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Read the article discussing the issue of recycling disposable cups and plates. Choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D) for questions (1 - 8). There is an example (0) at the beginning.

Disposable cups and plates

This isn't a tempest in a disposable teacup, but it is a big problem.



Fifty years ago, litter wasn't much of a problem. Cities didn't even have litter bins; people would go to restaurants or diners, sit down and drink out of mugs and eat off china plates.

Now, cities everywhere are overrun with the detritus of the fast-food industry, from food packaging to coffee and drink cups. According to Clean Water Action, quoted in Fast Company, 49 percent of San Francisco's litter is from fast-food restaurants. It all ends up in the streets or in the city's litter bins, which get emptied at taxpayers' expense. This is not paper that can be recycled. Many of these coffee cups are what Bill McDonough of "Cradle to Cradle" fame calls "monstrous hybrids" — paper cups lined with plastic to prevent leaks, but that also cannot be recycled. So these items have to be separated and landfilled.

In Vancouver, the city is considering a number of options, including deposits, take-back programs and even a ban on disposable coffee cups. From the report:

This report recommends that staff review options to target the distribution, use, and recycling of these items, including exploring options to restrict or ban their use, and report back to Council. Staff will also investigate potential options requiring producers, distributors, and retailers to take responsibility for the recovery of these materials, including possible take-back programs.

I will predict here and now that a ban ain't gonna happen. The industry is too huge and our habits are too ingrained. Years ago, the city of Toronto wanted the big coffee chain, Tim Hortons, to change its lids so that they didn't have to be manually separated from the cups for recycling; the company fought the city in court to a draw. At Starbucks, they claim that the problem is not just the company's problem but part of a larger issue:

Recycling seems like a simple, straightforward initiative but it's actually quite challenging. Our customers' ability to recycle our cups, whether at home, at work, in public spaces or in our

stores, is dependent upon multiple factors, including local government policies and access to recycling markets such as paper mills and plastic processors.

Keep it in the store, not in the streets.

This is, I believe, disingenuous. Starbucks could put a deposit on the cups, so that customers would bring them back to the store. The company could charge more for coffee in a paper cup than it does for a ceramic mug to encourage people to drink from the mug in the store instead of leaving with it.

Before Christmas, Robin Shreeves made a moral case for getting rid of disposables; I've also previously written about other things businesses could do:

- **Producer responsibility.** Make the people who sell us stuff responsible from start to finish, whether by making their products reusable, having take-back programs like Dell and Apple do, or charging the producers for the cost of taking the stuff away instead of charging the consumer through taxes.
- **Deposits on everything.** In countries with returnable beer bottles, everyone takes them back for the deposit. In Ontario where there are deposits on wine bottles, it's an industry for the homeless and the poor. If there was a deposit on every Starbucks and Tim Hortons paper cup, a lot more people would use refillable containers.
- **Consumer education.** Really, how long have we been trying to get people to stop buying bottled water? We have to turn it into the new smoking. Make zero waste living the cool new thing.

This is not a tempest in a disposable teacup, but a very big problem that seems intractable. Of course people want their takeout, but perhaps we can make a dent in it. What do you think?

EXAMPLE: (0) Over half a century ago, people used to...

- A. recycle more.
- B. litter more.
- C. use ceramic cups, plates and bowls.**
- D. use plastic cups, plates and bowls..

1. According to paragraph 2, how does the rubbish generated by the fast-food industry affect people most?
 - A. In the number of drink cups.
 - B. In the amount of food packaging.
 - C. In the use of taxpayers' money
 - D. In the use of non-recyclable paper.
2. The course of action, suggested by Vancouver city council, that surprised the author was the...
 - A. deposit system.
 - B. take-back program.
 - C. restriction on coffee cups.
 - D. prohibition of coffee cups.
3. The author speaks about the coffee chain, Tim Hortons, to provide an example of the...
 - A. responsibility of the industry.
 - B. power of the industry.
 - C. power of the people.
 - D. habits of the people.
4. Starbucks opinion on recycling is that it is...
 - A. complicated
 - B. easy
 - C. responsible
 - D. unavoidable.
5. The author thinks Starbucks should...
 - A. increase the price of coffee in paper cups.
 - B. increase the price of take-away coffee.
 - C. reduce the price of coffee in ceramic mugs.
 - D. reduce the price of coffee in refillable containers.
6. Producer responsibility means businesses will...
 - A. share responsibility for recycling costs.
 - B. take full responsibility for recycling.
 - C. tax all non-recyclable containers.
 - D. encourage consumers to recycle.
7. The author highlights added social benefits from using...
 - A. reusable products.
 - B. disposable bottles.
 - C. a deposit system.
 - D. an educational campaign.
8. The writer compares recycling to smoking because it is an issue which...
 - A. causes health problems.
 - B. causes environmental problems.
 - C. should be the new trend.
 - D. is taboo.

Read an article about teenage millionaires, and for questions 1 to 9, match the information to the young entrepreneur.

1. Although his/her first product didn't function adequately, it was noticed and admired. _____
2. An odd gift inspired this person to come up with his/her idea. _____
3. This person's product enabled him and other people to save time. _____
4. This person's business involved importing products. _____
5. This person's artistic designs and products became popular among his/her peers. _____
6. This person's product allowed people to skip a step in the shopping process. _____
7. This person started selling in order to acquire something he/she wanted. _____
8. This person's business has been recognised for minimising environmental damage. _____
9. This person's business took advantage of the fact that people like to express their individuality. _____

Teenage Social Media Millionaires

Many kids dream of becoming millionaires before they're twenty, but few realise their dreams. Some do, however. Harnessing new technology, their ideas become thriving multi-million-dollar businesses that inspire others. Let's see how some of them did it.

A) Dominic McVey

Dominic became a millionaire at the age of 13 due to a simple misspelling. He had been searching on the internet for information about Visa credit cards but mistakenly spelt it Viza. This took him to the website of an American company that sold scooters. Dominic had always wanted a scooter but couldn't afford one. So he contacted the site and offered to sell their scooters in the UK. The company gave him a deal: if he could sell five scooters, he would get one free. He scraped the money together, ordered the five scooters and sold them easily. After that, demand for scooters went up, and before long, he was selling thousands per week. He was later honoured by the queen as a young entrepreneur.

B) Maddie Bradshaw

10-year old Maddie wanted to decorate her school locker but couldn't find exactly what she wanted in the stores. So instead, she came up with her own idea. She had recently been given 50 bottle caps by her uncle, who had an old Coke machine that didn't work. She decorated these, added magnets to the back, and soon the handy, attractive magnets on her locker were attracting attention from all over the school. Her ideas didn't stop there, though. With help from her mother and a few hundred dollars' investment, she converted her bottle-cap idea into jewellery. At the age of 12, she created 'Snap-cap' necklaces with exchangeable magnetic pendants and add-ons, allowing girls to make custom designs that reflected their personalities. She made her first million when she was 13.

C) Nick D'Aloisio

15-year-old Nick was struggling with the amount of news on the internet. Despite his intention to keep up-to-date with current affairs, there just seemed no end to the stream of information. So he came up with 'Trimit', an app that compressed news articles into short summaries. Trimit was pretty basic, and summaries were mostly gibberish. However, the app attracted the attention of a Hong Kong investment company, which gave Nick \$300,000 to develop his idea. He improved the app and re-launched it under the name 'Summly'. This version was very successful and later sold to Yahoo! for 30 million dollars. Now Nick

runs a team of programmers who work on algorithms and language processing intricacies while he focuses on design.

D) Sean Belnick

As a young teenager, Sean made money by selling Pokemon cards and mowing lawns. But he also had an eye for business and paid curious attention to his stepfather's work as a manufacturer's representative for office furniture. He noticed that customers generally had no need for face to face contact with suppliers, so he invested \$500, learned HTML programming and created a website from which he sold mid-price office chairs. He sourced these directly from the manufacturer and stored them in his bedroom. His timing was perfect, as his business launched when companies were looking to cut costs. Sean, a millionaire by the age of 16, continues to work with his stepfather in a partnership that brings together experience gained over time and youthful, fresh ideas. Their company has won an award for its efforts to reduce energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions.

GAPPED TEST: SOURCE: <https://test-english.com/reading/b2/is-banning-singl-use-plastic-the-right-option-reading-test/>

Read an article about plastic waste, and for questions 1 to 8, complete the text with the correct sentences. There are TWO extra sentences you DO NOT need to use.

Is Banning Single Use Plastic the Right Option?

Around the world, people are realising the significant problems caused by plastic waste. In the last 65 years, we have become increasingly dependent on plastic. It's easy to understand why: it's cheap to produce, light – therefore easy and cheap to transport – and incredibly strong and durable. But it's these advantages which also make it so harmful. _____ 1 _____. The micro-plastics that result from these processes are harmful to the environment. It is also very difficult to recycle, in fact currently only 9% of all the plastic produced has been recycled. _____ 2 _____.

One popular solution to the problem is to prohibit single use plastics. In the UK, supermarkets are being encouraged to set up plastic-free aisles, in which the food is displayed loose, and shoppers are encouraged to make more environmentally-friendly choices in packing and transporting their food. A tax has already been placed on plastic carrier bags, which has cut their use by 90%. _____ 3 _____. Schemes for reducing the use of plastic bottles are also being considered, including paying people to return bottles to shops and increasing the number of public drinking fountains. Some governments, such as Canada and India, have even promised to ban the use of single-use plastic altogether by the not-too-distant future.

_____ 4 _____. One of the fields where single-use plastic has a vital role is medicine. This is not just because of its low cost. It's also because, by using dishes, vials, syringes and so on just once, infection and cross-contamination are minimised. _____ 5 _____. Plastic packaging is also crucial in the food industry, as it ensures that food is safe for consumers. Meanwhile, the provision of bottled water in poor regions and in emergency situations has reduced the spread of water-borne diseases and saved many lives.

Another issue is that alternative materials to plastic are often more environmentally harmful than plastic. Take paper bags, for example. Research by the Northern Ireland Assembly shows four times more energy is required to manufacture a paper bag than a plastic bag. _____ 6 _____. Even more, pollution is created when paper bags degrade, in fact, they generate 70% more air and 50 times more water pollutants than plastic bags. _____ 7 _____. Other alternatives, like aluminium, glass, card or cotton, similarly have environmental issues of their own.

Clearly there is a need to reduce plastic waste and its impact on the environment. However, simply banning their single use may not be the best option. Industries that rely on single-use plastics for people's health and safety must be accommodated. _____ 8 _____. Meanwhile, a better solution to banning all plastics might be to invest in redesigning plastics that can be readily broken down and remanufactured, and better recycling technology.

- A) Such plans are well-intentioned, but it may not be beneficial to eliminate the use of single-use plastic altogether.
- B) Some is burnt, but the majority goes to landfill.
- C) Although glass products are a potential alternative, cleaning them would be extremely expensive in terms of time, money and environmental resources, while increasing the risk to health.
- D) Some hospitals and laboratories sort their plastic recycling, but it is more common for them to mix all their waste together and burn it.
- E) Plastic never fully degrades by bacteria, so it must be gradually broken down into tiny pieces by the wind, sun or water.
- F) Bans on single-use plastic items like cotton buds and drinking straws and charges for disposable coffee cups are also coming into place
- G) They are also very fragile and rarely reusable, unlike plastic.
- H) Reducing single-use plastic is not only necessary and possible, it also has the potential to boost the local economy and save costs on in managing litter and waste.
- I) Moreover, alternative materials must be evaluated strictly regarding their own environmental impact.
- J) The process requires cutting trees, the emission of greenhouse gases and the production of toxic chemical waste.

ANSWER KEY

MULTIPLE CHOICE

1C, 2D, 3B, 4A, 5A, 6B, 7C, 8C

MULTIPLE MATCHING

1C, 2B, 3C, 4A, 5B, 6D, 7A, 8D, 9B

GAPPED TEXT

1E, 2B, 3F, 4A, 5C, 6J, 7G, 8I