Pollution and Recycling

Task: Air pollution in towns and cities

Activity 1: Listening

Welcome to a practice listening task for the GESE 7.

You are going to hear a talk about air pollution. You will hear the talk twice. The first time, just listen. Then I'll ask you to tell me generally what the speaker is talking about. Are you ready?

Audio Script

Nobody believes that air pollution is a good thing, but most of us contribute to it in one way or another. Have you stopped to think about the risks we are taking but not being careful?

Well, you must consider that air pollution is quite harmful for our health. It really is no joking matter. Approximately two and a half million people die worldwide yearly due to the effects of air pollution. Furthermore, some scientists believe it can even cause birth defects. Some of the health effects that air pollution has caused are heart disease, lung cancer, and respiratory diseases, for example that of emphysema. It doesn't stop there either. There may be long-term damage for the brain, kidneys, liver, nerves, and other organs. Furthermore, these sort of effects can last for years if you are lucky, and if you were less lucky, you would even experience it for an entire lifetime, which has to be terrible. Although, even worse than that is that people are led to death sometimes by the negative effects of air pollution.

There are some ways that air pollution might be able to be improved within towns and cities. One thing that some cities have done is banning the movement of vehicles or diesel vehicles through the city centres. Another thing is making towns and cities friendlier by adding more space for bicycles and public transportation. By doing this, it makes it easier on people to choose not to use their own private vehicles. Something else that can be done is adding more green areas to help convert the carbon dioxide into oxygen. This can be done by adding parks, green roofs and special walls that hold plants, such a moss, that will help purify the air. Another thing to consider is that although chimneys and air conditioners make our life more comfortable, they are also bad for air pollution. To reduce this, chimneys should have filters when being used and air conditioners should be replaced with fans most days, since they use a lot of energy and produce a lot of heat, being bad for the environment. Finally, replacing all vehicles with electric vehicles will help reduce this problem drastically. It will take time though, because it is not cheap to just change out a car, but it is certainly a great solution. Countries like Norway are in the process of doing just that.

To conclude, we used to not be aware of the damage that we brought to towns and cities, but now that we are we ought to do our best to reduce it as much as possible. Wouldn't you rather live in a clean, breathable environment?

Can you tell me in one or two sentences what the speaker was talking about?

Now listen to the talk again. This time make some notes as you listen, if you want to. Then I'll ask you to tell me which are the risks of air pollution and how can it be improved.

Now tell me which are the risks of air pollution and how can it be improved. You have one minute to talk.

This is the end of the listening task.

Answers:

Risks of air pollution	● two and half million people die every year from air pollution ● can cause birth defects ● health effects caused: heart disease, lung cancer, and respiratory diseases, for example emphysema ● long-term damage for the brain, kidneys, liver, nerves, and other organs ● people can die / are led to death by air pollution
Improvements to air pollution	● ban vehicles from town and city centres ● adding more space for bicycles and public transportation ● add more green areas: parks, green roofs, special walls with plants ● use filters with chimneys / replace air conditioners with fans ● replacing all vehicles with electric vehicles

Marks: +_ / +10

Grammar Used in the listening task:

- **Simple Passive**
- **Relative Clauses**
- **Second Conditional**
- **Used to**
- **Modal Verbs**
  - **Must**
  - **Might / May**
  - **Should / Ought to**