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## GENETIC ENGINEERING OF FOOD

1. Why do people in Third World countries suffer from acute **starvation**?
2. Is it necessary to produce more food to feed starving people?
3. Can the genetic engineering of food help in this respect?

Read the following text and answer the questions below it.

Despite the global overproduction of food, millions of people suffer from hunger and die of starvation each year. The problem is most severe in the underdeveloped and developing countries of the Third World. Politicians, scientists and human **aid** organisations have been trying to work out a concrete solution to the problem of starvation for years. However, it appears that aid concerts, charity donations and political **disputes** are not sufficient because the needs of poor and starving people are either not well-defined or the **measures** taken are not adequate. It may seem that the question of global starvation is not a difficult one to resolve judging by the **ample** amount of food produced by developed and wealthy countries. Yet, the issue of satisfying hunger in the Third World is **hindered** by many obstacles most of which are political and financial.

As the population of the planet increases and the poverty becomes more **acute** in the poor regions, the question of food availability turns into a matter of major concern. It is common knowledge that global food **resources** are sufficient to feed every person in need. There are suggestions for increasing global food production, but to specialists these suggestions make little or no sense at all. The **core** of the problem lies in food distribution and financial **constraints**. Many people are simply too poor to buy readily available food. At this point, the problems of **humiliating** starvation and **abject** poverty **overlap** and the conclusion that **emerges** is that there is no other way to end starvation than by **abolishing** global poverty. However **commendable** the objective may sound, it is highly unlikely to be **accomplished** within the next decade or so. No wonder then that a **host** of alternative proposals **crop up** every now and then. Genetic engineering of food is one of them and has attracted a great deal of attention in the **mainstream** media in many countries.

Genetic engineering is the field of science that can open many new doors and can have **multiple** applications in the future. To mention just a few, geneticists have cloned animals and are getting close to cloning man, however controversial the idea may be. They have grown *transgenic* animals with genes from other species, they can modify viruses to make them harmless to humans and they may be able to grow parts of the human body for transplantation. Genetic engineering has also made its way into food production. However, the idea of genetically engineered foods has as many opponents as **advocates**.

It may sound surprising to some people that a lot of foods we eat today contain genetically altered ingredients. Many of the changes have been **effected** without our knowledge and many such products are not clearly labelled. For example, considerable genetic changes have been introduced in many types of crops to make them grow bigger, faster and more healthily. Some genetically modified crops may contain greater amounts of vitamins, minerals or proteins than their naturally grown **counterparts**. Genetically **altered** cattle produce milk with a higher **content** of calcium whereas genetically modified pigs' meat is known to be **leaner** and more **tender**. Biotechnology experts claim that the genetic engineering of food is a direct response to the problem of global starvation. They believe that modified foods may help **alleviate** hunger and increase cheaper food production.

There are however many questions and uncertainties about the genetic alternative. There is a growing wave of concern among consumers, farmers, scientists and politicians about the **feasibility** and the ultimate **outcome** of the genetic engineering of food. Some of them point to the fact that the problem of hunger in the world does not **stem from a shortage** of food. They claim it is the political and economic **constraints** that keep many people dying of hunger and that there is no need for increased food production. **Adversaries** of the concept say technology does not represent a direct solution to the problem of **famine**. Other critics say that innovations in agricultural biotechnology are profit-driven rather than need-driven. Huge corporations have invested **exorbitant** amounts of money in a genetic research and hope it will bring financial **yield** and will make the populations in need dependent on their products. The motives of the food producers are recognised as clearly commercial. The companies that have **launched** genetically engineered foods on the market have recently come under severe criticism for selling products which have not been adequately tested for health safety. Some critics say that genetically engineered foods can be dangerous as there is no certainty about the ultimate effect of gene manipulation and the alterations made in the new products.

Those who hope to resolve the problem of global starvation with the use of genetic engineering are sure to **encounter** even more obstacles. The problem will not be solved as long as the real sources are not addressed. Poverty and economic limitations must be dealt with first if people in poor countries are to be able to buy a sufficient amount of food. And if genetically engineered foods will not be targeted at the suffering populations for **humane** reasons, they may land on the shop shelves in developed countries for commercial reasons. In this case, it may make sense to get accustomed to reading labels on food packages to make sure to what extent we are affected by the new **obscure** technologies.

1. What makes the problem of famine in Third World countries so difficult to solve?
2. What happens to the overproduced food in wealthy countries?
3. If genetic engineering fails, what other solutions can there be to global starvation?
4. Why may genetically engineered foods be considered dangerous to humans?
5. Do you make a point of reading labels on food packages? Does it make sense?

## VOCABULARY PRACTICE

### Match the words with their definitions

1	advocate	a	someone who has the same qualities as someone else
2	aid	b	something that worries someone
3	ample	c	notorious lack of something
4	concern	d	(price/amount of money) much higher than it should be
5	constraint	e	help in form of food or money given to people in need
6	counterpart	f	someone who is against someone else's plans or ideas
7	dispute	g	money given to a charity organization as help
8	donation	h	profit, result, effect
9	exorbitant	i	more than enough, sufficient
10	obscure	j	the result of an action or discussion
11	opponent	k	a restriction or limitation
12	outcome	l	death or suffering caused by lack of food
13	shortage	m	a disagreement about something important
14	starvation	n	someone who supports or speaks in favour of something
15	yield	o	unknown, unimportant, hard to understand

### Insert the verbs in the correct phrases

abolish   accomplish   alter   alleviate   effect  
encounter   label   launch   resolve   work out

- Regular food aid transports are sent to the regions where the famine has struck the most to ..... the suffering of the people in need.
- The government commission are to ..... the dispute between the management and the workers in the shipyard.
- For thirty years the citizens of the country have fought to ..... the authoritarian rule.
- The workers of the Red Cross ..... numerous obstacles when they first arrived in Kongo, the most difficult of which was the authorities' hostility.
- The rescue mission could not be ..... due to unfavourable weather conditions.
- It's up to the developed countries to ..... a solution to the problem of AIDS in Africa.
- The radical steps against corruption taken by the new government have ..... the nature of politics in the country.
- Because of his approval of the government-controlled economy, the politician was ..... as communist.
- The new law has been accepted by the parliament, but we still have to wait a few months before the changes are .....
- The social organizations are planning to ..... an anti-drug campaign aimed at young people.

## FOOTBALL VIOLENCE

1. Do you like football? Do you watch matches? Where?
2. Have you ever experienced or seen football violence on TV? What happened?
3. Why do football fans fight? Are they real fans?

Read the following text and answer the questions below it.

Since its beginnings in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the game of football has been closely linked with violence. In Medieval times, football matches involved hundreds of players and functioned as **pitched battles** between young representatives of rival towns and villages. The games were often used as opportunities to settle personal arguments, land disputes or **feuds**. These violent rituals that originated in England became the **roots** of modern football. Over time, football and its principles **underwent** radical changes and reformations so the game became more **refined** and civilised as it was introduced to continental Europe in the 1900's. Quickly, football which was once a favoured **pastime** of the British aristocracy spread throughout other European countries. With the **advent** of television and the mass media, football games developed into a most desired source of entertainment and a **venue** for football supporters who **grasped** at the opportunity to stage their violent shows live on the TV screen. In the 60's, the term 'football hooligans' was **coined** in England and the phenomenon reached other countries in Europe ten years later.

Football hooliganism which was once the 'British Disease' has been a major concern throughout the world ever since. Violent disturbances at football matches have been witnessed all over the globe and have **triggered** growing frustration about the inability to **curb** the anti-social behaviour of a minority of football fans. Presently, violence of some kind appears to be almost universal and an inseparable component of the game. Since the 70's, the **spread** of football subcultures and the patterns of their aggressive behaviour have been **omnipresent** although its forms and **acuteness** are not equal in every country. The extent of football-related violence is usually attributed to various social, economic, political, cultural and historical factors. Whereas social-class differences were a major constituent in England, in Scotland and Northern Ireland religious aspects played the key role in football **riots**.

There are basic cross-national similarities in forms of football hooliganism. The phenomenon starts from sporadic violence characterised by offences directed at referees and players. Then, it transforms into open violence between opposing groups of fans as well as against police and guards inside the stadium. The final development **consists in** savage **encounters** between groups of fans outside the stadium. This one involves pitched battles between rival groups in the streets, devastation of public **facilities**, theft, acts of vandalism and **clashes** with police forces. At this stage of football violence, hooliganism and football become literally disconnected. The violence turns into ritual **warfare** with little or no association with cheering or supporting.

In most European countries, football-related violence is an internal problem with the majority of incidents occurring at club-level matches. Clubs tend to have one main 'enemy' and **hostile** relations expressed towards the supporters of one or two other teams. The rest are usually considered neutral rivals and each club will have friendly relations with the fans of at least one other team. Rival fans typically **suspend** their hostilities when supporting their national team in international games. However, the **core** of troublemakers were found to concentrate in groups with no **allegiance** to any team. Therefore, they are not associated with specific clubs and characterised as passionate supporters. Such groups identify themselves separately and use matches only as venues for confrontations with other rival groups. Their strategy is to charge at their enemies to drive them away from their viewing area and **capture** as much of their **gear** as possible including flags, scarves, caps etc. They employ vicious violence and fight severely until the police step in. Sometimes, the police forces intervene too late. **Fatalities** occur from time to time. They usually result from **stabbing** or deadly wounds.

A great deal of blame for football violence is put on the mass media which is used by hooligans to score their **mindless** performance. The more coverage a group gets in TV news, the better its position in the rivalry ranking. Alcohol abuse, although recently under strict control, racism, and 'letting off steam' arguments are also provided as the possible source of football violence. Whatever the causes are, football hooliganism is undoubtedly a thoughtless, primitive and cruel **spin-off** from the game that, ironically, is supposed to promote the idea of fair-play.

1. What are possible **implications** for football teams whose fans turn violent?
2. What should clubs do to **eradicate** football violence at matches?
3. What punishment should violent fans be given?
4. Are acts of hooliganism restricted to football matches?
5. What kind of people make football fans?

## VOCABULARY PRACTICE

### Match the words with their definitions

1	allegiance	a	an integral part or component of something
2	constituent	b	a hobby or enjoyable activity
3	coverage	c	an unexpected meeting; a confrontation or fight
4	disturbance	d	a set of equipment or tools
5	encounter	e	support or loyalty to one's country, leader or beliefs
6	fatality	f	unexpected but useful benefit, result or by-product
7	gear	g	a violent behaviour of a crowd in a public place
8	pastime	h	a place where sports or cultural events are held
9	spin-off	i	a violent death
10	venue	j	the attention given to something in mass media

### Insert the verbs in the correct phrases

attribute   capture   consist in   eradicate   grasp  
originate   support   suspend   undergo   trigger

- The processes that the professor talked about were much too difficult to ..... for the younger students, and that's why most of them were bored with the lecture.
- I love to watch football games, but I don't ..... any specific team.
- The actress's great popularity is not so much ..... to her skillful performance as to her attractive appearance.
- Some people believe that a person's intelligence is based on the natural inborn features. But I say it ..... the proper decisions that a person makes in his or her life.
- The military tradition of saluting ..... from Medieval times when knights getting ready for a fight lowered their helmet visors with a hand.
- The controversial statement that the prime minister made has ..... a wave of critical responses from the opposition parties.
- The police say they are just one step from ..... the dangerous criminal who escaped from prison last night.
- We have had to ..... the research because our funds have run out.
- To ..... hooliganism, more effective legal procedures and stricter punishment must be administered.
- After the accident, the racing driver ..... a series of plastic surgeries that helped reconstruct his face.