

Skimming and Scanning: Plastic Pollution

Skimming and scanning is a useful skill for finding important information in a text quickly. Skim and scan this passage of text to find the words in the box below.

Tick each word off once you have found it in the text.

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|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> flexible | <input type="radio"/> consequences | <input type="radio"/> impact |
| <input type="radio"/> syringes | <input type="radio"/> entangled | <input type="radio"/> takeaway cups |
| <input type="radio"/> chemicals | <input type="radio"/> contaminated | <input type="radio"/> recycling centre |

Use a dictionary to check the meaning of any unknown words.

Plastic pollution is increasing and is damaging the world's environment. Tons of plastic rubbish is thrown away every year and this ends up polluting both land and oceans.

History of Plastic

Plastic is a useful resource. It is lightweight, flexible and can be moulded into any shape. Look around you and you will see plastic products being used every day. Plastic is used to make food containers, bins, toys, syringes and hundreds of other items. Plastic bags were first used in supermarkets in the 1960s and are used worldwide by many supermarkets and shops.

Dangers of Plastic

Plastic however, can be dangerous. Plastic is made of oil and other chemicals which help it keep its shape. Plastics that are left in landfills or in our oceans give out these harmful chemicals which then poison the surrounding environment. This can have deadly consequences for wildlife that lives in these affected areas.

Animals and marine creatures can become entangled in plastic objects which then make it hard (and sometimes impossible) for them to move, eat or even breathe.

Human health is also affected by plastic pollution. Plastic chemicals are finding their way into our drinking water and the fish that we eat may also be contaminated. Scientists do not yet fully understand how plastic pollution affects humans but evidence suggests that it does have a negative impact on our health.

Reduce. Reuse. Recycle

We all need to act now to help reduce plastic pollution and there are lots of things that we can do to help.

We need to reduce the amount of plastic that we use. Avoid using straws and plastic takeaway cups and say no to plastic bags at supermarkets. Take a fabric bag instead. We need to reuse plastic items that we already have. Wash plastic bottles and refill them. Use a lunch box instead of wrapping food in clingfilm. And finally, recycle plastic instead of throwing it in the normal bin. Use recycling boxes or take your plastic to a recycling centre so that it doesn't end up in a landfill site or in the ocean.

