

Problems, problems, problems by Susan Lucier-Ogawa

Age:	Teenagers/Adults
Level:	Pre-intermediate–intermediate
Time:	60–90 minutes
Objectives:	To practise using <i>how much/many, is there/are there any, a few/little/some/a lot of</i> with countable and uncountable nouns
Key skills:	Speaking, writing
Materials:	One copy of the worksheet per student; a picture of a home interior, a school and a cityscape from magazines or the internet (optional)

Procedure

- Ask students to say any nouns they can think of. Write them on the board in two columns, divided by whether they are countable or not. Don't label the columns at this point.
- When you have enough nouns, ask the students how the words in the two columns are different. If they aren't sure, ask them which nouns can take a plural form. Then label the columns *countable* and *uncountable*.
- Proceed to elicit the language used with each group of words:
 - Do we say 'how many apples' or 'how much apples'?
 - Do we say 'are there any information' or 'is there any information'?
 - Do we say 'a few people' or 'a little people'? etc.
 Add the language to the relevant column.
- Write a simple dialogue, like the one below, on the board and act it out with a volunteer.

A – Is there any coffee in your kitchen?
B – Yes, there's a little. How much tea is in your kitchen? etc.
- Ask students to form pairs. Have them think of their kitchens at home and ask each other questions using the target language.
- Ask a few pairs to report their partner's answers back to the class (for example, 'In my partner's kitchen, there's a lot of tea, but there isn't any milk'). Check for accuracy and give feedback.
- Draw a glass on the board and ask:
 - 'How much juice is there?' Answer – 'There isn't any.'
 - (*Draw a tiny bit of juice in the glass.*) Answer – 'There's some juice, but there isn't enough.'
 - (*Draw more juice.*) Answer – 'Now, there's enough juice.'
 - (*Draw the juice spilling out.*) 'Now there's too much juice!'
- Continue to explain the language for countable and uncountable nouns. Explain that *too much* and *not enough* indicate there's a problem.
- Give students the worksheet. Higher levels or small classes can work individually, or students can make groups of four. Give them at least ten minutes to complete as many boxes as they can. If you have them, pass around or stick up the pictures you prepared of a home interior, school and cityscape, to spark some ideas. Encourage students to discuss their ideas while working.
- Ask individuals or groups to share some of their ideas with the class. How you proceed will depend on the level of the class and also on whether or not this is the first time they have encountered this language.
 - Lower-level classes**
Students just read out their sentences.
 - Mid-level classes**
Students read out their sentences; other students or groups ask them follow-up questions.
 - Higher-level classes**
Students ask each other questions based on the information in the table and discuss their answers. For example: 'Do you think there are enough computers in our library?' 'I think there's too much pollution in our country. Do you agree?'

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11. Write up a few examples of correct language students used during the final activity, as well as a few mistakes you heard. Get students to correct the mistakes.

Homework

Students use the prompts in their table to write a short essay about their kitchen, home, school, town or country.