



CORRUPTION

“Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

Lord Acton (1834 - 1902), British historian, politician and writer

1. Corruption Discussion

1. What is corruption? What corrupt activities can you think of?
2. Why does corruption happen? How is it made possible?
3. Which countries are corrupt? Which are not so corrupt? How can you explain this difference?
4. Is corruption only a problem in poor countries? Why or why not?
5. How corrupt do you think your country is? What kind of corruption happens in your country?
6. Have there been any corruption scandals in your country? What happened?
7. Are the police, other law enforcement and intelligence agencies, or the military considered corrupt in your country? If so, what kind of activities do they get up to?
8. In which other professions might you find a high level of corruption? What happens?

2. Corruption Vocabulary

- **to lobby** (verb), **lobbying** (noun, activity), **lobbyist** (noun, person) – *the lawful act of influencing government policies or persuading politicians on behalf of the private sector or other interest groups.*
- **(to) bribe** (verb, noun), **bribery** (noun) – *to make a payment to dishonestly influence or persuade someone.*
- **(to) graft** (verb, noun) – *the misdirection of public funds to benefit private interests (sometimes used to refer to political corruption in general).*
- **influence peddling** (noun) – *using one's political influence on behalf of someone else in return for money or favours.*
- **nepotism** (noun) – *using power and influence to favour family members.*
- **cronyism** (noun) – *using power and influence to favour friends or associates.*

Using the vocabulary words above, complete the following sentences (remember to use the correct form of the word, e.g. verb conjugation or plural noun)

1. In the latest case of **graft**, the city's budget took a hit after the mayor awarded a large infrastructure contract to his own construction company which was unable to complete the project.
2. The appointment of the president's cousin as Attorney General, despite having no previous experience in prosecutions, shows how damaging **nepotism** can be to the functioning of government.
3. The Conservative Party was accused of **cronyism** after a multi-billion government contract was awarded to one of their key donors.
4. The drug cartel paid numerous **bribes** to politicians, judges and police officials in order to expand its operations unopposed.
5. The senator was arrested for **influence peddling** when it was revealed she had agreed to vote in favour of the motion in exchange for a large payment and the promise of a promotion to a higher government position.
6. When **lobbying** involves making donations to politicians, there is a question over whether they vote for what they believe in, or vote based on who has paid them.

Corruption vocabulary comprehension questions

1. Is lobbying just legal corruption? Is it compatible with democracy? Should it be made illegal, especially when it involves making large donations to politicians and political parties?
2. Have there been any cases of political bribery in your country?
3. Can you think of any examples of graft that might have happened in your country?
4. Do you suspect any politicians have been involved in influence peddling in your country?
5. Is nepotism always unacceptable? Can you think of any exceptions?
6. What examples of cronyism can you think of?

3. Video: The Cost Of Corruption

You are going to watch a video by CNBC International called "What's the cost of corruption?"

Watch the video here: <https://yourenglishpal.com/blog/esl-conversation-lesson-plan-corruption/>

Watch the video and answer the following questions:

Multiple choice

1. In China, India, and Thailand, what drink is associated with corruption?
a) *whisky* b) *coffee* c) **tea**
2. What did one in four people in Asia-Pacific countries pay?
a) *taxes* b) **bribes** c) *bills*
3. Who is most likely to ask for a bribe?
a) **police officers** b) *young people* c) *politicians*
4. The total cost of bribery is equal to what proportion of global GDP?
a) **2%** b) *3%* c) *4%*

Sentence completion

5. The Panama Papers revealed how much money has been **hidden** in offshore bank accounts.
6. After the Panama Papers leak, the **prime ministers** of Pakistan and Iceland were forced to resign.
7. Due to revelations in the Panama Papers, Lionel Messi was charged with **tax evasion**.
8. Since 2014, Brazil has been gripped by the **car wash** scandal, a money laundering investigation that became one of the largest corruption cases in history.

Short answer

9. How much of Brazil's economy does Petrobras represent? **10%**
10. How many people lost their jobs due the Petrobras scandal? **More than 100,000**
11. Who might not want to put their money in a corrupt country? **Investors**
12. Money from the IMF and World Bank can end up in whose hands? **Corrupt officials**

4. Corruption Conversation Questions

1. What kind of corruption happens during elections?
2. Do you think politicians, and politics in general, are naturally corrupt? Why or why not?
3. Why do people keep voting for politicians and political parties they know are corrupt?
4. Do you think people in some countries accept corruption as the natural right of powerful members of society?
5. What are the consequences of corruption for social equality? What are the consequences for economic development?
6. How might corruption negatively affect the environment?
7. How can corruption be eliminated? What anti-corruption measures has your country taken? What more should it do to tackle corruption?
8. Is the world becoming more or less corrupt? How will this change in the future?

5. Corruption Writing Task

Write about your opinion of corruption in your country. Try to use some of the vocabulary you learned earlier in this class. In your answer, you could include some of the following topics:

- Examples of corruption that have happened.
- The effect of corruption on the development of the country.
- What anti-corruption measures need to be taken.

Alternative exam practice question:

Some people say that lobbying involving the payment of large donations to politicians is nothing more than corruption. Other people say that lobby groups only make these donations to politicians whose views they agree with. What do you think?