

26th September – Reading Part C

Rhetorical question



Text 2: Should obesity be classed as a disease?

Paragraph 1 – Vocab:

- To triple
- Prevalence
- Daunting

15 What is the writer doing in the first paragraph?

1. The question asks “What is the writer doing...?” – Should we look for a detail in the paragraph or try to understand the main idea? **Main idea**

Driven by powerful cultural and economic factors, obesity is widely recognised as one of the most important health issues facing the world today. Prevalence has tripled over the past forty years, raising it to epidemic proportions, with more than 13 percent of the world’s adult population classified as obese. Although largely avoidable, **obesity is a major risk factor for an alarming number of potentially fatal non-communicable conditions**, such as **cardiovascular disease** (the leading global cause of death in 2019), **diabetes**, **musculoskeletal disorders** and some **cancers**. **Prevalence in the UK is expected to hit 35 percent by 2030**. This is a daunting figure, as **obesity not only places a heavy strain on the healthcare system, but also damages educational outcomes, labour force productivity and the economy.**

15 What is the writer doing in the first paragraph?

- (A) **criticising current attitudes** towards obese people
- (B) **explaining why** obesity is **linked** to **so many chronic diseases**
- (C) emphasising the **negative impact** obesity has on **society as a whole**
- (D) pointing out the **difficulties** involved in **predicting future levels** of obesity

Paragraph 2 – Vocab:

- Fad diets
- To follow suit
- Stigmatisation

16 In the second paragraph the writer argues that classifying obesity as a disease would ? What would happen?

1. The question uses the phrase “the writer argues” – What type of information might we need to answer this question? **The writer’s opinion/viewpoint**
2. This question is a sentence stem – What do you think could finish the sentence?
Result/effect

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines obesity as ‘abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that may impair health’ and have classed it as a disease since 1936. Calls for the UK to follow suit are increasing. Proponents claim that reclassification would inevitably lead to increased funds being allocated to fighting it, allowing for more research into its behavioural, environmental and genetic causes. This in turn would lead to the development of more effective healthcare policies, ranging all the way from prevention, to medical and surgical treatments. This is already the case for other ‘recognised’ diseases which are related to lifestyle choices, such as COPD or lung cancer in a person who smokes. Moreover, it would encourage people to discuss their condition and seek treatment. Stigmatisation and humiliation frequently leave patients fearful of doing so, causing some to turn to futile fad diets or unsafe non-prescription medication.

16 In the second paragraph the writer argues that classifying obesity as a disease would

- (A) cause some people’s anxiety about their weight to worsen.
- (B) deter patients from exploring potentially harmful remedies.
- (C) lead to excessive numbers of patients trying to access services.
- (D) have little effect on feelings of shame associated with the condition.

17 What is the writer referring to with the phrase 'this is already the case' in the second paragraph?

1. When we see referring words such as "this", how far back in the paragraph do we need to read?
2. What is your existing knowledge of the phrase "this is already the case"?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines obesity as 'abnormal or excessive fat accumulation that may impair health' and have classed it as a disease since 1936. Calls for the UK to follow suit are increasing. Proponents claim that reclassification would inevitably lead to increased funds being allocated to fighting it, allowing for more research into its behavioural, environmental and genetic causes. This in turn would lead to the development of more effective healthcare policies, ranging all the way from prevention, to medical and surgical treatments. This is already the case for other 'recognised' diseases which are related to lifestyle choices, such as COPD or lung cancer in a person who smokes. Moreover, it would encourage people to discuss their condition and seek treatment. Stigmatisation and humiliation frequently leave patients fearful of doing so, causing some to turn to futile fad diets or unsafe non-prescription medication.

17 What is the writer referring to with the phrase 'this is already the case' in the second paragraph?

- (A) the positive impact of better resourcing
- (B) an increased focus on preventative measures
- (C) the combined efforts of committed individuals
- (D) an improved understanding of how a problem arose

Answers:

15) C

16) B

17) A