

Ditch the balloons and swap the plastic toys for cake: how to have a waste-free birthday party

Level 2: Intermediate

Article summary: This article discusses some of the things people can do to make parties more sustainable.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Word forms

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to get students thinking about the effects that parties and celebrations may have on the environment. Ask students to work in pairs to discuss the questions. Get feedback from one or two pairs on what they discussed.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to work individually or in pairs to find the words in the article and then complete the definitions. Allow a few minutes for students to check answers in pairs or groups before checking answers with the whole class.

Key:

1. Cutlery
2. Thrift shops
3. ban
4. borrow
5. bunting
6. compostable
7. disposable
8. outfit
9. packaging
10. Reusable
11. second-hand
12. skip

- b. Ask students to work individually or in pairs to complete the sentences using words from the previous activity in the correct form. Encourage students to read complete sentences to you when they give answers, so you can check their pronunciation of the key words. To extend the activity, ask students to explain to you the difference between the following words: *reusable*, *recyclable*, *disposable*, *compostable* and *biodegradable*.

Key:

1. outfit
2. thrift shops
3. disposable
4. borrow
5. banned
6. skipped
7. second-hand
8. reusable
9. bunting
10. packaging
11. compostable
12. cutlery

3. Comprehension check

- a. Students can work individually or in pairs to do this activity. Encourage students to underline the section in the article where they found the answer, and where possible, to identify why each of the other options is incorrect according to the article.

Key:

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

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4. Key language

- a. Students work individually to complete the table with the correct forms of the words. Remind students to check the spelling of any words. Explain to students that the verb *memorise* is spelt *memorize* in American English.

Key:

1. *waste*
2. *waste*
3. *celebration*
4. *help*
5. *helpful*
6. *helpfully*
7. *memorable*
8. *colour*
9. *colourful*
10. *colourfully*

- b. Students now complete the sentences with the words from the box. They can do this activity individually or in pairs.

Key:

1. *memory*
2. *celebration*
3. *help*
4. *memorable*
5. *colourfully*
6. *waste*

5. Discussion

- a. Students discuss the questions in pairs or groups. Ask them to justify their opinions, referring to their own experiences whenever possible.

6. In your own words

- a. The aim of this task is to get students to reflect on the information they have read about in the article and how best to translate this into simple instructions that other people can use for their own parties. Where possible, encourage students to use the vocabulary from the worksheet in context in their 'how to' guides.
- b. Students share their 'how to' guides with the class. Give students the opportunity to choose the guide that they think is the most informative, useful or well-written.