

**New  
internationalist**

# Rubbish!!



New Internationalist Easier English  
Ready Upper Intermediate Lesson

What's happening? And why?



Decide which numbers to put in the gaps:

We use most plastic bags for only 1)..... minutes. But they take about 2)..... years to break down. People around the world use 3) ..... million plastic bags every minute.

In the Pacific Ocean, there is a very big island of floating plastic. It is 4) ..... times bigger than France. It is called the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. Coca-Cola makes 5) ..... billion plastic bottles each year. This is enough to go around the earth 6) ..... times.

**a) 2**

**b) 15**

**c) 120**

**d) 700**

**e) 1000**

**f) 3**

Check:

We use most plastic bags for only 15 minutes. But they take about 1000 years to break down. People around the world use two million plastic bags every minute.

In the Pacific Ocean, there is a very big island of floating plastic. It is three times bigger than France. It is called the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. Coca-Cola makes 120 billion plastic bottles each year. This is enough to go around the earth 700 times.

Create questions by putting these words in order:

1/ the Garbage What Pacific Great Patch is ?

2/ about in Plastic documentary was the  
What Drowning ?

3/ Overshoot is Earth What Day ?

4/ obsolescence is What ?

5/ good Patagonia company What is about the ?

6/ decide Convention the What did Basel ?

7/ do company what Burberry What did the?



Check – then scan through the text (link on the next slide) to find the answers:

1/ What is the Great Pacific Garbage Patch?

2/ What was the documentary Drowning in Plastic about?

3/ What is Earth Overshoot Day?

4/ What is obsolescence?

5/ What is good about the company Patagonia?

6/ What did the Basel Convention decide?

7/ What did the company Burberry do?

[https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php?title=Modern life is rubbish](https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php?title=Modern%20life%20is%20rubbish)



Match:

**a) upcycling**

**b) toxic**

**c) landfill**

**d) to decompose**

**e) single use**

**f) radical**

**g) obsolescence**

**h) to dump**

1/ to break down until it disappears into the earth

2/ poisonous

3/ something you use only once and then you throw away

4/ re-using something in a creative way to give it more value

5/ very thorough and complete (eg. of change or action)

6/ the process of becoming out of date and not used any longer

7/ to throw a large mass of rubbish on open land

8/ a big open site for a lot of rubbish

# Speaking presentations:

In pairs, take half the text each and prepare a 2-3 minute presentation on the main information

**a) 15 minutes to plan** your presentation – and remember:

- make notes to help you speak, but don't write out the whole thing
- choose the most interesting information
- use stress, intonation and pauses to help your listener understand it

**b) Take turns to present to your partners**, then discuss the whole article and

**c) decide on 4 – 6 most interesting points**



From your most interesting points, make a

**poster**

and / or write a letter to the world about rubbish

# Follow-up

Read the original version of the article:

<https://newint.org/immersive/2018/11/01/modern-life-rubbish>

Then read more Easier English articles about rubbish, and the originals too: [https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php?title=Issue 516](https://eewiki.newint.org/index.php?title=Issue_516)