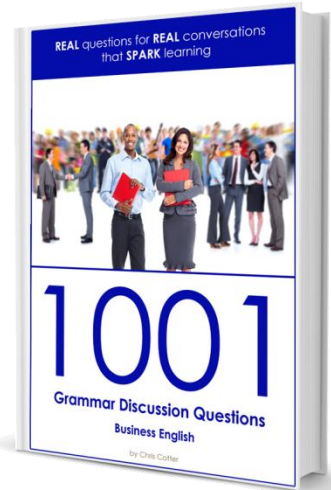
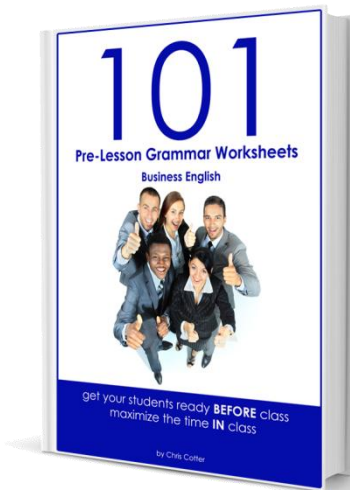
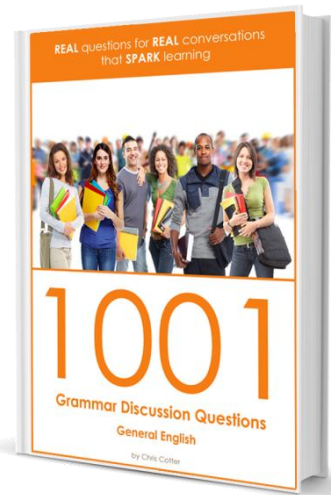
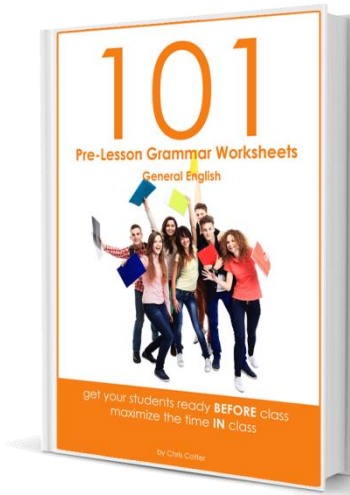
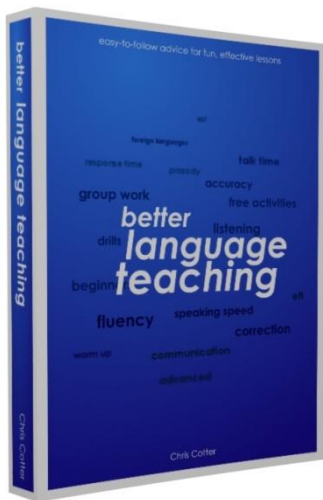


**HEADS UP ENGLISH's store**

find solutions.  
reach goals.  
engage your students.

awesome resources ready for immediate download!



## Become a Better Language Teacher

Join the Newsletter for Ideas, Answers, and Help!

**30 DAY** 30 Day Money Back Guarantee

Secure Checkout



# Could Too Many Children End Humankind?

Advanced - Speaking

## 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 may be vocabulary unfamiliar to the students.

# Could Too Many Children End Humankind?

Advanced - Speaking

## the Article (for students)

### 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?

Notes:

# Could Too Many Children End Humankind?

Advanced - Speaking

## STEP ONE

**Brainstorm:** Brainstorm with a partner(s) words and ideas associated with "apocalypse" for 2 minutes. Spend another 5 minutes or less discussing the words and ideas together.

## STEP TWO

**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 THREE

**The Article:** Read the article, and work with a partner to understand it. Lastly, summarize in your own words.

## STEP FOUR

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

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| a. | What was your general impression after reading this article?   |
| b. | Do you think humankind will become extinct? Why/not?   |
| c. | Would you support a policy that limited the birthrate to two children per couple? How about one child? |
| d. | What's your opinion on pollution and global warming? Give as much detail as possible.                  |
| e. | How responsible are you when it comes to maintaining a low ecological footprint?                       |
| f. | Argue your value to the human race. In other words, what do you do that benefits humankind?            |

## STEP FIVE

**Discuss:** Find three ways to lower your ecological footprint! Work with a partner to make a list, then share that list with another group of students. Lastly, in the group, reach a unanimous agreement on the best one.

#1:

#2:

#3: