

Critical evaluation of online didactic sequences for EFL learners in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation (Belgium)

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LIVING AT WORK



Scan to review worksheet

Expemo code:
1FVD-L1L7-185



1 Warm up

In pairs, discuss the following questions.

1. Do you think that you work too much? Why do you think that?
2. Do you have enough energy to do something fun after work?
3. Do most companies in your country expect people to work more hours than they already do?
4. Do you think you "work to live" or "live to work"?

2 Focus on adverbs 1

Match the underlined adverbs to the definitions below.

1. After over ten years of training, she was happy to say that she was now a highly successful lawyer.
2. I think my dog would happily chase a ball about for hours and hours.
3. As soon as he thought he was being followed, he quickly walked into the nearest supermarket to protect himself.
4. Chris thought things were getting better but unfortunately, he lost his job in January and that made him more depressed.
 - a. without good luck or in a negative situation
 - b. very
 - c. fast
 - d. in a cheerful way



3

Listen for predictions



Read the introduction from the transcript in the listening section and think about which adverbs from the above would go in the gaps. Then listen and check your predictions.

I started working at this company about a year ago, and I remember when I began, I was _____¹
motivated to do a good job. To be honest, the first couple of months were okay, I would _____²
work away at my desk on different tasks, and everything seemed fine. However, as time went by, I
_____³ noticed that _____⁴, I was struggling to meet deadlines.

4

Listen for details

Now listen to the full recording and answer the questions below.

1. Why was the speaker seeing their children less?

2. What were they surprised about?

3. Where did they eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner?

4. Do they want to talk to their boss about how they feel?

5. What advice would you give to the person in this story?





5

Focus on adverbs 2

Part A: The story that you listened to had several other adverbs that are often used when telling personal stories. Adverbs are useful as they add more detail to a sentence and can often make the way you speak and write sound more interesting. Match the adverbs to their meaning below and then chat with your partner:

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 1. Selfishly | a. In a way that is not quick |
| 2. Seriously | b. Say something is likely to happen |
| 3. Surprisingly | c. Without being harmed |
| 4. Slowly | d. In a way that shows you only care about yourself |
| 5. Safely | e. In a way that is not looking for fun |
| 6. Probably | f. In a way that cannot be predicted |

Part B: Complete the sentences and then tell your partner the reason for your answer.

e.g., I drove safely when I was driving on an icy road in January.

1. I acted selfishly when I _____
2. I thought about something seriously when I _____
3. I walked slowly when I _____
4. I will probably be perfect at English when I _____

6

Focus on vocabulary

Part A: Match the following vocabulary to the definitions.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1. <u>mental</u> (adj.) | a. agreed something was true |
| 2. <u>physical</u> (adj.) | b. the powerful effect something has on something else |
| 3. <u>impact</u> (n) | c. connected to the mind |
| 4. <u>strokes</u> (n) | d. sudden serious illnesses that happen when there is an issue with a blood vessel in your brain |
| 5. <u>admitted</u> (v) | e. falls, reduces in size, quality etc. |
| 6. <u>periods</u> (n) | f. the state of being really tired |
| 7. <u>exhaustion</u> (n) | g. going up in value |
| 8. <u>damage</u> (v) | h. connected to a person's body |
| 9. <u>increasing</u> (v) | i. have a bad effect on something |
| 10. <u>drops</u> (v) | j. a specific length of time |



Part B: Put the vocabulary from Part A into the correct gaps in the following sentences. You may need to change the form of the word.

1. I bought these Pokémon cards when I was a kid and they have been _____ in value since then.
2. He went through _____ of loneliness when his girlfriend moved overseas.
3. Heavy smokers are more likely to suffer from a _____ compared to non-smokers.
4. Her greatest _____ strength was her arms because she had been climbing for more than 10 years.
5. The car had crashed into the shopping centre and had _____ the entrance to the bookshop.
6. In parts of Europe, conversations about _____ health have become much more regular.
7. Now that we have moved into November, the temperature has really started to _____.
8. My daughter _____ to taking the cookies when I caught her eating one under her bed.
9. The _____ that Barack Obama had on American politics can still be felt to this day.
10. Feelings of _____ are common for people working more than 50 hours a week.

7**Skimming for general understanding**

Read the following paragraph titles for the article on page five. Match them to the correct paragraph, one of them is not needed.

1. The majority feel the pressure
2. "No" is the magic word
3. Sleeping on company time
4. Work and the body
5. The mind is more important than the body
6. Friends and family feel the stress
7. Lower your standards



Living at work

Damaging to both your mind and body?

A. _____

Do you "work to live" or "live to work"? If it is the second option, then there is a chance that you might be spending too much time in the office. The hashtag #sleepwhereyouwork got some attention recently as it showed an image of an office worker sleeping on the floor beside their desk with an accompanying sleeping bag and mask. This image may seem extreme to some of us but for others it is just a normal part of life as they try to earn an honest living. While making money is important, we need to think carefully about what effects this kind of lifestyle can have on both mental and physical health.

B. _____

Physically, the impact of spending too much time at work can be incredibly serious and it is something that we should know about. Obvious side effects include increased backache and neck pain especially if you are working in a job where you are standing or sitting a lot. It has also been shown that if you are spending more than 60 hours a week in the office then you have an increased risk of experiencing problems which can later lead to a higher danger of strokes and heart disease.

C. _____

The effects of spending too much time at work can have on your mind is equally as serious. In a 2019 study, 94% of working Americans admitted to experiencing some levels of stress at work and while it might be common to experience a little bit, long term periods of stress can be extremely serious.

D. _____

For example, it can affect our sleep patterns, our diet and increase how much alcohol we drink which in turn can lead to things like emotional exhaustion, anxiety and depression. Unfortunately, this tends to have a great impact on your life outside of the office with 76% of employees saying that work stress affected their personal relationships.

E. _____

So, is there anything we can do about this? What little steps can we take to make sure that our time spent at work doesn't damage our health? Firstly, care less. It might seem like a strange thing to say but caring less about work is one of the best ways to reduce your stress levels. The reality is that most bosses will not be able to tell if you are putting in 100% effort or 80% so start trying a little less.

F. _____

Another important skill is learning how to say "no". If you keep saying "yes" to all tasks, then you are putting unfair demands on yourself, and the chances are you are increasing the length of your working week. It has been shown that after working 50 hours, productivity actually goes down and after 55 hours, it drops massively, so learning to say no will actually improve your quality of work which should in turn keep your manager off your back.

Source: *The Washington Post, Cleveland Clinic, Better Up, Mayo Clinic, Nivati, Quiet Revolution, Atlassian*



8

Reading comprehension

Read the following statements and decide if they are true (T), false (F) or not given (NG) based on the article.

1. Body aches are just an issue for people who stand a lot at work. _____
2. Almost 100% of Americans with jobs have experienced a level of stress at work. _____
3. Spending more time at work will make us drink less alcohol. _____
4. To lower your stress levels, you should try and care more about your work. _____
5. A little bit of stress at work can make you more productive in the long term. _____
6. Saying "no" to certain things can actually help you work better. _____

9

Talking point

Look at the questions and discuss them with your partner.

1. What did you think of the article? What was the most interesting thing?
2. Do you think that work has more of an impact on your mental health or your physical health?
3. Do you think that the strategy of caring less could work well for most working people?
4. Is it easy for you to say no to your boss? Why do you think many people say yes to tasks that will make them stressed?



Transcripts

3. Listen for predictions

Speaker: I started working at this company about a year ago, and I remember when I began, I was highly motivated to do a good job. To be honest, the first couple of months were okay, I would happily work away at my desk on different tasks, and everything seemed fine. However, as time went by, I quickly noticed that unfortunately, I was struggling to meet deadlines.

Speaker: For this reason, I started to spend more and more time at the office, I felt like I was acting selfishly because I was seeing less and less of my kids, but I knew I had to seriously think about being able to put food on the table for them.

Speaker: Surprisingly, I began to catch up with my workload, but to be able to achieve this it meant I had to spend all day at work. I would eat all three meals in the terrible staff canteen, and I felt myself slowly losing my appetite. I would really like to talk to someone safely about this whole situation, but I am scared my boss will find out and I will probably lose my job.



Key

1. Warm up

5 mins.

This gives the teacher an opportunity to set the context and allows the students time to talk about how they feel about the amount they work and if it is an issue for society. Monitor and provide on-the-spot feedback when appropriate. The following concept may need some explaining:

Work to live - you work so that you can earn money to do fun things outside of work

Live to work - you love your job, and you try so hard to be successful

2. Focus on adverbs 1

10 mins.

Make sure students can correctly pronounce the target vocabulary. Ask them to complete the task by themselves firstly, and then compare answers with a partner.

1. → b.

2. → d.

3. → c.

4. → a.

3. Listen for predictions

5 mins.

Ask students to read the introduction from the transcript and discuss with their partners where they think each word from the section above goes. Play the audio and ask the students to check their predictions.

1. highly

2. happily

3. quickly

4. unfortunately

4. Listen for details

5 mins.

Tell students that they are going to listen to the whole story and ask them to answer the four questions and compare with a partner. They should then discuss question 5 and share their opinions with the class.

1. "...I started to spend more and more time at the office ..."

2. "...I began to catch up on my workload..."

3. "...in the terrible staff canteen..."

4. No "...I am scared my boss will find out ..."

5. Answers will vary

5. Focus on adverbs 2

10 mins.

Part A

Students are given extra practice of adverbs by matching them to their definitions and then personalising them with scaffolded sentences. Monitor for accuracy in this section.

1. → d.

2. → e.

3. → f.

4. → a.

5. → c.

6. → b.



Part B

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Students' own answers. | 2. Students' own answers. |
| 3. Students' own answers. | 4. Students' own answers. |

6. Focus on vocabulary

Part A

5 mins.

Ensure students can correctly pronounce the target vocabulary. Ask them to complete the task by themselves firstly, and then compare answers with a partner.

- | | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| 1. → c. | 2. → h. | 3. → b. | 4. → d. | 5. → a. |
| 6. → j. | 7. → f. | 8. → i. | 9. → g. | 10. → e. |

Part B

5 mins.

Ask students to identify which parts of speech could fill the gaps before completing the exercise. Circulate and help as needed.

- | | | | | |
|---------------|------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1. increasing | 2. periods | 3. stroke | 4. physical | 5. damaged |
| 6. mental | 7. drop | 8. admitted | 9. impact | 10. exhaustion |

7. Skimming for general understanding

5 mins.

You may want to set a time limit and highlight the differences between skimming and scanning at this point.

Glossary:

anxiety (n) - state of feeling nervous that something bad is going to happen

- A. Sleeping on company time
- B. Work and the body
- C. The majority feel the pressure
- D. Friends and family feel the stress
- E. Lower your standards
- F. "No" is the magic word

Not used is 'The mind is more important than the body'

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8. Reading comprehension

5 mins.

Ask students to read in more detail and complete the exercise. Ask them to underline where they find the answer. If the information is not in the article, then they should write Not Given.

1. False. "...you are standing or sitting a lot..."
2. True. "...94% of working Americans..."
3. False. "...increase how much alcohol we drink..."
4. False. "...caring less about work is one of the best ways to reduce your stress levels..."
5. Not given
6. True. "...so learning to say no will actually improve your quality of work..."

9. Talking point

5 mins.

Students discuss talking points from the article and share their opinions with each other about working too much, they also link it to their own experiences.