

1 | Why do we love sugar so much?

Many scientists believe our love of sugar may actually be an **addiction**. When we eat or drink sugary foods, the sugar enters our blood and affects parts of our brain that make us feel good. Then the good feeling goes away, leaving us wanting more. All tasty foods do this, but sugar has a particularly strong effect. In this way, it is in fact an addictive **drug**, one that doctors **recommend** we all **cut down on**.

"It seems like every time I study an illness and trace a path to the first cause, I find my way back to sugar," says scientist Richard Johnson. One-third of adults worldwide have high blood pressure,¹ and up to 347 million have diabetes.² Why? "Sugar, we believe, is one of the culprits, if not the major culprit," says Johnson.

Our bodies are designed to survive on very little sugar. Early humans often had very little food, so our bodies learned to be very **efficient** in **storing** sugar as fat. In this way, we had energy stored for when there was no food. But today, most people have more than enough. So the very thing that once saved us may now be killing us.

So what is the solution? It's **obvious** that we need to eat less sugar. The trouble is, in today's world, it's extremely difficult to avoid. From breakfast cereals to after-dinner desserts, our foods are increasingly filled with it. Some manufacturers even use sugar to replace taste in foods that are **advertised** as low in fat.

But there are those who are fighting back against sugar. Many schools are replacing sugary desserts with healthier options like fruit. Other schools are growing their own food in gardens, or building **facilities** like walking tracks so students and others in the community can exercise. The **battle** has not yet been lost.

¹ A person with **high blood pressure** has blood flowing through his or her body at higher than normal pressure, which can lead to a number of diseases.

² **Diabetes** is a medical condition in which someone has too much sugar in his or her blood.

Many believe the lollipop was first invented in the Middle Ages. The largest lollipop created in modern times weighed 3,176 kilograms. >



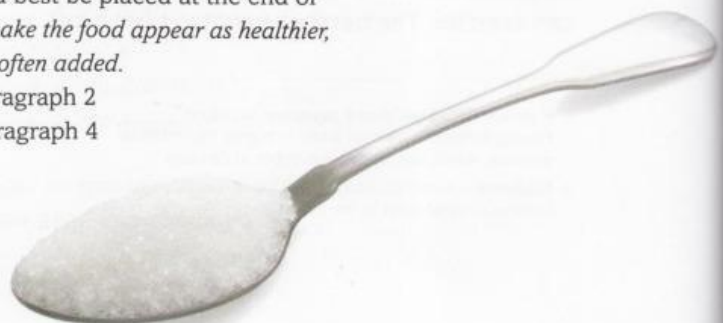
Reading Comprehension

Multiple Choice. Choose the best answer for each question.

- | | |
|------------|--|
| Gist | 1. What is this passage mainly about?
a. our addiction to sugar
b. illnesses caused by sugar
c. good sugar vs. bad sugar
d. ways to avoid sugar |
| Vocabulary | 2. In line 17, the word <i>culprit</i> is closest in meaning to _____.
a. disease b. unknown thing
c. sweet food d. cause of the problem |
| Reference | 3. What does the phrase <i>the very thing</i> in line 22 refer to?
a. the amount of sugar in our food
b. having enough food to survive
c. our ability to store sugar as fat
d. early humans' lack of food |
| Main Idea | 4. What would be a good title for the fourth paragraph?
a. Too Much Sugar
b. How to Avoid Sugar
c. A Solution: Low in Fat
d. No Easy Answers |
| Detail | 5. According to the passage, why is it so hard to avoid sugar?
a. We like candy too much.
b. It gives us needed energy.
c. It's in so many foods and drinks.
d. We get used to eating it at school. |
| Detail | 6. Which of the following statements about sugar is NOT true?
a. Sugar makes us feel good.
b. Our bodies store sugar as fat.
c. We need very little sugar to survive.
d. Only adults need to stop eating sugar. |
| Cohesion | 7. The following sentence would best be placed at the end of which paragraph? <i>This may make the food appear as healthier, but large amounts of sugar are often added.</i>
a. paragraph 1 b. paragraph 2
c. paragraph 3 d. paragraph 4 |

Did You Know?

Doctors recommend we eat no more than 9.5 teaspoons of sugar a day, but studies show the average person eats around 22.7 teaspoons.



Answers to Before You Read A:
1. 27 g, 2. 10 g, 3. 13 g, 4. 25 g, 5. 3 g

Reading Skill

Skimming for the Main Idea of Paragraphs

When you read a text, it's important to be able to recognize the main idea of each paragraph. Look at the headings (if there are any) and skim each paragraph to determine the key idea the author is making. When you skim, you don't read every word. Instead, read the first sentence and then run your eyes quickly over the rest, focusing on key words.

Make sure you are finding the main idea of the whole paragraph. Other sentences may express an idea, but it may not be the main idea.



^ While fresh fruits do contain small amounts of sugar, they make a healthy snack.

A. Determining Main Ideas. Look back at the passage on page 9. Choose the main idea of each paragraph.

1. Paragraph 1

- a. Sugar is addictive.
- b. All tasty foods contain sugar.

2. Paragraph 2

- a. Sugar can cause illnesses.
- b. The number of people with diabetes and high blood pressure is rising.

3. Paragraph 3

- a. Sugar gives us energy when we don't eat for a long time.
- b. Our bodies need very little sugar to survive, but we now eat too much of it.

4. Paragraph 4

- a. Advertisers are being dishonest.
- b. It is very difficult to avoid sugar these days.

5. Paragraph 5

- a. Some schools now grow their own food.
- b. Some are fighting back against sugar.

Critical Thinking Discuss with a partner. Do you think manufacturers have a responsibility to reduce the amount of sugar in the products they sell? Why or why not?

