

Week 9 Additives

Task 1 Speaking

Look at this statistic and then discuss the question with your partner.

The average woman uses (beauty) products containing 168 chemical ingredients every day.
(Stacy Malkan, Not Just a Pretty Face)

- Does the statistic surprise you?
- What products do you use or consume that contain chemical ingredients?
- How do you feel about the chemicals in the everyday products that you use?

Task 2 Before you read

You are writing a research paper on food additives and have found the material below. Look at the name of the organisation, the name of the website and the title of the article.

- Is it clear who created the text?
- Do you think the organisation has a position regarding the use of additives?
- Do you expect the information regarding additives to support a position?
- Read the article quickly. Does it support a position on the use of additives? If so, what is its position?

Task 3 Reading

FAIA – Food Additives and Ingredients Association

About us: The Food Additives and Ingredients Association is affiliated to the Chemical Industries Association and represents companies whose principal business is the manufacture and marketing of food additives and ingredients. The organisation promotes better awareness of the role additives play in modern world.

Additives, behaviour and hyperactivity

In the mid 1970s Dr Ben Feingold, a Californian allergist, generated a great deal of controversy with his claim that artificial colours and flavours and naturally occurring salicylates found in certain fruits could trigger hyperactivity in children. Feingold claimed that 30-50% of the hyperactive children he had treated benefited from diets free of these substances. The Feingold diet quickly became famous and many studies were conducted to try to confirm his hypothesis but with mixed results. Most showed little or no effect.

However, in September 2007, researchers at Southampton University (funded by the Food Standards Agency) reported the results of a study, which they claimed showed that mixtures of artificial colours and the preservative sodium benzoate affected the behaviour of 3-year-old and 8-year-old children. The conclusions of scientists on the UK Committee on Toxicity, who reviewed the study for the Food Standards Agency (FSA), were more tentative. The scientists noted that the observed changes in behaviour were small, and drew attention to inconsistencies in the results across the two age groups and between the two mixtures used in the study. Nevertheless, the evidence overall was enough to persuade the FSA to issue new advice to parents, and, at the same time, to call on UK food manufacturers for a voluntary ban on the colours by 2009.

The Southampton study was also reviewed by scientists at Europe's food safety watchdog, the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), with the help of experts in behaviour, child psychiatry, allergy and statistical analysis. The EFSA team carried out a re-analysis of

the results using what it called 'a more justifiable and conventional statistical model'. The overall finding of the EFSA team's review was that the clinical significance of the observed effects was unclear – they were not convinced that the small alterations in attention and activity found in the study would actually interfere with schoolwork and other intellectual functioning.

Nevertheless, EU member states and MEPs have agreed on the need for EU-wide legislation in this area and foods containing the colours must now be labelled 'may have an adverse effect on activity and attention in children'. The colours in question are sunset yellow (E110), quinoline yellow (E104), carmoisine (E122), allura red (E129), tartrazine (E102) and ponceau 4R (E104). The FSA's latest advice is that a child showing signs of hyperactivity might be helped by eliminating the artificial colours used in the study from their diet – at the same time reminding parents that there are many factors associated with this complex condition.

After you read

1. The article mentions several different studies on the effects of additives on children's behaviour. What were the findings of:
 - Dr Feingold?
 - 'many studies'?
 - Southampton University?
 - The UK Committee on Toxicity?
 - The European Food Safety Authority?
2. In what order are the findings presented? What is the effect of this ordering?
3. What is the effect of the final statement in the article?
4. How do you feel about additives after reading the article?

Task 4 Informative vs. persuasive speeches

- a) **Look at the different ways of organising a speech. Which of them are most likely to be used in an informative speech, which in a persuasive speech, and which in both?**

argument-counter argument	description	problem-solution
reasons	cause-effect	process

- b) **Does each thesis statement introduce an informative or persuasive speech? What sort of organisation could follow each statement?**

Food additives are harmful and should be banned.

The results of studies on additives and behaviour are inconclusive.

Additives are used to preserve food, enhance flavour and improve appearance.

Additives are necessary to preserve food, enhance flavour and improve appearance.

- c) **Choose one of these topics. Write one informative thesis statement and one persuasive thesis statement for the topic. What method of organisation would you use in each speech?**

GM foods Animal testing Technology Studying English
 Tourism Vegetarianism

- d) **Using your topic and thesis statement, prepare two one-minute speeches – one informative and one persuasive. Introduce your topic, and include a thesis statement, two supporting points and a concluding statement. Use the table below to make notes.**

	Informative speech	Persuasive speech
Topic (State your topic clearly)		
Thesis statement (Be specific)		
First supporting point		
Second supporting point		
Conclusion (Paraphrase your thesis statement)		

Give your speeches. Can your partner guess which is persuasive and which is informative?

(the lesson adapted from Lane, S. (2011). *Instant Academic Skills*. CUP.)