

Positive Psychology Reading Materials

Integrating Reading Skills and Well-Being in ESL Instruction

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Introduction

Students face various difficulties in their learning environments and need tools to handle such challenges. Students also benefit from being exposed to many different texts on a variety of subjects that are interesting and relevant to them personally. Thus, being inspired by listening/speaking lessons and research made by two previous graduate students in the MA TESOL program at Brigham Young University, a supportive group and I created additional content-based reading materials for English language learning incorporating positive psychology interventions. The reading passages chosen were prepared with this goal in mind: to integrate purposeful topics with reading skills for greater student success and well-being.

This book contains rationale and references explaining why the selected materials were created, a section with reading materials available for classroom use, and instructions on how you can further contribute to the book by creating additional materials.



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Book Rationale

Overview

This chapter includes literature review and references that demonstrate the purpose for the creation of the reading passages.

The following sections help frame the rationale for this book. Drawing on literature on positive psychology interventions, content-based learning, and research focusing on second language reading, we outline key research that supports and frames the value of this book.

Positive Psychology Interventions

In the history of psychological research in language learning, emphasis was placed on understanding the impact of negative emotions on achievement. However, recently a push to “integrate positive and negative experiences” has developed (Macintyre et al., 2019, p. 263). Positive Psychology (PP) focuses on well-being and using positive emotions to promote personal growth (Macintyre et al. 2019). Within PP is an “umbrella” of components including “strengths, virtues, excellence, thriving, flourishing, resilience, optimal functioning” etc. (Donaldson, S. L., 2011, p. 5). Positive Psychology Interventions denote the practice, or exercise, (Adbolrezapour & Ghanbari, 2021) applied to deliberately increase feelings of positivity (Hart, 2020). They demonstrate relationships to having a positive view of oneself in the L2 and greater self-efficacy (Lake, 2016). The following three areas of focus within PPI were selected for these materials: PERMA, character strengths, and mindfulness.

PERMA, a popular intervention model created by Martin Seligman (2011), is an acronym for positive emotion, engagement, positive relationships, meaning, and accomplishments/achievements. He argued that advocating for well-being in education is likely to combat depression and improve learning because better moods may result in “broader attention, more creative thinking, and more holistic thinking” (Seligman, 2018, p. 80).

Character strengths reflect positive qualities individuals possess. Niemiec (2018) identified 24 character strengths that define the best qualities in humans (see also Proctor et al., 2011). He argued that character strengths interventions in education have a positive impact on engagement and achievement (p. 30). Furthermore, character strengths “enable learners to feel invigorated, authentic, and intrinsically motivated” (Macintyre et al., 2019, p. 268).

Mindfulness is being aware of the present moment. Practicing mindfulness allows learners to become more sensitive to context and perspective, and it may improve memory with attentiveness to the present moment (Langer, 2000). Mindfulness can also enable the learning and information-processing areas of the brain to function more effectively (Shapiro, 2020).

Each area was carefully considered based on the benefits they present in education and learning.

Content-Based Instruction

Content Based Instruction (CBI) is an approach that utilizes specific topics to facilitate language learning. In recent years, CBI, which is also referred to as Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), has gained wider popularity as an approach to language teaching, and research has sought to investigate the implications of its use in the second language classroom. Douglas (2017) discovered that the strategies incorporated into CBI allow students to have better accessibility to understanding of content. His research supports previous studies which found learning in another language does not hinder the ability to understand target content (Arulselvi, 2016; Grabe & Stoller, 2002). CBI also allows for more cognitively complex linguistic learning to take place (Crandall & Tucker, 1990), promotes student involvement, and activates background knowledge (Grabe & Stoller, 2002).

As with all CBI, connecting content with language learning outcomes is essential.

Intensive Reading

Intensive reading is usually done within the boundaries of the classroom under a controlled environment. The goal is to obtain detailed information from a text which is usually “short and dense in terms of content and language features” (Renandya, 2017, p. 3). The text is chosen by the teacher and should focus on developing students’ reading skills for a variety of purposes (Harmer, 2010). MacAlister (2011) describes the components of intensive reading through the acronym LIST: learning goals, idea goals, skills and strategies goals, and text structure goals. Teachers can use intensive reading to increase reading comprehension as well as vocabulary, knowledge of content, and grammatical structures (Cardenas, 2019).

Hence, teachers should strive to make this type of selective reading become an interactive process (Harmer, 2010; Anderson, 1994), utilize appropriate reading strategies (Cardenas, 2019), and increase interest and motivation to read a text for different purposes by using pre-, while, and post- reading strategies (Alyousef, 2006). To elicit interaction, Harmer (2010) suggests encouraging students to respond to the text, transfer their information in another way, or incorporate follow-up or other related tasks. When students utilize their background knowledge to comprehend the text, they can make meaningful connections between the information in the text and what they already know (Renandya, 2017.)

Anderson (2012) agrees that using reading input is an effective way to create extension or follow-up activities which involve the other language skills, therefore improving overall L2 development. He created a framework ACTIVE to determine key elements that enhance the reading process. He suggests focusing on activating prior knowledge, cultivating vocabulary, teaching for comprehension, increasing reading rate, verifying reading strategies, and evaluating progress (see also Anderson, 1994). Grabe (2010) suggests using similar pre- and post- strategies to increase comprehension.

Many of the tasks included in the template passages have pre- and post- reading strategies which meet most of these elements and are targeted to bring greater student success in reading ability.

Reading Fluency

Reading fluency is defined as reading “text rapidly, smoothly, effortlessly, and automatically with little attention to the mechanics of reading such as decoding,” (Meyer & Felton, 1999, p. 284). In other words, fluency essentially requires utilizing both reading rate and reading comprehension in the target language (Anderson, 1999; 2008). Although the speed at which a learner will read may vary depending on the task and purpose, most language learners cannot read fast enough to be efficient (Stoller et al., 2013; Grabe & Stoller 2013). In order to read successfully, readers need to develop lower-level and bottom-up processing skills with greater automaticity (Grabe & Stoller 2013, Gorsuch & Taguchi, 2010). By becoming more autonomous in bottom-up processing, readers are able to read more rapidly, and “higher-level skills are engaged” (Villanueva de Debat, 2006, p. 13) .

Research suggests that reading more fluently increased the number of texts that students are exposed to further leading to proficiency gains in reading. (Anderson 1999). Hence, “good readers are fast readers,” and achieving quicker reading rates is “of the utmost importance” (Villanueva de Debat, 2006, p. 14). However, if focus is only given to speed alone, comprehension may decrease (Maluch & Sachse, 2020). To ensure both aspects of fluency are achieved, Anderson (2008) suggests learners reach a goal of 200 words per minute with 70 percent comprehension at appropriate levels.

A longitudinal study using a repeated reading (RR) program to promote fluency not only showed significant gains in reading rate, but the students also stated they felt able to maintain their levels of comprehension and learned better strategies to be more efficient readers (Gorsuch & Taguchi, 2010).

Tran and Nation (2013) conducted a study with 116 participants in an EFL environment located in Vietnam using a speed reading program consisting of a select number of texts with comprehension questions and progress charts. They used graded readers for pre- and post- test analysis to compare control and treatment groups over ten weeks. The results determined that all groups increased in reading comprehension. However, the treatment groups improved in reading speed substantially more, suggesting that the increased speed did not hinder comprehension. Additionally, the treatment groups demonstrated faster reading speeds in other text types. They also compared pre- and post-tests related to memory span, and the treatment groups greatly outperformed the control groups.

Fluency building tasks require ample at-level reading passages for students to adequately improve in reading proficiency (Anderson, 1999). Henceforth, by developing fluency building materials that support PPIs, students can also increase reading rate and comprehension.

Intersecting PPI, CBI, and Reading

Several research studies conducted show the beneficial outcomes of utilizing content-based material in language learning.

One study targeting PPIs used a mixed-methods approach to compare listening/speaking tests from a control group utilizing grammar-translation and the lexical approach to the experimental group using PERMA in a content-based approach during classroom instruction. Results from the experimental group indicated a significant improvement in listening/speaking proficiency, and many students commented on feelings of increase to their well-being as well (Cheng & Chen, 2021).

Another research study in a Taiwanese University used CBI in an English reading class and found gains in reading comprehension from pre- and post-tests. Furthermore, a one-way ANOVA determined that lower-level learners may benefit the most from content-based reading material (Tsai & Shang, 2010). Cunningsworth (1995) argued that in topic selection of reading text, educators need to consider not only the culture and background knowledge of the target students, but also to utilize topics that provide opportunities for language learning whilst expanding students' experience in general.

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Reading Passages

This section of the book contains reading materials created for specific positive psychology topics at target levels using the [ACTFL guidelines](#). These guidelines describe levels of performance that align to the purpose of each task created. The six template passages can be found in the intermediate mid chapter. If a level does not include any materials, that chapter has not received additional contributions yet. We thank you for your patience as we continue to add and develop more content.

Refer to the next page for suggestions and examples of how to use the materials.

How to Use the Materials
Novice High
Intermediate Low
Intermediate Mid
Experiencing Gratitude-Template
Resilience-Template
Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence-Template
Teamwork-Template
Mindful People-Template
Grieving Mindfully-Template
Curiosity
Intermediate High
Advanced Low



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How to Use the Materials

Using the Materials

This book was not created to be a prescribed set of lessons. Rather, it is meant to be a set of suggestions you may use for your specific classroom needs. Although each reading is shown in a set order from pre-reading to post-reading activities, many of the recommended activities and ideas do not need to be done in this order. Likewise, not all activities need to be utilized. As the instructor, you may decide which of the suggestions you would like to incorporate into your own lessons. The main elements of each passage are the text itself, the comprehension questions, and the discussion questions.

If you would like to use these readings first for reading fluency, you might consider utilizing different reading activities to target fluency development. Then, have students read the text with a timer and answer the comprehension questions without referring back to the text. Then you may include any other activities you find appropriate and relevant to your class context, especially the discussion questions since these are targeted towards positive psychology interventions.

A personal suggestion would be to allow students to see the original passage of each text as you introduce the materials so that they can better understand that each text came from a more authentic-looking source.

Calculating WPM Scores

To find the WPM score, first find the word count for the passage. This should already be included at the bottom of the text. The word count includes the passage and all titles/subtitles, etc. Next, multiply the word count by 60. Convert the time recorded into seconds. Divide the word count by the seconds. This number is the WPM.

Here is an example using the *Mindfulness Intermediate Mid* passage:

Word count: 483 Time: 2:35

Word count: $483 \times 60 = 28,980$ Time: 155 seconds

$28,980 / 155 = \mathbf{187 \text{ WPM}}$

Examples

Here is an example of how the *Intermediate Mid Experiencing Gratitude* passage was used as a repeated reading for several different purposes throughout the week in an IEP (Intensive English Program) Intermediate Mid level reading class:

Monday: The students first read the passage as a reading fluency activity. They timed themselves trying to read the text as quickly as possible while still maintaining comprehension. The text was then taken away, and students had to answer the comprehension questions based on what they remembered. The comprehension questions were gathered and analyzed. Additionally, the WPM score for each student was calculated, and their results were recorded in reading fluency charts.

Tuesday: The students received their passages back so they could look at their results. They completed the vocabulary activity to guess from context and use the dictionary. They also used the vocabulary list to review the concepts of word families, roots and affixes, and phrases. Then, the students did a group activity. One person in the group was assigned to write down 5 events that happened in the last week. The second person wrote 5 negative events. The third group member wrote 5 positive events. They shared what they wrote with their group first. After, the class discussed together their various answers and how they felt about their specific assignments. The students were then introduced to the basic components of research—a research topic/question, participants, methods, and results. They practiced identifying these components in both of the research studies mentioned in the text. This practice also allowed the students to review organizational patterns for comparison and cause/effect. The class concluded with a discussion on the benefits of being grateful.

Wednesday: The students used the first paragraph to practice and record for oral fluency. They also took the reading home as an assignment to increase their rate by reading the text again until they were able to finish the passage at least 20-30 seconds quicker.

Thursday: The students brought the text back to class for the teacher to collect and review their timed reading.



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Novice High

This section will contain contributed reading passages targeted at the Novice High ACTFL level.



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Intermediate Low

This section will contain contributed reading passages targeted at the Intermediate Low ACTFL level.



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Intermediate Mid

This section will contain template and contributed reading passages targeted at the Intermediate Mid ACTFL level.

Experiencing Gratitude-Template
Resilience-Template
Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence-Template
Teamwork-Template
Mindful People-Template
Grieving Mindfully-Template
Curiosity



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https://edtechbooks.org/PositivePsychologyReadingMaterials/intermediate_mid_hig.

Experiencing Gratitude-Template

Jessica Sousa

Printable Version: [Experiencing Gratitude](#)

Before You Read

Brainstorming

- In groups of three or more, select at least one person to write about each of the following:
 - "Write down five positive events that happened to you in the last week."
 - "Write down five negative events that happened to you in the last week."
 - "Write down five events that happened to you in the last week."
 - After you have finished writing, discuss together with your group how that writing exercise made you feel and compare your responses.
- Skim through the first paragraph of the text. It begins by talking about holidays. Why do you think it says that some people feel depression or anxiety during holidays? What is your experience with holidays?

Vocabulary

Find the definition for each word below. Use a dictionary if needed.

1. negativity (n.) _____
2. intervention (n.) _____
3. affect (v.) _____
4. focus (v.) _____
5. connect to (something/someone) (phrasal v.)

6. psychology (n.) _____
7. research (n.) _____
8. benefit (v.) _____
9. memory (n.) _____

Reading

Read the following online article from Harvard Health.

Giving thanks can make you happier

Each [holiday season](#) comes with high expectations for a comfortable and happy time of year. However, for many people, this time of year also includes sadness, anxiety, or depression. Of course, major depression or an anxiety problem benefits most from professional help. But what about those who just feel lost or stressed or sad at this time of year? Research suggests that one part of the Thanksgiving holiday can actually make you happier. It's being grateful.

Gratitude is being thankful for what a person receives, both real or an idea. With gratitude, people notice the goodness in their lives. Also at this time, people usually recognize that the reason for their goodness is at least partially outside themselves. As a result, being grateful also helps people connect to something larger than themselves. They can connect to other people, nature, or a higher power.

In positive psychology research, gratitude is strongly and usually connected with greater happiness. Gratitude helps people feel more positive emotions. They enjoy good experiences. They improve their health. They deal with challenges. And they build strong relationships.

People feel and express gratitude in many ways. They can apply it to the past. This means thinking of positive memories. And it means being thankful for parts of your childhood or past blessings. The present means accepting good experiences now. The future means keeping a hopeful feeling. The natural or current level of someone's gratitude does not matter. Gratitude is a quality that people can successfully build more.

Research on Gratitude

Two psychologists, Dr. Robert A. Emmons from the University of California, and Dr. Michael E. McCullough from the University of Miami, have done much of the research on gratitude. In one research study, they asked all the people to write a few sentences each week. They focused on specific topics.

One group wrote about things they were grateful for. They thought about things that had happened during the week. A second group wrote about daily problems or annoying things. The third group wrote about events that had affected them. This group did not focus on the events being positive or negative. After 10 weeks, the gratitude group was more hopeful. They felt better about their lives. Surprisingly, they also exercised more. And they had fewer visits to doctors than those who focused on negative ideas.

Dr. Martin E. P. Seligman is a psychologist at the University of Pennsylvania. He tested the effect of different positive psychology ideas on 411 people. Each group was compared with an assignment. They needed to write about early memories. One time their week's assignment was to write and personally deliver a letter of gratitude to someone who had never been properly thanked for his or her kindness. The groups immediately showed a big increase in happiness scores. This effect was greater than any other idea. The benefits lasted for a month.

Word Count: 484

Time: _____

WPM: _____

Text adapted from: <https://edtechbooks.org/-EUAz>

After You Read

Comprehension

Answer the questions:

1. The online article mainly suggests that people who are grateful _____.
 - a. send many letters and cards
 - b. look for the good in their lives
 - c. think more about the future
 - d. participate in a lot of research
2. According to the article, what does gratitude mostly influence?
 - a. good relationships
 - b. positive emotions
 - c. early memories
 - d. school assignments
3. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as a benefit of gratitude?
 - a. dealing with challenges
 - b. enjoying good experiences
 - c. working more effectively
 - d. increasing positive feelings
4. The purpose of the research was mainly to _____.
 - a. compare different types of gratitude
 - b. describe how to write gratitude letters
 - c. notice how people remember gratitude
 - d. understand the effects of gratitude
5. How does the article define gratitude?
 - a. recognizing the things you receive
 - b. telling other people thank you
 - c. forgetting negative emotions to be happy
 - d. thinking about events that affect you

Discussion

1. What are ways that you can *express* gratitude? In what ways can you *experience* gratitude?
2. How do you feel when others say “thank you” to you? Think of an experience you had when somebody expressed gratitude to you and it had a positive effect on you.
3. There is a popular quote that says, “You’ll find what you are looking for.” What do you think this means? Look at the text again to find connections to this phrase.

Extension

- What American holiday is mentioned in the text? What do you know about Thanksgiving? Do some research about the holiday to find out the different *traditions* that people do during this time to express gratitude. For example, some families will sit around the dinner table together and take turns saying one thing they are grateful for after they finish eating their meal.

- Are there any holidays or traditions in your culture that are used to express gratitude? How are these different or similar to Thanksgiving?
- Working in a group, imagine you are going to do research about how to become happier. Work together to plan a research study you can do inside or outside of the class. Then, present your results.

Follow-Up

- Are there different ways to say “thank you” in your country or hometown? Do these phrases have different meanings?
- Some people say that it is better to look forward to the future and not think too much about the past. In this article, much of the research talked about thinking of good memories from the past. In your opinion, do you think you are happier if you think more about the future or the past? Why?
- Discuss the following quote:

□

Retrieved from: <https://edtechbooks.org/-vfKW>

*Teacher’s Note:

Comprehension Questions: Answers

1. b
2. b
3. c
4. d
5. a

Strategies

This text is useful for:

- analyzing transitional words and phrases
- understanding basic research studies in expository text
- using word families with key vocabulary
- noticing common collocations
- introducing academic research

Grammar

This text is useful for:

- finding examples of gerunds
- pronouns and demonstratives



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https://edtechbooks.org/PositivePsychologyReadingMaterials/experiencing_gratitude.

Resilience-Template

Jessica Sousa

Printable Version: [Resilience](#)

Before You Read

Brainstorming

- Think-pair-share: Think of one of your favorite movies. What happens in the movie? Do the characters in the movie need to deal with problems or challenges? What do they do to solve problems?

Predicting

- Look at the title of the article below. How do you think a carrot, an egg, and a cup of coffee are similar? How are they different? Work with a group to create your best answer to share with the class.

□ □ □

Images retrieved from: <https://edtechbooks.org/-adYu>, <https://edtechbooks.org/-QLEH>,
<https://edtechbooks.org/-DenE>

Vocabulary

- Look up the word adversity in the dictionary. Brainstorm and try to think of as many synonyms for this word as you can. Scan the text and circle any words you see that are similar to this idea.

Reading

Read the following story.

A Carrot, an Egg, and a Cup of Coffee

A young woman went to her mother. She told her mother about her life and how things were so hard for her. She did not know how she was going to be okay and wanted to give up. She was tired of fighting and struggling. It seemed that as one problem was solved, a new one was created.

Her mother took her to the kitchen. She filled three pots with water and placed each on a high fire. Soon the pots came to a boil. In the first she placed carrots, in the second she placed eggs, and in the last she placed ground coffee beans. She let them sit and boil, without saying a word.

In about twenty minutes, she turned off the burners. She took the carrots out and placed them in a bowl. She pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. Then she took the coffee out and placed it in a bowl.

Turning to her daughter, she asked, "Tell me, what do you see?" "Carrots, eggs, and coffee," the daughter replied.

Her mother brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots. She did and noted that they were soft. The mother then asked the daughter to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard-boiled egg. Finally, the mother asked the daughter to sip the coffee. The daughter smiled as she tasted its rich aroma. The daughter then asked, "What does it mean, mother?"

Her mother explained that each of these objects had faced the same adversity. This challenge was boiling water. Each reacted differently. The carrot went in strong, hard and unrelenting. However, after being in the boiling water, it softened and became weak. The egg had been fragile. Its thin outer shell had protected its liquid interior. But after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened. The ground coffee beans were unique, however. After they were in the boiling water, they had changed the water.

"Which are you?" she asked her daughter. "When adversity knocks on your door, how do you respond? Are you a carrot, an egg or a coffee bean?"

Think of this: Which am I? Am I the carrot that seems strong, but with pain and adversity do I wilt and become soft and lose my strength? Am I the egg that starts with a flexible heart, but changes with the heat? Did I have a fluid spirit, but after a death, a breakup, a financial hardship or some other trial, have I become hardened and stiff? Does my shell look the same, but on the inside am I bitter and tough with a stiff spirit and hardened heart?

Or am I like the coffee bean? The bean actually changes the hot water, the very circumstance that brings the pain. When the water gets hot, it releases the smell and flavor. If you are like the bean, when things are at their worst, you get better and change the situation around you. When the hour is darkest and trials are their greatest, do you elevate yourself to another level? How do you handle adversity? Are you a carrot, an egg or a coffee bean?

Word Count: 545

Time: _____

WPM: _____

Text adapted from: <https://edtechbooks.org/-YCqf>

After You Read

Comprehension

Answer the questions:

1. Why did the daughter go to visit her mother?
 - a. She tried to spend more time with her mother at home.
 - b. She wanted to know how to cook better food to eat.
 - c. She was very tired of everything that she needed to do.
 - d. She thought her life was too difficult at that moment.
2. Why did the mother boil the carrot, egg, and coffee bean?
 - a. To show foods that will recover energy.
 - b. To explain how to think about challenges.
 - c. To compare common cooking methods.
 - d. To describe a different way to relieve stress.
3. According to the story, why is the coffee bean unique?
 - a. It changes the water.
 - b. It is much smaller.
 - c. It turns into a liquid.
 - d. It has a dark color.
4. What did the mother say was similar between the carrot, egg, and coffee bean?
 - a. The shape of each item
 - b. The amount of nutrients
 - c. The type of cooking pot
 - d. The temperature of the water
5. Why does the mother make her daughter touch the carrot, egg, and coffee?
 - a. To feel how hot they were
 - b. To compare their textures
 - c. To see if they were cooked
 - d. To mix them together

Discussion

1. Think of a time when you had to do something difficult. What did you do to *overcome* that challenge?
2. Watch the following video: [A Lesson On Resilience](#)

What are some ways that you can be more like the coffee bean when there is adversity in your life?

1. Some people suggest using humor to become more resilient. For one minute, think about three funny things that happened to you yesterday and write them down using the past tense. Then, share your three things with a small group. Notice that it is very easy to smile and laugh when you think and talk about these memories.

Extension

- This story uses metaphors to compare different ideas with something you are more familiar with. A metaphor may say something such as “My life is a movie” which is not literal and is meant to be a comparison. A simile is similar, but uses specific signal words (like or as) to describe the metaphor. For example: “My life is **like** a movie.” “That dog is **as big as** a bus.”
 - What are the comparisons in this reading? Are they metaphors or similes? Create three of your own metaphors to describe different ways to react to adversity.

Follow-Up

- Think about someone you admire that shows resilience. Describe this person, what has happened to them, and why you admire them in a short paragraph or essay .
- Do some research and read about one of these stories: <https://edtechbooks.org/-GUV> Prepare a short summary to present to the class about this child and how they show resilience.

*Teacher's Note:

Comprehension Questions: Answers

1. d
2. b
3. a
4. d
5. b

Strategies

This text is useful for:

- introducing narrative forms
- figurative speech
- guessing meaning from context

Strategy Based Questions

1. Based on the context, what is the closest meaning to the underlined word *fragile*:

“The egg had been fragile. Its thin outer shell had protected its liquid interior. But after sitting through the boiling water, its inside became hardened.”

1. very small
2. too sticky
3. not cooked
4. not strong

Grammar

This text useful for:

- comparing/contrasting three different items and their adjectives



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<https://edtechbooks.org/PositivePsychologyReadingMaterials/resilience>.

Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence-Template

Jessica Sousa

Printable Version: [Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence](#)

Before You Read

Brainstorming

- For two minutes, write down a list of things you think are beautiful. Be prepared to share your list with the class. If you have any of the same words or ideas, you must cross those off. The student with the most words left is the winner.
- What does the word appreciate mean? What is something you appreciate? Describe it and why you appreciate it for five minutes in a free write. Then share with a partner.

Predicting

- Look at the title. The author uses the phrase “Pearls Before Breakfast.” Why do you think he uses this phrase? What do you think it means? What do you think the article will be about?

Vocabulary

Write the definition for the words in the blank space. Use a dictionary if needed.

1. passerby (n.) _____
2. performance (n.) _____
3. hang around (phrasal v.) _____
4. mundane (adj.) _____
5. rush (v.) _____
6. urban (adj.) _____
7. valuable (adj.) _____

Reading

Read the following text from The Washington Post Magazine:

Pearls Before Breakfast: Can one of the nation's great musicians cut through the fog of a D.C. rush hour? Let's find out.

"HE EMERGED FROM THE METRO AT THE L'ENFANT PLAZA STATION AND POSITIONED HIMSELF AGAINST A WALL BESIDE A TRASH BASKET. By most measures, he was nondescript: a young white man in jeans, a long-sleeved T-shirt and a Washington Nationals baseball cap. From a small case, he removed a violin. Placing the open case at his feet, he shrewdly threw in a few dollars and pocket change as seed money. Then, he turned it to face pedestrian traffic, and began to play.

It was 7:51 a.m. on Friday, January 12. It was the middle of the morning rush hour. In the next 43 minutes, the violinist performed six classical pieces. 1,097 people passed by. Almost all of them were on the way to work. This meant, for almost all of them, a government job.

Each passerby had a quick choice to make. This choice is familiar to commuters in any urban area where the occasional street performer is part of the big city: Do you stop and listen? Do you hurry past with a blend of guilt and irritation, aware of your desire but annoyed by the unwanted demand on your time and your wallet? Do you throw in a buck, just to be polite? Does your decision change if he's really bad? What if he's really good? Do you have time for beauty? Shouldn't you? What's the moral mathematics of the moment?

On that Friday in January, those private questions would be answered in an unusually public way. No one knew it, but the violinist standing against a bare wall outside the Metro was one of the finest classical musicians in the world. He was playing some of the most elegant music ever written. And he had one of the most valuable violins ever made. His performance was planned by The Washington Post as an experiment in context, perception and priorities. It was also a planned assessment of public taste: In a mundane setting at an inconvenient time, would beauty be noticed?

So, what do you think happened?

Three minutes went by before *something* happened. Sixty-three people had already passed. Then, finally, there was a breakthrough. A middle-age man altered his walk for a split second. He turned his head to notice that there seemed to be some guy playing music. Yes, the man kept walking, but it was something.

A half-minute later, Bell got his first donation. A woman threw in a buck and scooted off. It was not until six minutes into the performance that someone actually stood against a wall and listened.

Things never got much better. In the three-quarters of an hour that Joshua Bell played, seven people stopped what they were doing to hang around and take in the performance, at least for a minute. Twenty-seven gave money. Most of them were on the run. He made a total of \$32 and change. That leaves 1,070 people who hurried by. They were distracted. Many people were only three feet away, but few turned to look."

Word Count: 527

Time: _____

WPM: _____

Text adapted from: <https://edtechbooks.org/-JKMs>

After You Read

Comprehension

Answer the questions:

1. The main purpose of this magazine article is to _____.
 - a. explain how work can be very distracting
 - b. describe how busy people travel in public places
 - c. show how classical music can change lives
 - d. notice how people react to a performance
2. Many people did not stop to listen because they _____.
 - a. were too busy
 - b. did not like the music
 - c. could not pay him
 - d. felt very tired
3. The article suggests that most people in the metro were _____.
 - a. traveling to their jobs
 - b. going to see their families
 - c. touring Washington D.C.
 - d. visiting famous places
4. Why did Joshua Bell perform in the station?
 - a. The people paid him more money.
 - b. The tourists asked him to stop there.
 - c. The train company hired him to work.
 - d. The magazine gave him an experiment.
5. According to the passage, which of the following is NOT true about Joshua Bell?
 - a. He was a famous violin musician.
 - b. He performed a few classical pieces.
 - c. He received many donations in one hour.
 - d. He was wearing normal clothes.

Discussion

Watch the following video and pay attention to what the people do: ['Stop and Hear the Music' Experiment](#)

Here is a video of Joshua Bell performing in concert. According to the magazine article, people usually pay \$100 to attend his concerts: [Joshua Bell - Tchaikovsky - Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35](#)

Discuss with a partner or group about the following questions:

1. Why do you think Joshua Bell decided to wear normal clothes in the station?
2. Why do you think most people passed by the performance without stopping?
3. Have there ever been times in your life where you didn't stop to appreciate something beautiful or excellent? Why? For example, maybe you did not look up to see the sunset yesterday.
4. The experiment uses the hashtag #stopandhearthemusic. How can we "stop and hear the music" more in our lives?

Extension

- Discussion:
 - Why do you think Joshua Bell put money into his violin case before he began playing? What other techniques might people or companies use to convince others to buy their products, or pay them money for their services?
- With a group, plan an experiment you could do in your school or neighborhood similar to the one Joshua Bell and the Washington Post created and prepare to present your plan to the class.

Follow-Up

- Writing Activity:
 - In your opinion, what is the difference between gratitude and appreciation? Write a compare/contrast paragraph with details and examples to support your opinion.
- Discussion:
 - Some people gave money to Joshua Bell. A few other people stopped to listen. One woman told him he was fantastic. Are there different ways to show appreciation in your own culture?

*Teacher's Note:

Comprehension Questions: Answers

1. d
2. a
3. a
4. d
5. c

Strategies

This article is useful for:

- scanning practice with numbers
- guessing the meaning of idiomatic phrases from context

Grammar

This article is useful for:

- past tense verbs
- irregular verbs
- phrasal verbs
- descriptive adjectives



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https://edtechbooks.org/PositivePsychologyReadingMaterials/appreciation_of_beau.

Teamwork-Template

Jessica Sousa

Printable Version: [Teamwork](#)

Before You Read

Brainstorming

- Create a “human knot” and try to undo yourselves. Do this by standing in a circle and take the hands of two different people across from you. You can try to undo it yourselves one time without speaking to each other. Then try it again but this time you can speak to each other.
 - Which way was easier to solve the knot and why?
- Write down *qualities* you think are important for teamwork and share with a group.
- Watch the following video: [Pixar 2014 The Power of Teamwork Short Film](#)
 - Why do you think these small animals and insects work better together?

Vocabulary

- Brainstorm a list of words you think connect to “teamwork” with a partner.
- Scan the text. Did you see any similar words that you thought about?
- Search each of the words in the list using a dictionary or thesaurus to find 1-2 synonyms for each word:
 - inspire
 - cooperation
 - achieve
 - task
 - role
 - leadership
 - unity
 - management
 - destination
 - behavior

Reading

Read the following post written on LinkedIn.

Leadership & Teamwork -- Talk to an Ant

Ants are very small. But, these tiny insects are a huge example of cooperation and working together. Have you ever noticed a group of ants at work? If you have, then you will agree with me. We can learn a lot from their behaviors about management, planning, and above all teamwork.



Thinking Drives Behavior

I once looked at about one hundred or more ants carrying a sugar bee. Compare the size of the sugar bee with that of a single ant. By itself the ant would never be able to move the sugar bee. A group of ants certainly would move it to the desired destination. I saw the sugar bee. He was being carried on the back of the ants. They had formed a circle beneath the bee. Their success, the realization of their goal, was because of teamwork. Cooperation was the way to success in the Kingdom of the ants. The weight may have seemed heavy. The task was too much. But the energy and strength of the group brought success.

How big is the team you're playing on?

Ants live in colonies with millions of individuals. They don't have leaders. There is the queen ant. But she doesn't tell the other ants what to do. Every ant knows their own roles and carries out their tasks faithfully. They are able to work together effectively. They all have the same goal for the good and unity of the colony.

All styles get results!

In an ant colony, different ants have different team roles. There are the worker ants, drones and queen ants. In the worker ants, there are workers of different sizes. The larger ants have stronger mouths. These are more effective for fighting. These are also known as soldier ants. But most of the time they will do the work of a worker ant. At the same time, the smaller ants are in charge of taking care of the young.



Teamwork

It is interesting. The role of an ant may change with age. A new worker ant spends the first few days of its adult life caring for the queen and young. As it grows, it may then move on to digging and other nest work. Later it can defend the nest and look for food. The ants' roles also change depending on the needs of the colony. When under attack, more soldiers will be called to defend. They leave their worker roles for the more important task at that moment.

Each ant is good at something. A colony of ants has various skills. Tasks can be finished quickly when everybody focuses on their own roles.

Let us inspire all our team to work as the ants do. Then, we will achieve almost every impossible goal.

Word Count: 465

Time: _____

WPM: _____

Retrieved from: <https://edtechbooks.org/-BmdC>

Images retrieved from the same site.

After You Read

Comprehension

Answer the questions:

1. What is the main idea of this online post?
 - a. To explain how ants find their food to survive.
 - b. To give an example of group work in an ant colony.
 - c. To show how the queen ant leads all of the other ants.
 - d. To describe the life cycle of an ant from birth to death.
2. According to the author, what did the ants carry?
 - a. a bird
 - b. a nest
 - c. a queen
 - d. a bee
3. Why does the author mention ants in his post?
 - a. we can learn lessons from them
 - b. we need to save them from attacks
 - c. we need to have better soldiers
 - d. we can avoid hurting them
4. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as something ants do?
 - a. digging
 - b. defending
 - c. carrying
 - d. capturing
5. What does the author say about the role of ants?
 - a. Each ant has a different role.
 - b. All ants keep the same roles.
 - c. Smaller ants do not have a role.
 - d. The queen ant gives every role.

Discussion

1. Think of a time you achieved a really difficult goal. Did anyone help you achieve that? Who were they and how did they help you?
2. Why do you think it's sometimes easier to achieve goals when you work with a team? Are there times you think it's better to work alone?
3. Think of one skill or strength you have. Share it with a group. Imagine your group needs to solve a problem. How can the strengths from each person help create a solution?
4. How can you be a better team member? Write down one goal and then share it.

Extension

- Pick a short story or write and prepare your own story to summarize to the class about teamwork. Here are a few examples:
 - <https://edtechbooks.org/-vSQU>
 - <https://edtechbooks.org/-Haqj>
 - <https://edtechbooks.org/-hUpI>
- Take a short personality quiz and compare your results with each other. Discuss how your differences and similarities can contribute to teamwork.
- Cut up a story into shorter segments and give each student in a small group a part of the story. Work together to put the story in order or fill in missing pieces.

Follow-Up

- Analyze the following African proverb: “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”
 - How does this relate to learning English or another language?
- In many cultures, non-verbal communication is very important when people work together. Compare differences in cultural non-verbal communication. How can certain gestures or body language affect teamwork?

***Teacher's Note:**

Comprehension Questions: Answers

1. b
2. d
3. a
4. d
5. a

Vocabulary

- It may be helpful to find pictures to show of these content-specific words:
 - ant
 - bee
 - nest
 - colony
 - soldier
 - digging
 - defending

Strategies

This text is useful for:

- identifying topic sentences.
- comparing/contrasting.
- ordering/sequencing patterns.

Grammar

This text is useful for:

- simple past and present tense.
- examples of different suffixes for noun endings.





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<https://edtechbooks.org/PositivePsychologyReadingMaterials/teamwork>.

Mindful People-Template

Jessica Sousa

Printable Version: [Mindful People](#)

Before You Read

Brainstorming

- What do you think mindfulness is? Search myths about mindfulness. Did you think any of these myths were true? Did anything surprise you?



Image from: <https://edtechbooks.org/-yYFA>

- The text below is written by a blogger. Do you know what a blog is? Have you ever read one? Why do you think people write blogs?

Predicting

- The title of this blog post is called “Live in the Moment.” Spend five minutes writing about what you think this means. Discuss possible meanings with a group after.
- Scan the text. Notice the different subtitles the blogger uses. How many topics are there? What do you think this article will be about?

Vocabulary

- Scan the text again. Find each of these words below. Guess the meaning of the word based on the context.

1. perspective _____
2. aware _____
3. attention _____
4. conscious _____
5. communication _____
6. surroundings _____
7. improve _____
8. goal _____
9. distract _____
10. balance _____

Reading

Read the following article.

Live in the Moment

We need to live more in the present moment. Living in the moment (also called mindfulness) is a state of an active, non-judgmental, and conscious attention on the present. It is awareness (with all your senses) about yourself, others and surroundings at any moment. It means not worrying about the future or thinking too much about the past.

How to Live in the Moment?

Living in the present requires practice. Practice everyday. It takes time to train yourself to enjoy and live in the moment. Here are the tips on how to live in the present moment.

Mindful Nature Walks:

While you go for a walk/run, try to notice the things you have never looked at before. Look and notice the flowers, trees, clouds, birds, colors, sound of leaves, or cool blowing breeze. Take advantage of the natural beauty around you to have greater mindfulness. Make your time a mindful nature walk.

Mindful Eating:

How often do you sit down to eat, completely distracted? With smartphones in your hands, perhaps you're checking your email, Whats-app, Twitter or Facebook. Try to make your eating time mindful. During breakfast, lunch or dinner, simply eat. Do not use digital devices, books, magazines or newspapers, etc. Pay more attention to what you're eating. Think about the senses—smell, touch, taste, etc.

Mindful Communication:

We all communicate a lot in our daily life. Practice mindful speaking and listening. Being more aware about what you say and hear will help you to live in the present moment. It will also improve your communication skills and relationships. Listen to others. Be aware of your own thoughts. Control your words during communication.

Mindful Writing:

This is what I am doing right now. One of the benefits of blogging is it gives you the opportunity for mindful writing. When I write content, I become more aware about my thoughts, values and beliefs. I have become more aware about my passion ,and what I love to do. Writing my blog is one of the meditation practices. The past and future do not distract me.

Balance Among Past, Present, and Future

Of course, this doesn't mean you don't need to plan, set goals, or prepare for the future. You can do all of these things and still enjoy each moment. For example, if you set a goal to exercise each day, you continue the goal while enjoying the actual moment of exercising.

Likewise, the past is the biggest teacher in life. You learn from past mistakes. These experiences help you when you deal with similar challenges and problems in the present. At times, you need to remember past events. But the past has a different perspective. It's not for feeling bad. Instead, it's to have improved knowledge and skills for dealing with problems in the present moment. So, a fair balance of past, present and future is required for living a meaningful life.

Word Count: 486

Time: _____

WPM: _____

Text adapted from: <https://edtechbooks.org/-waPn>

After You Read

Comprehension

Answer the questions:

1. What does the author say about living in the moment?
 - a. We should plan carefully for the future.
 - b. We should think more about events in the past.
 - c. We should focus our attention on the present.
 - d. We should have more experiences in life.
2. Which of the following is NOT one of the four mindfulness tips mentioned?
 - a. Mindful writing
 - b. Mindful meditation
 - c. Mindful eating
 - d. Mindful communication
3. What does the author recommend you do during a mindful nature walk?
 - a. Go to a new or different place each time.
 - b. Take pictures of all the beautiful things.
 - c. Look at something you didn't notice before.
 - d. Make more time to go on longer walks.
4. According to the author, how often should we practice mindfulness?
 - a. once a week
 - b. every single day
 - c. twice a month
 - d. every other day
5. How does the author describe mindfulness?
 - a. being aware of things around us right now
 - b. finding time to relax in stressful moments
 - c. looking for beauty in everything we see
 - d. training ourselves to enjoy our lives more

Discussion

1. Do you think mindfulness is important? Why or why not?
2. Do you agree or disagree with any of this writer's ideas?
3. Which of the suggestions would you like to try? Why?

Extension

- Imagine you are going to create your own blog. You need to write about one mindfulness practice that you can recommend to others. Make your blog post and read your classmates' posts.
- Try a mindfulness practice in class or at home. Think about five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste.
- Watch this video: [You are not your thoughts](https://youtu.be/0QXmmP4psbA) (<https://youtu.be/0QXmmP4psbA>)
 - What do you think about the title "you are not your thoughts?"

Follow-up:

- Try one of the blogger's suggestions for one week. Then, report to the class about your experience.

*Teacher's Note:

Comprehension Questions: Answers

1. c
2. b
3. c
4. b
5. a

Strategies

This article is useful for:

- noticing “hooks” at the beginning of topic paragraphs
- identifying supporting details and examples
- word parts and collocations with target vocabulary i.e. aware of, distract from, balance with, etc

Grammar

This article is useful for:

- imperatives
- introducing gerund phrases



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https://edtechbooks.org/PositivePsychologyReadingMaterials/mindful_people.

Grieving Mindfully-Template

Jessica Sousa

Printable Version: [Grieving Mindfully](#)

Before You Read

Brainstorming

- Think about a time you lost something special or important. How did they feel when you lost it? If you never found it again, what did you do?

Previewing

- Skim through the text and look at the titles and subtitles. What do you think is the main idea of the passage?

Vocabulary

Look at the list of vocabulary words. Match the words with their definition. Write the letter next to the correct word. Use a dictionary if necessary.

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 1. process | a. no longer having something or having less |
| 2. grief | b. to recognize that something is necessary or cannot be changed. |
| 3. express | c. accepting or dealing with something difficult |
| 4. loss | d. a reply or reaction to something |
| 5. response | e. a series of actions that happen in an order |
| 6. aware | f. something or someone being useful for you |
| 7. normal | g. a limit |
| 8. helpful | h. to show what you think or feel |
| 9. stuck | i. a feeling of extreme sadness |
| 10. affect | j. unable to move or get away |
| 11. cope | k. to admit that something is true or exists |
| 12. acknowledge | l. usual and common |
| 13. cycle | m. series of events repeated again and again |
| 14. boundary | n. to influence or change |
| 15. accept | o. knowing something is happening |

Definitions taken from collinsdictionary.com

Reading

Read the following article from Healthline.com

Present Tense: 7 Mindfulness Strategies to Cope with Loss



Illustration by Brittany England

What is grief?

There are many ways to grieve. For some people it passes quickly. It can take years for other people. The feeling of loss becomes a part of our lives. At some point, most people will experience the loss of a friend, a parent, a relationship, or health. Grief is a completely natural human response. There are many reasons to grieve. These include the loss of:

- a job
- a pet
- a relationship
- a pregnancy
- a loved one
- a home
- your health
- your mobility

Mindful grief

There's no right way to grieve. But there are ways to support the grieving process. "Mindfulness [is] paying attention to what's happening as it's happening. [It] is actually really helpful inside of grief," says Megan Devine. Devine says it's important to remember grief is **normal** and **natural**. She says the goal in using mindfulness while grieving is "**to survive, to manage it, to cope with it, but not to fix it.**" There's nothing wrong with being positive. However, it's important to not quickly forget or ignore difficult emotions while healing. Grief is not a problem.

How to practice mindful grieving

There are seven steps to help you.

1. Acknowledge and accept your feelings

It might not be easy. But accepting how you feel is the first step to healing. And it is the most important in the process of mindful grieving. Allow yourself to feel without judgment. You will stop resisting your emotions. You also start to understand that grief is not a straight path. It's a cycle. Then, you can start to see that grief comes and goes. The feelings will pass.

2. Express yourself

First, you accept your feelings. Then, you can put them in a safe place. This can include:

- writing or [journaling](#)
- [art-making](#)
- exercising
- talking and sharing
- dancing
- [gardening](#)
- [volunteering](#)
- [cooking or baking](#)
- [listening to or playing music](#)

Everyone is different. It's helpful to find a way to express your emotions.

3. Know you're not alone

Grief can be a lonely place. But the truth is you're never alone in your grief. Everyone experiences grief. Mindfulness helps you be aware. You're not alone in these feelings.

4.Try grief-focused meditation

During times of loss, meditation may seem impossible to do. With practice, meditation can allow you to feel and accept. This creates a safe environment for your pain.

5.Create healthy boundaries

Sometimes, friends may want to help. Friends or family may repeatedly call or visit. Some people think this is helpful. Other people may need space and time alone. You can communicate your needs and set healthy boundaries. It can be difficult to ask for what you need. But you need to be supported and understood.

6.Get 'unstuck'

There are a lot of ideas about what grief should look like. Because of this, sometimes you feel like you're "stuck" in your grief. There is no way to grieve "correctly." You can still cry years later. It doesn't mean you're stuck. But some normal grief responses can negatively affect your life. It's normal to lose interest in work, hobbies, or even friendships. But it's important to be social where you can.

7.Start telling your story

It doesn't need to happen right away. But Devine strongly suggests sharing your own story with grief. Telling about what happened can be very powerful. "That is how things change."

It's OK to feel whatever you're feeling. That is the first step.

Word Count: 583

Time: _____

WPM: _____

Text adapted from: <https://edtechbooks.org/-Gnxxn>

After You Read

Comprehension

Answer the questions:

1. What does the author say about grief?
 - a. We need to forget pain quickly.
 - b. It is unhealthy to grieve.
 - c. Grieving is a natural reaction.
 - d. People grieve in similar ways.
2. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as a way to practice mindful grieving?
 - a. Tell your friends or family you need time and space.
 - b. Talk about your experiences during your grief.
 - c. Let yourself feel your emotions and accept them.
 - d. Find new hobbies so you can forget about the experience.
3. The author says we grieve because we _____.
 - a. forget how to be social with others
 - b. ignore our difficult emotions
 - c. lose something important to us
 - d. focus too much on the pain in life
4. How can mindfulness help grief?
 - a. Practicing meditation relaxes us.
 - b. The focus guides us to fix our problems.
 - c. Awareness helps us to survive the pain.
 - d. Thinking makes us feel more positive.
5. What is the author's main advice? We should _____.
 - a. ignore negative thoughts
 - b. accept our emotions
 - c. think more about the past
 - d. try to heal slowly

Discussion

1. Which of the 7 suggestions in the reading passage do you think would be very helpful to you and would like to try? Are there any other suggestions you would add to this list?

Watch the following video: [The Present | A Short Film](#)

1. How can knowing that we are not the only ones facing difficult moments and we are not alone help us to cope with our pain and grief?
2. How might grieving be different in your own culture?

Extension

- Responding to others' challenges:
 - Example: One student can pretend that her family is having some problems right now. She tells her friend about it. The friend should avoid simply saying "Oh, I'm sorry" "That's too bad" "I'm sure it will get better" "You can do this!" "I understand that" "My family also had problems one time" and think about how to better respond to the friends feelings. "Your experience is unique and I would like to understand how you feel." "What can I do to help you through this process?" "Would you like to talk more about it?"
 - Other possible scenarios (keep in mind these could be sensitive): losing a job, a pet died, a loved one is sick, somebody stole their wallet and all their information, divorce/breakup, they didn't pass an important test or class, they have a health problem, etc.
 - Sometimes during our lives, we may not feel that we are grieving, but someone we care about is having a difficult challenge. Role-play scenarios in partners and practice responding appropriately.
- Read the questions before watching these two videos. The first video is about a boy named Hiro from the movie Big Hero 6. His brother Tadashi made a robot, but Tadashi dies and Hiro is upset. The second video is about a girl named Anna from the movie Frozen. She cannot find her sister and is lost in a cave. [Big Hero 6](#) [Frozen](#)
 - Notice how Hiro feels at the beginning of the video. He is upset and angry, so he wants to kill the person who caused his brother's death. How do his feelings change after he thinks about his brother Tadashi?
 - Even though Anna is lost and feels like there is no hope, what does she do to get out of the dark place she is in? What can we learn from this song?

Follow-up

- Play the Name Game. This can be a helpful way for people to cope when they are dealing with difficult emotions—sadness, depression, loneliness, anger, anxiety, stress, etc. Right now, think about three things you can see, two things you can touch, and one thing you can feel. Say these out loud.
- Write down everything you are feeling right now for five minutes. Be honest with yourself. Allow yourself to think of every emotion.

*Teacher's Note:

Comprehension Questions: Answers

1. c
2. d
3. c
4. c
5. b

Strategies

- This article is useful for:
 - creating and inferring topic sentences for each heading

Grammar

- This article is useful for:
 - infinitive verbs
 - gerunds



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Curiosity

Printable Version: [Curiosity](#)

Before You Read

Brainstorm

- Today you will read about the benefits of curiosity.
- Discuss these questions with a partner. Then discuss the questions as a class.
 - What does it mean to be curious?
 - What do you think the benefits of curiosity are?

Scanning

- Look at the passage. What is the title?
- Scan the text. You have 20 seconds to find the six benefits listed in the passage.
- What are the six benefits of curiosity?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Reading

Read the following article from *Mind & Body*.

Six Surprising Benefits of Curiosity

Did you know that the benefits of curiosity are not limited to science and research? For both children and adults, curiosity has been connected to many different types of benefits. Here are six of them!

First of all, curiosity helps us survive. The desire to explore and understand new things helps us be observant. When we are curious and observe the world around us, we gain more knowledge about our environment. This may be why our brains evolved to release dopamine and other feel-good chemicals when we experience new things.

Curious people are also happier. Research shows curiosity is associated with high positive emotions and low anxiety. It also is linked to more satisfaction with life and greater psychological well-being. Of course, it may be that people who are already happy tend to be more curious. However, since learning new things can make us feel good, it seems likely that it goes the other direction as well.

Another benefit of curiosity is that it promotes achievement. Studies reveal that curiosity leads to more enjoyment and participation in school. This helps students reach higher academic achievement. It also causes greater learning, participation, and performance at work. It may seem like common sense, but when we are more interested in what we are doing, we perform better. Curiosity makes it easier to get involved, put effort in, and do well.

Furthermore, curiosity can expand our empathy. People have different lives, experiences, and opinions from our own. When we talk to people outside our usual social circle, we are better able to understand them. The next time you have the chance to talk with a stranger, try talking with them on a personal level. This is important especially if this person is very dissimilar to you. Be respectful and show them that you are interested in what they have to say.

Curiosity helps strengthen relationships as well. One study asked strangers to ask and answer personal questions, a process scientists call “reciprocal self-disclosure”. They found that people were seen as warmer and more attractive if they showed real curiosity in the conversation. Other variables like the person’s social anxiety and their emotions did not affect their feelings of attraction and closeness. This suggests that showing curiosity towards someone is a great way to build your closeness with them.

Finally, curiosity improves your health. Research shows that when doctors are genuinely curious about their patients’ feelings, both doctors and patients report less anger and frustration and make better decisions. In the end, this increases the effectiveness of treatment.

Word count: #

Time: _____

WPM: _____

Text adapted from: <https://edtechbooks.org/-FoM>

After You Read

Comprehension

Answer the questions:

1. Which of the following is NOT a main idea from this article?
 1. Curiosity strengthens social relationships
 2. Patients receive better treatment when doctors are curious
 3. Happiness and curiosity are connected
 4. Curious people make more money
2. Which of the following is closest to the meaning of the word "dissimilar"?
 1. like
 2. different
 3. disagree
 4. related
3. What does the passage say about people who show curiosity in conversations with other people?
 1. They have less social anxiety.
 2. They are rated as warmer and more attractive.
 3. They asked more personal questions.
 4. Their negative emotions affected the conversation.
4. What is the meaning of "dopamine"?
 1. A chemical that makes you feel good
 2. Asking and answering personal questions
 3. Health benefits
 4. Effectiveness of treatment
5. Which of the following best describes the author's purpose?
 1. To convince the reader to be curious
 2. To surprise the reader with facts about curiosity
 3. To contrast the benefits of curiosity with medical treatment
 4. To describe the advantages of being curious
6. Which of the following is an example the passage gives of curiosity promoting achievement?
 1. Curious people have better paying jobs
 2. Curious people are healthier
 3. Curious people participate more in school
 4. Curious people observe their environment

Discussion

1. Discuss with a small group: "Which benefit of curiosity do you want the most?"

Image retrieved from: <https://edtechbooks.org/-jxKxj>

With your small group, read this quote from Albert Einstein.

- What does it mean to be passionately curious?
- What were the benefits of curiosity in Albert Einstein's life?
- How can being curious help you to learn English?

Extension

- You are now going to practice being curious. Discuss in groups of 3-4:
 - What should you do when you are curious about something?"
 - Possible answers may include research, talking with others, or experiencing what you are curious about.
- You have 7 minutes to research something you are curious about. You can do this on your phone or laptop. Remember to search for sources online in English.
- After 7 minutes, share what you learned with your group.
 - Did you learn anything new?
 - Were there any unfamiliar words?
 - What are you curious about after reading?

Follow-Up

- Learn more about something you are curious about this week.
 - This may be watching a documentary or reading a wiki page.
 - You will share their experience at the end of the week.
- Share with your group your goal. Make plans for when and what you will learn about something new.
- How do you feel when you learn something new?

***Teacher's Note:**

Comprehension Questions: Answers

1. d
2. b
3. b
4. a
5. d
6. c

Strategies

This text is useful for:

- Scanning
- Predicting
- Identifying main ideas and details

Grammar

This text is useful for:

- Commas



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Intermediate High

This section will contain contributed reading passages targeted at the Intermediate High ACTFL level.



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Advanced Low

This section will contain contributed reading passages targeted at the Advanced Low ACTFL level.



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Book Contribution

This section includes instructions, guidelines, examples, and resources on how to create additional materials that can be added into the book through a submission form.

Instructions
Adapted Text Example
Guidelines
Novice High
Intermediate Mid
Advanced Low
General Assessment
Template and Formatting



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Instructions

Creating Your Own Passages:

Select a Topic

First, decide on the topic you would like to target. You can refer to corresponding listening/speaking lessons created on similar topics in [PositivePsychologyintheClassroom](#) or this following list of positive psychology topics within the three areas of PERMA, character strengths, and mindfulness:

1. Experiencing Gratitude
2. Resilience
3. Active Constructive Responding
4. Service
5. Goals
6. Expressing Gratitude
7. Perseverance
8. Kindness
9. Volunteerism
10. Appreciation of Beauty and Excellence
11. Teamwork
12. Judgment
13. Perspective
14. Hope
15. Love of Learning
16. Kindness
17. Bravery
18. Zest
19. Social Intelligence
20. Honesty
21. Self-regulation
22. Curiosity
23. Spirituality
24. Creativity
25. Forgiveness
26. Humility
27. Prudence
28. Humor
29. Spirituality
30. Perfectionism
31. The Five Senses
32. Connecting to the Past
33. Self-Compassion
34. Perspective
35. Handling Strong Emotions
36. Mindful People
37. Mindful Relationships
38. Mindful Learning
39. Cultural Mindfulness
40. Grieving Mindfully
41. Selective Attention

Select a Level

Choose a level based on the needs and area of interest you want to target based on the [ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines](#) or a similar framework and your own classes.

Understand the Guidelines

The following [rubrics](#) were created at the novice high, intermediate mid, and advanced low levels to demonstrate the three areas of materials development utilized in this project. Use these rubrics to determine the parameters and guidelines for your chosen level and how to proceed in creation of additional materials.

Create or Select a Passage

Now that you have selected a topic, search for or write a passage that does not infringe copyright* and has content that is relevant, interesting, and familiar to learners at the given level. The passages should be somewhere between 400-600 words in length. You may also choose parts of a passage or delete sections if the text is too long.

*More information about copyright and fair use can be found on this website <https://edtechbooks.org/-Ewn>

In summary, please ensure content you use:

- was not originally created for English language learning
- does not make profit
- will only be used in the classroom and is related to educational objectives
- is brief or a brief excerpt

And remember, you *must* include a link to the original content following the passage.

Level Passages

There are several analysis tools you may use to ensure that passages are appropriate for the given level. Texts may also need to be adapted and modified in order to reach the desired level. A description and example of how to do this will be given below.

Lexile and Quantile Tools “Text Analyzer”

If you would like to use the Lexile text analyzer, first you need to sign up for a premium account. This will require a yearly subscription and only allows you to analyze 50 measures per month with a maximum of 500 words for each analysis. Please read the instructions as outlined in their guide before using it: [Metametrics](#).

The tool can only analyze text from magazine/web/newspaper/journal articles, passages, short stories, and books.

***It is important to note that this tool is not an official Lexile score and therefore you cannot publish the lexile measure. Instead, as indicated by the passages in this template, use the ACTFL level closest to the measure given.**

Lexile Level Estimates

1. Novice High: 200-400L
2. Intermediate Low: 400-600L
3. Intermediate Mid: 600-800L
4. Intermediate High: 750-900L
5. Advanced Low: 850-1000L

Additional Leveling Options:

If you do not want to use the lexile analyzer, there are a variety of other free options. It is recommended that you use several together in order to have a more accurate leveling since each source by itself may not have complete reliability.

Lextutor: <https://lexutor.ca/vp/eng/>

This website will show the number of vocabulary in the K1, K2, Academic, and off-word lists. Here is a short tutorial on how to navigate this tool:

Textalyser: <https://edtechbooks.org/-sgZ>

This website gives a score for Reading Ease. The text analysis section will also show other areas such as lexical density. The primary scores to utilize in the analyses are Gunning Fog, Coleman Liau, and the Smog Index.

Roadtogrammar: <https://edtechbooks.org/-sCuH>

This website is used to analyze text and give an estimated level for CEFR scores. However, a rough equivalent can be used to determine the ACTFL score.

Flesch-Kincaid Scoring: <https://edtechbooks.org/-azBD>

This website gives several results from the text analysis. The one that will primarily be used for leveling text is the Flesch Reading Ease (FRE) score.

These websites are a just a few suggestions. There are many other resources you may use to find lexile and readability scores. Here is an example of another website that gives similar information in different formats: <https://voyant-tools.org/>

The additional websites ranges and averages are given for novice high, intermediate mid, and advanced low levels.

<i>Intermediate Low</i>	Lextutor (K1-K2)	Reading Ease	Gunning Fog	Coleman Liau	Smog Index	CEFR	FRE
Average	93%	96%	3.6	7.3	3	high A2	86
Range	90-98%	85-98%	2.5-5	6.5-9.5	2-4	high A2-high B1	80-90

<i>Intermediate Mid</i>	Lextutor (K1-K2)	Reading Ease	Gunning Fog	Coleman Liau	Smog Index	CEFR	FRE
Average	89%	78%	7	10	5.5	mid B1	60

Range	85-95%	60-85%	5.5-8.5	8.5-13.5	4-7	B1-B2	45-80
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<i>Advanced Low</i>	Lextutor (K1-K2)	Reading Ease	Gunning Fog	Coleman Liau	Smog Index	CEFR	FRE
Average	89%	71%	9	10.5	7	mid B2	55
Range	85-92%	50-80%	7-10.5	9-14.5	5-8.5	low-high B2	40-70

Adapting the Text

Modify the passage as needed to meet the intended lexile range. To make passages easier, you can substitute low frequency and academic vocabulary for higher frequency words. Lextutor and Lexile Tools will give you a list of words to target. You can also change complex and compound sentences into simple sentences when doing so still makes sense. In other cases, you can change complex grammar structures such as future perfect progressive or passive voice into simple tenses. To make passages more difficult, simply do the opposite of the suggestions above. Refer to the [Adapted Text Example](#) to see part of a modified passage.

Reading Fluency Scores

Add the word count for the entire passage with the title directly after the passage. Also add a space for the time and WPM scores. All of these spaces should be right justified. See the example template for formatting guidelines [Template and Formatting](#)

URL Link

If applicable, following the reading fluency scores, provide a space to link the URL from the source you took the passage. Put the link after "Text adapted from:"

Comprehension Questions

An additional recommended resource to creating effective multiple choice questions can be found in this document: <https://edtechbooks.org/-LgmM>

Every passage should include 5-8 multiple choice comprehension questions following the passage based on the target level and abilities. Refer again to the ACTFL guidelines, the learning outcomes of your course, and the [Rubrics](#) as guides while you write these questions.

***Note: remember that these materials should be written from a student's perspective and not as lesson plans. Therefore, please write all content and instructions simply in a manner that student's can understand and follow.**

Discussion Questions

Every passage should also include at least 1-2 discussion questions that allow students to critically think or draw on connections with the targeted positive psychology topic. As you write these questions, keep in mind how they will benefit the students.

Example question: How do you feel when others say "thank you" to you? Think of an experience you had when somebody expressed gratitude to you and it had a positive effect on you.

Additional Tasks

You may add any additional sections to compliment the reading passage such as pre-reading and post-reading activities. See the [Template and Formatting](#) for ideas and how to order these. For any media added, please include a direct URL link.

Revise, Edit, and Pilot

Before submitting the passage for publication, please ensure that it has been revised and edited thoroughly, and piloted (if possible). Use this short [Evaluation Checklist](#) if you would like a guide to help you proofread and check that your materials are written correctly.

Submit for Publication

Use this [Google Form](#) to complete your submission. We will contact you if we need any further information or permission to make modifications.



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<https://edtechbooks.org/PositivePsychologyReadingMaterials/instructions>.

Adapted Text Example

This page shows an example of a text that was adapted to meet the performance guidelines and Lexile level for an Intermediate-Mid passage. Further suggestions on how to adapt a text for target levels can be found on the previous page: [Instructions](#)

Original passage:

First, I analyzed this passage through *Lexile and Quantile Tools*. The passage had a range above the 1000L level. The *Lex tutor* analysis showed 85.75% of the vocabulary words were in the K1-K2 (1,000-2,000) word list. The *roadtogrammar* gave a CEFR level of B2, which is equivalent to the intermediate mid-high range in the ACTFL scale. *Textalyser* shows a range of different readability index scores. The reading ease was 63.8%. There was a Coleman Liau index of 10.3. The gunning fog index indicated a score of 11.

First revision:

After analyzing the text through *Lex tutor*, I simplified some sentences and made the clause-to-sentence ratio smaller. I also changed a few of the words that were on the AWL or off-word list that did not seem relevant for students to know or were only used once (as indicated by the number of tokens in the analysis). This text was then analyzed through *Lexile and Quantile Tools*, giving me a range of 800-1000L. The end result through another *Lex tutor* analysis showed 89% of the words in the K1-K2 word lists.

Final copy:

I replaced some of the most difficult words with synonyms from the *Lexile and Quantile Tool's* top ten vocabulary list. I also changed most complex and compound sentences to be simple when possible. The second analysis with this tool gave me a range of 610-800L for the Intermediate-mid range. Another analysis through *Lex tutor* showed 90% of the vocabulary tokens and types used within the K1-K2 word lists. The *roadtogrammar* gave a CEFR level of B1. *Textalyser* showed several differences in overall scores. There was a 78% reading ease. Coleman Liau had an index of 9. Gunning Fog had an index of 7.5. Smog had an index of 6.1. The Flesch-Kincaid score was 60.

Example original text:

Low frequency vocabulary, ambiguous language, and complex grammar structure are highlighted:

"Each [holiday season](#) comes with high expectations for a [cozy](#) and [festive](#) time of year. However, for many this time of year is [tinged](#) with sadness, anxiety, or depression. [Certainly](#), major depression or a [severe anxiety disorder](#) benefits most from professional help. But what about those who just feel lost or [overwhelmed or down](#) at this time of year? Research [\(and common sense\)](#) suggests that one [aspect](#) of the Thanksgiving season can actually [lift the spirits](#), and [it's built right into the holiday – being grateful.](#)"

Example modified text: Changes are highlighted

Each [holiday season](#) comes with high expectations for a [comfortable](#) and [happy](#) time of year. However, for many people, this time of year [also includes](#) sadness, anxiety, or depression. [Of course](#), major depression or [an anxiety problem](#) benefits most from professional help. But what about those who just feel lost or [stressed or sad](#) at this time of year? Research suggests that one [part](#) of the Thanksgiving holiday can actually [make you happier](#). [It's](#) being grateful.



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Guidelines

Please see the target level and area for an outline of the evaluative measures. These measures are provided as a guide to ensure that the content and tasks created are at the appropriate level of performance.

A rubric version of the guidelines at each level can be found here: [Rubrics](#)

Novice High
Intermediate Mid
Advanced Low
General Assessment



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Novice High

Please see the evaluative measures below to ensure the content and tasks of the materials you are creating are appropriate for performance at the Novice-High ACTFL level.

Text Development

Content/Context

1. Texts are personal and very familiar
2. Learners can rely heavily on extralinguistic support or contextual knowledge to understand the topics
3. Consist of mostly modified material specifically for this level

Examples:

family, weather, school, work, food, transportation, community, home, shopping, daily routines

Text Type

Learners at this level can understand short passages with the following:

1. Conveying basic information
2. Simple texts
3. Concrete forms

Examples:

maps, small infographics, social announcements, advertisements, short stories, receipts or bills, menus, lists, short descriptions, schedules, signs, letters

Structure

1. Has very predictable patterns of presentation based on repetition, background knowledge, familiar contexts and grammar structure, extralinguistic support, etc.
2. Mostly simple paragraphs
3. Predominantly uses simple sentences with some compound sentences
4. Does not rely on order of events, sequencing, or chronology to make sense of the text
5. Uses high frequency vocabulary

Learner Characteristics

Function

Learners at this level can understand the following:

1. Explicit main ideas
2. Explicit major details
3. General high frequency vocabulary

Level of Tasks

Learners at this level are able to:

1. Preview for main ideas and topics
2. Scan for major details
3. Recognize basic organization patterns
4. Connect content to background knowledge

Example activities:

Discussions or writing prompts related to the topic, making connections about the text to personal experiences before and after reading, scanning to find major details, pre-teaching vocabulary words, identifying parts of an infographic/map/etc, watch videos related to the topic, using visuals to support the text

Assessment

Learners at this level should be able to understand and answer questions about the following:

1. Explicit main ideas
2. Explicit major details

Provide at least 5-8 multiple choice comprehension questions after each reading passage





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Intermediate Mid

Please see the evaluative measures below to ensure the content and tasks of the materials you are creating are appropriate for performance at the Intermediate-Mid ACTFL level.

Text Development

Content/Context

1. Texts are personal, familiar, and social topics
2. Consist of mostly authentic material with few modifications unless necessary to reach the appropriate level

Examples:

family, weather, school, work, food, travel, transportation, community, home, sports, shopping, health

Text Type

Learners at this level can understand short passages with the following:

1. Narrative forms
2. Some expository text elements
3. Simple and straightforward text with loose connections

Examples:

weather reports, social announcements, advertisements, forums, online notices, short stories

Structure

1. Has predictable patterns of presentation based on repetition, background knowledge, familiar contexts and grammar structure, etc.
2. Predominantly uses simple sentences
3. Does not rely heavily on order of events, sequencing, or chronology to make sense of the text
4. Mostly consists of high frequency vocabulary

Learner Characteristics

Function

Learners at this level can understand the following:

1. Explicit main ideas
2. Explicit major details
3. Author's purpose

Level of Tasks

Learners at this level are able to:

1. Preview for main ideas
2. Scan for major details
3. Skim for main ideas and topics
4. Make inferences using explicit information from the text
5. Use context to infer meaning of vocabulary
6. Connect content to background knowledge

Example activities:

Discussions or writing prompts related to the topic, making predictions about text before reading, scanning to find major details, guess the meaning of target vocabulary from context, identify topic sentences, skim

Assessment

Learners at this level should be able to understand and answer questions about the following:

1. Main ideas stated within the text
2. Major details stated within the text
3. The author's point of view or purpose

Provide at least 5-8 multiple choice comprehension questions after each reading passage





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Advanced Low

Please see the evaluative measures below to ensure the content and tasks of the materials you are creating are appropriate for performance at the Advanced-Low ACTFL level.

Text Development

Content/Context

1. Texts are familiar, personal, social, and real-world
2. Informal texts are mostly authentic
3. Formal texts can be authentic but are sometimes modified to meet the needs of the level

Examples:

family, weather, school, work, food, travel, transportation, community, home, sports, shopping, health, college subjects, history, culture, hobbies, news

Text Type

Learners at this level can understand passages with the following:

1. Narrative and descriptive forms
2. Some expository elements in non-fiction text
3. Some straightforward argumentative texts
4. Concrete ideas with little to no abstract forms

Examples:

weather reports, social announcements, advertisements, forums, online notices, news reports, short stories, factual paragraphs

Structure

1. Mostly uses predictable patterns of presentation based on repetition, background knowledge, familiar contexts and grammar structure, etc.
2. May use simple, compound, and complex sentence structures
3. Can grasp order of events, sequencing, or chronology to make sense of the text
4. Mostly consists of high frequency vocabulary and some academic words

Learner Characteristics

Function

Learners at this level can understand the following:

1. Explicit and implicit main ideas
 2. Explicit and implicit major details
 3. Author's purpose and point of view in personal and general topics
-
1. Inferences on concrete ideas

Level of Tasks

Learners at this level are able to:

1. Preview for main ideas
 2. Scan for major and minor details
 3. Skim for main ideas
 4. Make inferences using explicit information from the text
 5. Use context to infer meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary
 6. Use syntactic and morphological cues to infer meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary
-
1. Connect content to background knowledge
 2. Recognize basic organizational patterns

Example activities:

Discussions or writing prompts related to the topic, making predictions about text before reading, scanning to find major details, guess the meaning of target vocabulary from context, learn word parts or word families, identify topic sentences, skim titles/subtitles/keywords/etc, create questions that must use context clues to make inferences, identify transition words that indicate organization

Assessment

Learners at this level should be able to understand and answer questions about the following:

1. Main ideas stated and implied straightforwardly within the text
2. Major details stated and implied straightforwardly within the text
3. The author's point of view or purpose
4. The organizational pattern of the text

Provide at least 5-8 multiple choice comprehension questions after each reading passage.



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General Assessment

See the guidelines below for information about creating comprehension questions. These guidelines are for formatting the stems (questions) and alternatives (multiple choice options) and apply to all target levels.

Stems

1. Number each stem
2. Use language widely accessible to students at this level
3. Avoid the use of colloquial language, slang, or words with more than one meaning
4. Use clear simple sentences
5. If using a negative in the stem, italicize the word for emphasis such as *not* or *except*
6. Include as much information as possible in the stem as needed to avoid redundancy in the options
7. End the stem with a question mark or leave a fill in the blank to complete the sentence

Alternatives

1. Provide four options—one correct answer and three distractors
2. Place options below the stem labeled as a) b) c) d)
3. Avoid the use of negatives
4. Avoid using specific determiners such as *only* or *always*
5. Avoid using “all of the above” or “none of the above” as an option
6. Use short simple sentences ending with a period OR short phrases without a period
7. All options should be of a similar length
8. Ensure options are parallel in grammatical structure
9. Options that use *and*, *but*, *or*, etc. should all follow a similar pattern
10. Place the correct answer equally in random order for each question
11. Provide the correct answer to each question in the teacher’s note

*Some of this information is based on the [ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for Reading](https://testing.byu.edu/handbooks/betteritems.pdf) and <https://testing.byu.edu/handbooks/betteritems.pdf>



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Template and Formatting

Below is a template version that displays general formatting guidelines for contribution. Please ensure that your materials adhere to these guidelines before submitting them.

A google document version is available to view here: [Template Document](#)

Positive Psychology Topic Title [Heading 2]

Before You Read [Bolded, Italicized, 14 pt font]

[Include appropriate pre-reading activities. These may include but are not limited to brainstorming activities, discussion questions, previewing, predicting, scanning, vocabulary activities, strategy building, fluency tips, etc.]

Brainstorming

- All text under these sections should be bulleted.

Reading

Read the following passage/article/story from _____.

Title of passage [Heading 2]

[Reading passage in original text format]

Word count: #

Time: _____

WPM: _____

Text adapted from: [insert link if text is taken from another source, 8 pt font]

After You Read

Comprehension

Answer the questions:

[Include 5-8 multiple choice, 3 distractors, questions should target learning outcomes according to the desired level.
Refer to the [Guidelines Page](#) for more information on the types of appropriate tasks]

1. What is the main idea of this passage?
 1. answer one
 2. answer two
 3. answer three
 4. answer four

Discussion

[Insert questions to discuss about the positive psychology topic, additional materials, etc]

1. Add questions and prompts using numbers.

Extension

[Critical thinking, analyzing, and evaluating sections could be included here]

- Use bullet points.

Follow-Up

[Include any activities or discussions that can be used later in the week]

- Use bullet points.

*Teacher's Note:

Comprehension Questions: Answers

1. a
2. b
3. c
4. d
5. a

Strategies

This text is useful for:

- List strategies in bullet points without periods

Grammar

This text is useful for:

- List grammatical elements in bullet points without periods

[Times New Roman Font, 12 pt for regular text, 14 pt for subsections, 16 pt for titles in Heading 2, 8 pt for text url links—please include url links for all media]



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