

Analysis of English.

Some of my listeners have asked me to examine and explain English phrases and vocabulary in depth. I think that that is a great idea. In order to do this, I have selected a small paragraph from a magazine that is about wasting money. This will be the first in a series of 'Analysis time' that will, hopefully give you deeper understanding of certain, common vocabulary and phrases, so you will find them easier to use.

Stop wasting(1) food! With a little creativity(2), you can use commonly(3) trashed(4) items and save yourself some major(5) dough(6). Did you know that, on average, Americans throw out 25 percent of the food they bring home, worth(7) an astonishing(8) \$2,200 per year. Think of what you could(9) do with that cash(10)!

1. Stop wasting....! It's a command. You could add various words at the end, such as, money, time, my time, the milk.

2. With a little creativity, a little thought, a little care, a little attention to detail. You're using your brain to think carefully. Ex: With a little effort, you could finish this project in an hour.

3. Commonly: normally, regularly, daily. It is used to describe the items that are 'trashed'. How often are they trashed? Answer is very often, normally, daily, commonly. This action is committed by most people; it is common.

4. Trashed, comes from the noun trash which means rubbish or garbage. It has become a verb, 'to trash'. Ex: We trashed the old car. This means that we threw it in the rubbish, or that we smashed it up first, and then threw it away. It is an Americanism. It essentially means the same as 'to waste'. Garbage and rubbish are only found in noun form; they are not verbs.

5. Major is also an Americanism. It means 'a lot of'. It implies an important amount, or an important position. Ex: I have major bills to pay. This could mean big bills, or a lot of bills.

6. Dough, is taken from bread dough, the uncooked bread. It means money, again slang. * A note about using slang. If you are going to use it, make it consistent. For example, in this paragraph, both 'major' and 'dough' go together well because they are BOTH slang. It sounds like a good fit. If you mix formal language with slang, it doesn't sound so good.

Ex: Save yourself quite a lot of dough. 'Quite a lot of' sounds more English, precise, and from England. Whereas 'dough' is definitely slang, street language, and very informal.

7. Worth means 'has the value of'. Ex: This coat is worth a lot more than \$100.

8. Astonishing here means surprising and shocking. To be astonished. Ex: I am astonished by his progress! Ex: The opulence of the palace was astonishing.

9. Think of what you could..... is a very useful phrase to which you can add a variety of verbs:

Think of what you could eat at the buffet. Think of what you could learn if you went to that university. Think of what you could paint if you had the right equipment. Think of what you could achieve if you were President.

10. Cash, as you probably know is money. It's not as slang as 'dough', it can be used even in formal situations with more formal language.

So, let's hear the paragraph again, first slowly, and then at normal speed.