



RJ Matson

#### DEBATE ESSAY KIT

([HTTPS://SCOPE.SCHOLASTIC.COM/PAGES/TOPICS/DEBATE-ESSAY-KIT.HTML](https://scope.scholastic.com/pages/topics/debate-essay-kit.html))

# Should You Go Trash-Free at Lunch?

Some say it's inconvenient. Others say it's worth it to help the environment. What do you think?

By Mackenzie Carro |



From the March 2019

(<https://scope.scholastic.com/issues/2018-19/030119.html>) Issue

**Learning Objective:** to identify and evaluate key points on both sides of a debate; to write an argument essay

#### Complexity Factors

**Lexile:** 1000L

**Featured Skill:** Supporting an Argument  
(<https://scope.scholastic.com/pages/an-argument.html>)

**Other Key Skills:** central ideas and d

#### Common Core Standards

#### TEKS Standards

The Story

Resources

Lesson Plan

## Bookmark & Share

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## Presentation View

Read the  
Debate

Devon, 13, is ready for lunch. His stomach rumbles as he eagerly unwraps the meal he packed that morning: a turkey sandwich neatly tucked into a plastic bag, a shiny pouch of fruit juice, and a snack pack of crackers and chocolate spread.

But what Devon doesn't know is that his delicious lunch has a dark side. When he's done eating, left behind will be an empty plastic bag, a crushed juice pouch, and a sticky plastic cup.

That might not sound like much garbage, but it matters when you consider that Devon isn't the only one leaving behind a trail of trash. Most of us throw away an assortment of plastic containers and food wrappers not just at lunchtime but throughout the day. In fact, Americans throw away about 15 million tons of plastic containers and packaging each year, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. And all that garbage is a problem—a big, sticky, messy problem—for our planet.

### How to Go Trash-Free

America's great love for disposable products began in the 1950s. That's when advertisers began aggressively pushing items like paper towels, plastic utensils, and prepackaged foods. Disposable products, they said, would make our lives easier and save us from all that tedious cleaning and dishwashing.

They were right. Americans loved the convenience. And now, most of us can't imagine life any other way.

But what is the cost of this convenience? Very few of the disposable products we throw away get recycled. Most of our trash ends up in landfills, where it will sit for centuries, giving off toxins as it slowly degrades. Some trash ends up in lakes and rivers, on beaches, and even out in the ocean, where it can harm marine plants and animals.

But here's the good news: You can help solve this problem. How? By packing a trash-free lunch.

Going trash-free means replacing plastic forks and spoons with metal ones that can be used over and over. Paper napkins are traded for cloth napkins that get washed between uses. And all food gets packed

in reusable containers.

So instead of bringing water or juice in a disposable plastic bottle or pouch, choose a refillable bottle. Instead of eating foods that come prepackaged in individual servings, like mini bags of chips and small containers of yogurt, buy in bulk. Then divide food into single servings yourself.

There is even a hidden benefit of going trash-free: It can save money. Why? A large package of food tends to cost less than if you bought the same amount of food in single-serving packages.

### **Convenience Versus Cost**

Of course, when it comes to packing lunches, many families are thinking less about cost and more about convenience. It's often quicker to put together a meal when most of the food is already packaged and you can simply toss it into a bag or lunch box. And on hectic school mornings—when you're barely awake and you have 10 minutes to shower, scarf down your oatmeal, and get to the bus stop—anything that saves time is extremely valuable.

On the other hand, many kids who have made the switch to trash-free lunches say the inconvenience can be avoided. For example, Hannah, 12, from South Carolina, makes her lunches the night before or on the weekend. That way, all she has to do on busy mornings is grab her lunch and go.

Many students also say that once they form the habit of packing trash-free lunches, it isn't that time-consuming.

"It takes the same amount of time to put a sandwich in a plastic bag as a reusable container," says Karli, 17, from Illinois.

### **Making the Switch**

Reusable containers do have some drawbacks though. If containers aren't thoroughly washed after every use, germs can grow inside. Reusable containers can be costly, and some kids point out that these containers are bulky and won't fit in their already overstuffed

backpacks. Plus, during rushed lunch periods, it's not uncommon for those expensive reusable cups, spoons, and lids to get tossed out accidentally.

As for Devon, his view is that trash-free lunches are not convenient. But he says he's willing to try making the switch because it will help the environment.

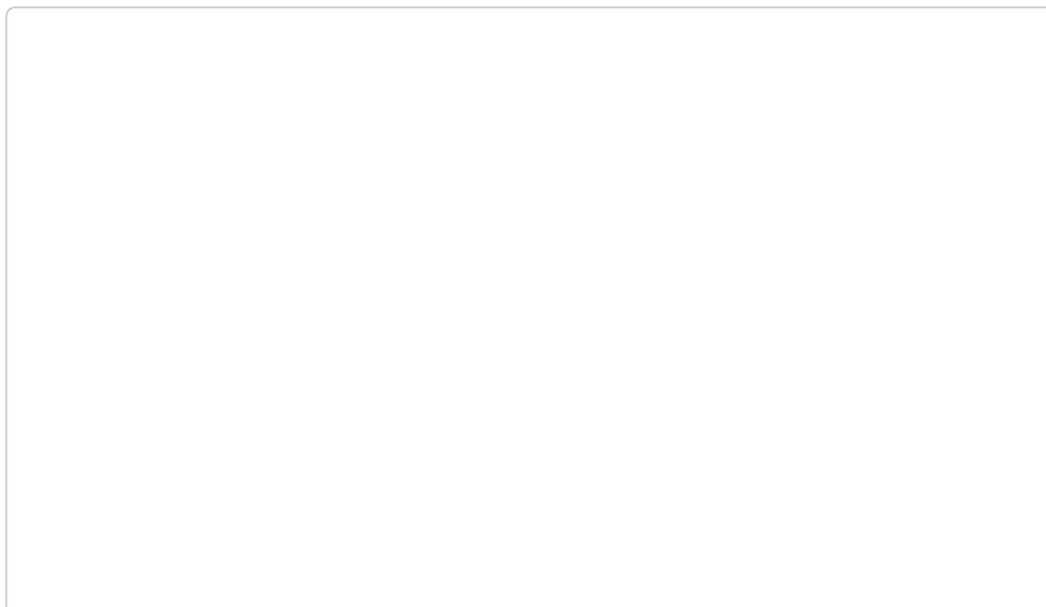
Should you?

## Writing Task

**What Do You Think?** Should you go trash-free at lunch? Find arguments in the article that support each side of this debate. Write the information you find on a piece of paper. You can use the information in an argument essay on this topic.

*Need help getting started? Use this helpful guided-writing activity.* (</content/dam/classroom-magazines/scope/issues/2018-19/030119/should-you-go-trash-free-at-lunch/SCOPE-030119-Debate-EssayKit.pdf>)

*This article was originally published in the March 2019 issue.*





## Should You Go Trash-Free at Lunch?

### Words to Know

Vocabulary from "Should You Go Trash-Free at Lunch?," pages 10-11, March 2019 issue of *Scope*

### Launch Slideshow

Our interactive vocabulary slideshows help unlock challenging vocabulary words and build listening-comprehension skills for all learners.

## More From This Issue



### SHORT READ

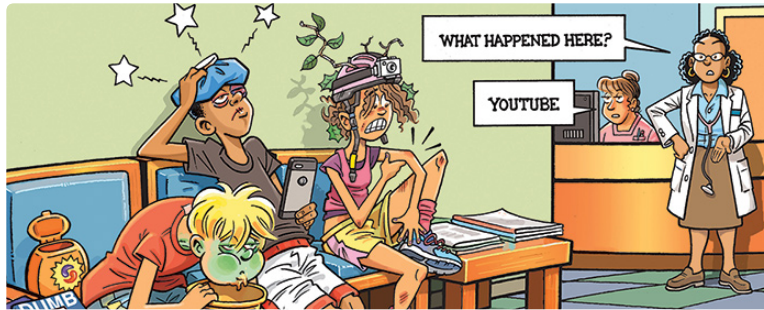
### How Are Emojis Made?

(<https://scope.scholastic.com/issues/2018-19/030119/How-Are-Emojis-Made.html>)

This bite-sized nonfiction text explores the fascinating story of who decides which emojis will be created.

# More Debates

View All (<https://scope.scholastic.com/pages/topics/debate-essay-kit.html>)



## DEBATE ESSAY KIT

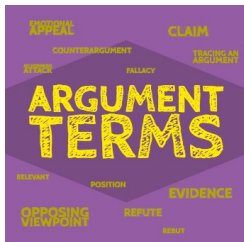
### YouTube Made Me Do It

(<https://scope.scholastic.com/issues/2017-18/040118/YouTube-Made-Me-Do-It.html>)

Kids are attempting dangerous stunts to get famous online. Is it up to social media sites to stop them?

(<https://scope.scholastic.com/pages/ideabook.html>)

Simple, spectacular ideas for using Scope in your classroom



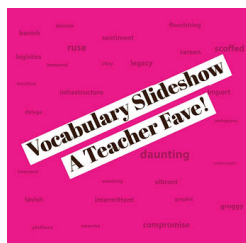
### Big News

### Check Out Our Glossary of Argument Terms!

(<https://scope.scholastic.com/pages/ideabook/2018/11/Dont-Miss-Our-New-Debate-Glossary-of-Terms.html>)

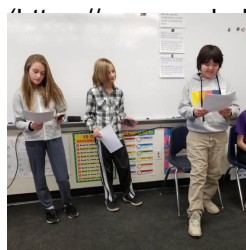
(<https://scope.scholastic.com/pages/ideabook/2018/11/Dont-Miss-Our-New-Debate-Glossary-of-Terms.html>)

### ELL Spotlight



## Vocabulary Slideshow: A Great Tool to Support Your ELLs

(<https://scope.scholastic.com/pages/ideabook/2018/08/Scopes-Vocabulary-Slideshows.html>)



([https://scope.scholastic.com/pages/ideabook/2018/08/Scopes-Genius Teacher Idea](https://scope.scholastic.com/pages/ideabook/2018/08/Scopes-Genius-Teacher-Idea))

## Hold a Debate With Student-Created Skits

(<https://scope.scholastic.com/pages/ideabook/2018/02/Hold-a-Debate-with-Student-Created-Skits.html>)

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[a-Debate-with-Student-Created-Skits.html](https://scope.scholastic.com/pages/ideabook/2018/02/Hold-a-Debate-with-Student-Created-Skits.html))

**View All** (<https://scope.scholastic.com/pages/ideabook/categories/ideabook-archive.html>)

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Frequently Asked Questions ([https://scope.scholastic.com/pages/frequently-asked-About Us questions.html](https://scope.scholastic.com/pages/frequently-asked-About-Us-questions.html))

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