novel		
	automated		
	respective		
	discarded	x	
x	durable		

A novel rental service from Brazil has established itself in New York and will soon spread to Europe. *Rentbrella*, first available in São Paulo in 2018, allows people to borrow an umbrella for free as long as they return it within 24 hours. The umbrellas can be found and returned at automated kiosks conveniently located throughout their respective cities.

Umbrellas are the latest entry in the trend of sharing services in big cities. Over the last few years, bicycle and ride sharing services have become popular in many places. Sharing services often have reasonable fees that make them attractive to users. However, in the case of *Rentbrella*, charges are only applied if the umbrella is kept longer than a day. Users in New York can keep their umbrella for a second and third day at the cost of \$2 per day. After three days, they are charged the permanent purchase price of \$16. *Rentbrella* keeps the costs down by selling advertising space on the umbrellas.

In addition to providing cover during sudden downpours of rain, *Rentbrella* serves an environmental function. Previously, unexpected rain caused some people to buy cheap umbrellas that quickly broke and added to the discarded plastic polluting the streets and oceans. *Rentbrella*

umbrellas, in contrast, are durable enough to last for years. Furthermore, they are made from recycled PET bottles, and when the umbrella is retired, its materials are recycled once again.

The service is expected to be available in London soon.

Sources: forbes.com, timeout.com, reuters.com

For source links, see the article on ESLNewsStories.com

COMPREHENSION: *Decide if the following are true (T) or false (F), and then discuss your answers with your partner(s).*

1. Rentbrella originated in Brazil. (T / F)
2. The umbrella sharing service will soon spread to New York. (T / F)
3. It costs \$2 to keep an umbrella for a few hours. (T / F)
4. Users may buy the umbrella for \$16. (T / F)
5. The umbrellas don't break easily. (T / F)

COMPLETE: *Re-order the following sentences. Capitalize certain words and add punctuation.*

1. advertising / umbrellas / there / on / the / is
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2. made / are / rentbrella / plastic / from / umbrellas / recycled
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DISCUSSION: *Discuss the following questions with your partner(s). Try to speak in sentences and ask follow-up questions.*

1. How often does it rain where you live? Do you ever get caught in the rain?
2. Do you use umbrellas? What are some ways of dealing with rain besides using an umbrella?
3. Does your city or town have rental bicycles? Do you use them?
4. What do you think about the Rentbrella service? Would you use it?
5. Do you like sharing things? Or do you prefer to keep your things private and separate from other people's things?
6. Have you ever been to Brazil? How was it? If not, are you interested in going there?
7. Would you rather buy something cheap that doesn't last long or something expensive that you expect to last a long time?
8. Do you recycle? What kinds of things do you recycle?

