Unit 1

Waste and Recycling

Listening (p.12)

How to Deal with Garbage

Paragraph 1 (トラック１：Q1 / Q2)

The world produces more and more garbage every year and this is a serious problem. How’s it being **dealt with**? For thousands of years, the solution has been to dump it in **landfills**. But that takes up a lot of space. Garbage is also burned, and this can be used to **generate** electricity. But incineration causes air pollution and wastes precious **resources**.

Paragraph 2 (トラック２：Q3 / Q4 / Q5)

The most sustainable approach at present is to recycle garbage. Among major cities, San Fran- cisco is leading the way, with an **overall** waste recycling rate of about 80%. Some countries have very high recycling rates for certain categories of waste. Norway, for example, has achieved a 100% recycling rate for PET bottles thanks to its unique vending machines that return a small deposit when you insert an empty bottle into the machine.

Paragraph 3 (トラック３：Q6 / Q7 / Q8)

Compared with most wealthy countries, Japan’s overall recycling rate is low: only about 20%, excluding **incineration**. Most of its garbage is burned. But Kamikatsucho, a small town in Shi- koku, is aiming for zero waste, and to achieve that, it separates garbage into 45 different categories.

Paragraph 4 (トラック４：Q9 / Q10)

Recycling generally isn’t very **profitable**, but recycling **precious** metals is. During preparation for the 2020 Summer Olympics, old smartphones and other electronic devices were collected from cities all over Japan, and gold, silver and copper were **extracted** and used to make the Olympic medals. That not only saved a lot of money, but also helped protect the environment. It’s believed that a huge amount of these metals could be recovered from landfills in Japan and elsewhere. This is called urban mining.

Paragraph 5 (トラック５：Q11)

Unfortunately, there isn’t much money to be made by recycling plastic, especially small plastic objects like drinking straws. So many people are now calling for these to be **banned**. The movement gained a lot of support after a photograph of a sea turtle with a plastic straw stuck in its nose was shared on social media.

Paragraph 6 (トラック６：Q12 / Q13)

Straws can be made from more eco-friendly materials, such as paper, but it’s much harder to replace plastic bags. They’re strong, light and attractive to look at, and they can be used many times. What’s more, they’re cheap. Shops in Japan used to provide them for free, but that was banned in July 2020 because of their impact on the environment, and now shops have to charge for plastic bags. But according to a BBC report, strong plastic bags used many times might actually be better for the environment than any other kind of bag as long as they’re recycled in the end.