



Warmer

1 Work in pairs or small groups. Discuss the questions.

- 1 How do you think the three photos are connected?
- 2 Why do you think some people choose to avoid the consumption of animal products?
- 3 Explain the terms in the box:

vegetarian pescatarian vegan plant-based carnivorous omnivorous

Vocabulary

1 Read the sentences and match the words and phrases in bold to the definitions (a–l) on page 2.

- 1 **Received wisdom** says that children need dairy products to grow and develop strong bones. ____
- 2 Vegans tend to **vilify** the farmers, but it is the consumer that drives demand for the product. ____
- 3 Taking a **hard-line stance** sometimes makes it less likely that people will accept what you are saying. ____
- 4 Nagging children is often **counterproductive**. Making a chore into a game will get better results. ____
- 5 We have **incontrovertible** evidence that smoking can kill you; the same cannot be said of eating meat. ____
- 6 The website tries to **debunk the myth** that plant-based diets are necessarily deficient. ____
- 7 So, to give you an **analogy**, imagine what happens to your drain if you pour meat fat down it – that's what you are doing to your arteries when you eat fatty meat. ____
- 8 Extremists actually **do a disservice** to their cause by behaving in a way that puts people off. ____
- 9 Some vegans believe it is **hypocrisy** to say you love animals but pay to have them slaughtered. ____
- 10 There is plenty of **anecdotal evidence** that athletes do well on a plant-based diet but no large-scale research has been done. ____
- 11 Some people make **unwarranted** assumptions about others based on where they come from. ____
- 12 All **ruminants**, such as cows, are herbivorous. ____



- a act in a way that harms someone or something
- b support for a belief that relies on stories and personal testimony
- c having the opposite of the desired effect
- d to say or write negative things to cause others to have a bad opinion of someone or something
- e a comparison between two things to explain or clarify something.
- f common knowledge that is held to be true but may not be
- g animals such as cattle, sheep and goats which have complex stomachs
- h not having a good reason and therefore annoying or unfair
- i acting in a way that is in conflict with stated beliefs
- j extreme position which is unlikely to change.
- k impossible to doubt because it is obviously true
- l reveal that something people believe is untrue

Reading

1 Read the first prompt in the exam task on page 3 and answer the questions.

- 1 What do you think is meant by *carries more weight*?
- 2 Think of reasons for someone to go vegan.
- 3 Scan each of the texts and look for reasons for going vegan.
- 4 When you find a reason, read in detail. Does it convey the idea of *carrying more weight* these days?

2 Read the second statement in the part 8 exam task and answer the questions.

- 1 What *challenges* do you think adopting a plant-based diet might present for people?
- 2 Scan each of the texts to find the one that gives an opinion on the challenges that going vegan may represent for people.



Tip

In part 8, you will either have one long text divided into sections or several shorter ones. You have to match ten prompts to the correct text or section. All texts or sections will address the same subjects and candidates have to read them carefully to identify detail, attitude or opinion expressed in the prompts. Make sure you identify all texts / sections which mention the idea in the prompt. Then carefully read each of the relevant parts several times to find which section matches all parts of the prompt.



3 Answer questions 3–10 in the exam task.

You are going to read four reviews of a documentary on plant-based diets called “Real men eat plants”. For questions 3–10, choose from the people (A–D). The people may be chosen more than once.

Which person gives each of the opinions?

Going vegan carries more weight these days.

1	
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Adopting a plant-based diet may present some challenges.

2	
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The documentary made unwarranted assumptions about men.

3	
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The documentary made a false and misleading analogy.

4	
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The documentary may have done a disservice to veganism.

5	
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The film-makers are guilty of hypocrisy.

6	
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Research conducted by the film-makers lacks validity.

7	
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People shouldn't generalise about diet based on their own lives.

8	
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Trying to reduce meat consumption is typical of health-conscious individuals.

9	
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Evidence linking veganism to improved fitness was intentionally overlooked.

10	
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A Matt

This film pushes the accepted fact that vegetables are good for you to a new extreme with the claim that meat and indeed all animal protein is therefore bad. It challenged received wisdom about 'healthy' white meats, classifying them alongside the already vilified processed and red meats. Cherry-picking research findings, the producers conveniently ignored studies which show that healthy vegetarian and omnivorous diets can also lead to optimal athletic performance. While it is clear that a plant-based diet has a beneficial effect on cholesterol levels and heart health, it also lowers HDL ('good' cholesterol). We can infer from this that allowing some consumption of animal protein might raise HDL levels and actually lower the risk of heart disease. As in many other areas of life, taking a hard-line stance can be counterproductive and I fear this is what has happened here. I watched it with a male vegan friend, who cringed from start to finish, so obvious was the lack of objectivity. We actually found the implication that men will ignore the green or compassionate arguments for veganism quite insulting. Not all men are solely interested in building muscle, strength and stamina.

**B Vicky**

As an ethical vegan, I felt this documentary represented a missed opportunity to present our belief system in a holistic way. It was all too easy for overzealous carnivores to jump on the flaws in its arguments. For example, that an ox is strong and a herbivore, therefore we can be stronger on a plant-based diet. Cows can break down cellulose: we can't. True herbivores have bacteria in their gastrointestinal tract which degrade plant proteins, enabling them to use them for muscle building and repair. It is disingenuous to compare humans with ruminants. Similarly, the film oversimplifies the link between certain cancers and animal protein. It seems more likely that better health is associated more generally with healthy lifestyles – which probably includes a limit on meat as well as sugar and processed foods. In any case, evidence for direct causation is limited so we shouldn't pretend it isn't. Small-scale studies and anecdotal evidence may have a role to play, but we should not overstate the implications. Based on my own experience, I feel healthier on a vegan diet, but I accept there is no incontrovertible proof that it's right for everyone.

C Sonia

Real men eat plants sets out to debunk the myth that eating meat somehow makes a man more 'masculine'. Veganism is definitely overcoming its image problem: it is no longer the preserve of hippies and weirdos, but is a fashionable lifestyle choice. Nevertheless, there are some macho types who will not succumb to the more robust arguments related to the environment and compassion for sentient beings. The documentary presents persuasive arguments from doctors, scientists and academics, as well as testimonials from elite athletes. While all of this was very powerful, what it convinced us of was that plant-based diets are a viable alternative for athletes – that being vegetarian or vegan will not harm your performance and it may even help in some aspects. What was less convincing was the argument that vegan athletes will necessarily outperform omnivorous ones. The film showed an experiment in which a small number of athletes were given a meat-based meal on one occasion and a plant-based one on another. Tests revealed that animal protein thickened their blood and prevented arteries from opening fully. However, the sample size was too small and the experiment was not repeated, making it unreliable.

D Andrew

As a bodybuilder, I was fascinated when I heard about this documentary. I used to eat a high protein diet, mostly steak, chicken and eggs, but I was always slightly worried about the effect it would have on my health in the long run. I had bought into the myth that vegan diets were deficient and totally unsuitable for an athlete like me. I was stunned to learn that plant-based diets can actually provide as much protein as omnivorous diets, including all nine essential amino acids. Like the athletes featured, I am used to putting time and money into getting my diet right so after watching, I did some more research and began to plan a gradual transition to a plant-based lifestyle. The documentary does imply that going vegan is not a major undertaking, but for the average person who doesn't have a trainer, dietician and personal chef on hand, it might be. Another thing that struck me was that the film accuses the Meat Producers Association of funding research, the results of which can't be trusted, yet pro-vegan research is funded by the Soy Institute and others. Research has to be funded, but whoever funds it must represent the findings honestly.

Writing**1 Complete the exam-style task in 220–260 words.**

A health website is looking for reviews of documentaries relating to healthy lifestyle choices, including exercise, diet, sleep and stress management. You decide to send in a review of a documentary you have watched recently, explaining why you would recommend others to watch it. You should also mention at least one limitation of the documentary. Write your review.



Aims

This worksheet aims to practise the skills needed for C1 Reading and Use of English part 8, particularly understanding and identifying opinion. However, in terms of complexity and language level, the worksheet is more C1/C2 level.

- It pre-teaches vocabulary needed to understand the prompts and texts.
- Guided support is then provided for the students to attempt the first two prompts before completing the rest of the part 8 task.
- The worksheet concludes with practice of a writing task, in which students write a review of a documentary related to the area of health.

Warmer

- 1 Students discuss the photos and questions in small groups. Help them clarify the terms, if necessary. Encourage students to share their own ideas on the topic.

Suggested answers

- 1 The link between the photos is diet and health, what we eat ethically and in terms of health and exercise.
- 2 Reasons for avoiding animal products: animal welfare, religious reasons, health concerns, environmental concerns
- 3 **Vegetarian:** doesn't eat meat or fish, usually eats eggs and dairy products though this may vary. May or may not use other animal 'bi-products'.

Pescatarian: eats fish but not meat

Vegan: doesn't eat or use any product of animal origin including wool, silk, leather and honey. An ethical vegan makes this choice for animal welfare/environmental reasons rather than health.

Plant-based: refers only to diet. People who eat a plant-based diet may or may not consider themselves vegan.

Carnivorous: meat-eating

Omnivorous: eats both meat and plants

Vocabulary

- 1 This exercise presents the most challenging vocabulary from the prompts and reading texts in context. Encourage students to work out the meaning of the highlighted word or phrase from context before checking the definitions. Do the first one as a class as an example. Have students compare their answers with a partner and discuss any differences, before checking as a class.

Answers

1 f 2 d 3 j 4 c 5 k 6 l 7 e 8 a
9 i 10 b 11 h 12 g

Reading

- 1 Explain that the exam task students are about to do will focus on opinions expressed in the texts, and that they are going to practice exam technique by looking at the first two prompts in the next two exercises. Have them read the exam tip. This exercise supports students with the first prompt. It teaches them to analyse the key words and phrases in the prompts, and predict how they may be represented in the texts. When checking answers, explain the meaning of *carries more weight* and some non-health-related reasons people go vegan. Ask students to scan all the texts for possible reasons. When checking answers, explain that there is mention of *green and compassionate arguments for veganism* in Matt's text, but in her text, Sonia says *Veganism is definitely overcoming its image problem: it is no longer the preserve of hippies and weirdos, but is a fashionable lifestyle choice*, which corresponds to the idea of 'carry more weight' (literally here it is the idea that veganism is no longer a niche thing for a limited few, but has 'weight' as a fashionable lifestyle choice).

**Answers**

- 1 *Carries more weight* here means the arguments to support veganism are stronger or that attitudes towards veganism in society have become more positive.
- 2 Possible reasons to go vegan: health; religious beliefs; the belief that killing animals for food is cruel and unnecessary; concern for the environment impact of meat production; taste/personal preference; a trend within society.
- 3 **C** (Sonia: *Veganism is definitely overcoming its image problem: it is no longer the preserve of hippies and weirdos, but is a fashionable lifestyle choice. and The documentary presents persuasive arguments from doctors, scientists and academics as well as testimonials from elite athletes.*)

Answers

- 3 **A** (Matt: *We actually found the implication that men will ignore the green or compassionate arguments for veganism quite insulting. Not all men are solely interested in building muscle, strength and stamina.*)
- 4 **B** (Vicky: The analogy from the documentary she mentions implies that the herbivore diet of an ox or cow can be associated with developing strength, which she refutes, saying *It is disingenuous to compare humans with ruminants.*)
- 5 **A** (Matt: He says *As in many other areas of life, taking a hard-line stance can be counterproductive and I fear this is what has happened here.* He then gives the example of a vegan friend who *cringed from start to finish, so obvious was the lack of objectivity.*)
- 6 **D** (Andrew: *Another thing that struck me was that the film accuses the Meat Producers Association of funding research, the results of which can't be trusted, yet pro-vegan research is funded by the Soy Institute and others.*)
- 7 **C** (Sonia: She mentions a test of athletes performance on different diets and says *However, the sample size was too small and the experiment was not repeated, making it unreliable.*)
- 8 **B** (Vicky: *Small-scale studies and anecdotal evidence may have a role to play, but we should not overstate the implications. Based on my own experience, I feel healthier on a vegan diet, but I accept there is no incontrovertible proof that it's right for everyone.*)
- 9 **B** (Vicky: *It seems more likely that better health is associated more generally with healthy lifestyles- which probably includes a limit on meat as well as sugar and processed foods.*)
- 10 **A** (Matt: *the producers conveniently ignored studies which show that healthy vegetarian and omnivorous diets can also lead to optimal athletic performance.*)

- 2 Have students read prompt 2. Ask them to suggest some challenges that someone might face when switching to a plant-based diet. They then scan the texts for a reference to potential challenges. Check answers and have a volunteer student explain why they chose the correct answer.

Answers

- 1 Potential challenges: changing eating and shopping habits; being able to buy a good range of plant-based food locally; the cost of such a diet; ensuring a nutritious, balanced diet; difficulties in finding appropriate food when eating out; finding good advice to help them adapt to the diet, etc.
- 2 **D** (Andrew: *The documentary does imply that going vegan is not a major undertaking, but for the average person who doesn't have a trainer, dietician and personal chef on hand, it might be.*)

- 3 Students work alone to answer questions 3–10. You may want to ask students to highlight or underline in each text where they found their answers with the corresponding question / prompt number. This is good exam technique as it makes it easier for students to check their answers when they finish.



Writing

- 1 Ask students to read through the task. Invite them to share any documentaries they have seen which might be suitable. If they haven't seen any, tell them they will have to invent one. They can base it on the documentary the reading text is based on. Elicit other ideas that relate to healthy lifestyle choices that a documentary could cover, such as health fads, the popularity of gyms, risky beauty treatments, the rise of alternative medicine and therapies, etc. Check with the students what they have to include in their documentary reviews (why you recommend it; one limitation of the documentary).

It is probably best that students write their reviews for homework. As a follow-up in class once you have marked them, you could do a feedback session where you select sentences from their reviews for the class to identify mistakes in and correct.