

Advanced English II

A free life is rich

Mark Boyle, a "freeeconomist," gave up cash for more than two years while living in a trailer.

¹I gave up money for two-and-a-half years and I've never been happier and healthier. To prepare, I wrote down everything I consumed, and the list was embarrassingly long. I did it because I wanted to reconnect directly with the things I use. In my view, the key reason for so many problems in the world today, such as ecological destruction, sweatshops, and factory farming, is the fact that we no longer have to see the direct repercussions of our actions. (1) —

²To start my moneyless life, I got a trailer that somebody didn't want anymore. I also decided to volunteer at an organic farm, and in return they allowed me to park my new home in an orchard. (2) — When I went for a walk, I would go foraging for food. Cooking was on a camping stove outside. I bathed in a river, and my toothpaste was made from washed-up cuttlefish bones and fennel seeds. (3) — Washing clothes was probably the only drag. Between making the detergent from a plant called soapwort and hand-washing the clothes, it took much longer.

³To get around I had a bike and trailer, and the 36-mile round-trip to the city on my bike acted as my gym membership. I grew almost all my own food and, depending on the season, I would supplement it with a bit of foraged food and on rare occasions, some bartering or looking in dumpsters. The most common item you find in dumpsters is bread because it's not homemade anymore. If you make your own bread, you don't waste a crumb. (4) —

⁴I had a normal upbringing. We didn't have lots of money, but I had everything I needed. After studying business and economics, I spent five years managing organic food companies. I thought this was creating a good livelihood, but I realized ethical business would never be quite enough.

⁵The response to my experiments has been mixed. (5) — It's up to the individual to interpret what I'm doing any way they want. The way we live now is so inherently unsustainable that I think it will have to change at some point. What I'm trying to do is explore what could come next, that's all.

⁶Could we all live moneyless tomorrow? Of course not. Our culture is addicted to money. What we can do, however, is to start making a transition to a way of living where we're less dependent on money. If you want to go moneyless—or use less money—you need to look at your life and decide whether you want to reestablish real relationships, either with your environment or community.



B Read the text again. Write the letter of each sentence (a–e) in the correct blank (1–5).

- a) I take my fair share of abuse, but that's fine.
- b) I used beeswax candles for lighting.
- c) The one thing I did buy was a solar panel because I needed a way to fuel my laptop to write my first book, *The Moneyless Man*, and to communicate my experiment to the world.
- d) If you pick up a loaf cheaply at the supermarket, you don't care if it goes out of date because it doesn't have any real value to you.
- e) The degree of separation between the consumer and the consumed has increasingly widened, to the point that we are now completely unaware of the problems caused in the production of the food and other "stuff" we buy.

D. Match the word or phrase to the definitions

1. consume ____

2. sweatshop ____

3. factory farming ____

4. forage ____

5. barter ____

6. dumpster ____

7. livelihood ____

8. (un)sustainable ____

a. to search in a wide area for something, especially food

b. to use a supply of something such as time, energy, or fuel

c. a large metal container used in the building industry for waste

d. an intensive form of agriculture where animals have little space

e. (not) capable of continuing for a long time without harming the environment

f. to exchange goods/services instead of using money

g. something such as your work that provides the money that you need to live

h. a factory where the people very work hard in bad conditions and earn very little