

# Cleanliness

## Pre-Reading

### A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Is your home clean and orderly most of the time or only when you are expecting guests?
2. How important is it to have an organized workspace?
3. Do you carry hand sanitizer with you everywhere you go?



### B. Vocabulary Preview

Match up as many words and meanings as you can.  
Check this exercise again after seeing the words in context on page 2.

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| ___ 1. have it together       | a) untidy  |
| ___ 2. immaculate             | b) to clean until something shines                             |
| ___ 3. clutter                | c) a mess, things that are left randomly around a room         |
| ___ 4. disheveled             | d) extremely neat and clean                                    |
| ___ 5. slob                   | e) a person who is messy and dirty                             |
| ___ 6. polish                 | f) cutlery (forks, knives, and spoons)                         |
| ___ 7. silverware             | g) able to produce a lot                                       |
| ___ 8. productive             | h) to be very organized, to be ready                           |
| ___ 9. be told time and again | i) to be reminded many times                                   |
| ___ 10. immune system         | j) parts of the body that work together to fight off infection |

## Reading

### CLEANLINESS

*Are you a neat freak or a slob?*

1. Some people always seem to **have it together**. Their hair is perfect, their kids' clothes are pressed, and their homes are **immaculate**. Unlike these neat freaks, **slobs** always seem **disheveled**.
2. Neat freaks cannot stand **clutter**. They are fearful of germs. Slobs, on the other hand, can't find anything if it's put away where it belongs! You can keep your shoes on when you visit their homes. If a slob comes to visit, you don't have to **polish** your **silverware**.
3. Keeping a perfectly ordered home and office may help you be more **productive**. But what about creativity? Some experts say that slobs, or at least those who refuse to clean up between each activity, are actually more imaginative. We only have to watch children play to see the proof. Young kids rarely tidy up their mess between projects. They have to **be told time and again** to put things away.
4. If we didn't clean up or tell our kids to wash their hands, we would surely be ill all of the time. Or would we? Some doctors say that our obsession with cleanliness prevents our **immune system** from developing properly. Is your house too clean?

## Comprehension

Discuss these questions in pairs and write the answers in your notebook.

1. According to the passage, what can neat freaks not tolerate?
2. What is a slob?
3. Why does the passage mention forks and knives?
4. Why might a little disorder be a good thing?
5. Why do some doctors think people are too clean?

## Vocabulary Review

Which one word from the vocabulary list on page 1 will fit into all three blanks? Some words are used in a different way in these examples than they are in the passage.

1. a) I can't stand all of the \_\_\_\_\_ in the kitchen.  
b) The bench at the front entrance is always full of \_\_\_\_\_ .  
c) My brain is so full of \_\_\_\_\_ that I can't concentrate.
2. a) My house would be \_\_\_\_\_ too if I had no children.  
b) Don't come down for dinner until your room is \_\_\_\_\_ .  
c) Virgin Mary's pregnancy is often called the \_\_\_\_\_ Conception.
3. a) I got in trouble at work because I didn't \_\_\_\_\_ my shoes.  
b) Did you \_\_\_\_\_ off the wine, or is there still enough for one glass?  
c) I need some pink nail \_\_\_\_\_ to go with my dress.





## Listening

Fill in the blanks as you listen to the recording.

### **CLEANLINESS**

*Are you a neat freak or a slob?*

1. Some people always seem to have it together. Their hair is perfect, their kids' clothes are \_\_\_\_\_, and their homes are immaculate. Unlike these neat freaks, slobes always seem disheveled.
2. Neat freaks cannot stand clutter. They are fearful of germs. Slobes, on the other hand, can't find anything if it's put away where it \_\_\_\_\_. ! You can keep your shoes on when you visit their homes. If a \_\_\_\_\_ comes to visit, you don't have to polish your silverware.
3. Keeping a perfectly ordered home and office may help you be more productive. But what about creativity? Some experts say that slobes, or at least those who refuse to clean up between each \_\_\_\_\_, are actually more imaginative. We only have to watch children play to see the proof. Young kids rarely tidy up their mess between projects. They have to be told time and again to put things away.
4. If we didn't clean up or tell our kids to \_\_\_\_\_, we would surely be ill all of the time. Or would we? Some doctors say that our obsession with cleanliness prevents our immune system from developing \_\_\_\_\_. Is your house too clean?

# Answer Key

**LESSON DESCRIPTION:**

In this lesson, students read and talk about cleanliness. Why are some people “neat freaks” while others are “slobs”? A class survey about cleanliness is included.

**TEACHING TIPS:**

See *Discussion Starters Teaching Guide* (<https://esllibrary.com/courses/72/lessons/>) for a variety of ways to use the reading.

**LEVEL:** Int

**TIME:** 1.5–2 hours

**TAGS:** discussion, cleanliness, organization, clean, idioms, survey, children, family, habits

## Pre-Reading

**A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS**

Have students work in small groups or as a class.

**B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW**

- |      |      |      |      |       |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. h | 3. c | 5. e | 7. f | 9. i  |
| 2. d | 4. a | 6. b | 8. g | 10. j |

## Reading (and/or Listening)

Read individually, in small groups, or as a class. You can also play the listening as your students read along. A gap-fill version of the reading is available on page 6. Help your students with vocabulary and expressions that they are unfamiliar with.

## Comprehension

1. According to the passage, neat freaks cannot stand clutter. They are also fearful of germs.
2. A slob is an untidy person who always looks disheveled.
3. The passage says that slobs will not care if your forks and knives are polished when they come and visit you.
4. A little disorder may allow you to be more imaginative.
5. Some doctors think people are too clean because our immune systems may not develop properly if they never have access to dirt and germs.

## Vocabulary Review

- |            |               |           |
|------------|---------------|-----------|
| 1. clutter | 2. immaculate | 3. polish |
|------------|---------------|-----------|

## Writing

**A. DISCUSSION**

Read the letter out loud with your class. Discuss possible suggestions that Dr. Neat Freak could make to Casey.

**B. WRITING**

Have your students write a response from Dr. Neat Freak. Answers will vary. Invite your students to share their answers with the class.

## Class Opinion

Have your students walk around the class and ask each other the survey questions. They should write the answers in the chart.

## Listening

1. pressed
2. belongs, slob
3. activity
4. wash their hands, properly