

THINKING SKILLS

9694/41

Paper 4 Applied Reasoning

May/June 2019

1 hour 30 minutes

No Additional Materials are required.

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

An answer booklet is provided inside this question paper. You should follow the instructions on the front cover of the answer booklet. If you need additional answer paper ask the invigilator for a continuation booklet.

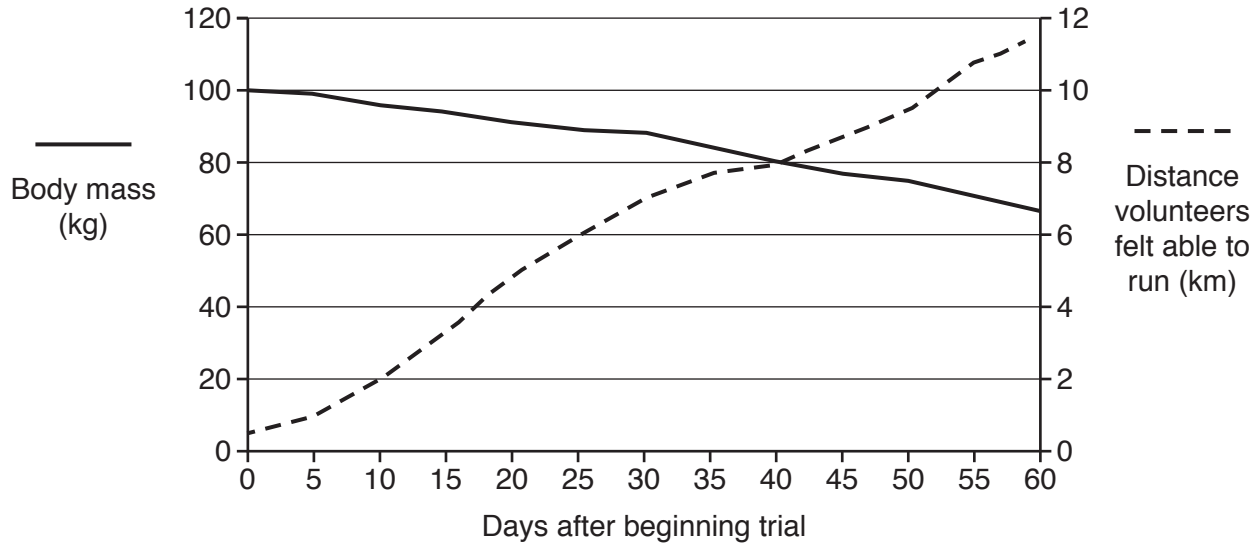
Answer **all** the questions.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question.

This document consists of 7 printed pages, 1 blank page and 1 Insert.

1 Study the information below and answer the question that follows.

Speedyloss helps you lose weight and improve fitness. When we first developed *Speedyloss*, our new weight loss product, we expected it to help people lose weight but were amazed about its effects on physical fitness as well. A group of 15 volunteers agreed to take part in a trial of *Speedyloss*. They used our product for just 60 days and over that time showed a steady decrease in body mass. Amazingly, they also reported feeling able to run further as the trial continued. In fact, after day 40 the running effect overtook the weight loss effect!



Make **five** criticisms of the use of statistics, the way they have been presented or any inferences drawn from them. [5]

Questions 2, 3 and 4 refer to Documents 1 to 5.

- 2 Briefly analyse the argument in Document 1: *Democracy or shamocracy?*, by identifying its main conclusion, intermediate conclusions and any counter-assertions. [6]
- 3 Give a critical evaluation of the strength of the argument in Document 1: *Democracy or shamocracy?*, by identifying and explaining any flaws, implicit assumptions and other weaknesses. [9]
- 4 'Government decisions should represent the will of the people.'

Construct a reasoned argument to support **or** challenge this claim. In your answer you should make critical use of the documents provided. [30]

DOCUMENT 1**Democracy or shamocracy?**

It is accepted wisdom that democracy is the best system of government available. In a democracy, the population is asked to vote on who gets to form a government, or on major decisions that a government must take. This consultation of the people is often cited as the major benefit of democracy. Most modern democracies work on the basis of every adult having an equal vote. This might seem fair, but on closer inspection it creates a raft of problems.

If every adult has a vote of equal weight, then the opinion of a well-informed, far-sighted, public-spirited citizen is of no more value than that of an ignorant, narrow-minded and selfish individual. Even in countries with a high level of education, the majority of the population are not well informed about political issues. Democracy leads to bad decisions because the informed minority are out-voted by an ignorant majority. To support democracy one has to assume that it is better for people to make their own decisions than for the right decisions to be made. People often forget that 1930s Germany was a democracy that elected Adolf Hitler as leader, with devastating consequences.

The will of the majority is not always in the best interest of all the citizens. In a country where one religion or ethnic group is in a majority, then the representatives of that particular group will win every election. Governments then make decisions for the benefit of that group. Decisions may seem harmless at first, such as choosing on which day to celebrate a public holiday. With every successive election, however, more and more small-scale decisions lead to discrimination. Discrimination inevitably leads to persecution and ultimately extermination. This pattern was also seen in 1930s Germany after Hitler was elected.

Voters get most of their information from a narrow range of media outlets, many of which have political vested interests. The outcome of many elections is, in effect, decided by a small number of unelected, out-of-touch newspaper owners. Election campaigns are won or lost as a result of some catchy newspaper headlines.

Regular elections create two problems. Firstly, no politician's job is safe unless he or she can keep the public happy. This leads to policy decisions that make the public feel good in the short term, often at the expense of long-term stability and prosperity. This political short-termism means that we will never be able to tackle the big issues of the future such as global warming, overpopulation and the avoidance of global conflict. Secondly, the direction of a government often changes from one election to the next. The effect is that decisions made by each government are reversed by the next one. This explains why very little real progress is ever made in a democratic country.

It is often said that democracy leads to prosperity and that democratic nations are among the wealthiest. However, this belief hides massive inequality. While the overall wealth of a country might be high, most of this is concentrated in a small minority of wealthy individuals. Many more individuals live in a state of perpetual poverty with no help from governments, because they have little access to education and rarely vote themselves.

DOCUMENT 2

There is not one democracy

In reality there is no universally agreed definition of democracy.

Most democracies operate a system of representative democracy. In these systems, members of the public elect representatives, who then vote on issues on behalf of the people by whom they were elected. The advantages of such a system are that those who vote directly on important issues tend to be better informed than members of the general public and that the machinery of government turns more quickly, as public consultation takes time. However, such systems can be tainted by corruption of the elected representatives, and the public rarely get to directly influence legislation and hence often feel unrepresented and alienated from what is perceived as a distant elite.

Representative democracies vary widely on the number of opportunities the general public have to vote. Most countries hold elections that decide the leader once every four or five years, sometimes slightly longer. In some countries, e.g. France, the public are able to vote directly for the president, while in others the public vote for a local representative who then votes for a leader on their behalf, usually along party lines. In some systems the public get to vote for a range of local representatives or authority figures at differing levels of 'localness': councillors, mayors, regional governors etc. In some democracies, such as the US, the head of state is elected and has real power; in others, like the UK, the head of state can be unelected but has no real influence over the government of the country.

Central to the concept of democracy is the idea of who is entitled to vote. There is no system in which absolutely everyone gets to vote. 'Adults only' is the general rule but the age at which adulthood is defined differs. Some adults are excluded because of reasons such as citizenship, length of residence, criminality, mental health and bankruptcy. Ancient Athens is often cited as the archetypal democracy, but only adult males who had completed their military training were allowed to vote; notably, women and slaves were not. Historically, many democracies insisted on a certain level of wealth before voting was permitted.

Some systems, noticeably those of ancient Athens and modern-day Switzerland, attempt to function as a more direct democracy. In such systems, the public are consulted frequently about single issues, on which referendums are held. Such systems rely on the public being well informed about issues and able to understand the long-term consequences of decisions. Referendums are expensive and time-consuming, so they do not facilitate speedy decision-making, but direct democracy seems to have worked reasonably well for wealthy Switzerland. With the advent of digital technologies, public referendums are becoming more frequent in other countries.

Because of the ambiguity of the concept of democracy, most countries in the world are able to describe themselves as democratic. In the mid- to late-20th century, Germany was split into two countries, East and West. The eastern part was called the German Democratic Republic, but most other countries in the world regarded it as by far the less democratic of the two.

DOCUMENT 3**The risky business of the referendum**

'Let the people decide' is a great political soundbite. Referendums are expensive – ballots need to be printed, administered, counted; buildings need to be hired and, before that, money needs to be spent on publicity – but they have become increasingly popular in recent years. More than that, referendums can be a very risky business.

Voters are often angry and disillusioned, particularly in the middle of a government's period in office. A single-issue question can produce unexpected results. The referendum on the UK's membership of the EU was one example. David Cameron, the prime minister, was sure the public would vote his way but slightly more than half of the votes went against him – and that was all it took. More recently, the people of Colombia were asked if they approved of a peace deal after decades of devastating war – they said no; again the majority was slim, and the turnout was low, but that was all that was required for the referendum to be binding. The Hungarian government's call for the people to reject the EU's quotas on accepting refugees was approved by nearly everyone who voted. But only staunch government supporters turned out to vote, so the referendum did not get the required turnout for the decision to be implemented.

In reality there are rarely only two choices, but most referendums ask 'Yes or No' questions. Win or lose, a referendum can be a defeat for a government, because it exposes or underlines divisions in society which many in government would hope to ignore.

Referendums are often portrayed as important tools of democracy and self-determination – creating new countries from South Sudan to Montenegro. This type of direct democracy also occurs in more stable administrations. Switzerland holds referendums all the time – around 10 every year – on everything from tax policy to building tunnels; US states often do the same sort of thing. However, somewhat counter-intuitively, referendums are often popular with dictators. It was a referendum in 1934 that merged the posts of German chancellor and German president, giving Adolf Hitler absolute power.

Critics see referendums as an abdication of responsibility by elected politicians, bypassing systems that have been carefully crafted to provide democratic checks and balances. But in many countries politics itself has become a dirty word and a referendum is seen as a way to protest against a corrupt system.

Newspaper article

DOCUMENT 4

Some famous quotes about democracy

We here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Abraham Lincoln

The strongest argument against democracy is a five-minute discussion with the average voter.

Winston Churchill

What difference does it make to the dead, the orphans and the homeless, whether the mad destruction is wrought under the name of totalitarianism or in the holy name of liberty or democracy?

Mahatma Gandhi

If voting made any difference they wouldn't let us do it.

Mark Twain

Elections belong to the people. It's their decision. If they decide to turn their back on the fire and burn their behinds, then they will just have to sit on their blisters.

Abraham Lincoln

Democracy is in the blood of the Muslims, who look upon complete equality of mankind, and believe in fraternity, equality, and liberty.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah

Many forms of government have been tried, and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed, it has been said that democracy is the worst form of government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time.

Winston Churchill

It is an axiom in my mind, that our liberty can never be safe but in the hands of the people themselves, and that too of the people with a certain degree of instruction.

Thomas Jefferson

Democracy is worth dying for, because it's the most deeply honourable form of government ever devised by man.

Ronald Reagan

Anti-intellectualism has been a constant thread winding its way through our political and cultural life, nurtured by the false notion that democracy means that 'my ignorance is just as good as your knowledge'.

Isaac Asimov

Propaganda is to a democracy what the bludgeon is to a totalitarian state.

Noam Chomsky

Democracy substitutes election by the incompetent many for appointment by the corrupt few.

George Bernard Shaw

The ballot is stronger than the bullet.

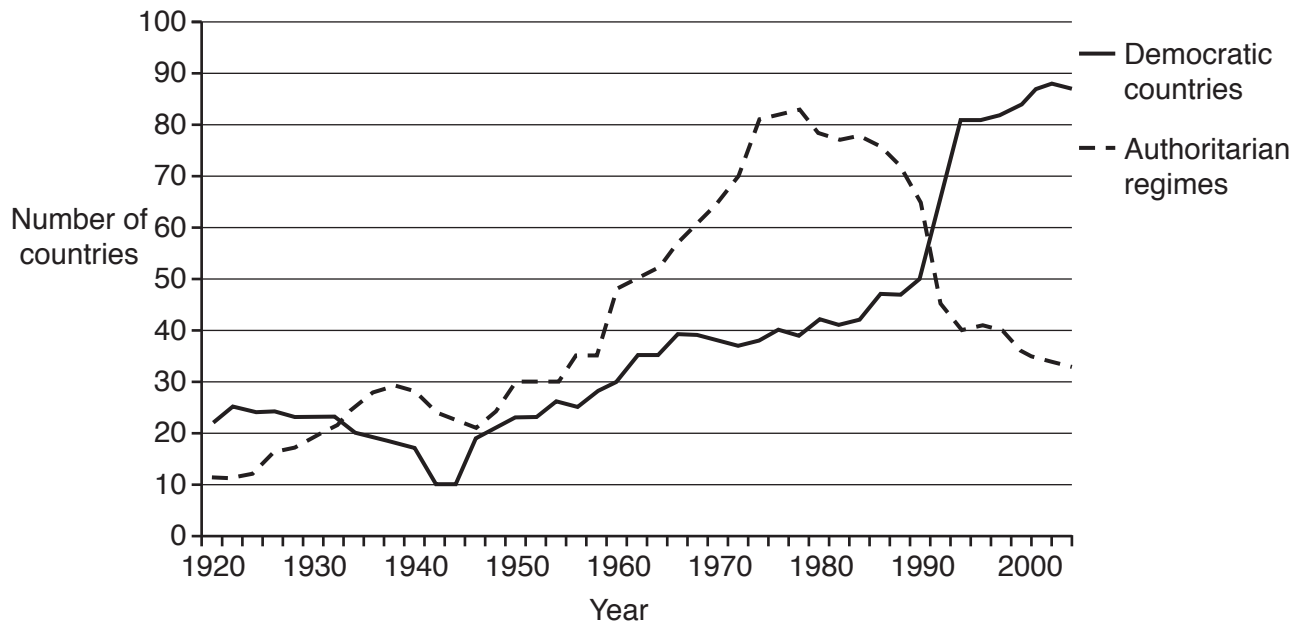
Abraham Lincoln

Democracy is two wolves and a lamb voting on what to have for lunch.

Variouly attributed

DOCUMENT 5

Changing number of democracies



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