

Let's Stop Using Pennies!

When was the last time that you bought something for a penny?

Do you think you will *ever* buy something for a penny? Pennies date back to the days when our nation was new. At that time, the penny actually had some value and might purchase something of value such as a roll to eat. But today pennies are all but worthless. When many people drop one or see one lying on the ground, they can't even be bothered to pick it up.

Pennies are not only practically worthless, however. They are a complete nuisance! We live in an age of speed-of-light transactions. The fastest and most efficient way to do business is with a swipe of a credit or debit card. But people who fish for pennies from their pockets and change purses, sometimes one by one, hold up checkout lines and slow service for everyone. At the end of the day, all these coins have to be processed and, sometimes, exchanged. Surely, store and business owners, as well as their employees, could spend their time far more productively on other tasks.

For most Americans, pennies are nothing but a pain. They weigh down pockets and change purses. They set off alarms and slow us all down as we go through security devices such as those at airports and other public buildings. Many people treat pennies as the problem that they truly are. They just routinely rid themselves of their pennies by setting them on dressers or throwing them into cans or jars at the end of the day. Then they try to forget about them. Even when a huge pile of pennies accumulates in these personal way stations, for many people, it isn't worth the trouble to cash them in.

There is another compelling reason for getting rid of the penny now: the United States is losing money on every penny it makes. Even though pennies are mostly made of zinc, instead of the far more dear copper that appears to make them up, each penny still costs about 1.7 cents to make. That means that each year the United States Treasury ends up with an approximately fifty-million-dollar loss just for making pennies. The costs to banks and businesses for processing these coins every day of the year probably runs the annual total deficit figure to the economy closer to a billion dollars. Isn't it high time we stopped this fabulous and foolish waste of our time and money?



57. Which is the *most effective* reading strategy for previewing this selection?
- A reading the title and the subheadings first
 - B reading the title and topic sentences
 - C circling and then looking up unfamiliar words in each article
 - D writing down the main idea of each paragraph
58. Based on the selection, which activity is *most similar* to continuing to produce pennies?
- A spending more money on something than it is worth
 - B saving up money for an event that will never occur
 - C making plans to assist our national economy
 - D putting effort into a project that fails
59. Which word *best* shows its author's position or point of view?
- A nuisance
 - B compelling
 - C swipe
 - D zinc
60. Which *most accurately* states the author's viewpoint on the penny?
- A If dropped, pennies are best left lying on the ground.
 - B The United States Treasury should no longer make pennies.
 - C The penny is as useful today as it was when our nation was new.
 - D Pennies should be made out of copper instead of mostly from zinc.
61. Which of these could be a hidden bias of the author of this selection?
- A The author works for the newspaper in which this editorial appears.
 - B The author works for a financial institution that is bothered by pennies.
 - C The author works for a company that profits from the sale of zinc.
 - D The author believes firmly in the values and ways of the past.
62. What is *most effective* about the author's method of organization?
- A The editorial opens with a question.
 - B The thesis is not stated or implied until the last paragraph.
 - C Reasons are presented from least important to most important.
 - D Reasons are arranged in chronological order.