

You be the judge: should my partner use a co-working space so I can have our flat to myself?

Level 3: Advanced

Article summary: This article outlines the different opinions of two people, Claire and Xavier, who have asked readers of The Guardian for advice on working at home together.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Phrasal verbs

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to get students thinking about the practicalities of working from home when you live with other people. If students don't know anyone who works from home, ask them to speculate about what they think the pros and cons might be.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to work individually or in pairs to match the words in bold in the article to the correct definitions. Remind students to look for clues in the definitions to help them identify the correct key word. Allow a few minutes for students to check answers in pairs or groups before checking answers with the whole class.

Key:

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. co-working space | 9. corporate |
| 2. on top of each other | 10. detracts from |
| 3. consistently | 11. solo time |
| 4. couple bubble | 12. stipulation |
| 5. offended | 13. irritated |
| 6. have boundaries | 14. compatible |
| 7. dragged my heels | 15. proposed |
| 8. work remotely | 16. suppress |

- b. Ask students to work individually or in pairs to complete the sentences using words from the previous activity.

Key:

1. work remotely
2. detracts from
3. offended
4. solo time
5. have boundaries
6. proposed
7. co-working space
8. consistently
9. dragged my heels
10. on top of each other
11. stipulation
12. couple bubble
13. compatible
14. suppress
15. corporate
16. irritated

3. Comprehension check

- a. Students can work individually or in pairs to do this activity. Encourage students to mark the section of the article where they found the answers to the questions.

Key:

1. Claire (paragraph 3: '... not just live in a couple bubble.')
2. Xavier (paragraph 14: '... my productivity starts at 100 per cent.')
3. Claire (paragraph 8: '... talk about issues that arise right away...')
4. Xavier (paragraph 14: 'Every little thing I do before working, detracts from that ...')
5. Claire (paragraph 8: 'I need to be understood ...')
6. Xavier (paragraph 16: '... it was way too social.')
7. Claire (paragraph 9: '... separation as a couple.')
8. Xavier (paragraph 18: '... I wish I had a bit more freedom ...')

You be the judge: should my partner use a co-working space so I can have our flat to myself?

Level 3: Advanced

4. Key language

- a. Students work individually to match the phrasal verbs to the correct definition. To extend the activity, ask students to work in pairs to list as many phrasal verbs that they know with the verb *come* and to give you definitions, e.g. *come about*, *come back*, *come up*, *come off*, etc.

Key:

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

- b. Ask students to work individually or in pairs to complete the sentences with the words from the previous activity in the correct form. To extend the activity, ask students to work in pairs to write example sentences of their own using the phrasal verbs.

Key:

1. *pop into*
2. *comes to*
3. *Ahead of*
4. *dropped off*
5. *stuck to*
6. *hang around*

5. Discussion

- a. Students discuss the questions in pairs or groups. Ask them to justify their opinions, referring to their own experiences whenever possible.

6. In your own words

- a. The aim of this task is to get students to read further into the dilemma by reading the comments that Guardian readers have posted online. Remind students that they need to be polite and respectful when writing comments about other people's lives and experiences (even if this is only for this practice activity).
- b. Give students time to share their comments with their classmates. Students can then vote on the advice that they think is most useful.