

Name _____

Date _____

CHAPTER 6

STUDENT ACTIVITY SHEET

AVOIDING ONLINE FRAUD

Read the following article about identity theft. Then, research websites that allow you to buy and sell things. Read the warning and fraud tips on the websites, and write your answers on the student research sheet.

Lindsay Mattison, a college student, was on “The Price is Right” game show and won a “Hattaras Roman Arc Hammock,” which retails for about \$800. Since Lindsay didn’t really need a hammock for her dorm room, she decided to sell it online for \$300.

Lindsay posted an ad, and a con-artist sent her an e-mail response offering to buy the item at full price. Lindsay was leaving the country the following day and needed to speed up the process. The thief’s colleague agreed to send the check by overnight courier to a shipping service he was familiar with and would pick up the item at Lindsay’s home.

To save time, the buyer sent Lindsay one check to pay for the hammock and shipping, plus an extra \$50 for her troubles. The next day, Lindsay received a package containing a \$3,000 check. After sending the check, the thief asked Lindsay to wire \$2,600 out of the country to the shipper in Apakpa Cotonou, Republic of Benin (an African nation bordering Nigeria).

Lindsay thought it was very weird that someone would pay \$2,600 to ship a \$350 item, so she called her mother for advice. Her mother immediately recognized the scam and contacted the police department. Turns out the check was fraudulent and did not belong to the company listed on the check. If Lindsay had cashed the check and shipped the item, she would have been out the item, cost of shipping, and \$3,000 which the bank would have taken from Lindsay for bouncing a check.

TIP: If you advertise a product or service in a local newspaper or magazine, it is likely the ad is also available on the internet, which is worldwide. Local, national and international thieves commonly use “For Sale” ads to locate their victims.

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