



SPECIMEN

**Advanced Subsidiary GCE
CRITICAL THINKING**

F502

Unit F502: Assessing and Developing Argument

Resource Booklet



INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- Use Document 1 to answer the questions in Section B.

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This document consists of **3** printed pages.

Document 1**Should we restrict television?**

Watching television for long periods leads to a lack of activity and it is no coincidence that the recent rise in obesity matches the rise in the average number of hours of television that we watch. The visual images we watch might make us feel excited through the release of adrenaline, but over a period of time the build up of adrenaline can lead to many physical problems such as high blood pressure. Studies have also shown that most television news leaves viewers feeling pessimistic. Pessimism leads to feelings of helplessness and then to depression and anxiety. Clearly, watching television makes people depressed and if we continue to watch so much, hospital beds will be full of depressed people. There is little doubt that watching television leads to poor health.

1

Television programmes are full of violence and death. For instance, 62% of the cartoon movies on video or DVD that are aimed at young children contain images of injuries caused by violence and half of these are fatal injuries. Children are easily frightened by these images and it not surprising that so many children suffer from sleep disturbances as a result of nightmares. There are many cartoons broadcast on television and reducing the amount of television broadcast could help our young children to sleep better.

2

Some might argue that the global increase in IQ scores is evidence that watching television increases intelligence. However, the whole basis of this argument is flawed because it would be impossible to identify a causal relationship. Admittedly some television shows, such as 24 and The West Wing, are far more complex than the simplistic programmes of the 1970s, but it would be wrong to conclude that they have created more intelligent viewers. To do so would be like suggesting that the complexity of modern cars has made us better drivers – something that is clearly not the case.

3

Bhutan, an idyllic Himalayan country isolated from the West, was the last place on earth to introduce television in 1999 and is a perfect example of the dangers of watching television. As part of plans to modernise a country that previously had no public hospitals, schools or roads until the 1950's, satellite dishes were suddenly allowed to pump out 46 channels of round the clock entertainment. The previously peaceful life of the inhabitants, based on Buddhist* principles, was then ripped apart by a crime wave in 2002 – theft and drug abuse have now become common in Bhutan. For the people of Bhutan there is a stark choice. Having television means violence and crime; only a total ban would recover the previously tranquil lifestyle.

4



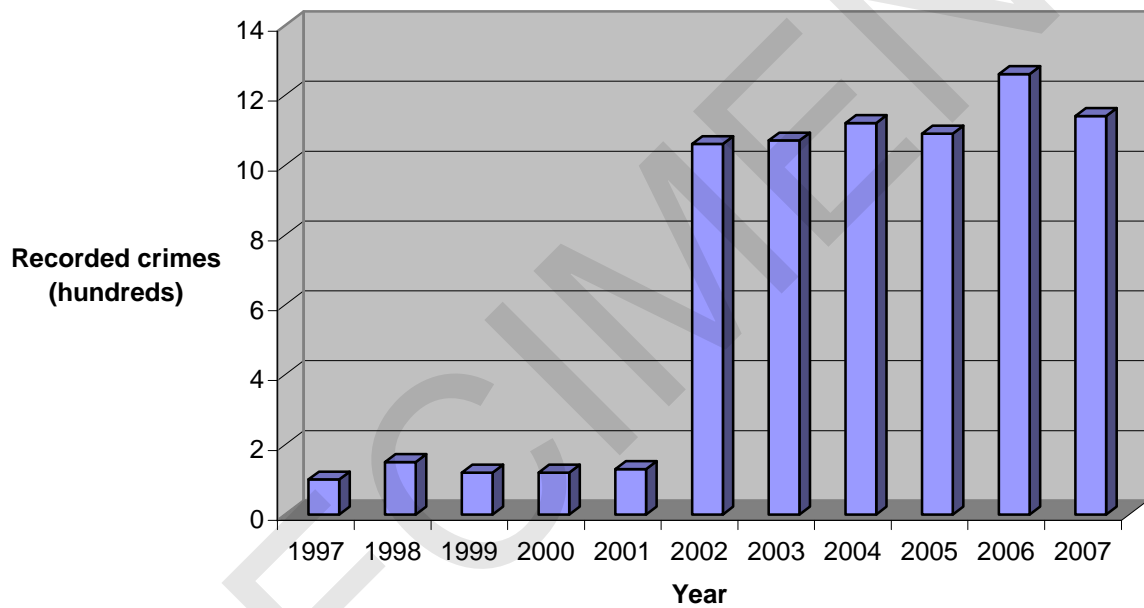
A typical
Buddhist
monastery in
Bhutan

Watching television is a danger to all aspects of our well being . In other areas where we have recognised the risk of harm, such as smoking and alcohol, we have passed laws to restrict the activity. Television is no different. Therefore, we should restrict the amount of television that is broadcast.

5

* Buddhism promotes freedom from greed, hatred and desire through meditation, wisdom and good conduct.

Figure 1. Bhutan's crime wave



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