

## CORONAVIRUS NEWS

# SOUTH KOREA: "YOU CAN'T CATCH IT TWICE"



**SOUTH Korean scientists say that they do not believe that you can catch the new coronavirus more than once.**

In the first few weeks of the outbreak, several countries, including China, Japan and South Korea, reportedly saw COVID-19 patients who tested positive for the illness again after they had recovered.

Now, new research from South Korean scientists says that they think this is unlikely, and that cases where people had caught the disease more than once were most likely due to "testing failures".

Apparently, tests had detected "dead virus traces", rather than the actual virus. If it's confirmed that you really can't catch



There are two types of tests: one that can tell whether you have COVID-19 now, and another that can tell whether you have the antibodies that fought off the virus

COVID-19 more than once, you might begin to hear more about 'immunity passports'.

These will be government-issued documents that would mean you were less restricted by the lockdown if you have antibodies that can fight off the virus.

However, the World Health Organization (WHO) says that "the use of [immunity passports] may increase the risks of transmission," but that "guidance is constantly kept under review and could be updated."

## UK LOCKDOWN LATEST

**AS First News went to press, the Government hadn't said too much about the end of lockdown.**

According to reports earlier this week, the prime minister Boris Johnson will reveal on Sunday 10 May how we'll be leaving lockdown.



The news came after the PM announced that we had "passed the peak," and that cases had begun to fall.

Until now, Government officials have decided not to explain their 'exit strategy', as they say that doing so would make the message to stay at home less effective.

Labour leader Keir Starmer said that his party agreed the lockdown "needs to remain in place, but to maintain morale and hope, people need a sense of what comes next".

## THE TWO Rs



The coronavirus can spread rapidly if its R value is not kept very low

**YOU might have heard a lot in the past week about the 'R' number and a drug called remdesivir. So what's all the fuss about?**

The R number has been talked about a lot lately in relation to relaxing the lockdown. Also known simply as R or the "effective reproduction number", it's a way for scientists to monitor a disease's ability to spread.

R is the average number of people who one infected person will pass the virus on to. It's vital that R stays below one, because if it rises above that, the virus will spread faster and faster. The closer to zero it is, the slower the virus is spreading. As First News went to press, the Government's scientific advisers say that R is between 0.6 and 0.9.

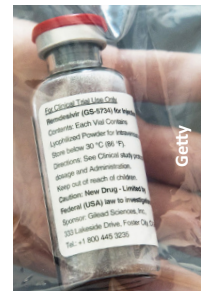
If R stays below one, the epidemic should eventually die down – though it takes time, and without social distancing and other measures, R can quickly rise again.

When the COVID-19 epidemic started, scientists think R was between 2 and 3. To give you an idea how that compares with other diseases, measles' R number is thought to be 12-18. That's why it's so important that people are vaccinated against

measles – it spreads really quickly and easily.

Another 'r' has been in the news a lot lately, and that's the drug remdesivir (below, right). It was originally developed to treat Ebola, and works by stopping a virus from multiplying inside the body. In the US, the agency that controls the medicines doctors are allowed to use has issued an emergency approval so that it can be used to treat people with COVID-19. President Trump has been hyping it up, but is it all it's cracked up to be?

Perhaps not. A study of 237 adults in Wuhan, China, found it "did not provide significant benefits" over a placebo (a substance given to a patient in a trial that has no physical effect on them). The study may also not be as accurate as was hoped. That's because it was stopped early after scientists were unable to recruit enough patients due to the steep fall in COVID-19 cases in China.



## Questions on – Coronavirus News



### GLOSSARY

**immunity** – The ability to resist a particular infection or toxin

**antibodies** – Proteins produced by the immune system to fight disease

**transmission** – Transfer of a disease from one individual to another

### Questions on ‘South Korea: “You can’t catch it twice”’

#### Part A: Find and explain the facts

**A1.** What has new research from South Korean scientists said about COVID-19?

**A2.** What are ‘immunity passports’?

#### Part B: Deduce and infer information

**B1.** The World Health Organization is concerned that “the use of [immunity passports] may increase the risks of transmission”. How might that be the case?

#### Part C

**C1.** Explain the use of quotation marks in the headline.

### Questions on ‘UK lockdown latest’

#### Part A: Find and explain the facts

**A1.** Look at the quotations and identify the person being quoted.

<i>We have “passed the peak” of the pandemic.</i>	
<i>The lockdown “needs to remain in place, but to maintain morale and hope, people need a sense of what comes next”.</i>	

#### Part B: Deduce and infer information

**B1.** Why have Government officials been reluctant to say much about how lockdown will end?

**B2.** Why has Keir Starmer criticised the lack of information about the end of lockdown?

#### Part C: Discussion task

*“The peak of the pandemic has passed, so schools should now reopen.”*

Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Give reasons for your view.

### Questions on ‘The two Rs’

#### Part A: Find and explain the facts

**A1.** What is the R number?

**A2.** What is remdesivir?

#### Part B: Deduce and infer information

**B1.** Suggest why President Trump has been “hyping [remdesivir] up” in the US.

**B2.** Why might remdesivir not be the answer?

#### Part C

**C1.** Define the following phrases and comment on the effect of their use.

Phrase	Meaning
<i>“what’s all the fuss about?”</i>	
<i>“hyping it up”</i>	
<i>“is it all it’s cracked up to be?”</i>	

Effect of their use:







**Part B: Deduce and infer information**

**B1.** Suggest why President Trump has been “hyping [remdesivir] up” in the US.

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**B2.** Why might remdesivir not be the answer?

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**Effect of their use:**

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## Teacher Answers

**AIM OF THE NEWS COMPREHENSIONS:** News reports are unique non-fiction texts. Being real, they naturally engage students, and with the range of topics that are covered, help to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world outside the classroom. The reports are ideal for short, focused comprehension or discussion activities. Along with the opportunity to find fascinating facts and appreciate the opinions of those involved, there is plenty to be inferred and deduced to understand in more depth what is being reported. Like authors, journalists play with language, so news 'stories' are rich nuggets of text to investigate and provide the opportunity for literacy programmes.

**TEACHER ANSWER GUIDE:** The teacher answers are intended to provide a guide to the reading skill each question is practising. Suggestions are given for a starting point for responses that students would be expected to give at the start of KS3. Further suggestions then give fuller, more developed responses that students will work towards by the end of KS3, in preparation for the non-fiction elements of GCSE English language.

### Questions on 'South Korea: "You can't catch it twice"'

#### PART A

##### A1. What has new research from South Korean scientists said about COVID-19?

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

**Possible answer**

**Starting point**

- South Korean scientists say that they do not believe that you can catch the new coronavirus more than once.

**Development**

- In the first few weeks of the outbreak, several countries, including China, Japan and South Korea, reportedly saw COVID-19 patients who tested positive for the illness again after they had recovered. However, the South Korean scientists have now attributed that to "testing failures". They believe that tests had detected "dead virus traces" rather than the actual virus.

##### A2. What are 'immunity passports'?

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

**Possible answer**

**Starting point**

- 'Immunity passports' will be Government-issued documents that would mean that the holder would be less restricted by the lockdown.

**Development**

- This is because immunity passport holders would have had the virus, so have the antibodies that can fight it off. Therefore, it should be safer for them to go back into society.

#### PART B

##### B1. The World Health Organization is concerned that "the use of [immunity passports] may increase the risks of transmission." How might that be the case?

READING SKILL — Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

**Possible answer**

**Starting point**

- At the moment, scientists think that it is unlikely that people can catch COVID-19 more than once, but they don't know for certain. There is still a lot of research being done into the new coronavirus and it seems to affect people differently. Therefore, if immunity passports are issued on this belief, it could increase the risks of transmission because it may turn out that some people don't develop immunity to the disease after recovering from it. The immunity passport would give these people a false sense of security and by going back into society they could catch the illness again and transmit it to others.

**Development**

- Even if people are immune once they have had COVID-19, the use of immunity passports could still cause transmission rates to rise. People may try to catch the disease deliberately so that they can get an immunity passport and get out of lockdown.

**PART C**

**C1. Explain the use of quotation marks in the headline.**

READING SKILL — Identify benefits of text organisation and presentation

**Possible answer**

**Starting point**

• Quotation marks are used in the headline because, although scientists do not believe that you can catch the new coronavirus more than once, there is no conclusive evidence yet. Therefore, quotation marks are used to show that this is a reported belief and not an assertion being made by First News.

**Development**

• The use of quotation marks also adds interest to the headline because it makes the reader intrigued to know the source of the quotation and the basis on which the statement is being made.

**Questions on ‘UK lockdown latest’**

**PART A**

**A1. Look at the quotations and identify the person being quoted.**

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

**Possible answer**

**Expected response**

<i>We have “passed the peak” of the pandemic.</i>	<b>PM Boris Johnson</b>
<i>The lockdown, “needs to remain in place, but to maintain morale and hope, people need a sense of what comes next.”</i>	<b>Labour leader Keir Starmer</b>

**PART B**

**B1. Why have Government officials been reluctant to say much about how lockdown will end?**

READING SKILL — Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

**Possible answer**

**Starting point**

• Government officials have been reluctant to say much about how lockdown will end because they say that it would make their message to stay at home less effective. This is because with talk about the end of lockdown, people may start to think that the situation isn’t as serious any more. If they know what the exit measures will be, they may start to relax and put them into practice before it is safe to do so.

**Development**

• Furthermore, the pandemic has presented the Government with an unprecedented and quickly-changing situation. It is likely that the Government wants to wait until they have as much information as possible before publicising their ‘exit strategy’. If they move too soon then they might have to retract their plans in the light of new data and this would cause confusion. It might even make people lose faith in their leadership.

**B2. Why has Keir Starmer criticised the lack of information about the end of lockdown?**

READING SKILL — Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

**Possible answer**

**Starting point**

• Keir Starmer has criticised the lack of information about the end of lockdown because he feels that people need something to look forward to in order to keep their morale up.

**Development**

• However, as he is the leader of the Labour Party, it is not surprising that his comments have a critical tone because his party is in opposition to the Government. It is his job to give the impression that he and his party could organise the country better. Therefore, his comments have to be viewed in this context.



**PART C – DISCUSSION TASK**

“The peak of the pandemic has passed, so schools should now reopen.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement?

Give reasons for your view.

READING SKILL — Develop opinions and provide justifications for viewpoints

Possible answer

AGREE	DISAGREE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued school closures will have a detrimental impact on pupils’ academic progress. It will also affect their mental health and wellbeing and that of their families. Children need to get back into the school community.</li> <li>• Children don't appear to be as affected by the coronavirus as adults, so it is safe for them to return to school.</li> <li>• Schools have to reopen at some point. If we leave it until September there might be a second spike in the winter months. This would overwhelm the NHS, which is already busier in the winter with flu and other seasonal illnesses.</li> <li>• A number of countries such as China, Denmark and Japan have reopened their schools to some extent. Early reports are favourable.</li> <li>• We need to get the economy started, but this can't happen while parents have to stay at home with their children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and safety must take priority. Social distancing is impractical in a school environment due to the tight corridors and small classrooms in most school buildings. Therefore, there would have to be rotas and reduced school days. With so much disruption it seems unlikely that children would benefit much academically from returning to school anyway. Surely it isn't worth the risk and the worry.</li> <li>• Some reports from China suggest that children are just as likely as adults to be infected by the disease. Children may not get as ill themselves, but several studies suggest that they are just as infectious as adults. Furthermore, there isn't really enough information on children's role in the pandemic. There have been recent cases of children hospitalised by a rare disease possibly linked to COVID-19. Until more is known about this, children shouldn't be treated as guinea pigs. Plus, the teachers and support staff are adults, so they would be at risk of getting seriously ill.</li> <li>• Children tend to have more contacts than adults in a typical day. Reopening schools too early is likely to accelerate transmission rates and the efforts people made during lockdown will be wasted. If there is a second spike in cases and the lockdown has to start again, then the economy will suffer even more.</li> </ul>

**Questions on ‘The two Rs’**

**PART A**

**A1. What is the R number?**

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

Possible answer

**Starting point**

• The R number is also known simply as R or the “effective reproduction number”. It’s a way for scientists to monitor a disease’s ability to spread.

**Development**

• R is the average number of people who one infected person will pass the virus on to. The closer to zero the R number is, the slower the virus is spreading. If R stays below one, the outbreak should eventually die down.

• As First News went to press, the Government’s scientific advisers say that R is between 0.6 and 0.9.

**A2. What is remdesivir?**

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

Possible answer

**Starting point**

• Remdesivir is a drug that was originally developed to treat Ebola. It works by stopping a virus from multiplying inside the body.

**Development**

• In the US, the agency that controls the medicines doctors are allowed to use has issued an emergency approval so that it can be used to treat people with COVID-19.

**PART B**

**B1. Suggest why President Trump has been “hyping [remdesivir] up” in the US.**

READING SKILL — Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

**Possible answer**

**Starting point**

- President Trump has been “hyping [remdesivir] up” because he is keen to give the impression that his administration is in control and that under his leadership COVID-19 will soon be beaten.

**Development**

- The US presidential elections are due to take place this year and Trump wants to get re-elected. However, the US has been severely hit by COVID-19 and the resulting health and economic problems will not help his campaign. In proclaiming good news about a drug to combat the disease, Trump will be hoping to reassure people and get them on side. This explains why he is being more enthusiastic about remdesivir than the research about the drug warrants.

**B2. Why might remdesivir not be the answer?**

READING SKILL — Infer information and justify with evidence from the text

**Possible answer**

**Starting point**

- Remdesivir might not be the answer because when it was given to 237 adults in Wuhan, China, it was found that it “did not provide significant benefits” over a placebo.

**Development**

- Also, the study might not even be as accurate as was hoped. It was stopped early after scientists were unable to recruit enough patients due to the steep fall in COVID-19 cases in China. Therefore, it seems clear that a lot more research is required before we cite remdesivir as the answer to the problem of COVID-19.

**PART C**

**C1. Define the following phrases and comment on the effect of their use.**

READING SKILL — Recognise effect of language choices

**Possible answer**

**Starting point** – some understanding shown in the defining of the words

**Developed response** – clear definitions and detailed explanation of effect

Phrase	Meaning
“what’s all the fuss about?”	Why are the R number and the drug called remdesivir getting so much attention?
“hyping it up”	Donald Trump has been exaggerating the benefits of the drug.
“is it all it’s cracked up to be?”	Does the drug live up to its good reputation?

**Effect of their use:**

- The article is in Science News and it contains lots of facts and scientific information. These phrases are all informal so their use makes the article less intimidating and more accessible for First News’ young target audience.