

Grade 7 Social Sciences Worksheet

Assessment Task: HIV/AIDS

HIV / AIDS

Are you tired of people telling you all about HIV/AIDS?

A lot of people and organisations seem to be obsessed with HIV and AIDS.

Take this test to see if YOU need to be obsessed with it too. For each answer, give a reason why you think it is true or false.

True or false

1. More people die of AIDS in one month in South Africa than are killed in cars in a whole year.
2. About 4 million South Africans are infected with HIV and almost all of these will die in the next 10 years.
3. HIV does not infect people who follow a good diet.
4. Anti-retrovirals are a cure for AIDS.
5. HIV weakens the human immune system, so eating an immune system-strengthening diet will prevent HIV.
6. A person who is HIV positive will not infect other people if he/she is otherwise healthy.
7. An HIV-positive person can remain productive for many years with the help of anti-retrovirals.
8. There is a vaccine against HIV.
9. If a person who is HIV positive is given a vaccine this will cure them.
10. If a person who is HIV positive is given a vaccine it will stop them spreading the disease to other people.
11. I can tell if someone is HIV positive just by looking at him or her.
12. Most people who die of HIV in South Africa actually die of TB.

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13. About 60% of children born to HIV-positive mothers will also be HIV positive. This can be reduced to about 30% if the mother is given anti-retrovirals before she gives birth.
14. HIV is a virus contracted mainly through sexual intercourse.
15. AIDS is an illness caused when the immune system stops protecting the body from other infections.
16. Traditional medicine has many cures for HIV/AIDS.

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Suggested Solutions

A score of over 12 out of 16 means that this person is well educated about HIV/AIDS. Less than 8, then the person is in danger through his/her ignorance.

True or false

1. True. In fact, TWICE as many people die of AIDS than in car crashes.
2. True. In fact, it is probably at least 4 million. As many of these have already been HIV positive for some time, many will die before ten years from now. If there are between 500 and 1000 deaths per day from those currently infected (not counting new infections) it will take between 4 000 and 8 000 days for all to die, i.e. between 11 and 22 years. New infections are still a bit higher than deaths, despite all the publicity, so this rate of deaths will continue for many years to come.
3. False. A good diet may delay the onset of AIDS in an infected person, but will not prevent it.
4. False – there is no cure for AIDS.
5. False. No diet can prevent HIV from destroying the immune system, although a healthy lifestyle will probably prolong a normal life.
6. False – even if you appear healthy and have no symptoms, you can still spread HIV.
7. True, but they will die eventually.
8. False, and we are many years away from developing a vaccine.
9. False. There is no cure for HIV/AIDS. Anti-retrovirals can reduce the ‘viral load’ for quite a considerable time but cannot eliminate the virus, and eventually the immune system will be overwhelmed. The most important value of anti-retrovirals is in allowing HIV positive people to live a normal life for longer.
10. False. An effective vaccine, which has not yet been invented, is NOT a cure for people who are already infected. It can help prevent new infections.
11. False. Unless you are a medical doctor, you will not recognise any of the symptoms of HIV just by looking at them.
12. True. TB attacks people with a weakened immune system. If you are HIV positive it will be very difficult NOT to get TB eventually.

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13. True. The baby in the womb is not infected. Only during birth, when the mother's body fluids may enter the baby's bloodstream through minor cuts and abrasions, does the baby become infected. If the mother's viral load is reduced immediately prior to the birth by anti-retrovirals, then the risk to the baby is reduced.
14. True. It can also be contracted through contact with infected blood. 'Needle stick' injuries to medical personnel occur when a doctor or nurse accidentally pricks him-/herself while drawing blood from an infected patient. Immediate treatment with anti-retrovirals greatly reduces the risk of infection by this route.
15. True. The HIV virus attacks the immune system directly, resulting in the body's inability to fight off infections, most notably TB, although there are many other *opportunistic diseases* that will attack people with a compromised immune system.
16. False: No traditional medicines have been shown to prevent or cure HIV. The South African government came under massive criticism from HIV/AIDS experts around the world, because they promoted traditional 'cures'. This has now changed and South Africa is in line with the rest of the world.