

## A 'heathenish liquor'? A cure for cancer? The history of coffee is full of surprises

### Level 2: Intermediate – Teacher's notes

**Article summary:** The article describes the history of coffee and how attitudes towards it have changed over the years. It also discusses the potential health benefits of drinking coffee.

**Time:** 45–60 minutes

**Skills:** Reading, Speaking

**Language focus:** Vocabulary

**Materials needed:** One copy of the worksheet per student

#### 1. Warmer

- a. The purpose of this activity is to introduce the topic of coffee drinking. This is a general-knowledge activity, which may encourage some discussion, even argument, among students. Brazil (which produces 2,652,000 metric tonnes of coffee a year) is certainly in the first place, but the order of the other five countries is more debatable.

**Key:**

- |             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| 1. Brazil   | 4. Indonesia |
| 2. Vietnam  | 5. Honduras  |
| 3. Colombia | 6. Ethiopia  |

#### 2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and compare their answers in pairs or small groups. Note that beneficial and detrimental have opposite meanings, and both are followed by to as in detrimental to your health. The word beverage is a formal word for drink and may often be seen in notices, as in "Hot beverages are served until 9 pm."

**Key:**

- |                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. bowel       | 7. beverage      |
| 2. beneficial  | 8. gaslight      |
| 3. detrimental | 9. contradictory |
| 4. disorder    | 10. notably      |
| 5. drowsy      | 11. overturn     |
| 6. petition    | 12. virtually    |

- b. Give students time to complete the task individually and check answers as a class.

**Key:**

1. beverage
2. overturned
3. drowsy
4. virtually
5. petition
6. beneficial/detrimental

#### 3. Comprehension check

- a. The answers given are only suggested answers. Students may correctly answer the questions in different ways, e.g., in item 6, they may say, 'He tried to make them think coffee was detrimental to their health' or something similar.

**Key:**

1. True
2. False. They appeared in the 1650s.
3. True
4. False. The article does not say that this was on the leaflet.
5. False. His company made a wheat drink.
6. False. He tried to make them believe that coffee was bad for them.
7. False. He was a secret coffee drinker.
8. True
9. False. It said this in 1991 but changed this in 2016.
10. True

#### 4. Key language

- a. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs. Encourage them to do the exercise without looking at the text but to check their answers in the text.

**Key:**

1. digestive system
2. health benefits
3. art form
4. brain fog
5. lifestyle choices
6. court ruling

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- b. Students use the collocations from the previous task to complete the sentences.

**Key:**

1. *brain fog*
2. *lifestyle choices*
3. *art form*
4. *court ruling*
5. *health benefits*

### 5. Discussion

- a. Allow students time to note down their ideas about each statement and encourage them to say why they agree or disagree with each one.

### 6. In your own words

- a-b. The task could also be done as homework, and students could then present their reports to the class. If you have a large class, you can set up a debate in two teams defending the positive or negative effects of coffee on people. This way, you can make sure everyone gets to voice an opinion on either side of the argument.