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SPEAKING PRACTICE

Reading:
Listening:
Mini Test:

Organic food: why?

by Rob Lyons and Jan Bowman



Today, many governments are promoting organic or natural farming methods that avoid the use of pesticides and other artificial products. The aim is to show that they care about the environment and about people's health. But is this the right approach?

A Europe is now the biggest market for organic food in the world, expanding by 25 percent a year over the past 10 years. So what is the attraction of organic food for some people? The really important thing is that organic sounds more 'natural'. Eating organic is a way of defining oneself as natural, good, caring, different from the junk-food-scoffing masses. As one journalist puts it: 'It feels closer to the source, the beginning, the start of things.' The real desire is to be somehow close to the soil, to Mother Nature.

B Unlike conventional farming, the organic approach means farming with natural, rather than man-made, fertilisers and pesticides. Techniques such as crop rotation improve soil quality and help organic farmers compensate for the absence of man-made chemicals. As a method of food production, organic is, however, inefficient in its use of labour and land; there are severe limits to how much food can be produced. Also, the environmental benefits of not using artificial fertiliser are tiny compared with the amount of carbon dioxide emitted by transporting food (a great deal of Britain's organic produce is shipped in from other countries and transported from shop to home by car).

C Organic farming is often claimed to be safer than conventional farming – for the environment and for consumers. Yet studies into organic farming worldwide continue to reject this claim. An extensive review by the UK Food Standards Agency found that there was no statistically significant difference between organic and conventional crops. Even where results indicated there was evidence of a difference, the reviewers found no sign that these differences would have any noticeable effect on health.

D The simplistic claim that organic food is more nutritious than conventional food was always likely to be misleading. Food is a natural product, and the health value of different foods will vary for a number of reasons, including freshness, the way the food is cooked, the type of soil it is grown in, the amount of sunlight and rain crops have received, and so on. Likewise, the flavour of a carrot has less to do with whether it was fertilised with manure or something out of a plastic sack than with the variety of carrot and how long ago it was dug up. The differences created by these things are likely to be greater than any differences brought about by using an organic or non-organic system of production. Indeed, even some 'organic' farms are quite different from one another.

E The notion that organic food is safer than 'normal' food is also contradicted by the fact that many of our most common foods are full of natural toxins. Parsnips cause blisters on the skin of agricultural workers. Toasting bread creates carcinogens. As one research expert says: 'People think that the more natural something is, the better it is for them. That is simply not the case. In fact, it is the opposite that is true: the closer a plant is to its natural state, the more likely it is that it will poison you. Naturally, many plants do not want to be eaten, so we have spent 10,000 years developing agriculture and breeding out harmful traits from crops.'

Questions 1–7

The reading passage has seven paragraphs, A–G. Choose the correct heading for paragraphs B–G from the list of headings below.

List of Headings

- i Research into whether organic food is better for us
- ii Adding up the cost of organic food
- iii The factors that can affect food quality
- iv The rich and poor see things differently
- v A description of organic farming
- vi Testing the taste of organic food
- vii Fear of science has created the organic trend
- viii The main reason for the popularity of organic food
- ix The need to remove hidden dangers from food

1 Paragraph A	8 Paragraph E
2 Paragraph B	5 Paragraph F
3 Paragraph C	6 Paragraph G
4 Paragraph D	7 Paragraph

F Yet educated Europeans are more scared of eating traces of a few, strictly regulated, man-made chemicals than they are of eating the ones that nature created directly. Surrounded by plentiful food, it's not nature they worry about, but technology. Our obsessions with the ethics and safety of what we eat – concerns about antibiotics in animals, additives in food, GM crops and so on – are symptomatic of a highly technological society that has little faith in its ability to use this technology wisely. In this context, the less something is touched by the human hand, the healthier people assume it must be.

G Ultimately, the organic farming movement is an expensive luxury for shoppers in well-manicured Europe. For developing parts of the world, it is irrelevant. To European environmentalists, the fact that organic methods require more labour and land than conventional ones to get the same yields is a good thing; to a farmer in rural Africa, it is a disaster. Here, land tends to be so starved and crop yields so low that there simply is not enough organic matter to put back into the soil. Perhaps the focus should be on helping these countries to gain access to the most advanced farming techniques, rather than going back to basics.

1 You will hear part of a lecture about jeans.
Look at Questions 1–10. What is the main focus of the task? Circle A, B or C.

A developments connected with jeans
B the different uses of jeans
C attitudes towards jeans

Các con mở link nghe sau bằng máy tính:
[Track 09](#)

2 (09) Now listen and answer Questions 1–10.

Questions 1–10

Complete the sentences below.

Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** for each answer.

- 1 The word jeans may have originated in a material used in clothes worn by from Italy.
- 2 One difference between jean and denim material concerned the used to create them.
- 3 Denim was used in the clothes worn by people whose place of work was
- 4 Strauss's first name was originally
- 5 The miners' problem concerned the on their clothes.
- 6 Strauss's clothes solved the problem because they used fasteners.
- 7 The label Strauss added showed his waist overalls connected to
- 8 In the 1930s, the clothes became more popular because people saw characters in wearing them.
- 9 In the 1940s, people in other countries saw the clothes being worn by from the U.S.
- 10 In the 1950s, teenagers called the clothes

Các con mò link nghe sau bằng máy tính:

Track 33

33 SECTION 3

Questions 21–27

Choose the correct letter A, B or C.

21 The students did the study skills course because
A it was part of their syllabus.
B they needed it to prepare for an exam.
C their tutor recommended it.

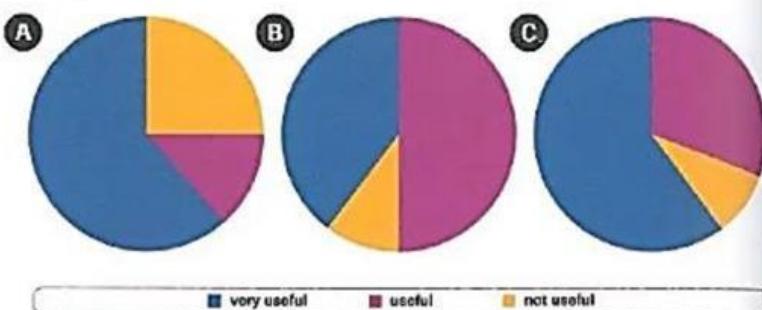
22 Why did Sylvie and Daniel use a questionnaire?
A Other students preferred the method.
B It reduced the preparation time.
C More information could be obtained.

23 How often did the students meet in class for the course?
A once a week
B twice a week
C every weekday

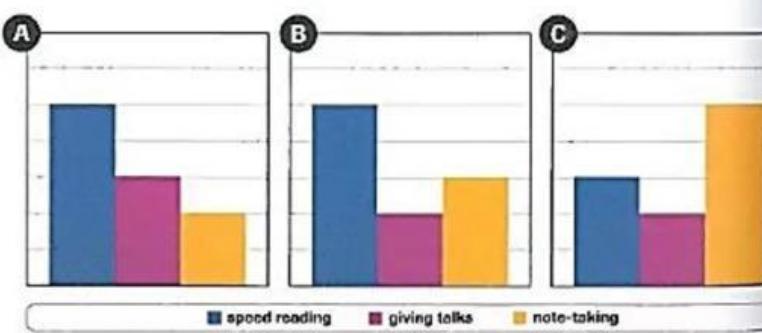
24 Why did Daniel like the course?
A It improved his confidence.
B It focused on economics articles.
C It encouraged him to read more books.

25 What did the students like about Jenny?
A her homework assignments
B her choice of study material
C her style of teaching

26 Which chart below shows how useful students found the course in general?



27 Which graph below shows how useful students found the different parts of the course?



Questions 28–30

Complete the sentences.

Use NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS for each answer.

28 Good note-taking improves concentration during

29 Making notes with the help of a is useful.

30 Having a on note paper makes notes easier to read.

I. Fill in the blanks with the given words in the box. There is one extra word that you do not need. Make changes if necessary.

anchor	evaporate	heatwave	interval	exceptional
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1. There will be two 20-minute _____ during the opera.
2. A long summer _____ had caused most of the crops to die.
3. Heat until all the water has _____.
4. The roots _____ the plant in the earth.

II. Arrange the words in the bracket to make a complete sentence.

1. (purpose / the / website / main / the / of / technology) is to help students learn independently.

→ _____ is to help students learn independently.

2. (fundamental / of / the / one / facing / problems / medicine / modern) is the resistance to antibiotics.

→ _____ is the resistance to antibiotics.

3. It's (restaurant / town / lovely / a / the / old / in).

→ It's _____.

4. Salt is (ingredient / food / is / which / used / an / most / fast / in).

→ Salt is _____.

***Lưu ý:** Với những từ con không nhớ và viết sai, con viết từ đó vào vỏ 2 dòng.

Mọi ý kiến đóng góp của phụ huynh sẽ là động lực để StarLink nâng cao chất lượng đào tạo.

Mời bõ mè quét mã ở đây để thực hiện khảo sát a!

