

The Pros and Cons of Nuclear Energy

partner A

Introduction:

Pros: *First of all, nuclear power generation does emit relatively low amounts of carbon dioxide (CO₂). The emissions of green house gases and the contribution of nuclear power plants to global warming is therefore relatively little.*

Nuclear energy is also relatively cost effective. It is possible to generate a high amount of electrical energy in one single plant. The initial construction costs of nuclear power plants may be large. However when the power plants first have been built, nuclear energy is cost-competitive. Generating electricity in nuclear reactors is cheaper than electricity generating from oil, gas and coal.

Last but not least, one must not forget that this technology is readily available, it does not have to be developed first.

Cons:

Conclusion:

The Pros and Cons of Nuclear Energy

partner B

Introduction:

Pros:

Cons: *The problem of radioactive waste is still an unsolved one. The waste from nuclear energy is extremely dangerous and can emit dangerous radiation for several thousand years (10'000 years according to United States Environmental Protection Agency standards).*

Despite a generally high security standard, accidents can still happen. It is technically impossible to build a plant with 100% security. A small probability of failure will always last. The consequences of an accident would be absolutely devastating both for human beings and for the environment. The more nuclear power are built, the higher is the probability of a disastrous failure somewhere in the world. Nuclear power plants as well as nuclear waste could also be preferred targets for terrorist attacks. No atomic energy plant in the world could withstand an attack similar to 9/11 in New York. Such a terrorist act would have catastrophic effects for the whole world.

In addition, the same know-how used to design and run nuclear power plants can to a certain extent be used to build nuclear weapons that could potentially be used by terrorists. One can hardly imagine the disastrous effects caused by terrorist attack involving an atomic bomb.

Another important point is, that nuclear energy is not sustainable. The energy source that is used is Uranium. Uranium is a scarce resource, its supply is estimated to last only for the next 30 to 60 years depending on the actual demand.

Conclusion:

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Notes

This exercise will help you understand the pros and cons of nuclear energy. It will also help you train your talking and listening skills. The most important goal of this exercise, however, is to teach you an easy way of writing a well-structured composition.

Task

- Study your part of the text.
- Tell your partner about it and listen to her summary.
- On your own, create a written version of your partner's summary and insert it in the blank spot on your worksheet. If necessary, ask your partner for more details.
- Together with your partner, write an introduction and a conclusion to the text to complete the composition.

Reflection

Reading/Understanding the content

Can you sum up the pros and cons of nuclear energy in your head?

Talking

Did you manage to get your points across? Ask your partner.

Listening

Did you understand your partner's summary?

Writing

- Name the three parts of a composition.
- Did you write coherent paragraphs?
- Did you use topic sentences like the ones in the model text? Find the ones that are used in the original text and underline them.
- Did you use connective chunks/words to connect your paragraphs? Find the ones that are used in the original text and underline them.

Language

Compare your text (pros or cons) with the original. Did you use the topical vocab correctly?

Setting goals

Which element of today's lesson would you like to work on more thoroughly? Set yourself an achievable goal you want to reach within the next week.