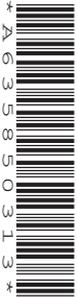


Tuesday 5 November 2013 – Morning**GCSE ENGLISH/ENGLISH LANGUAGE****A680/02/RBI** Information and Ideas (Higher Tier)**READING BOOKLET INSERT****Duration:** 2 hours**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

- The materials in this READING BOOKLET INSERT are for use with the questions in Section **A** of the Question Paper.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

- This document consists of **8** pages. Any blank pages are indicated.

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Malaria: the net gains of keeping mosquitoes at bay



Feeding on human blood

Atong Deng put on her finest clothes today and walked for two hours to receive a household item that could save her life and the lives of her four children. Mosquito nets treated with insect killer are being distributed free of charge by Malaria Consortium in the remote village of Riang Aker in Southern Sudan. This is part of a worldwide effort to defeat the deadly disease that is malaria.

What is malaria?

The disease is caused by a parasite which is transmitted to humans when they are bitten by female Anopheles mosquitoes. This occurs between dusk and dawn when the mosquitoes feed on human blood. Young children are most vulnerable because they have not developed enough immunity to fight the infection. In Africa, children under the age of five die from malaria at an astonishing rate – around 3,000 a day, or one every 30 seconds.

If treatment is not given within 24 hours, the disease progresses rapidly and causes damage to the kidneys, liver, lungs and brain. Severe cases lead to coma and death. Even getting treatment does not guarantee recovery because the parasite has become resistant to the cheaper drugs. Effective treatment is expensive and, in Africa, often in short supply.

Why are mosquito nets so important?

The net is effective. It works in two ways; serving as an actual barrier, it prevents the insects from biting and it will also kill them, provided the insects are not already immune to the insecticide in the net's fibres. The newest type of mosquito net lasts up to five years and experts consider this to be one of the few 'magic bullets' in global health.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) wants everyone at risk of malaria to be able to sleep under a net, believing this could cut deaths by a half. It is an ambitious target when, at present, fewer than one in four children in Africa sleeps under a net.

Why are mosquito nets not more widely used?

One problem is that there just aren't enough nets to go around, even though Western donor organisations have become more generous in recent years. Charities such as Comic Relief have paid for some 5.4 million nets for the poorest and most remote regions of the malaria-stricken continent. This sounds impressive but a further 14 million nets would be needed just to keep one country, Kenya, on target.

Many of the communities most affected are the least accessible. Malaria Consortium's next step is the delivery of 6,000 nets to a string of fishing villages along the shores of Lake Albert in Uganda. This country has the highest recorded incidence of malaria and the need for nets is urgent, but the villages sit at the bottom of steep Rift Valley cliffs and can only be reached first by plane and then by boat.

Even when nets go out to homes, people can be unwilling to use them, or use them incorrectly. Some people say they experience a sense of suffocation or discomfort when sleeping under a net. In Uganda, malaria nets have been sewn together for use in fishing, by villagers who feel there is a more pressing need for food than for disease prevention. Nets have been turned into bridal veils.

Interviews with women in Atong Deng's village suggest that there is a substantial seasonal variation in whether nets are used. Amir Garang already has three nets for her household but she 'hasn't used them yet', because there are 'only a few' mosquitoes this time of year. 'I'm looking for sticks to hang them on and waiting for more mosquitoes to come,' she said.

What can be done to increase use of mosquito nets?

Dr Elizabeth Juma, director of Kenya's Division of Malaria Control, believes it is vital to get people to change their behaviour. 'You have to get people into the habit of hanging a net,' she said. 'In many homes there is no fixed sleeping area, so people must be encouraged to carry their net with them.' Local superstitions must also be challenged. Some villagers have been afraid to use white nets as white is the colour of death. Ironic, given that the nets could save their lives. The volunteer malaria workers express bitter frustration when they hear about nets sitting, folded and unused, in the corner of a hut while a child comes down with fever. They know that instruction in how to use a net is as vital as the net itself.

That is why Atong Deng and the other women from her village gather in the shade of a tree and listen while a volunteer demonstrates how to hang the net and explains its importance. It is a demonstration that has had a great impact on Atong. 'I learnt that it is my children who are most at risk', she said. 'If they sleep under a net, they cut that risk by half.'



Charity Fundraising: boring and embarrassing – unless you join in, says comic Robert Webb

The build-up to Comic Relief's mammoth annual fundraiser, Red Nose Day, can feel like the build-up to a general election. One thing they both have in common is that they take over our TV viewing. As an added extra, they both provide the chance for seeing public figures getting a bucket of baked beans tipped over their heads. Now I like general elections and I like Comic Relief, but there is something about both that can start me on a good old moan.

We know that, like democracy, charitable giving is a Good Thing, yet we reserve the right to complain about both. My reason for disliking elections is obvious enough: I don't want to be forced to watch any more politicians on TV, but the reasons behind my mixed feelings towards Red Nose Day are more complicated and, I dare say, might be worth taking a look at.

As a family, we never really "did" TV fundraisers. You know, the ones with those repeated moments when you're watching TV and some famous person comes on, wracked with anguish, saying something like, "You, sitting at home, enjoying all this marvellous entertainment: you who still haven't called in to pledge any money – you know who you are – please call now. Call now. Call. Just call. You know who you are: call!"

Well, that was us. We never called. In the 1980s, when TV fundraising really started, we would sit through the whole thing in mounting embarrassment, clutching the furniture every time the presenter threatened to go all sincere. Basically, you have to agree to hand over cash or you're just going to get told off for 12 hours.

It reminds me of how I used to hate fundraising in my student days. Hearty types in strange fancy dress felt they had a right to tell everyone to tape themselves naked to a lamp post in the name of "a worthy cause". Give me a break! If I said, quite understandably, that I didn't really want to sign up for two days of being power-sprayed with mushy peas, I'd run the risk of being told I had "no sense of humour".

If you like that sort of thing, good luck to you. For me, and I suspect many others, a much more preferable way of helping a good cause is a quiet word on a telephone with a credit card to hand. Now, this might sound strange coming from me, as my own contribution to Let's Dance for Comic Relief once involved me in a gigantic collision with a wig and a leotard. Perhaps what I'm trying to say is that any charity fundraiser is boring and can be embarrassing unless you actually join in.

There are other objections people raise that are less personal and more political. "Charity lets governments off the hook – they ought to look after the poor." This has always struck me as feeble. Shall I not help a struggling mum carry a buggy up the stairs in order to send London Underground a powerful message that they should install a lift?

Then there's: "Comedy sketches paired with images of third world suffering make for uncomfortable viewing." Yes, they do. Pity the poor presenters who have to perform these crunching gear changes. But we all know the format by now. And the suffering is real.

The fact is that Comic Relief has, since 1985, raised more than £650 million. The mosquito nets sent in the past couple of years to Uganda alone mean that many thousands of people, who would otherwise be dead, are now going to school, reading, writing, working, falling in love and having families.

I believe this might be worth watching the television for and goes a long way towards explaining why we should all suffer a little boredom and a lot of embarrassment.

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