

BIG NEWS



GOT YOUR VACCINE PASSPORT?

BIG tech companies are working together to try to create digital ‘vaccine passports’ that could help people return to travel, work and school.

Health and tech companies, including Microsoft, are teaming up to create the digital passport – a digital copy of a person’s immunisation records stored in a digital wallet. The Vaccination Credential Initiative (VCI) aims to allow people to show proof that they have had a COVID-19 jab.

It’s thought that a secure, digital record of your vaccine record may be required as people start to return to work and school, and to travel abroad. It could also be required, along with your ticket, to get into a concert or theatre.

Joan Harvey, president of care solutions at Evernorth, one of the companies involved in the VCI, said: “A secure, convenient solution to verify COVID-19 vaccination will play

an important role in making sure we can all return to work, school and life safely. And to do it in a certified way, where the consumer owns the data.”

The group will have to address concerns that not everyone has access to a smartphone, or that not everyone will have had their vaccine yet, which may lead to discrimination. Privacy International says:

“Until everyone has access to an effective vaccine, any system requiring a passport for entry or service will be unfair.”

The VCI says it is in talks with governments around the world about its plan.

SPORT



World No1 Novak Djokovic relaxes on his hotel balcony during quarantine

AUSSIE OPEN’S “INSANE” LOCKDOWN



Naomi Osaka, on her way back to the hotel

SOME of the world’s top tennis players have been complaining about being kept under a strict quarantine before the start of the Australian Open.

The first tennis Grand Slam of the year is due to begin on 8 February. Most players have been placed in five-star quarantine hotels in Melbourne and Adelaide. They are only allowed out of their rooms for up to five hours a day to practise on court.

However, 72 tennis stars have been ordered to stay in their rooms in Melbourne for 14 days because they travelled on planes alongside people who tested positive for COVID-19.

Among the 72 is Novak Djokovic, the reigning men’s champion. He asked for better food and permission to visit coaches and gyms, but his demands were rejected by the Victoria state authorities.

Many players are hitting tennis balls against their room walls to try to keep fit. Kazakhstan’s Yulia Putintseva said the players had not been told they would have to stay in their rooms

if one person on their flight tested positive. Tournament organisers say that players knew the rules beforehand.

French player Alizé Cornet, who is not among the 72 quarantining, described the quarantine arrangement as “insane”, though she later apologised for her remark.

British wheelchair tennis star Gordon Reid said it was a “minority that are kicking up a fuss”.

Australia has strict COVID-19 rules, including a weekly limit on the number of international arrivals. Some people were angry that players were allowed to enter the country while 37,000 Australians are still waiting to return home.

Britain’s Andy Murray tested positive for the coronavirus in mid-January and, as *First News* went to press, was still isolating and unable to travel to Australia.

GLOSSARY

Grand Slam — The four most important annual tennis events. They are the Australian Open, the French Open, Wimbledon and the US Open. These tournaments offer the most ranking points and prize money.



Questions on: Big News: ‘Got your vaccine passport?’ and Sport: ‘Aussie Open’s “insane”

Questions on: Big News: ‘Got your vaccine passport?’

Part A: Find and explain the facts

- A1. What is the VCI?
- A2. What is a digital passport?
- A3. Who is Joan Harvey?

Part B: Deduce and infer information

- B1. What would be the advantages of digital passports?
- B2. Why are there likely to be some concerns about digital passports?

Part C: Analyse the writing and presentation

- C1. Discuss the effectiveness of the picture that accompanies this article.

Questions on: Sport: ‘Aussie Open’s “insane” lockdown’

Part A: Find and explain the facts

- A1. What do the numbers in the table refer to?

8	
5	
72	
14	

- A2. Who are the following people?

Novak Djokovic	
Yulia Putintseva	
Alizé Cornet	
Gordon Reid	

Part B: Deduce and infer information

- B1. Why are some of the tennis players who’ve been asked to quarantine unhappy about the arrangement?
- B2. Suggest why Alizé Cornet apologised for describing the quarantine arrangement as “insane”.
- B3. Why are some people angry that the tennis players were allowed to enter Australia at all?

Part C: Analyse the writing and presentation

- C1. Comment on the use of quotation marks in the headline.

Part D: Discussion task

“The Victoria authorities were right to reject Novak Djokovic’s requests for better food and permission to visit coaches and gyms.”

Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Justify your view.

B2. Why are there likely to be some concerns about digital passports?

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Part C: Analyse the writing and presentation

C1. Discuss the effectiveness of the picture that accompanies this article.

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Questions on: Sport: ‘Aussie Open’s “insane” lockdown’

Part A: Find and explain the facts

A1. What do the numbers in the table refer to?

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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.

'Got your vaccine passport?'

Part A

A1. What is the VCI?

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

Possible answer

Starting point

- The VCI is the Vaccination Credential Initiative.

Development

- It aims to allow people to show proof that they have had a COVID-19 jab.

A2. What is a digital passport?

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

Possible answer

Starting point

- It is a digital copy of a person's immunisation records stored in a digital wallet.

Development

- Health and tech companies, including Microsoft, are teaming up to create the digital passport.

A3. Who is Joan Harvey?

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

Possible answer

Starting point

- Joan Harvey is the president of care solutions at Evernorth.

Development

- Evernorth is one of the companies involved in the VCI.

Part B

B1. What would be the advantages of digital passports?

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

Possible answer

Starting point

- Digital passports could play a role in making sure people can return to work, school and life safely because they would show that the carrier has been vaccinated, so is less likely to catch and thus spread COVID-19.
- *Development*
- If people are required to have a digital vaccine record in order to travel abroad and to go to the theatre or attend concerts, then it could help to prevent the spread of the virus because the virus spreads when people are close together. However, if everyone in the large group has been vaccinated, then the risk is much lower. Also, if people know that they need to have a digital passport in order to access certain things, then they may be more likely to have the vaccine as soon as they become eligible. The more people who have the vaccine, the more the whole population is protected.

B2. Why are there likely to be some concerns about digital passports?

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

Possible answer

Starting point

- There are likely to be some concerns about digital passports because some people do not have a smartphone. People may also be concerned about the use of their data. Furthermore, there are fears that 'vaccine passports' could lead to discrimination if people have not yet received their vaccination or are unable to be vaccinated on health grounds. For example, at the moment, pregnant women are not going to be given the COVID-19 vaccine.

Development

- Privacy International says: “Until everyone has access to an effective vaccine, any system requiring a passport for entry or service will be unfair.” However, the VCI says it is in talks with governments around the world about its plan.

Part C

C1. Discuss the effectiveness of the picture that accompanies this article.

READING SKILL — Identify benefits of text organisation and presentation

Possible answer

Starting point

- The picture is a close-up image of a smartphone bearing a digital certificate of vaccination. The certificate is mainly black text on a white background with a QR code. There is an orange border separating the main text from the heading and QR code.

Development

- The picture in itself isn’t particularly visually appealing because of the predominance of text and the lack of colour. However, the image supports the article and creates interest because digital passports are not in use yet, so this shows the reader what they might look like.

‘Aussie Open’s “insane” lockdown’

Part A

A1. What do the numbers in the table refer to?

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

Possible answer

Starting point – some relevant information correctly identified.

Developed response – relevant information correctly identified and clearly explained

8	• There are four tennis events in the Grand Slam. The first of the year is the Australian Open, which is due to begin on 8 February.
5	• Most players have been placed in five-star quarantine hotels in Melbourne and Adelaide. They are only allowed out of their rooms for up to five hours a day to practise on courts.
72	• 72 tennis stars have been ordered to stay in their rooms in Melbourne because they travelled on planes alongside people who tested positive for COVID-19.
14	• The 72 players have to quarantine for 14 days.

A2. Who are the following people?

READING SKILL — Find and explain information

Possible answer

Starting point – some relevant information correctly identified.

Developed response – relevant information correctly identified and clearly explained

Novak Djokovic	• The reigning men’s champion. He is having to quarantine and has asked for better food and permission to visit coaches and gyms.
Yulia Putintseva	• A tennis player from Kazakhstan who said the players had not been told that they would have to stay in their rooms if one person on their flight tested positive.
Alizé Cornet	• A French tennis player. She described the quarantine arrangement as “insane”, though she later apologised.
Gordon Reid	• British wheelchair tennis star. He said that it was a “minority that are kicking up a fuss” [about having to quarantine].

Part B

B1. Why are some of the tennis players who’ve been asked to quarantine unhappy about the arrangement?

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

Possible answer

Starting point

- Some of the tennis players who’ve been asked to quarantine are unhappy about it because they say that they weren’t informed in advance that they would need to quarantine if one person on their flight tested positive.

Development

- Furthermore, the Australian Open is a very important tennis tournament and the players in quarantine feel at a disadvantage because they can’t train properly. The other tennis players are allowed out of their rooms for up to five hours a day to practise on court, but the players in quarantine have been reduced to hitting tennis balls against their room walls to try to keep fit.
- Indeed, Novak Djokovic is so unhappy about his quarantine that he has asked for better food and permission to visit coaches and gyms. He obviously feels a lot of pressure because he is the reigning men’s champion and doesn’t want

anything to jeopardise his bid to retain the title. However, the Victorian state authorities rejected his appeal.

B2. Suggest why Alizé Cornet apologised for describing the quarantine arrangement as “insane”.

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

Possible answer

Starting point

- It is likely that Alizé Cornet apologised for describing the quarantine arrangement as “insane” because as a visitor to Australia, she didn’t want to cause offence by seeming to criticise their rules.

Development

- Indeed, she isn’t even among the 72 tennis players quarantining so doesn’t really have any reason to complain herself.

B3. Why are some people angry that the tennis players were allowed to enter Australia at all?

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

Possible answer

Starting point

- Some people are angry that the tennis players were allowed to enter the country because 37,000 Australians are still waiting to return home.

Development

- As part of Australia’s strict COVID-19 rules, there is a weekly limit on the number of international arrivals. Some people feel that priority should not have been given to tennis players arriving for a tournament.

Part C

C1. Comment on the use of quotation marks in the headline.

READING SKILL — Identify benefits of text organisation and presentation

Possible answer

Starting point

- The use of “insane” in the headline makes it more sensational because it is intriguing and makes the reader wonder about the nature of the lockdown.

Development

- However, to show that the lockdown was judged “insane” by a French player and not First News, quotation marks are used.

Part D – Discussion Task

“The Victoria authorities were right to reject Novak Djokovic’s requests for better food and permission to visit coaches and gyms”.

Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Justify your view.

READING SKILL — Develop opinions and provide justifications for view points

AGREE	DISAGREE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The tennis players are being quarantined in five-star hotels. Therefore, it seems unlikely that the food is of an unacceptable quality. • People who have to self-isolate are not allowed to leave their homes even for work, exercise or food shopping. People all around the world are making sacrifices in order to stop the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, it would set a very bad example if Djokovic was allowed to bend the rules just because he is a famous tennis player. • Djokovic and the other tennis players have been allowed into Australia while 37,000 Australians are still waiting to return home. Therefore, the least they can do is to respect Australia’s rules and help to prevent the spread of the virus in the country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As an athlete, Novak Djokovic is probably used to a highly specialised diet. Any change to this could affect his performance or even make him ill. Therefore, his request for better food should have been granted. • Being unable to train for 14 days will put Djokovic and the other 71 tennis players at a disadvantage. The organisers of the Australian Open must have known that it was likely that some tennis players would have to quarantine and should have made better arrangements to enable them to train safely while self-isolating. • These tennis players are highly trained professionals and concessions should be made for them. Otherwise, the Australian Open should have been postponed until it could be run fairly.