

**LIFE ORIENTATION
COMMON ASSESSMENT TASK
PART B**

EXAMINATION NUMBER

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Time: 2 hours

70 marks

THE SUGAR REVOLUTION

Food Revolutions are not new. Through the centuries, humans have altered their diet to suit their lifestyles. In our modern society, food producers and manufacturers are also driven by the desire to increase their profits and they use powerful advertising mechanisms to lure us into buying their products. At the same time, we are driven by a desire to eat healthy and nutritious food so that we avoid illness. Scientists and experts do not always agree on what is healthy and nutritious. At one stage, we were told that fat was unhealthy for us and this brought about shelves full of low-fat and fat-free foods. Now, questions are being raised about this and we find ourselves poised for another food revolution – the anti-sugar revolution.

SECTION A SHORT QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

SOURCE 1

Is Sugar the New Tobacco? – Elizabeth Svoboda

You already know that eating too much sugar causes your teeth to rot and can lead to diabetes and obesity. But could it also trigger high cholesterol, high blood pressure, heart disease, and possibly even cancer? That is the theory of a group of progressive medical researchers, who argue that sugar acts as a toxin in the body and is responsible for not only our rising rates of diabetes and obesity but also increasing incidences of heart disease, cancer, and other chronic illness. Because sugar is so prevalent in food today – in obvious items like ice cream, cookies, and soda, as well as in 'healthy' foods like crackers, energy bars and salad dressings – experts contend that most people are living in a toxic overload.



[Source: Getty Images]

"Sugar is the biggest public health crisis in the history of the world," says Dr. Robert Lustig, an endocrinologist at the University of California, San Francisco. "The brain is biologically programmed to become dependent on sugar, wanting more and more of it over time. Every substance of abuse – cocaine, heroin, you name it, has required personal or social intervention," says Lustig. "For sugar we have nothing."

Sugar is found in nearly every food except meat, oil, and butter. But there is a big difference between the sugar that occurs naturally in raw, unprocessed foods like fruits, vegetables, milk, and whole grains and the type added to prepared or processed foods. Added sugars include every sweetener imaginable: white sugar, brown sugar, corn syrup, high-fructose corn syrup, dextrose, honey, agave nectar. It is these added sugars that experts say are the root cause of our sugar problem because high amounts of them are found in almost every food we eat.

[Adapted from source: <<http://www.mensjournal.com/health-fitness/health/is-sugar-the-new-tobacco-20140723#ixzz3XmJqdT1M>> (Accessed 2 April 2015)]

1.1 According to the source, what are the negative consequences of a diet too high in sugar? List FOUR consequences.

(4)

1.2 Why has the word 'healthy' been placed in inverted commas in Source 1? (11th line of the first paragraph)

(2)

1.3 In your opinion, what is the reason food manufacturers add sugar to foods?

(2)

1.4 *'Every substance of abuse – cocaine, heroin, you name it – has required personal or social intervention.'* What is meant by the phrase 'personal or social intervention'?

(2)

1.5 The title of the article in Source 1 is, 'Is sugar the new tobacco?'. In a paragraph, explain the connections you think the author is making between sugar and tobacco.

(4)

[14]

QUESTION 2

SOURCE 2

Sugar. We think of it as a sweet treat, but it hides in everything from barbeque sauce to yogurt to salad dressing, added to foods before they ever reach our plates.

Scientific evidence has shown that overconsumption of added sugar has serious health consequences: heart disease, obesity, diabetes, and hypertension have all been linked to high consumption of added sugar. And yet we continue to consume large amounts of hidden sugar every day, and our food policies do not reflect the scientific evidence on this health risk.

A major factor that has kept us in the dark about sugar's detrimental impacts is the role that industry has played in keeping it that way. Sugar interests – food and beverage manufacturers along with industry-supported organisations such as trade associations, front groups, and public relations firms – have actively sought to ensure consumption of high levels of sugar continues.

[Source: <<http://www.ucsusa.org/center-for-science-and-democracy/sugar-industry-undermines-public-health-policy.html#.VTQp3JSUf39>> (Accessed 2 April 2015)]

2.1 What is meant by 'it (sugar) hides in everything'?

(2)

2.2 In the last line of the second paragraph, the author states that 'our food policies do not reflect the scientific evidence of this health risk'.

2.2.1 Who is, or which groups are, responsible for ensuring that food policies protect public health?

(2)

2.2.2 Create an appropriate slogan that could be used on a poster alerting teenagers to the dangers associated with consuming too much added sugar.

(2)

2.3 Suggest a possible reason why the sugar industry would want to hide from consumers the dangers of a diet high in added sugars.

(2)
[8]

QUESTION 3

SOURCE 3

South Africa: A fat, hungry nation
by Wilma Stassen on April 7, 2015 in Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), Nutrition

Food is a big issue in South Africa. Many South Africans are both overweight and hungry. About 40 percent of South Africans eat the amount of calories recommended daily but eat food with so little nutrition that they are actually malnourished. "People think of food insecurity as only having insufficient amounts of food, but it can also include not having enough food of sufficient quality," says Prof David Sanders from the University of the Western Cape's School of Public Health.

A typical 'low quality' meal consists of mostly mealie meal, bread or rice, with very little animal protein or vegetables. The meal is also usually prepared with cheap oil and lots of salt or sugar. Foods such as white bread, biscuits and processed meats that are high in calories and added sugars but low in nutritional value, are cheaper than healthy food. Poverty is at the heart of South Africa's food problems. A 2012 study found that healthier foods typically cost South Africans between 10 and 60 percent more than less healthy foods when compared by weight and up to 110 percent more when compared by nutritional value.

Various countries have attempted to implement a so-called 'sugar tax', but food industry opposition has overthrown efforts in most cases. Mexico implemented a tax on sugary drinks last year and became the only country to have successfully implemented a 'sin tax' on a foodstuff.

Other interventions could be successful including ensuring that fast food outlets are a certain distance away from schools and banning fast food advertising during children's TV viewing times.

[Adapted from source: <<http://www.health-e.org.za/2015/04/07/south-africa-a-fat-hungry-nation/>> (Accessed 2 April 2015)]

3.1 Why do you think the tax on sugary drinks is referred to as a 'sin tax'?

(2)

3.2 Suggest ONE way in which poor people could eat more healthily without buying expensive, healthy food.

(2)

3.3 From a broader perspective, what impact could a poorly nourished population have on the country? Explain TWO consequences.

(4)
[8]

QUESTION 4

SOURCE 4

Sweatshop sugar by Jason Hickel

When you pour a packet of South African-made sugar into your morning coffee, you can feel good about the fact that the workers who milled, refined, packed, and shipped it are paid relatively decent wages, enjoy basic benefits, and are protected against severe exploitation. In many respects, South African sugar is about as 'ethical' as sugar gets. That is because the South African sugar industry bears the happy distinction of being unionised wall-to-wall.

But the benefits of unionisation apply to only one side of the sugar industry: the milling sector. The other side of the industry – the agricultural sector – has been almost completely ignored by the union movement, despite the fact that it is much more labour intensive.

Almost none of these workers are unionised. They work in extremely dangerous conditions with very little by way of rights and protections. This is where the sweatshop analogy becomes appropriate. Just as Nike avoids unions and labour laws in the Western world by outsourcing to sweatshops in the developing world, so sugar producers in South Africa avoid unions by outsourcing to small farmers. These farmers often operate with precarious, razor-thin profit margins and stay afloat by forcing down costs, usually by employing the most vulnerable and exploitable workers they can find and hiring them on a 'seasonal' basis so that they can be retrenched on a whim. Some of the smaller operations run as family businesses centred on homesteads, where farmers rely on their wives and children for labour and have zero recourse to the benefits that come with formal employment.

[Adapted from source: <<http://www.thoughtleader.co.za/jasonhickel/2011/10/13/sweatshop-sugar/>> (Accessed 2 April 2014)]

4.1 Give ONE obstacle you can think of that stands in the way of workers on sugar farms forming unions.

(2)

4.2 Give TWO benefits for workers belonging to a trade union.

(2)

4.3 In what respect is sugar produced in South Africa possibly not ethical?

(2)

4.4 Do you think that children working on their parent's farm amounts to child labour? Justify your opinion.

(2)

4.5 What action could you take, as a member of the public, to promote more ethical sugar farming?

(2)

[10]

40 marks

SECTION B DISCURSIVE ESSAY

We all 'vote with our fork' every day. Everyone alive is making food choices that change the world, bite by bite, for better or worse.
Nick Saul, author of *Beyond Evil Food Banks*

[Source: <<http://www.urbanfoodrevolution.com/beyond-evil-food-banks-nick-saul-coming-to-vancouver/>>>
(Accessed 2 April 2015)]



[Source: <http://www.joup.ie/wp-content/uploads/FoodRevolutionFinal_905.jpg>
(Accessed 2 April 2015)]

The previous four questions have exposed you to various aspects of the debate about added sugars in the food we eat. Throughout your engagement with 'revolutions' in CAT Part A in your Life Orientation classes, you have considered the following aspects of revolutions:

- the concept of a revolution,
- why change may be necessary in society, and
- the roles and responsibilities of groups and individuals in bringing about necessary change.

Using your knowledge of 'revolutions' and the sources from Section A of this paper, answer the following question:

To what extent is an anti-sugar revolution necessary in our global society?

Answer this question in an essay of between 500 and 600 words.
