

FAT ACCEPTANCE



Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Reading.....	4
Reading Comprehension Questions.....	7
Essential Vocabulary.....	8
Obesity Crisis!.....	10
Discussion Questions.....	12
Writing.....	14
Credits.....	15

Introduction

How are overweight people regarded in your country/culture?

Do you think being overweight is no problem in today's society?

Should there be clearer education about being overweight?

Reading

Marie is overweight. Some people are not so kind and they just say she is fat.

And when people say fat, they mean obese.

She currently weighs 280 pounds. In kilograms, that is 127. That is a lot of weight. To get a little perspective, the average horse weighs around 1000 pounds. So Marie is just over a quarter of a horse.

But she does not regard her weight as unhealthy. In fact, she thinks she is in very good health.

“All those ideas about how much we should weigh are out of date,” she says. “Women today weigh a lot more than that and those numbers all need to be revised.”

And to prove to the world that there is nothing wrong with her size, Marie has embarked on a career as a model. An agency has snapped her up, and she is inundated with work offers every month.

“That just goes to prove that the media and the public agree with me,” she says.

But many people disagree. One of those people is fitness guru,

Mark Davis, who had this to say.

“There is no way that Marie is healthy at that weight. At 280 pounds she would suffer from some serious detriments to her health and general quality of life. I can’t believe that these fashion magazines are encouraging her.”

Another person that sees Marie’s weight as a major health issue is Dr Amanda Nutt.

“I can tell you without even looking at her, that she is having serious health problems. She could be diabetic and she would definitely be having heart issues too. There could be a whole catalogue of other risks because of her very unhealthy diet and lifestyle.”

But Marie is adamant.

“I get sick and tired hearing from these people,” she said. “Why can’t they just let other people live and let live? I am not hurting anyone and they all need to get a life.”

But Dr Nutt refuses to acknowledge what Marie says.

“The point is, she is hurting other people. In the future, she will be a major drain on health services in the country. She will need hospital treatment and doctors and nurses will be expected to run around after her. This is not fair to people in real need of

care. People that have led healthy lives and eaten a healthy diet.”

But Marie just laughs all of this off.

“I’m sure that she is really just worried that no one is paying her any attention,” says Marie. “I have no intention of losing weight or changing my lifestyle. I have a great career as a plus-size model and I am earning a lot of money now. Why would I change anything?”

Marie shows a new magazine spread of her wearing designer gear while lying on a huge bed. In the pictures, she is spooning great mounds of chocolate cake into her mouth.

“I was doing what I love to do on that fashion shoot — eating!”

She beams a big smile and shifts her weight to make herself more comfortable.

Reading Comprehension Questions

How much does Marie weigh?

What percentage of a horse is Marie's weight?

Does Marie think she is healthy?

What does Marie do for a living? Is she successful in this line of work?

What does Mark do for a living?

What does he think of Marie's lifestyle?

What is Amanda's job?

What does she say about Marie's lifestyle?

What two health risks does Amanda mention that Marie could have?

What economic issue does Amanda talk about concerning Marie's health?

How does Marie refer to her job? What name does she give it?

What is she doing in the latest fashion job that she completed for a magazine?

Essential Vocabulary

overweight	pounds
kilograms	perspective
average	regard
out of date	revised
embarked	model
agency	snapped her up
inundated with offers	media
fitness guru	detriments
quality of life	encouraging
diabetic	catalogue
lifestyle	adamant
sick and tired	live and let live
get a life	acknowledge
drain	laughs all of this off
no intention	plus-size model
magazine spread	designer gear
spooning	mounds

Exercise

Write down all the words and phrases in your vocabulary notebook. Look in your dictionary and find the meaning of each word. Write the definition next to

each word.

Then make up your own sentences using each word or phrase.

For example:

Notebook—*a small book with pages of blank paper that students use to make notes when studying.*

“I left my notebook at home so I was unable to make any notes in my English class.”

Obesity Crisis!

This is a debate exercise.

The class should divide into two groups. Each group should select a captain of their group. One student should be the chairperson for the debate — it is the chairperson's job to keep order in the debate if things get heated!

Go through all the points and decide if these are good or bad methods to combat obesity in your country.

- Higher tax on all added-sugar food
- Cash incentives for overweight people who go on a diet — provided by the taxpayer!
- Overweight people forced to attend fitness and diet classes
- No advertising on TV or social media for unhealthy food and drinks
- Free gym membership for all overweight people — paid for by the taxpayer!
- Schools provide clear education on healthy eating and the importance of fitness
- A complete ban on all fast food
- More exercise facilities provided in towns and cities —

running tracks, outdoor exercise areas, basketball courts and football playing fields

- Shopping malls must provide healthy eating restaurants in all food courts and eating areas

Discussion Questions

What do you think of Marie's life? Is she healthy? Do you think she is happy?

Do you think Marie is overweight?

How is being overweight viewed in your country/culture?

Is obesity a problem in your country?

Which country do people from your country always regard as being overweight? Why?

What does it mean to be obese? How about overweight? What is regarded as a healthy weight in your country?

What is fat-shaming? Do you think this is acceptable? Is fat shaming just bullying?

What about fat acceptance? Is this acceptable? Should there be more accurate information on health issues regarding weight?

Should the media be more or less responsible when it comes to fat-shaming and fat acceptance?

If Marie was your friend, what would you say to her?

Does the food industry have a responsibility in the kind of food we eat? Think about all the food that is available with added sugar. Or the fast-food industry.

Plus-sized models are very popular in western countries these days. Is this a healthy portrayal of people? In the eighties, the models were stick-thin. Now they are extremely overweight. Should the media and fashion industry have more responsibility regarding people's health?

What information does the media in your country have towards a healthy weight? Is this accurate?

Writing

You are Dr Amanda Nutt in the article.

You have been asked to write a letter to Marie and advise her about her eating and lifestyle.

Your letter needs to be sympathetic and show sensitivity, but at the same time, you need to explain to Marie that her eating is unhealthy.

Be very careful how you write your letter. You need Marie to follow your advice without scaring her.

Credits

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