Topic

Reducing the amount of plastic we use

Learning outcomes

- Discuss issues surrounding plastic packaging in supermarkets
- Practise the language of food items and packaging
- Identify ways produce can be displayed plastic free in supermarkets

Age group

Aged 9-12 and 13-17

Level

CEF level B1

Time

50 minutes

Materials

- Worksheet
- Presentation (this can replace the worksheet)

Introduction

This lesson is based on photographs taken in a local supermarket during a campaign which challenged consumers to shop without buying anything in plastic packaging for a week. As well as offering a great context for reviewing the language of food, it also offers a chance to expand on this topic and look at the language used to talk about issues surrounding plastic waste. This lesson focuses on discussion.

Procedure

1. Lead in (5 minutes)	• Put learners into pairs. Display **slide 2** or give out the worksheet and ask learners to look at Task 1 • Learners identify the food in the packaging together. Ask them where they think the photos were taken.

© The British Council, 2019 The United Kingdom's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. We are registered in England as a charity.

	• Get whole class feedback and write any new vocabulary on the left side of the board. If needed, drill the pronunciation. **Note:** Having a designated part of the board for vocabulary creates a classroom routine that aids learning
2. Ranking and discussion **(15 mins)**	• Put learners into small groups. Ask them to rank the items in the order in which they need the packaging least, starting with those which need no packaging. • Encourage them to justify their answers. You may need to feed in useful language such as banana skin, peel, protect, etc. • Ask groups to suggest alternative ways of displaying each of the items. E.g. the bananas can be loose in a box. • Monitor and help with language. Add any new vocabulary to the board • Bring the whole class together and ask one group to share their rank ordering and alternative packaging methods. • Ask the other groups if they agree or have other ideas. • Feedback on any new or difficult language from the discussion phase • Ask the learners to discuss why supermarkets choose to package the food this way. What might they be gaining from it? **Note**: This extends the topic, includes an element of critical thinking and allows the learners a chance to recycle language from the previous discussion.
3. Discussion (10 mins)	• Put learners in pairs. Display **slide 3** or ask them to look at task 2 in their worksheet • They answer the questions Ask them to discuss what other differences there might be between the items **Notes:** Items in plastic are usually less expensive; the ones in glass or paper are often organic and more expensive. The packaging may reflect the ethos and principles of the company that produces the product, so whether or not they believe in sustainable production and packaging. It may also be that they realise that customers who choose those items are more likely to be anti-plastic. **Notes on the photos** 1. The eggs in the cardboard boxes are free-range, the ones in plastic are not 2. There was a negligible difference in price between the glass bottles packaged in cardboard and the tins held together by the plastic rings. 3. the bottles on the right are made of glass and contain fermented tea, the bottles on the left are made of plastic and contain a generic “detox” drink. The fermented tea is more expensive.)

© The British Council, 2019 The United Kingdom’s international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. We are registered in England as a charity.

	Alternative: This could be a homework task conducted on an online forum such as Moodle or Edmodo, or learners could post their answers to an online noticeboard such as Linoit or similar. • Highlight any new or difficult language from the discussion before conducting whole class feedback. This gives learners an opportunity to recycle the language you've focused on.
4. Brainstorming (10 minutes)	• Display **slide 4** or write 'Products in plastic' in the middle of the board and elicit a few products that usually wrapped in plastic in supermarkets • Put learners into groups to brainstorm other products that are wrapped in plastic. Support with vocabulary. • Ask groups to each share a few ideas.
5. Class discussion (10 minutes)	• Highlight some of the products identified and elicit other types of packaging that could be used. • Introduce the learners to the idea of plastic-free shopping and what it entails. Ask them to think about what the main problems might be, and which items would be most difficult to buy.
6 Extension ideas	• Learners choose one (or more) of the photos and write a caption for it as if they were sharing it on social media. • Learners take their phones to the supermarket and take photos of other examples to share in the next lesson. • Learners take part in a zero plastic challenge and try not to buy anything packaged in plastic until the next lesson. They then report back on the problems and successes. • Ask learners to find out more about plastic use and report back in the next class. These B1-friendly websites could be recommended: • https://earth911.com/ • https://myplasticfreelife.com/

Contributed by

Ceri Jones; Edited by Suzanne Mordue

© The British Council, 2019 The United Kingdom's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. We are registered in England as a charity.