

Ocean Garbage



Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Have you ever been to an ocean? Which one(s)?
2. How does garbage get into the ocean?
3. Do you recycle?

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. deep | a) dangerous |
| _____ 2. current | b) a small piece of something |
| _____ 3. enormous | c) a living thing (e.g., animal, plant, or single-celled life-form) |
| _____ 4. particle | d) an animal |
| _____ 5. creature | e) garbage, harmful substances that affect the environment |
| _____ 6. harmful | f) far below the surface |
| _____ 7. organism | g) very large, huge |
| _____ 8. pollution | h) a constant flow of surface water in one direction |

Reading

OCEAN GARBAGE

1. Many people think of oceans as beautiful and clean bodies of water. Unfortunately, oceans are full of garbage. In fact, there are eight million metric tons of plastic in the oceans today. Much of this trash is **deep** down on the seafloor, where it is difficult to clean up.
2. Some of the garbage floats on or close to the surface. Ocean **currents** cause the trash to collect and form huge garbage patches. There are five **enormous** garbage patches in the world's oceans. The biggest one is called the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. It contains about 1.8 trillion pieces of plastic.
3. Plastic breaks down into tiny **particles** called microplastics. Microplastics are full of dangerous chemicals. When sea **creatures** eat these microplastics, they can become sick and die. Microplastics are also **harmful** to humans who eat seafood.
4. Ocean garbage reduces the amount of sunlight that reaches the ocean floor. This is a big problem for **organisms** like algae and plankton that depend on sunlight to survive.
5. Did you know that 80% of the plastic **pollution** in the ocean comes from just 20 countries? The top polluters are China, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Egypt, Brazil, and the United States are also on the list.

Word Forms

Word endings can be changed to make different word forms:

- Big ships produce **pollution** in the ocean. (*noun*)
- In the last 20 years, the lake has become very **polluted**. (*adjective*)
- I don't want to **pollute** the earth's oceans, so I recycle. (*verb*)

Here is another example with the word "harm." Note that the noun and verb forms are the same.

- Swallowing plastic can **harm** you. (*verb*)
- Plastic is very **harmful** to sea creatures. (*adjective*)
- Don't be afraid of that big fish—it's **harmless**. (*adjective*)
- These organic materials will not cause **harm**. (*noun*)

Comprehension

A. Questions

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

1. How much plastic is in the oceans today?
2. What is the biggest ocean garbage patch called?
3. What happens when sea creatures eat microplastics?
4. Why is it important for sunlight to reach the ocean floor?
5. What is the last paragraph mainly about?

B. Sorting

Look at the topics. Which paragraph in the reading does each one belong to?

- _____ A. Which countries are the biggest ocean polluters?
- _____ B. How are sea creatures affected by plastic?
- _____ C. How much garbage is in the ocean?
- _____ D. What is the importance of sunlight?
- _____ E. Where does the garbage go?

Movement Break

Stand up and take a pledge not to litter. Raise your right hand and repeat these words while marching in place. Repeat the pledge until you can do it without reading it.

- I promise NOT to throw trash in the street.
- I promise NOT to throw trash in the ocean.
- I promise to pick up any litter I see.
- I promise to remind others not to litter.

Vocabulary Review

A. Complete the Sentences

Circle the correct word to complete each sentence.

1. Don't worry if you're not a good swimmer. This river is not very _____.
 - a) clean
 - b) deep
 - c) harmless
2. Many different _____ live at the bottom of the ocean.
 - a) creatures
 - b) particles
 - c) currents
3. I don't want to swim here. There is too much _____.
 - a) pollute
 - b) pollution
 - c) polluted
4. If you look into this microscope, you will see tiny _____.
 - a) currents
 - b) chemicals
 - c) organisms
5. Whales are _____ mammals that live in the sea.
 - a) polluted
 - b) enormous
 - c) microscopic
6. This is not a good day for surfing. The _____ is too strong.
 - a) current
 - b) polluter
 - c) chemical

B. Choose the Closest Meaning

Choose the word or phrase with the closest meaning to each word.

1. harmful
 - a) difficult
 - b) angry
 - c) dangerous
2. creature
 - a) current
 - b) animal
 - c) patch
3. organism
 - a) living thing
 - b) dead thing
 - c) man-made thing
4. pollution
 - a) garbage
 - b) algae
 - c) body of water
5. particle
 - a) plant
 - b) enormous piece
 - c) tiny piece
6. deep
 - a) far below the surface
 - b) far above the surface
 - c) directly on top of the surface

Discussion

1. Besides plastic, what other types of garbage do you think are in the world's oceans?
2. Even before plastic breaks down into microplastics, how could it be harmful to sea creatures?
3. Have you heard of the food chain? What is it?
4. What are three things you can do to reduce the amount of plastic you use?

Class Survey

Walk around the class and ask your classmates the questions in the chart. Write their names and answers in the blank boxes.

| Name | What plastic products do you use in a typical day? | What do you think should be the punishment for littering? |
|------|--|---|
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| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Listening

Fill in the blanks as you listen to the recording.

OCEAN GARBAGE

1. Many people think of oceans as beautiful and clean bodies of water. Unfortunately, oceans are full of _____. In fact, there are 8 million metric tons of plastic in the oceans today. Much of this trash is _____ down on the seafloor, where it is difficult to clean up.
2. Some of the garbage floats on or close to the surface. Ocean _____ cause the trash to collect and form huge garbage _____. There are five enormous garbage patches in the world's oceans. The biggest one is called the Great Pacific Garbage Patch. It contains about 1.8 trillion pieces of plastic.
3. Plastic breaks down into tiny _____ called microplastics. Microplastics are full of dangerous chemicals. When sea creatures eat these microplastics, they can become sick and die. Microplastics are also _____ to humans who eat seafood.
4. Ocean garbage reduces the amount of _____ that reaches the ocean floor. This is a big problem for _____ like algae and plankton that depend on sunlight to survive.
5. Did you know that 80% of the plastic _____ in the ocean comes from just 20 countries? The top polluters are China, Indonesia, and the Philippines. Egypt, Brazil, and the United States are also on the _____.

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

Students read about and discuss ocean garbage. They review related word forms and survey their classmates on how to stop littering.

TEACHING TIPS:

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

LEVEL: Low Int

TIME: 1.5–2 hours

TAGS: discussion, ocean garbage, animals, pollution, plastic, nature, littering

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Have students work in small groups or as a class.

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

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

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. Discuss how the endings of some words can change in order to make a different part of speech. Ask your students throughout the lesson: *Is this a noun or a verb?*

Comprehension

A. QUESTIONS

- There are eight million metric tons of plastic in the oceans.
- The biggest ocean garbage patch is called the Great Pacific Garbage Patch.
- When sea creatures eat microplastics, they can become sick and die.
- It is important for sunlight to reach the ocean floor because organisms like algae and plankton depend on sunlight to survive.
- The last paragraph of the reading is mainly about which countries are the biggest ocean polluters.

B. SORTING

- A. 5 B. 3 C. 1 D. 4 E. 2

(continued on the next page...)

Answer Key cont.

Vocabulary Review

A. COMPLETE THE SENTENCES

1. b 2. a 3. b 4. c 5. b 6. a

B. CHOOSE THE CLOSEST MEANING

1. c 2. b 3. a 4. a 5. c 6. a

Discussion

Answers will vary.

Can be done individually or in small groups or pairs.

Class Survey

Answers will vary.

Listening

1. garbage, deep
2. currents, patches
3. particles, harmful
4. sunlight, organisms
5. pollution, list