

Passage Comprehension- 11

Grade 4

The Growing Concern of Childhood Obesity

Childhood obesity has become a serious health problem in many countries around the world. When children consume more calories than they burn through physical activity, they gain excess weight. This extra weight can lead to various health problems like diabetes, heart disease, and difficulties in breathing.

According to recent studies, the United States has one of the highest rates of childhood obesity, with about 20% of children aged 6-11 years being considered obese. This means that one in every five children in America is significantly overweight. China follows closely behind, showing a rapid increase in childhood obesity rates, especially in urban areas where fast food restaurants are becoming more common.

On the other hand, Japan has one of the lowest rates of childhood obesity, at only 4%. This is largely due to their traditional diet rich in fish, vegetables, and smaller portion sizes. Japanese schools also make sure children get regular exercise and teach them about healthy eating habits from an early age.

Brazil is currently experiencing the fastest growth in childhood obesity rates in the world. In the past decade, the number of overweight children has doubled. This increase is mainly because more families are eating processed foods and spending less time cooking healthy meals at home. Many Brazilian children are also spending more time watching TV or playing video games instead of playing outside.

To fight childhood obesity, many countries are taking action. Some schools have banned sugary drinks and snacks from their cafeterias. Other countries have started programs to encourage children to exercise more. For example, Finland has created special playground areas in cities

where children can play safely, and they make sure every child gets at least one hour of physical activity at school each day.

Doctors say the best ways to prevent childhood obesity are eating a balanced diet, limiting screen time, and getting regular exercise. Parents can help by cooking healthy meals at home and encouraging their children to participate in sports or other physical activities. Remember, healthy habits learned in childhood often continue into adulthood.

1. According to the passage, what percentage of children aged 6-11 years in the United States are obese? What does this fraction represent in simpler terms?

2. Name two reasons why Japan has one of the lowest childhood obesity rates. Support your answer with information from the passage.

3. Calculate the approximate number of obese children in a typical American classroom of 30 students, based on the statistics given in the passage.

4. What evidence does the passage provide to show that Brazil has the fastest growing childhood obesity rate?

5. Find a word in the passage that means:

- a) Very serious or worrying (paragraph 1) _____
- b) Taking in food or drink (paragraph 1) _____
- c) Traditional or typical (paragraph 3) _____

6. In the sentence "This increase is mainly because more families are eating processed foods", identify:

- a) The subject _____
- b) The verb _____
- c) The object _____

7. Write two compound sentences from the passage. Explain how they are joined.

8. The passage mentions several countries. List them in alphabetical order.

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Answer Key

1. 20% of children aged 6-11 years in the United States are obese, which represents one in every five children. This means that for every 5 children in America, one child is significantly overweight.
2. Japan has low childhood obesity rates because they maintain a traditional diet rich in fish and vegetables with smaller portion sizes, and their schools ensure regular exercise and healthy eating education from an early age.
3. In a classroom of 30 students, approximately 6 students would be considered obese (20% of 30 = 6 students).
4. According to the passage, Brazil's childhood obesity rates have doubled in the past decade, with more families eating processed foods and children spending increased time on sedentary activities like watching TV and playing video games.
5. Vocabulary:
 - a) serious
 - b) consuming
 - c) traditional
6. Grammar:
 - a) Subject: This increase
 - b) Verb: is
 - c) Object: processed foods
7. Compound sentences:

- "Parents can help by cooking healthy meals at home and encouraging their children to participate in sports or other physical activities." (joined by "and")

- "This extra weight can lead to various health problems like diabetes, heart disease, and difficulties in breathing." (joined by "and")

8. Countries in alphabetical order:

- Brazil
- China
- Finland
- Japan
- United States

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