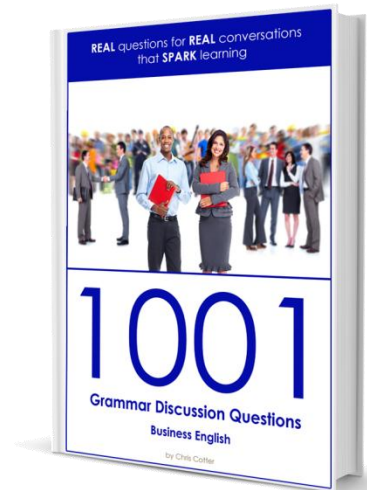
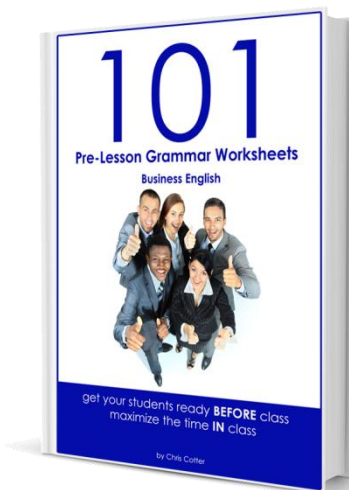
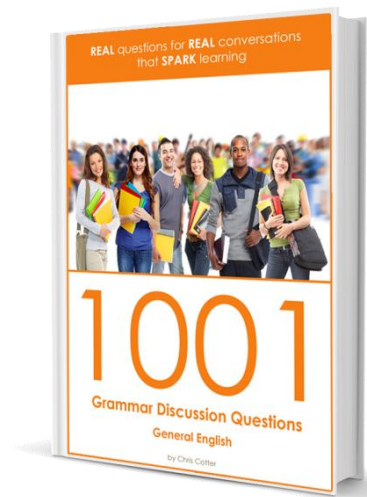
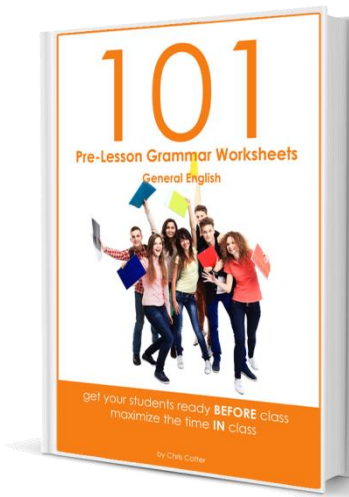
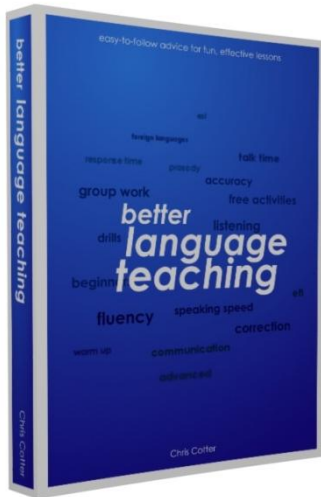


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# Could Too Many Children End Humankind?

Advanced - Listening

## the ARTICLE (for teachers)

### Could Too Many Children End Humankind?

What if it came to the point where a second child in every household tipped the scales irreparably towards environmental apocalypse? After all, despite treaties, bans, conferences, and Nobel winning former Vice Presidents, environmental degradation continues to seriously hamper humankind's future survival.

America, for example, consumes huge amounts of resources, arguably inefficiently. The ecological footprint of the US is twenty-four acres. If everyone on Earth lived like Americans, then it would take 5.5 planets to sustain our consumption of resources. China consumes far less than America, yet they are a major polluter. And although European countries pollute less and maintain smaller ecological footprints, they also pay poorer, less developed countries in a pollution barter. In other words, Europe pays some countries to pollute less so that Europeans can pollute more.

Let's return to the original question: What if a second child brought about extinction? There are some organizations who surprisingly favor the end of humankind, as they advocate voluntary human extinction through a halt on reproduction. Others look at the numbers, and suggest that two children per family wouldn't ever tip the balance. They suggest that the birthrate of developed nations, by and large the planet's greatest polluters, has actually dropped. Population increases there now come primarily from immigrants. As a result, most nations will eventually achieve an equilibrium, then pollute less and less as green technologies also come on line. This will stave off the end.

In the end, the question doesn't really allow a black-and-white analysis. It's more a matter of raising an altruistic and responsible child. After all, what if the second child became a champion of the environment, or developed a clean energy source?

Teacher's Notes:

\* Underlined words in red typeface are the answers.

# Could Too Many Children End Humankind?

Advanced - Listening

## the Article (for students)

Listen and fill in the missing sentences. Compare your answers with a partner, and then listen once more.

### Could Too Many Children End Humankind?

What if it came to the point where a second child in every household tipped the scales irreparably towards environmental apocalypse? After all, despite treaties, bans, conferences, and Nobel winning former Vice Presidents, a) \_\_\_\_\_.

America, for example, consumes huge amounts of resources, arguably inefficiently. The ecological footprint of the US is twenty-four acres. b) \_\_\_\_\_, then it would take 5.5 planets to sustain our consumption of resources. China consumes far less than America, yet they are a major polluter. c) \_\_\_\_\_, they also pay poorer, less developed countries in a pollution barter. In other words, Europe pays some countries to pollute less so that Europeans can pollute more.

Let's return to the original question: What if a second child brought about extinction? There are some organizations who surprisingly favor the end of humankind, as they advocate voluntary human extinction through a halt on reproduction. Others look at the numbers, and suggest that two children per family wouldn't ever tip the balance. They suggest that the birthrate of developed nations, by and large the planet's greatest polluters, has actually dropped. Population increases there now come primarily from immigrants. As a result, most nations will eventually achieve an equilibrium, d) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. This will stave off the end.

In the end, the question doesn't really allow a black-and-white analysis. e) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. After all, what if the second child became a champion of the environment, or developed a clean energy source?

Notes:

# Could Too Many Children End Humankind?

Advanced - Listening

## STEP ONE

**Discuss:** Do you agree or disagree? Why?

a.	Global warming will kill the human race.
b.	Humankind will end in one hundred years.
c.	America is the biggest polluter in the world.
d.	If couples have fewer children and lower the population of the planet, this will help the environment.
e.	I don't care about the environment!

## STEP TWO

**Questions:** Read as much of the article as you can in two minutes. Guess the answers to the questions below, then listen to your teacher read the article. Try to confirm your answers.

a.	The human race will end if everyone has a second child.	T / F
b.	If everyone lived like Americans, we would need more than five planets.	T / F
c.	China has the largest ecological footprint.	T / F
d.	Some organizations want the human race to end.	T / F
e.	Many developed nations have experienced a drop in birthrates.	T / F

## STEP THREE

**Fill in the Blanks:** Listen and fill in the missing sentences. Compare answers with a partner, and then listen once more.

## STEP FOUR

**Summarize:** Work with a partner to summarize the article in your own words.

## STEP FIVE

**Discuss:** Talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Remember to support your answers!

a.	Did you like this article?
b.	What's your opinion on organizations that want the human race to end?
c.	How would you raise your child? (Or how are you raising your child?)
d.	Argue your value to the human race. In other words, what do you do that benefits humankind?