



Points of view, understanding, inference, synthesis



Plastics: Precious or Problematic?

There are plastics all around us and we use them every day, but there are also many problems associated with plastics, so are they 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 inexpensive to produce, highly durable, 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 particularly 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 versatility and functionality of plastics make them a fundamental part of our everyday lives.

2 Plastics pose significant challenges to our environment. One of the main issues is that plastics do not biodegrade easily. They can persist in the environment for centuries, leading to pollution in our landscapes, waterways, and oceans. Microplastics, which are tiny pieces of degraded 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 reliance on plastics and improve recycling efforts to protect our planet and its inhabitants from these dangers.

1. Why might two experts have opposing views on the use of plastics, and what factors could influence their perspectives?

2. What are the major industries that rely heavily on plastics, and why do they prefer this material?

3. How could innovations in plastic manufacturing reduce its environmental impact?

If you have time, do some research to find out how mushrooms and worms are breaking down plastics.



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 online with my friends.

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. They can go at the beginning, the end, or in the middle:

I played online with my friends, *after walking home from school*.

I played online with my friends, *after walking home from school*, to recover from a big day.

You Try!

Complete the sentences below by writing in your own subordinate clause. Use one of the conjunctions in the table above to start it. We've done the first one to get you started.

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

a) Tunde Onakoya played chess for 60 hours, because he is passionate about childrens' education.

b) The confetti at St Stephens' School will naturally decompose _____

c) _____ you can try various

insect-based dishes like Cinnamon Bug Crunch.

d) The cicadas were added to the menu _____

_____ giving them a unique, earthy flavor.

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