

Answer Question 1 **and either** Question 2 **or** Question 3.

- 1 The following text is an extract from a magazine article written by Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations. In the article, Annan warns of the global consequences of overpopulation on planet Earth.
- (a) Comment on the language and style of the text. [15]
- (b) After reading the text, you give a speech to your classmates to persuade them to tackle the issue at a local level through individual and community action. Basing your writing closely on the material of the original text, write a section of the speech. You should use between 120 and 150 of your own words. [10]

Red Alert

We are running out of space. Fly over Africa at night and you will see mile after mile of fires burning red in the dark as scrub is removed to make way for human beings. Satellite images of nocturnal Europe or America show vast areas lit up like an enormous fairground. From Shanghai to Sydney, from Moscow to Mexico City, the skylines of our major cities are no longer fixed and familiar. Where we cannot build into the sky, we construct vast chequerboards of smogbound, low-rise dwellings that stretch from one horizon to the other. 5

Our cities expand in every direction as we fight to house a population that is growing at the rate of 200,000 each day. That adds up to a headcount the size of Germany every year. To feed this growing number requires ever more land to farm: each year, more than 150,000 square kilometres of natural forest are lost to agricultural or urban development. 10

Forests cover a third of our planet's surface. They produce life-giving oxygen and, by absorbing carbon dioxide, also mitigate the otherwise catastrophic effects of climate change. Not only do they provide a habitat for many of the world's most endangered animals, around 1.6 billion people rely on them for food, fresh water, clothing, traditional medicine and shelter. Yet they are under threat from rampant deforestation in its many forms: fires, clearing for agriculture, unsustainable logging, ranching and development. 15 20

We speak reverentially of the savage beauty and teeming biodiversity of the world's great wildernesses, from the tropical rainforests of Amazonia and central Africa, to our wetlands and deserts, and on to Patagonia and the frozen wastes of Antarctica. We are increasingly aware of the threats to such spaces and have encouraged sustainable conservation and ecotourism. But still the threats remain. 25

The greatest unexplored space on our planet lies beneath the oceans. Yet rising CO₂ levels in the atmosphere are causing acidification, which disrupts food chains and marine habitats. Huge floating masses of plastic dumped in the oceans turn into hazardous waste that endangers not only marine life but also, indirectly, human populations – and the planet itself. Overfishing, illegal and damaging trawling practices and past whaling have emptied the oceans before we have even properly understood what riches they contain. And the great spaces of the oceans are the lungs of the planet. 30

The very air we breathe is filling up with toxins. For years, gases have burned through the ozone layer, exposing us to ultraviolet rays and affecting climate 35

change. Airborne diseases – such as Zika, swine flu and bird flu – have multiplied and threatened to become global pandemics.

Great clouds of smog hover above our cities and airborne diseases multiply. Inhalation of toxic gases is said to reduce average lifespans by one to two years. Various estimates suggest that air pollution accounts for between half and two-thirds of all premature deaths in Asia, while anywhere between 10 and 20% of all worldwide deaths are attributable to the same cause.

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Typhoons, hurricanes and cyclones are harbingers of disaster, yet the winds are also, for some, an important source of energy. The debate about the effectiveness of wind farms rages on. Protesters claim they are ineffective and even dangerous eyesores, while pro-campaigners trumpet the positive impact of these wind farms.

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Space itself – famously the final frontier – has not been colonised but has, instead, become a dumping ground to such an extent that scientists are now calling on nations to reduce the quantity of orbital junk they produce or risk inhibiting future space activity. And yet, as overpopulation and decreasing landmass become a conundrum for future generations, will outer space provide an inhabitable environment?

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- 2 The following extract is from food writer Sophie Egan’s book, *Devoured*. In the extract, Egan explores the connection between the working and eating habits of the ‘millennial’ generation – people reaching adulthood in the early twenty-first century.
- (a) Comment on the language and style of the passage. [15]
- (b) After reading the extract, you decide that Josh and his fellow ‘millennials’ need to make some changes regarding what, where and how they eat. You explain your views on the subject in your personal blog. Basing your writing on the material of the original passage, and using between 120 and 150 of your own words, write a section of text for your blog. [10]

The Millennial Food Psyche

Wednesday, 7:00 A.M.

An alarm clock blares, and a guy we’ll call Josh bolts out of bed. The noise is definitely alarming because he has the alarm set to the one that sounds like bad things are happening on a submarine. Ambling into the kitchen, Josh finds his neatly lined rows of coffee pods and goes for the southern pecan flavour. Autumn has just begun, and at that particular moment, he’s in the mood for something comforting.

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Josh is a thirty-one-year-old hardware operations quality engineer at Google. At six feet tall with pale, freckled skin, brown hair, and blue eyes, he’s got somewhere between a cross-country runner’s build and a ‘dad-bod’¹ – the latter thanks to a slight paunch that’s developed since taking the Google position three years earlier (surely a small price to pay for finally having landed his dream job at the best company to work for *in the country*).

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7:08 A.M.

Josh opens his laptop and plunges deep into the Internet. With seven different windows open, his screen flashes with a whirl of activity. The number of e-mails waiting for him this morning is massive. It’s not so much that the deluge has already begun, but that it never really ends. Every minute he sleeps, the more behind he gets at work. So now he takes a sip of coffee and starts firing e-mails back.

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Josh is a member of the millennial generation. A graduate of the University of Michigan, he’s among the 61 percent of his cohort with a college degree, 15 percent higher than his parents’. He’s among the 62 percent who prefer to live in mixed-use urban areas, according to a successful consumer insights firm. Work, nightlife, shopping – all at their doorsteps. Also like other millennials, he was raised on cereal, computers, and a congratulations every time he put his socks on straight.

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Josh scrolls through his Facebook feed and sees that his friend from a summer internship in Austin a few years back is on a two-week liquid diet. She has posted a photo of herself sipping a kale smoothie at Starbucks. Josh also sees that his sister in Portland made homemade pizza last night with gluten-free dough, topped with poached eggs from the chickens in her backyard. And Josh’s former college roommate has posted from a CrossFit² box in New York, bragging about his WOD, which means ‘workout of the day’. He’s eating a strawberry coconut breakfast bar he got from the gym.

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7:55 A.M.

Josh has an 8:30 A.M. meeting, so he grabs a roasted jalapeño almond protein bar because it is non-genetically modified and gluten-free and has 10 grams of protein. He takes the keys with his other hand and heads out the door. 35

While driving to work – which he does because he can leave when he wants, and listen to his favourite NFL podcast as loudly as he wants, because it takes five minutes longer by bus, and, well, because every minute counts these days – he remembers he’s out of toilet paper and plain, non-fat Greek yogurt. When he doesn’t have an early meeting, he eats Greek yogurt at home before work because one time at the airport he read in *Men’s Fitness* that Greek yogurt is one of those foods that ‘Fill You Up While You Trim Down.’ 40

Given his hectic schedule that day, he doesn’t know when he’ll have time to get groceries. So, at a stoplight, he takes out his phone (even though he promised his sister he’d stop doing that), opens his Instacart app, and quickly places an order. Before checkout, the page reminds him about grocery items he has purchased in the past, so he throws in some sour cream and onion ‘Popchips’, which he eats a few times a week because the label says ‘all the flavour, half the fat.’ Their absence of evil means it’s totally fine to eat the whole bag after dinner. 45

¹*dad-bod*: a slang term in popular culture for a male physique that is not slim or toned

²*CrossFit*: an exclusive fitness programme in a private gym 50

- 3 The following extract is taken from a biography of Pete Maravich, a famous basketball player. In the extract, the writer describes Maravich taking part in a friendly game eight years after his retirement from professional basketball.

- (a) Comment on the language and style of the passage. [15]
- (b) After the game at the Parker Gymnasium, Pete Maravich decides to record his thoughts and feelings in a diary. Basing your writing closely on the material of the original extract, and using between 120 and 150 of your own words, write his first diary entry. [10]

They cannot see him, this slouched, ashen-faced man in their midst. To their oblivious eyes, he remains what he had been, unblemished by the years, much as he appeared on his first bubblegum card: a Beatles-esque halo of hair, the fresh-faced, sad-eyed wizard, cradling a grainy leather orb.

One of the regulars, a certified public accountant, had retrieved this very artefact the night before. He found it in a shoebox, tucked away with an old train set and a wooden fort in a crawlspace in his parents' basement. He brought it to the gym this morning to have it signed, or perhaps, in some way, sanctified. The 1970 rookie card of Pete Maravich, to whom the Atlanta Hawks had just awarded the richest contract in professional sport, notes the outstanding facts: that Maravich had been coached by his father, under whose tutelage he became 'the most prolific scorer in the history of college basketball.' 5 10

Other salient statistics are provided in the small print: an average of 44.2 points a game, a total of 3667 (this when nobody had scored 3000). The records will never be broken. Still, they are woefully inadequate in measuring the contours of the Maravich myth. 15

Even the accountant, for whom arithmetic is a vocation, understands the limitation in mere numbers. There is no integer denoting magic or memory. 'He was important to us,' the accountant would say.

Maravich wasn't an archetype; he was several: child prodigy, prodigal son, result of his father's proverbial deal with the devil. He was a creature of contradictions, ever alone: the white hope of a black sport, a virtuoso stuck in an ensemble, an exuberant showman who couldn't look you in the eye, the athlete who lived like a rock star, a reckless genius saved by God. 20

Still, it's his caricature that evokes unqualified affection in men of a certain age. *Pistol Pete*, they called him. The Pistol is another relic of the seventies, not unlike Bruce Lee flicks: the skinny kid who mesmerized the basketball world with Globetrotter moves, floppy socks, and great hair. 25

Pistol Pete was, in fact, his father's vision, built to the old man's exacting specifications. Peter's father, Press Maravich, was a Serb. Ideas and language occurred to him in the mother tongue, and so one imagines him speaking to Pistol (yes, that's what he called him, too) as a father addressing his son in an old Serbian song: *Listen to me, eyes of mine, guard that which is thine ...* 30

* * *

The game in progress is a dance in deference to this patrimony. The Pistol is an inheritance, not just for the Maraviches, but for all the American sons who play this American game. The squeak of sneakers against the floor produces an oddly chirping melody. Then there's another rhythm, the respiration of men well past their 35

prime, an assortment of mainly white guys: the accountant, insurance salesmen, financial planners, even a preacher or two. ‘Just a bunch of duffers,’ recalls one. ‘Fat old men,’ smirks another. 40

But they play as if Pistol Pete, or what’s left of him, could summon the boys they once were. They acknowledge him with a superfluous flourish, lingering teenage vanity – an extra behind-the-back pass or an unnecessary between-the-legs dribble. The preacher, a gentle-voiced man of great renown in evangelical circles, reveals a feverishly competitive nature. After hitting a shot, he is heard to bellow, ‘You get that on camera?’ 45

The Parker Gymnasium at Pasadena’s First Church of the Nazarene could pass for a good high school gym – a clean, cavernous space with arching wooden rafters and large windows. At dawn, fully energized halogen lamps give off a glow to the outside world, a beacon to spirits searching for a game. As a boy, Maravich would have considered this a kind of heaven. Now, it’s a way station of sorts. 50

Pete begins wearily. He hasn’t played in a long time and moves at one-quarter speed, if that. He does not jump; he shuffles. The ball seems like a shotput in his hands, his second attempt at the basket barely touching the front of the rim.

But gradually, as the pace of his breath melds with the others’ and he starts to sweat, Pete Maravich recovers something in himself. ‘The glimpse of greatness was in his ballhandling,’ recalls the accountant. ‘Every once in a while the hands would flicker. There would just be some kind of dribble or something. You could see a little of it in his hands, the greatness. Just the quickness of the beat.’ 55

There was genius in that odd beat, the unexpected cadence, a measure of music. The Pistol’s talent, now as then, was musical. 60

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