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HUMAN ORGANS FOR SALE



a talking points lesson for English reading & speaking

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Introduction

What are your human organs?

If someone needs a new organ, what can they do?

Who donates these organs?

Would you exchange one of your organs for an iPhone?

Why/why not?

Your Kidney for an iPhone?

The trading of human organs has been in existence for many years.

The trade started as far back as the 1980s and has been increasing ever since.

The buying and selling of human organs can be very profitable. And as such, there are many criminal gangs involved in this business.

Many kind-hearted people leave their organs to charity as part of their final wishes before they die. Their liver, eyes or other body parts may then be used for the advancement of science — or be donated to someone truly in need, to improve the quality of other people's lives.

But still, some other people are seeing the large profits made from the sale of human organs and setting up agencies so they can trade in these body parts.

The internet is a great resource to help these unscrupulous agents in finding donors to give up their organs.

Usually, the people that surrender their body parts are in very unfortunate circumstances.

They may be very poor. Or in need of some fast cash themselves to send their child to a hospital for a life-saving operation.

It is not uncommon for a man or woman to surrender one of their kidneys to save the life of their child.

But now there are even stranger situations in the sale of human organs.

Some of these agents are offering sets of much sought-after goods in exchange for human organs.

One agency advertised an offer of a full set of iPhone, iPad and iWatch to any donor willing to give up one of their kidneys.

The agent was inundated with calls — usually from young people who figured that they have two kidneys, so losing one would not be much of a problem.

All in exchange for three gadgets that will be out of date in a year or two.

Of course, these organ donors are usually from poor parts of the world and see these items as luxury goods. They can show them off and make their friends and neighbours regard them with a certain amount of envy for a while.

But at what cost?

One young man surrendered one of his kidneys for an iPhone. But now he has serious medical conditions due to the loss of one of his vital organs.

There seems to be no control over this.

The donors are usually of an age where they can give full consent to hand over a human organ, and so there is little the authorities can do about it.

But the agents are cashing in big time.

All they have to do is bulk-buy some smartphones and other tech items and they can get kidneys they can sell to the right buyer for very large sums of money.

It is a corrupt way of making money.

From the naivety and greed of a young person, keen to be seen in a good light for a few months, but a whole lifetime of regret.

Is human life that disposable?

Reading Comprehension Questions

How long has the human organ trade been around?

Is this business legitimate? Is it totally legal?

Do some people leave their organs to charity?

What happens to their organs?

What modern-day technology helps the organ trading agents?

Are the people who sell their organs from well-off families?

What is a common thing that people need money for when selling their organs?

What are some agencies offering in exchange for a kidney?

What is a common reason that young people agree to these terms? Why are they willing to give up one of their kidneys?

What happened to one young man who did this?

Are the organ donors of legal age to do this?

Are the agencies making a lot of money?

Essential Vocabulary

trading	human organs	existence
increasing	profitable	criminal gang
kind-hearted	charity	final wish
liver	advancement	to donate
the quality of (sb) life	agency	resource
unscrupulous	surrender	unfortunate circumstances
fast cash	life-saving operation	uncommon
surrender	sought-after	willing
inundated	luxury good	envy
vital	full consent	authorities
to cash in	big time	bulk-buy
tech	large sums of money	corrupt
naivety	greed	keen
to be seen in a good light	regret	disposable

Exercise

Write down all the words and phrases in your vocabulary notebook. Look in your dictionary and find the meaning of each word. Write the definition next to each word.

Then make up your own sentences using each word or phrase.

For example:

Notebook—*a small book with pages of blank paper that students use to make notes when studying.*

“I left my notebook at home so I was unable to make any notes in my English class.”

Discussion Questions

What is an organ donor? Do you have these in your country?

How many human organs can you name? What do they do?

What do you think of the organ agents in the article? Should they be punished? Why/why not?

What do you think of the young people giving up a kidney for an iPhone? Tell the class.

Would you do this? Why/why not? Think of three reasons why/why not.

Who buys these organs? What are their reasons for needing these organs?

Are people too greedy today for new gadgets? Have they become too big a status symbol?

For a young person who sells one of his kidneys, what problems could he have later in life? Do you think he would regret his decision later?

If someone offered you a million dollars for one of your kidneys, would you take it? How about ten million?

Would you offer one of your kidneys to a friend or family member if their life depended upon it?

Credits

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