

Test Your Speaking & Listening Skills

Discussion Questions – Page 1

Raw Materials



Ask and answer the questions with a partner or small group:

1. Which raw materials do we need to make... a) a mobile phone, b) a pen, c) a Sunday roast, d) an ironing board, e) a guitar, f) a spoon, g) a carpet, etc.?
2. Which raw material could you... a) easily live without, b) live without but it would be hard, c) not live without? Why?
3. Which materials do we waste the most? Why? How could we better save, manage, reuse, and recycle these materials, e.g. reuse old scrap paper as notebooks?
4. Why are some raw materials more expensive than others? Which raw materials are the cheapest? Which are the most valuable? Why?
5. Which raw material is the most used? List the top five most used raw materials in the world today. Discuss why they are the most useful. Which are the least useful?
6. Should we use sentient beings (e.g. animals) as raw materials for food, clothing, shoes, entertainment, sport, etc.? Would you be happy to catch, kill, cook, and eat your own meals? Why? If no, why not?
7. Should we use animals for our entertainment, e.g. bullfighting, cock fighting, dog fighting, in circuses, etc.
8. What things can you do *from scratch*? Can you... a) build a fire outdoors, b) catch, kill, and cook your own food, c) make clothes, d) knit a jumper, e) make furniture, f) write and perform an entertaining show, g) build a car from a kit, etc.? What would you like to be able to do that you can't do at the moment?
9. How often do you think about the raw materials in the products that you buy? Do you ever wonder how many thousands of miles the materials in your hand have travelled to be there? Does it make any difference to your life? Why? / Why not?
10. Which raw materials have been used to make the things around you where you are now? Are they natural or processed? How have they been processed?
11. How important is recycling to you? Do you recycle regularly? Why do other people want us to recycle materials? Is it a good idea? Why? / Why not? What can we make from recycled... a) paper and card, b) plastic, c) glass, d) metal, e) fabric, etc.?
12. Can you make something useful or beautiful out of... a) wood, b) metal, c) glass, d) paper, e) fabric, f) wool, g) clay? If not, why not? Would you like to learn one or more of these crafts? How could you learn them?
13. How does intensive mining for raw materials affect local communities around the planet? Does it affect *your* community? If yes, how? If no, how would you feel if it did?
14. What are the raw materials of *your life*? What is your life made up of, e.g. friendship, love, work, etc. What are the raw materials of... a) a successful life, b) a happy life, c) a happy marriage, d) a happy family, e) a good friendship?, f) a great career?