

Creating YOUR Argument

Should You Go Trash-Free at Lunch?



Name: _____

Directions: Follow the steps below. Fill in the sections that require you to do so.

1. Close read your article. Highlight important information, ask questions, and add comments.
2. Fill in the “What Do You Think?” section that appears at the end of the article. Find three pieces of evidence that support both sides of the argument. Do not complete the section that is crossed out.
3. After reading the article (step 1) AND looking at evidence that supports both sides (step 2), decide which side you support. Put a check mark in the box below that describes your opinion on the topic.
 - Trash-free lunches are important.
 - Trash-free lunches aren’t worth the trouble.
4. Create a claim (similar to the **point** in a PEEL+). This can be the statement that you checked off in step 3. Then add “because...” and explain your point a little more. Write it on the space provided.
For example, “**Trash-free lunches are important because they help cafeterias eliminate waste.**”

5. Look back at the section you filled out in step 2. Highlight the TWO most important pieces of evidence to support your claim. (This is the **evidence** section of your PEEL+).
6. For each piece of evidence that you highlighted in step 5, explain how that connects back to the claim you wrote in step 4 (like your **point**). Write these explanations in the space below. (This is the **explanation** section of your PEEL+).

A. _____

B. _____

7. Look at the claim (or **point**) that you wrote in step 4. You need to end your argument with a final thought. Reword your claim to create a concluding sentence. (This is the **link** section of your PEEL+). Write it below.

8. Are you a reliable author of this paragraph? Are you informed? Are you **objective** (or not biased)? Explain why your reader should trust you in one sentence. Write this below.

9. Finally, go to Google Classroom. Type your completed PEEL+ argument using steps 4, 5, 6, and 7 to create a paragraph. The assignment is called “Argument Writing - PEEL+ Paragraph.”

ESSAY KIT
what you need
to write a great
essay



Should You Go Trash-Free at Lunch?

Some say it's inconvenient. Others say it's worth it to help the environment. What do you think? **By Mackenzie Carro**

Devon, 13, is ready for lunch. His stomach rumbles as he eagerly unwraps the meal he packed that morning: a turkey sandwich neatly tucked into a plastic bag, a shiny pouch of fruit juice, and a snack pack of crackers and chocolate spread.

But what Devon doesn't know is that his delicious lunch has a dark side. When he's done eating, left behind will be an empty plastic bag, a crushed juice pouch, and a sticky plastic cup.

That might not sound like much garbage, but it matters when you consider that Devon

isn't the only one leaving behind a trail of trash. Most of us throw away an assortment of plastic containers and food wrappers not just at lunchtime but throughout the day. In fact, Americans throw away about 15 million tons of plastic containers and packaging each year, according

to the Environmental Protection Agency. And all that garbage is a problem—a big, sticky, messy problem—for our planet.

How to Go Trash-Free

America's great love for **disposable** products began in the 1950s. That's when advertisers began aggressively pushing items like paper towels, plastic utensils, and prepackaged foods. Disposable products, they said, would make our lives easier and save us from all that **tedious** cleaning and dishwashing.

They were right. Americans loved the convenience. And now, most of us can't imagine life any other way.

But what is the cost of this convenience? Very few of the disposable products we throw away get recycled. Most of our trash ends up in **landfills**, where it will sit for

centuries, giving off toxins as it slowly **degrades**. Some trash ends up in lakes and rivers, on beaches, and even out in the ocean, where it can harm marine plants and animals.

But here's the good news: You can help solve this problem. How? By packing a trash-free lunch.

Going trash-free means replacing plastic forks and spoons with metal ones that can be used over and over. Paper napkins are traded for cloth napkins that get washed between uses. And all food gets packed in reusable containers.

So instead of bringing water or juice in a disposable plastic bottle or pouch, choose a refillable bottle. Instead of eating foods that come prepackaged in individual servings, like mini bags of chips and small containers of yogurt, buy in **bulk**. Then divide food into single servings yourself.

There is even a hidden benefit of going trash-free: It can save money. Why? A large package of food tends to cost less than if you bought the same amount of food in single-serving packages.

Convenience Versus Cost

Of course, when it comes to packing lunches, many families are thinking less about cost and more about convenience. It's often quicker to put together a meal when most of the food is already packaged and you can simply



7
MILLION
TONS
amount of trash
that ends up in the
ocean each year

toss it into a bag or lunch box. And on **hectic** school mornings—when you're barely awake and you have 10 minutes to shower, scarf down your oatmeal, and get to the bus stop—anything that saves time is extremely valuable.

On the other hand, many kids who have made the switch to trash-free lunches say the inconvenience can be



Statistics from *Garbology* by Edward Humes and the Environmental Protection Agency

avoided. For example, Hannah, 12, from South Carolina, makes her lunches the night before or on the weekend. That way, all she has to do on busy mornings is grab her lunch and go.

Many students also say that once they form the **habit** of packing trash-free lunches, it isn't that time-consuming.

"It takes the same amount of time to put a sandwich in a plastic

bag as a reusable container," says Karli, 17, from Illinois.

Making the Switch

Reusable containers do have some drawbacks though. If containers aren't thoroughly washed after every use, germs can grow inside. Reusable containers can be costly, and some kids point out that these containers are bulky and won't fit in their

already overstuffed backpacks. Plus, during rushed lunch periods, it's not uncommon for those expensive reusable cups, spoons, and lids to get tossed out accidentally.

As for Devon, his view is that trash-free lunches are not convenient. But he says he's willing to try making the switch because it will help the environment.

Should you? ●

What Do You Think?

Should you go trash-free at lunch? Find arguments in the article that support each side of this debate. Write them below.

YES

Trash-free lunches are important.

1 Reducing waste will help the environment.

2 _____

3 _____

NO

Trash-free lunches aren't worth the trouble.

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

~~Examine points on both sides of the debate—as well as your own beliefs—and decide what you think. State your opinion in one sentence below. This can be your thesis statement for an essay on this topic.~~

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