



Article: [Reducing plastic pollution might not be in the bag](#)

Classroom Discussion Questions College Level

Individual Action vs. Systemic Change: The author emphasizes personal responsibility in reducing plastic waste. To what extent can individual behavior meaningfully impact large-scale environmental issues, and where should systemic or corporate accountability come into play?

Policy, Economics, and Ethics: Plastic bag bans and fees are often criticized as performative or regressive. Do such policies represent genuine progress toward sustainability, or do they simply shift the burden onto consumers without addressing deeper production and consumption problems?

Cultural Values and Environmental Identity: The columnist links plastic use to cultural habits of convenience and disposability. How might shifting social norms or consumer values help drive long-term environmental change, and what role does collective identity play in that process?

Classroom Discussion Questions Grades 9-12

Personal Responsibility vs. Convenience: The author argues that people often choose convenience over sustainability when it comes to plastic bags. Do you agree that small personal habits—like using reusable bags—can make a real difference in solving environmental problems? Why or why not?

Policy and Behavior: The column mentions bans and fees as ways to reduce plastic bag use. Do you think laws are an effective way to change people's behavior, or should environmental change be left to personal choice?

Cultural Shift: The writer suggests that attitudes about single-use plastics reflect our broader culture of waste. What might it take for society to truly shift toward more sustainable habits—and what role can young people play in that change?

Classroom Discussion Questions Grades 6-8

Making Choices: The writer says people often pick what's easy instead of what's good for the planet. Do you think using reusable bags instead of plastic really helps the environment? Why or why not?

Rules or Responsibility: Some places have banned or added fees for plastic bags. Do you think rules like that help people make better choices, or should everyone decide for themselves?

Changing Habits: The author wants people to use less plastic. What are some simple changes you or your community could make to reduce waste?

Classroom Discussion Questions Grades 1-5

Helping the Earth: Plastic bags can hurt the environment. How can using your own bag help the Earth?

Making Good Choices: Some stores don't give out plastic bags anymore. Do you think that's a good idea? Why or why not?

Small Changes: What are some things you and your family can do to use less plastic every day?