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TOM TOM ENGLISH



What would you do if you were King for a day?

VOCABULARY

Eradicate =
Completely wipe-out,
destroy.

Pander =
To gratify, indulge

Pander =
To gratify or
indulge

Slosh =
Splash, pour carelessly

Discussion questions

1. Do you think Coca-Cola is especially unhealthy? Why? Why not?
2. Do you think sugary drinks like Coca-Cola should be banned, restricted, taxed, or allowed to be sold freely? Why?
3. Do you think the world would be a better place without Coca-Cola? Why? Why not?
4. If you were King/Queen for a day, with absolute power, what would you do?
5. Do you think any of the ideas given by your classmates are good ones? Are any of them likely to happen? Why? Why not?

VOCABULARY

Ramshackle =
In a state of severe
disrepair

Ubiquitous =
Found everywhere

Beverage =
Formal word for a drink

Gushing =
Flowing rapidly, with
great volume

The absolute power to do anything, but for one day only. Not enough time to

eradicate poverty, find a cure for cancer. I could turn my favourite football team, QPR, into Premier League champions, but that's too much of a fantasy.

One thing: a single order, that needs no **pandering** to public opinion.... It's simple. I'd ban Coca-Cola and all other high-sugar drinks.

I considered restricting my banning order to by the under-25s. **Sloshing** this sugary chemical into the throats of children has no beneficial effect at all. If fluoride gives poor kids rich kids' teeth, cola can do the opposite. It doesn't quench thirst or increases energy. It's responsible for damaged teeth, thicker waistlines and lighter purses.

Its **eradication** would have a positive effect on educational achievement and improve behaviour in the classroom. Ideally, the ban would be accompanied by the introduction of free healthy meals in every primary school.

But why restrict these benefits to children? My power allows me to save adults from themselves; to push them towards healthier **beverages** such as rooibos tea and mango juice. Or how about good old Adam's Ale, that marvellous, refreshing drink that's free at the tap (and expensive at the

British Newspaper "The Guardian" invites famous people to write a column called "King for a Day" in which they explain one thing that they would do if they had absolute power. This week's King for a Day is Alan Johnson, formerly UK Health Minister

supermarket). As king of the world I would make this ban international. The global power of a huge

corporation would be removed at a stroke.

When I was at secondary school, our geography teacher, Mr Woosnam, would show us films from exotic and remote parts of the world. The film would flicker from a huge projector on to a shaky white screen or the classroom wall. One image was always there - the Coca-Cola sign hanging off the corner of a **ramshackle** shop. Whether it was a Peruvian city or an African village, that white lettering on a red background was **ubiquitous**.

That was in the early 1960s and it's reach has expanded greatly since then. Amazonian tribes making contact with the outside world for the first time will probably come out of the jungle holding a Coke bottle. It's a symbol of socially useless power.

On this one day, my power will exceed theirs. Coca-Cola would disappear. A great **gushing** waterfall would release it into sealable caverns used for nuclear waste. with a proportion kept back to be used for Some would be saved for steam-cleaning heavy machinery. The result will be an army of happy children marching forward together, eyes bright, teeth gleaming; instead of teaching the world to sing, they will teach it to stop consuming sugar. Humanity will be all the sweeter for it.