



Points of view, comprehension and inference



Plastics: Precious or Problematic?



There are plastics all around us and we use them every day, but there are also problems caused by plastic pollution. Are plastics good or bad?

Read the two statements from different speakers below, and then complete the tasks at the bottom of the page.

- 1** Plastics are incredibly useful materials. They are cheap to produce, last for a long time and are used across many industries, including medicine and food packaging. Plastics are also lightweight, which makes them easier and more energy-efficient to transport. This is important because it helps reduce fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. In hospitals, plastics are essential for making a wide range of medical supplies like sterile packaging, disposable syringes, and even life-saving devices. The many uses of plastics make them an important part of our everyday lives.
- 2** Plastics pose some serious challenges to our environment. One of the main issues is that plastics do not biodegrade easily. They can last in the environment for hundreds of years, leading to pollution in our landscapes, waterways, and oceans. Tiny pieces of plastic can be consumed by wildlife, leading to injury or death. Furthermore, plastics can release toxic chemicals into the environment, posing risks to animal and human health. It's crucial for us to reduce our use of plastics and improve recycling efforts to protect our planet and its inhabitants from these dangers.

1. Circle the words in each of the statements above that tell you whether the person feels positively or negatively about plastics.

2. What are some good things about using plastics in things like toys and food packaging?

3. How might two people have different opinions about plastics, and what things could make them think this way?

4. Why might a conservationist argue that the dangers of plastics outweigh their benefits? What do you think? Talk with a conversation partner about this question.





Clauses, subordinating conjunctions and commas

I Saw A What Now?

if	since	as	when	although	while	after	before	until	because
I	S	A	W	A	W	A	B	U	B

Subordinating conjunctions are words that introduce a part of a sentence called a clause. A subordinate clause can't stand on its own. Confused? Here's an example:

After walking home from school, I played my favourite video game.

Imagine if someone simply said, "After walking home from school." It wouldn't make sense! Subordinate means "lower in importance" and these clauses are subordinate to the main part of the sentence.

You Try!

Use one of the conjunctions in the table above to complete the sentences below.

Hint: Notice that you need a comma between the two clauses.

_____ Tunde Onakoya knows education is important, he played chess for 60 hours to raise money for Nigerian children's schooling.

The confetti at St Stephens' School will naturally break down, _____ it is biodegradable.

_____ you visit Bug Appetit in New Orleans, you can try insect-based dishes like Cinnamon Bug Crunch.

Tunde has finished his chess marathon, _____ the official record needs to be approved by Guinness World Records.

Now, have a go at writing your own. Bonus points if it's about a story from today's podcast.

