

TOEFL Listening Lesson 2

Setting: Environmental Science class. A few students are seated in a small seminar-style classroom. The professor is facilitating the discussion.

Questions

1. What is the discussion mainly about?

- A. How waste is sorted in recycling plants
- B. The financial cost of waste removal on campus
- C. Strategies the campus could use to reduce waste
- D. Student complaints about campus cleanliness

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- B. Removing trash cans from campus entirely
- C. Setting up centralized waste disposal stations
- D. Fining students for improper waste disposal

3. Why does the female student mention composting food scraps?

- A. To explain why dining hall waste is hard to manage
- B. To offer a practical solution for reducing organic waste
- C. To criticize current waste disposal policies
- D. To suggest that composting is too complicated to implement

4. Why does the professor mention that some students misunderstand recycling rules?

- A. To highlight the need for clearer communication
- B. To show that students are not taking waste seriously
- C. To argue for more recycling bins around campus
- D. To recommend changing the types of materials accepted

5. What can be inferred about the professor's view on student involvement in waste reduction?

- A. Students should leave it to campus administration

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Script

Professor:

All right, everyone—last class we talked about how much waste an average college campus generates per year. Today, I want us to brainstorm and evaluate strategies to reduce that waste. So, let's start simple. What are some types of waste we see a lot of here on campus?

Student 1 (male student):

Definitely single-use plastics. Like, take-out containers, plastic cups, utensils...

Professor:

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Exactly. So if we wanted to reduce that, what might be one approach?

Student 2 (female student):

Maybe encourage students to bring reusable containers? Like their own cups or lunch boxes?

Professor:

Yes, that's one of the more straightforward strategies. Reusable containers. What would be necessary to make that effective?

Student 2:

Probably some kind of incentive—like discounts for people who bring their own, or a charge for using disposable ones.

Professor:

Right. Behavioral nudges. Research shows small incentives or penalties can shift habits. Anyone else?

Student 3 (male student):

We could ban certain types of plastic on campus entirely. Some cities have done that.

Professor:

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Professor:

Exactly. There's a balance between regulation and personal freedom.

Also, enforcement could be tricky. Okay, let's move beyond plastic.

What's another kind of waste we generate?

Student 4 (female student):

Paper? I mean, we still use a lot of paper in classes, handouts, flyers...

Professor:

Yes, and?

Student 4:

Some professors post digital versions of everything, but not all. Maybe make that a requirement?

Professor:

Now you're thinking about institutional policy. Requiring digital materials could reduce waste. But what could be a potential concern?

Student 1:

Not everyone likes reading on screens. Some people learn better with printed material.

Professor:

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One year—like when students take more than they can eat in the dining halls.

Professor:

Right. Any strategies to reduce that?

Student 3:

Portion control? Smaller serving sizes so people can take only what they want?

Professor:

Good. Or even trayless dining—some schools have removed trays so

students can't overload their plates. It's been surprisingly effective. Anyone heard of composting programs?

Student 4:

Yeah! My old high school had compost bins in the cafeteria. But we don't really have that here, right?

Professor:

Not yet, no. Composting is a great strategy but needs infrastructure and student buy-in. What would we need to implement that?

Student 2:

Bins, signage, maybe volunteers to monitor them? And education—

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success of any campus waste reduction programs?

Student 1:

Probably participation. If students don't buy in, it won't work.

Professor:

Bingo. Even the best-designed systems rely on user behavior. So it's not just what strategies we choose, but how we engage the campus community. Great ideas today, everyone. Next class, we'll look at some case studies from universities that have actually implemented these programs and see how effective they've been.

Answers

1. What is the discussion mainly about?

C. Strategies the campus could use to reduce waste

2. What strategy does the professor say has been effective at other universities?

C. Setting up centralized waste disposal stations

3. Why does the female student mention composting food scraps?

B. To offer a practical solution for reducing organic waste

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5. What can be inferred about the professor's view on student involvement in waste reduction?

C. Student-led initiatives are essential to success