



The problem with Palm Oil

We wash our hair with it, brush our teeth with it, smother our skin in it, and use it to powder our cheeks, plump our lashes, and colour our lips. We clean our houses with it, fuel our cars with it, and eat it in chocolate, bread, ice cream, pizza, breakfast cereal, and chocolate bars. What is it you ask? Well the answer may surprise you: it's palm oil. You may never have walked into a supermarket with it written on your shopping list, but you've certainly walked out with bags full of it.

An extremely versatile ingredient that's cheaper and more efficient to produce than other vegetable oils, palm oil is found today in half of all consumer goods. Our modern lives are inextricably intertwined with the commodity, which can appear on ingredient labels under a myriad of alternative names. Our insatiable demand for palm oil has fuelled one of the most pressing environmental and humanitarian crises of our time. The equivalent of 300 football fields of rainforest is destroyed every hour to make way for palm oil plantations and this rampant deforestation has decimated the habitat of endangered species like Orangutans. Can you believe that companies have been able to get away with this for so long? We cannot let this continue, we must take action and the clock is ticking. The palm oil industry is causing potentially irreparable damage to the planet and if we don't take immediate action, the outcome will be catastrophic. The problems with palm oil may feel complex and impossible to solve, but solutions are within reach.

Firstly, consumers should push companies to be more transparent about where their palm oil is coming from. Next time you're in the supermarket, look at the ingredient lists on the things that you are buying and figure out what products actually contain palm oil. Then contact the company and ask them what their palm oil policy is in order to send a message to the companies that we will not tolerate the use of palm oil.

Secondly, companies must be more transparent about their practices. If they want to be trusted, they need to put everything on the table, they need to be as transparent as humanly possible and we need to be watching them closely.

Lastly, we should all support companies who actively seek to use alternatives to palm oil and boycott those who don't. The power of the people is a real and undeniable force that, when used for good, can change the world. Put your money where your mouth is. It's not an impossible problem, it's a matter of willpower.



Purpose: To persuade the reader to do something



Key features

Structural:

- Introduction to tell the reader what the issue is
- Paragraphs which detail each point
- Conclusion to sum up and encourage you to act
- Bright image with slogan

Language:

- Rhetorical questions: What is it you ask?
- Emotive language to make the reader feel: the outcome will be catastrophic
- Second person to speak directly to the reader: Put your money where your mouth is.



Writer's toolbox

Emotive language bank:

- Insatiable demand
- Take action
- Rampant destruction
- Not tolerate
- Undeniable force
- Decimated

Modal verbs:

- May
- Will
- Would
- Might
- Could
- Can
- Should
- Must
- Shall

Punctuation:

- Remember to use commas in lists and to mark fronted adverbials
- Try and use a colon to mark clauses.

Colons:

- Can be used to separate clauses.
- Example: Well the answer may surprise you: it's palm oil.

Recommended reads

