



**Exams Corner — Listening** (pp.64-65)

Announcer : Arthur is listening to a documentary about plastic bags and the environment. Listen to the documentary and also use the Background Facts to complete the Information Sheet.

The documentary will be played twice. There are eight questions in all. Do as much as you can the first time and complete all answers the second time. You have one minute to read the Background Facts and the questions on the Information Sheet.

The documentary will begin now.

[Host : Good evening. <sup>①</sup> Welcome to our new documentary *Plastic Horror*. A member of the audience asked me why this documentary was called *Plastic Horror*. Well, as you'll see very soon, the plastic bags we use and throw away do terrible damage to the environment. Plastic bags can also be a horror to animals. That's why it's called *Plastic Horror*.

Let me start with some figures. Every year, around 500 billion plastic bags are used around the world. In fact, 1 million plastic bags are made every minute. <sup>②</sup> 4.4 billion of these are used and thrown away in Hong Kong, which was only 6% less than that in 2009, after the plastic bag levy of 50 cents per bag was introduced.

Materials like paper are fairly easy to recycle, but it's not the same for plastic. <sup>③</sup> Different types of plastic are very hard to separate and reuse. The process is also very expensive. It's better to use other materials instead of plastic for packaging and carrying goods. <sup>④</sup> Plastic

bags take a long time to photodegrade, a process in which plastic bags break into smaller parts naturally. This process requires ultraviolet radiation for plastic bags to break down into fragments. How long does it take for the sun to work its magic? 3 or 30 years? <sup>④</sup> No, it takes around 300 years for that to happen.

<sup>⑤</sup> Plastic bags cause a major problem to the environment because they not only fill up landfills, they also create greenhouse gases when they're produced. Did you know that to make just 9 plastic bags uses the same amount of energy as driving a car for 1 kilometre? That's a terrifying amount!

After use, plastic bags break down into toxic particles that damage the soil and waterways. They also poison the food chain as animals mistake the bags for food.

There are many types of plastic bags and some do more damage to the environment as they take longer to break down through photodegradation.

<sup>⑥</sup> Rubbish bin bags, supermarket plastic bags or sandwich bags take a long time to break down, but the thin disposable bags that cake shops or vegetable stalls use to carry customer's purchases take even longer to break down. They're not included in the plastic bag levy, but they're thrown away more often than the others.]

Announcer : Now listen to the documentary again.

**Repeat [ ]**

You now have one minute to check your answers.