

'People are more scared of hunger' (901 words)



Worksheet with mediation

This worksheet includes reading comprehension exercises as well as pre-reading and post-reading sections. Students also practice vocabulary and complete a mediation task at the end of the worksheet. Sample answers are given in the answer key.

This worksheet is written in **British English** as the original article is.

Pre-reading

1. Introducing Nigeria

Write a short text (no more than 150 words) and give basic facts about Nigeria.

2. Mankind's most dire threats

- Work in groups of four. (When working on your own, write approximately 200 words.)
- Think about situations that pose a threat to people and societies around the world. Take notes while you discuss your ideas.
- Decide on what you think are the biggest threats to people in central Europe in 2020.
- Discuss what you think threatens people living on other continents.
- **Tip!** Think about health threats or political, economic, social, and environmental situations. Think about people who may be at risk because of poverty, their race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation.
- **Tip for teachers! (Differenzierung)**
For students of lower levels, use the table provided in the answer key. It will help the students to start their discussion.

Reading comprehension

1. Complete the following tasks (comprehension)

- a) Summarise the changes that the COVID-19 crisis brought to the town of Orile-Iganmu in Lagos State in Nigeria.
- b) How much support do people in Lagos State feel they are getting from their government?
- c) Since the outbreak of COVID-19, Nurudeen Olugbade has spent a lot of time taking pictures in Orile-Iganmu where he lives. Explain his intention.
- d) Explain why people in Lagos State are less afraid of COVID-19 than people in other parts of the world.

2. Re-creation of text: Olugbade's picture

In paragraph 7, a picture taken by Olugbade is described in more detail. Prepare a statement (200–250 words) in which you answer the following questions:

- a) How does the picture illustrate life in times of coronavirus in the town of Orile-Iganmu?
- b) Why is the picture so powerful?

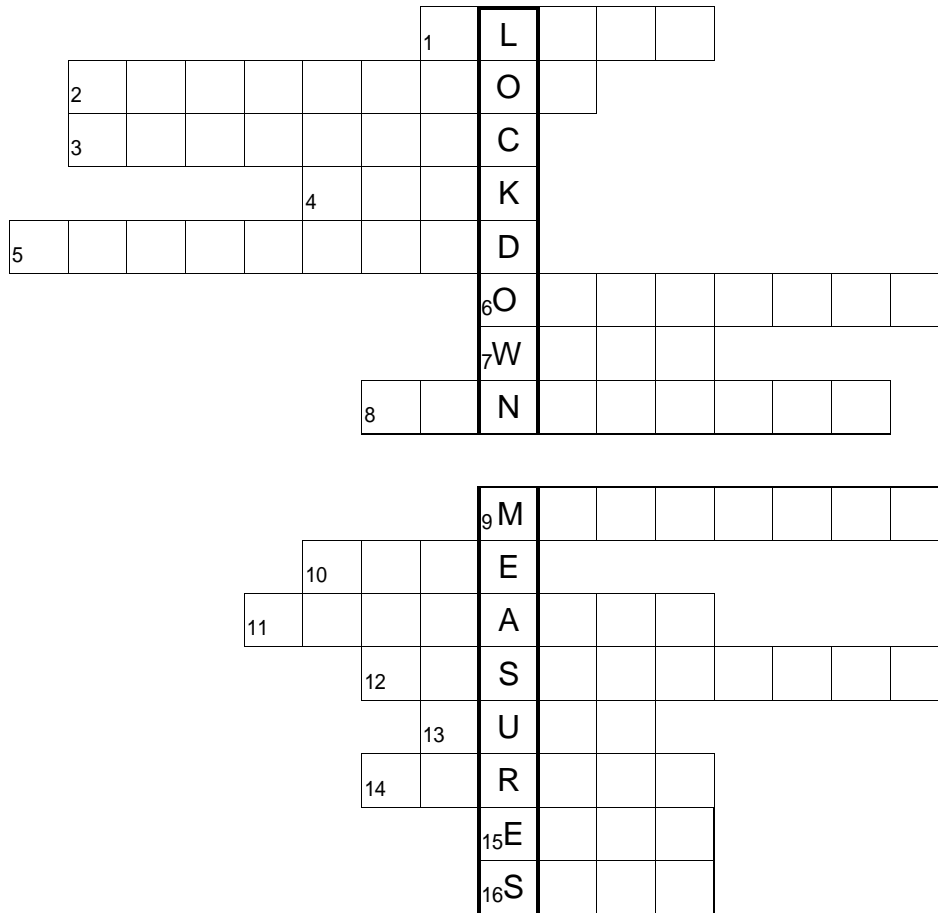
3. Are the following statements true (T), false (F), or not mentioned in the text (N)? Mark (✓) the correct box, and then correct the false statements below.

Statement	T	F	N
a) Olugbade made face masks using thrown-away plastic and shoelaces.			
b) With his camera, Olugbade documents life under COVID-19 for an international human rights organisation.			
c) Taking pictures keeps Olugbade busy while work is slow at the food delivery business where he works.			
d) In Orile-Iganmu, some people describe face masks as the best precaution against the virus.			
e) Wealthy and poor people suffer alike during the pandemic.			
f) The government has denied that food was eaten by the people who were supposed to hand it out to poor people.			

Corrections

Vocabulary

COVID-19 vocabulary: Fill out this crossword puzzle with words from the article.



1. used to cover your hands in order to protect them (singular)
2. the process of coming in contact with bacteria or viruses that cause disease
3. when a disease affects several countries or continents
4. used to cover your mouth and nose
5. another word for "established" cases: _____ cases
6. when s.th. suddenly begins (e.g., a disease)
7. When working with COVID-19 patients, doctors and nurses _____ protective gowns made of plastic so that they won't catch the virus.
8. a special substance (e.g., a spray or gel) used to kill bacteria or viruses
9. another word for "keep" a distance: _____ a distance
10. If the _____ of new cases is going up, it means the number of new cases is going up.
11. the amount of space between you and another person
12. another word for "disturbance"
13. to control or limit s.th., especially something harmful like a disease
14. The fast _____ of COVID-19 has caused alarm among people.
15. to _____ lockdown rules means to make lockdown rules less strict.
16. a substance used to wash your hands with

Post-reading

1. The coronavirus pandemic around the world

Find a partner and discuss the tasks **a)** and **b)** below. (When working on your own, write between 150–200 words for each task.)

- a)** What do you think have people in Germany suffered from the most during the coronavirus lockdown? Discuss individuals, families, friends, and society in general.
- b)** How have people in faraway countries suffered during the coronavirus pandemic? Bear in mind what you have read in the article about Nigeria and discuss how people's experiences may have been more extreme.

2. Documenting life in times of the coronavirus

Imagine you have been asked to document life in times of the coronavirus crisis. You are supposed to photograph essential aspects of the life in your hometown during lockdown.

What would you have photographed? Which would have been the motifs, themes, or scenes that summarise people's lives? Collect ideas and discuss them with your classmates.

Additional tasks

- a)** Think of a picture you would have taken that includes people. Get your classmates to stage the picture with you. Take it, print it, and hang it up in your classroom. Together, discuss the pictures by taking a gallery walk in which every photographer explains his or her choice.
- b)** If you can't take a picture, let your classmates stage a freeze frame for you and discuss it. ("freeze frame" = a snapshot of a scene in theatre; actors pose to create a specific moment; they don't move while their positions, body language, and facial expressions are discussed.)

Mediation

You were shocked by the text dealing with the Nigerian town of Orile-Iganmu. You want to find out how Nigeria as a country has been hit by the consequences of the coronavirus pandemic. You also want to know what Nigeria's chances are to recover from the crisis. An article published in the "Neue Züricher Zeitung" provides you with information.

Prepare a statement for your English class with a summary of the information you have found. Write approximately 180 words.

Leave out three paragraphs in the middle of the article (i.e., the passage from "Auch in vielen anderen Entwicklungs- und ..." to "rückt aber so oder so in weite Ferne."). Only use the rest of the text (**531 words**).

Useful vocabulary

- Internationaler Währungsfonds (IWF): IMF (International Monetary Fund)
- Kontraktion der Wirtschaft: decline in economic performance

Source: www.nzz.ch/international/corona-treibt-millionen-in-die-extreme-armut-ld.1555052

- 'Neue Züricher Zeitung', " 'Wochen des Hungerns und des Leidens' – wie Corona weltweit Millionen von Menschen in die extreme Armut treibt", by Fabian Urech, 13 May 2020)

Answer key

Pre-reading

1. Some facts about Nigeria

- Nigeria is located on the western coast of Africa, bordering Benin, Niger, Chad, and Cameroon.
- The country's official name is "Federal Republic of Nigeria".
- Its capital is Abuja (approx. 3 million inhabitants). Its biggest city is Lagos (approx. 14 million inhabitants).
- It has approximately 200 million inhabitants (2020 estimate; largest population in Africa; Ethiopia comes second with approximately 115 million inhabitants; Nigeria has the 6th largest population in the world).
- As of 2019, approximately 40 per cent of Nigerians live in poverty while the country is Africa's largest economy (Nigeria is the country with the highest GDP in Africa).
- The official language spoken in Nigeria is English. Other major, indigenous languages used are Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo (Ibo), and Fulani.
- The main religions followed in Nigeria are Islam (approx. 53%) and Christianity (approx. 46%)
- Nigeria is a former British colony and gained independence in 1960.

For further information, please visit:

- www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html
- www.reuters.com/article/us-nigeria-economy-poverty/forty-percent-of-nigerians-live-in-poverty-stats-office-idUSKBN22G19A
- www.statista.com/statistics/1120999/gdp-of-african-countries-by-country/
- www.statista.com/statistics/1121246/population-in-africa-by-country/#:~:text=Nigeria%20has%20the%20largest%20population,Africa%2C%20reaching%20102%20million%20people.

2. Mankind's most dire threats

Table for students of lower levels:

Mankind's most dire threats		
HUNGER	POLLUTION	PANDEMICS
UNEMPLOYMENT	RELIGIOUS OR POLITICAL PROSECUTION	POVERTY
WAR	CLIMATE DISASTERS	LACK OF BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS
...

Individual students answers; possible points are:

- **socio-economic threats:** unemployment, poverty, hunger, homelessness, economic crisis caused by COVID-19 pandemic, ...

- **environmental threats:** climate change, global warming, heat waves, droughts, floods, other natural disasters, air pollution, water pollution, loss of biodiversity, deforestation, ...
- **health threats:** pandemics (e.g., COVID-19, HIV/AIDS), Ebola outbreaks, cholera outbreaks, lack of access to health care, problematic hygienic conditions and poor sanitation, lack of clean water, rise of cancer cases and deaths, ...
- **poverty:** hunger, overcrowding, living in poor conditions, poor sanitation and hygienic conditions (see health threats above), lack of access to education, ...
- **socio-political threats:**
 - war and other conflicts
 - lack of basic human rights (e.g., freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of thought and religion, the right to life, liberty, and security of person)
 - suppression of religious or ethnic minorities (e.g., Uighur Muslims in China)
 - discrimination and violence against ethnic minorities (e.g., African Americans in the US)
 - suppression of people because of their sexual orientation or gender (e.g., anti-LGBTQ laws in Nigeria; suppression of women's rights)
 - political prosecution (e.g., China's new security law for Hong Kong impacts on the right to freedom of expression)

Reading comprehension

1. Comprehension

- a) The COVID-19 pandemic has been very disruptive to the economic and daily life in the Nigerian town of Orile-Iganmu. The lockdown measures forced shops and other businesses (e.g., a factory) to close. Informal work has slowed because middle-class customers are afraid to book cleaning services or order deliveries because they want to avoid contact with other people. This affects people with lower incomes who fear losing their jobs or have lost their jobs already and are out every day looking for work. The crisis has also changed the character of the town, which used to be vibrant with streets full of people. Crime has also gone up at an alarming rate, leaving people scared. (paras. 1–5)
- b) People in Lagos State feel let down by their government. Nurudeen Olugbade from Orile-Iganmu points out that the government has imposed lockdown rules but has not made sure that poorer people are also able to follow them. He says that the government has failed people because many cannot afford masks, gloves, sanitiser, soap – or food. Also, many cannot afford to stay home as required by the lockdown measures. The government has failed to make provisions and didn't provide the help it promised. When food packages were promised to people living in poor areas, it was not sufficient or consistent. There have even been rumours that those who were supposed to hand out the packages ate large portions of the food themselves. (paras. 7–9, 13)
- c) Olugbade wants to bring attention to the suffering experienced by people since the outbreak of COVID-19 in Orile-Iganmu. He feels that the town and its people aren't really seen with regard to their struggle during the crisis. He wants to show the disruption that the pandemic and the lockdown measures have brought to their lives (see answer to task **a**) above). He also wants to highlight the inequalities that have since worsened. Poorer people are at greater risk of catching the virus and suffering from hunger. They cannot afford food or protection, like masks and gloves, and they cannot follow health guidelines because of their situation (see answer to task **b**) above). (paras. 1, 7–9)

- d)** In Lagos State, people are exposed to many dangers in their daily lives. In Orile-Iganmu for example environmental pollution is a serious threat which people face on a daily basis. People have to use contaminated water and are exposed to harmful chemicals. This makes them feel that COVID-19 is not any more serious than what they have to deal with already. People are also more afraid of how the pandemic affects their daily lives: They fear suffering hunger more than catching the virus. (paras. 10, 12)

2. Re-creation of text: Possible answers

- a)** The message of the photo points out very bluntly what people in Orile-Iganmu are lacking and what they are suffering from during the coronavirus pandemic. They cannot protect themselves from the virus, and they are hungry. Children wear self-made masks that are made of used plastic bags that were thrown onto the streets in the slum where they live. Each child in the picture holds up a piece of paper expressing in simple words how their basic needs are not being met – they cannot protect themselves from the virus, and they don't have enough to eat. The statements written on the pieces of paper read "No face masks", "no sanitiser", "no food".
- b)** The picture is powerful because it touches people's hearts and makes them feel sympathy.
- Children are shown as those who suffer while they express their needs by holding up the messages.
 - The message given in the picture is verbal and non-verbal: it's an image of suffering children who communicate what they suffer from in writing (e.g., one sign reads "No masks" while they are wearing self-made masks made of things that people have thrown away. The masks won't protect them properly, but instead highlight their poverty and need of help even more).
 - The messages themselves emphasise the children's needs because they repeat the word "no" three times in the same structure. The word "no" repeated in short phrases creates a clear and charged message.

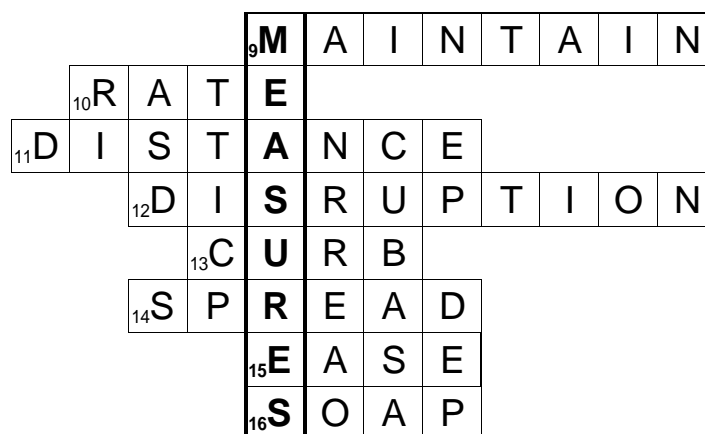
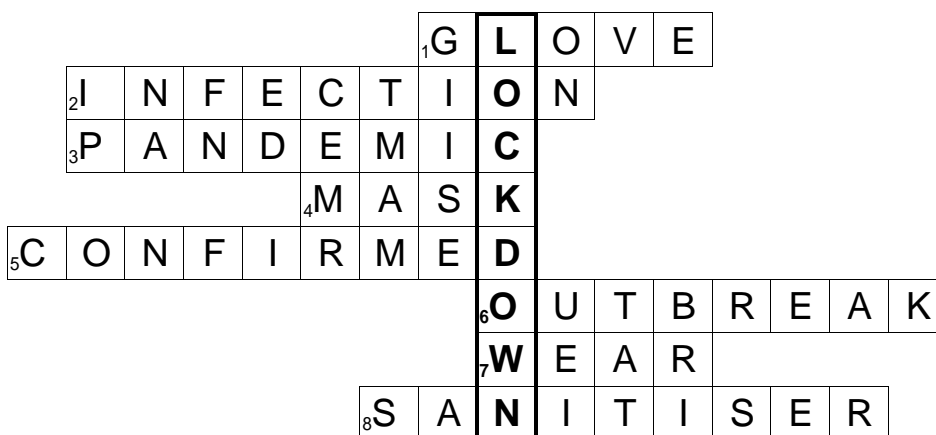
3.

Statement	T	F	N
a) Olugbade made face masks using thrown-away plastic and shoelaces.	✓ (§7)		
b) With his camera, Olugbade documents life under COVID-19 for an international human rights organisation.		✓ (§1, 8)	
c) Taking pictures keeps Olugbade busy while work is slow at the food delivery business where he works.	✓ (§6)		
d) In Orile-Iganmu, some people describe face masks as the best precaution against the virus.		✓ (§11)	
e) Wealthy and poor people suffer alike during the pandemic.		✓ (§5, 9)	
f) The government has denied that food was eaten by the people who were supposed to hand it out to poor people.			✓

Corrections

- b) It's Olugbade own project. He wants to take pictures to show the suffering and need of people during the pandemic. (paras. 1, 8)
- d) Some people in Orile-Iganmu don't see masks as a working precaution. They describe how people handle and try on different masks before they buy one. To them, the masks are just for show but don't actually protect them. They just wear them so that they are allowed to leave the area and won't be stopped by police. (para. 11)
- e) Wealthy people can stay at home and avoid catching the disease. Poor people are out in the streets looking for work. Wealthy people can afford protective equipment, poor people cannot, and they have to use makeshift face masks or no protection at all. (paras. 4, 5, 7, 9)

Vocabulary



Post-reading

1.

a) Sample points

Individuals, families, friends:

- losing loved ones to COVID-19; attending funerals with a limited number of people who must keep their distance
- not being able to visit sick or elderly people
- social isolation (not being able to see friends or family, being confined to one's home)
- losing your job, struggling financially
- struggling with working from home (e.g., having to look after children while working)
- struggling with studying from home (e.g., preparing for exams) or getting left behind in terms of schooling (e.g., lacking enough support or workable technology at home)
- not being able to enjoy life in a carefree way (restaurants and sport clubs are closed; you can't celebrate birthdays and weddings, etc.)
- ...

Society:

- economic crisis (business closures, unemployment)
- overwhelmed medical staff
- other problems have got worse (poverty, homelessness, domestic violence)
- other issues cannot be dealt with (e.g., climate change)
- greater tension between people (e.g., those who follow rules vs. those who are more lax)
- poor working and living conditions (e.g., meat factory employees) that make it possible for the virus to spread fast
- ...

b) Sample points

- extreme poverty and greater social inequality
- lack of access to health care
- hunger
- job loss and financial struggles can often mean not being able to buy food.
- people at greater risk of catching the virus because ...
 - they can't afford protective gear (masks, gloves).
 - they lack proper materials to make their own masks.
 - sanitiser and even soap are too expensive.
 - they live in slums with poor sanitation, polluted water, and overcrowding where they can't keep enough distance.
- lack of support from the government (food provisions, financial support)
- rise of severe crime
- faster and greater outbreak of COVID-19 where the government fails to curb the spread of coronavirus (e.g., USA, Brazil)
- ...

2. Possible themes and motifs:

- empty streets and motorways
- closed shops and restaurants
- families doing homework together
- people using electronic devices to keep in touch
- queues in front of COVID-19 testing centres
- queues of people wearing face masks in front of shops, etc.
- people cleaning and tidying up at their home
- people trying to keep fit by working out at home
- ...

a), b) Individual projects

Mediation

The "Neue Züricher Zeitung" writes that the coronavirus pandemic drives millions of people worldwide into extreme poverty. In Nigeria, the pandemic brought hunger. Nearly half of the people living in Lagos, Africa's biggest city, did not have enough to eat during the lockdown. Although lockdown measures have been eased, five million more Nigerians are expected to be trapped in extreme poverty. This sets the country back for years in its fight against poverty.

The IMF expects the Nigerian economy to shrink by 3.4 per cent in 2020. With Nigeria being the top African oil producer, the national budget is expected to shrink in half due to the drop of the oil price. Measures to revive the economy are very much needed but too costly because more than half of government spending is used to cover debt. Jobs will be lost, public services will be cut back, and tensions, poverty, and hunger will increase.

The virus is far from being under control in Nigeria. If the spread isn't curbed, there will be an even greater decline in the economic performance leading to an unprecedented economic fiasco. **(185 words)**

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