

In a reading rut? How to get back into reading for fun

Level 2: Intermediate

Article summary: This article explains the advantages of reading, why people tend to fall out of the habit and offers tips on how to rebuild the habit.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Passive voice: identification and conversion from active voice

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

- b. Before reading the article carefully, students use the key words to fill the gaps in the sentences to ensure that they know how the words are used in other contexts.

Key:

1. *bingeing*
2. *center*
3. *empathetic*
4. *enemies-to-lovers*
5. *genre*
6. *gossipy*
7. *grounded*
8. *rut*
9. *increasingly*
10. *get hung up on*
11. *slow down*
12. *memoir*
13. *fiction*

1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to get students thinking about reading and reading habits. If students aren't readers, encourage them to think about reading at school or friends of theirs who are heavy readers. Be prepared to support with emergent language where necessary, as some key words might be quite specialised (e.g. *genre*, *science fiction*, *mystery*, *trilogy*, etc.).

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do this task individually and then compare their answers in pairs or small groups. As an extension activity, ask students to highlight the key words in the article.

Key:

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. <i>fiction</i> | 8. <i>slow down</i> |
| 2. <i>gossipy</i> | 9. <i>grounded</i> |
| 3. <i>bingeing</i> | 10. <i>empathetic</i> |
| 4. <i>rut</i> | 11. <i>memoir</i> |
| 5. <i>increasingly</i> | 12. <i>enemies-to-lovers</i> |
| 6. <i>get hung up on</i> | 13. <i>center</i> |
| 7. <i>genre</i> | |

3. Comprehension check

- a. Students answer the questions based on the information in the article. If possible, encourage students to add more explanatory information or opinion when they answer, e.g. students might agree or disagree with the perspectives of the article or offer up equivalent statistics from their own contexts.

Key:

(Suggested answers)

1. *Around half*
2. *Reading fiction*
3. *If can protect cognitive function.*
4. *It can help reduce stress, to rest, to slow down, to sleep.*
5. *Do something else*
6. *Books that will make her seem serious and intellectual.*
7. *Detective stories and gossipy memoir*
8. *Not at all. "If that's what gets you reading, that's great."*
9. *At least 10 minutes a day for 20 days*
10. *Joy*

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4. Key language

- a. This activity is designed to help students identify the difference between passive and active voices. Support students through the examples, as they are in different tenses, which might cause some confusion. Remind them that the verb *to be* is conjugated as in an active sentence, and the main verb is always in the past participle.

Key:

1. *It is said that reading is good for you.*
2. *It has been found that reading fiction can make people more empathetic and thoughtful.*
3. *Regular reading has been shown to reduce stress levels.*
4. *A lot of entertainment is made to get our attention.*

- b. This activity is simply to remind students of the purpose of the passive voice. If they struggle, try asking them specific questions about the subjects—*which people? What researchers?* If needed, remind students that the passive is formed by putting the object of the verb in the subject position + the verb *to be* in the appropriate tense + past participle.

Key:

Because they were obvious, unknown, or unimportant.

- c. Walk them through moving the object of the sentence to the subject position (e.g. *the article*), adding the verb *to be* in same tense as the active sentence (e.g. *was*), changing the main verb in the past participle (e.g. *published*) and then completing the sentence with the other important information (e.g. *yesterday*).

Key:

1. *The article was published yesterday (by the newspaper).*
2. *A lot of mistakes were made at the budget meeting.*

3. *It has been argued that reading helps with cognitive functioning as we get older.*
4. *The book was written to appeal to mystery fans.*
5. *The milk had been knocked off the counter.*

5. Discussion

- a. Students discuss the statements related to the article and give their reasons and justifications for each answer, referring to their own experiences wherever possible. Feel free to refer them back to their Warmer activity discussions, now that they have read the article.

6. In your own words

- a. Encourage students to imagine their most opinionated friend having this opinion. For more digitally inclined students, this could be converted into an activity to prepare a blog post, social media response or video essay. If you have an online class, turn it into one of those forms so that students can comment on each other's blog posts to keep the task going. Encourage them to do as much research as is appropriate to support their arguments.
- b. Students then present their opinions to the class, supporting their points with as much information as possible. In larger classes, you might prefer to organise group presentations with opposing viewpoints as opposed to individual presentations with question-and-answer sections.