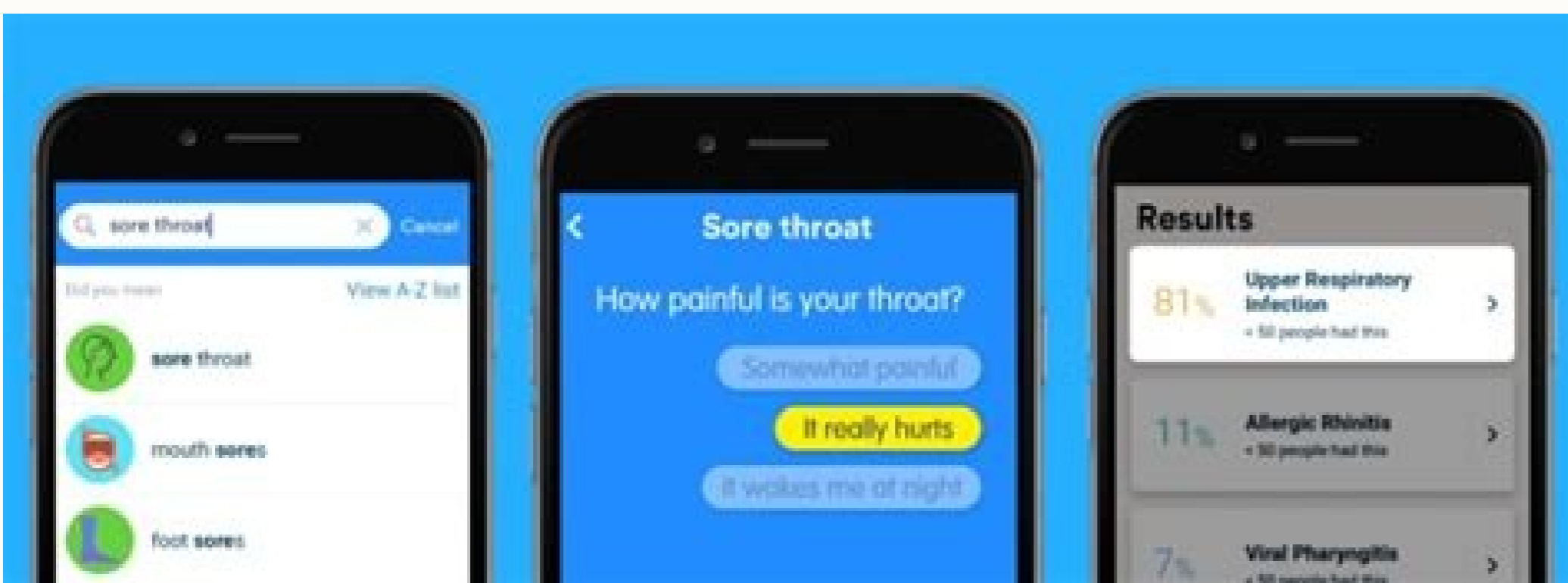


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How to teach reading response. What is team based learning. How to teach reading comprehension effectively.

BEST IELTS Academic Reading Test 134 Team building Particularly in times of economic downturn, efficiency is of supreme importance across all industry bases; whilst companies may be looking to cut their costs, many still invest in staff motivation, training and development programmes, having developed an understanding of just how crucial strong interpersonal relationships can be for success. Louise Edwards of HR Success says that one of the barriers she comes across time and time again is that corporate heads often seem to understand that 'team building' is important but are not quite sure what it is or how to achieve it. In the terms of a sports club, she says, the team (i.e. what it is and how it is defined) is obvious and easy to identify. In contrast, she says, within a company - particularly a multi-layered, larger organisation, definitions may become more confused. Many define a business 'team' as the group of people who report to the same boss - a department, for example. However, according to Edwards, it is more productive to define a team as a group of people working towards a common goal. In training terms, therefore, this group could be members of a department with the same roles and responsibilities, such as a sales team with the common goal of selling or even the organisation as a whole, whose 'goal' in this case is the continued success of the organisation, their many different skills and roles all contributing to this in a number of ways. Brenda Durham of Corporate Trouble-Shooters believes it inevitable that to some extent conflict will exist in a successful workplace since the necessary diversity of skills and personalities required for success will also unavoidably lead to misunderstandings and disharmony from time to time. A cohesive unit that minimises friction, she believes, can however be developed in any organisation committed to investment in its people. Whilst the taking on of external expertise for staff training and team building programmes can be costly, a number of companies, particularly those with a robust human resources department, are undertaking the training themselves. Liaison Wizards, established in 2001 and headed by Jeff Blackshaw, offers free training and development advice to companies wishing to offer motivation seminars designed in house. In the belief that contextualised training is always more effective. The company's own business model is based upon generating revenue from advertising on their popular website - a great success, so far, having surpassed financial projections for each year it has been in operation to date. Blackshaw likens the key to successful corporate team building to the tactics employed in a less formal sporting environment. He says that bonds, connections and empathy developed between members of a rugby team, for example, can also be developed within a department in the business world or even at company level. He says that good team work is fostered by respect, encouragement, shared enthusiasm and a caring and supportive workplace. Trying to exploit or dictate to personnel is sure to lead to failure, Blackshaw says. Brian Osborne, Human Resources Director of Opmax Inc, believes that programmes developed in house are inherently more likely to be of greater success than external offerings for two main reasons. Most importantly, he says, people are much easier to motivate if they themselves can be involved in designing and deciding activities - this level of consultation at the planning stage being much easier to achieve for an internal department than an external consultant. Of only slightly less importance, says Osborne, training activities must be perceived by participants as providing outcomes geared towards developing the individuals' potential. Once again, programmes developed by people with an insight into the personalities and culture at hand can be more easily tailored to suit the distinctive needs of that particular audience. According to Osborne, one of the biggest barriers to successful staff training is the perception that activities are too game-focussed, with no real objectives, more professionals, believing that such games are trite or patronising, are unable to appreciate the hidden benefits of building understanding and camaraderie within the group. If presented correctly, within the correct context and in conjunction with other, more staid approaches, Louise Edwards holds that games can be an enormous asset in staff training. In simple terms, Edwards defines the objectives of team building activities as a process, starting with the first stage - the clarification of the collective goals. This leads to the identification of the inhibitors preventing achievement of those goals and the introduction of enablers which will assist in goal achievement. This is followed by stage four - the final stage, where outcomes are measured and from that point on are monitored to ensure that goals are achieved and continue to be achieved. In stages 2 and 3 (identifying barriers and introducing positive alternatives) Edwards believes that the use of humour goes a long way towards relationship building on a personal level through development of empathy and removal of antipathy, ultimately fostering cooperation and support on a more formal level. Alan Kidman, HR Manager of Tellam Industries agrees that the use of humour and games within a training context can go a long way towards helping an organisation achieve its goals. He has recently designed a two month long in house team building programme for senior management and will soon be delivering the first of a series of 8 workshops and activities. The goal of the project, he says, was to strengthen communication and support within the extremely diverse departments of the organisation. Heads of six departments, collectively responsible for over 200 staff members, are to be involved in the series of seminars. The programme, Kidman says, is experimental and if it proves to be a success is also intended for use in the organisation's branches overseas. Previously the organisation has taken a more formalised approach to staff development training relying on methods such as psychometric testing discussions, motivational conferences and formal appraisals. The new, and as yet untried, approach will challenge participants in, by comparison, rather radical ways. One initiative, for example, requiring the writing, organisation and delivery of a theatrical performance to which all staff members will be invited to view. Team building and motivational approaches include a wide variety of methodologies, techniques, theories and tools. Experts generally agree that different options may succeed or fail depending upon the culture of the organisation in which they are implemented. A fit with the personalities involved in crucial to success. Not only is delivery of appropriate training sessions themselves important but professional and measurable follow up is also a must. Questions 26-30 Do the following statements agree with the information given in the reading passage? In boxes 26-30 on your answer sheet write TRUE - if the statement is true FALSE - if the statement is false NOT GIVEN - if the information is not given in the passage 26. Typical stresses of working with different people are removed with the correct training. 27. Liaison Wizards claims that training has increased their income every year since the company started. 28. Many companies are unsuccessful because they are dogmatic and take advantage of staff. 29. In house training is more successful primarily because employees feel more involved in the planning. 30. The value of games as a training tool can be misunderstood. Questions 31-35 Look at the following list of statements based on Reading Passage 3. Match the statement with the correct person A-E. You can use each letter more than once. A. Louise Edwards B. Brenda Durham C. Jeff Blackshaw D. Brian Osborne E. Alan Kidman 31. Many companies will experience friction between staff. 32. Training specifically tailored to a company is more efficient than generic training. 33. Modern methods of training, although still only being piloted, can bring people from different perspectives together. 34. Successful team relationships are formed in a positive work environment. 35. A lack of clarity as to what the term 'team building' means. Questions 36-40 Complete the summary USING NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS from Reading Passage 3 for each answer. Team building can be considered to have (36)..... clear stages. Initially, it is essential to be clear as to the (37)..... of the entire team or company. Those barriers which are preventing the team from achieving these aims are identified as (38)..... and are addressed by introducing enablers. Here the use of (39)..... can be used to help build a cooperative relationship. Finally, success can be quantified and continually (40)..... ANSWERS ARE BELOW SEE MORE POSTS-> ANSWERS 26. FALSE 27. FALSE 28. NOT GIVEN 29. TRUE 30. TRUE 31. B 32. C 33. E 34. C 35. A 36. FOUR/4 37. COLLECTIVE GOALS 38. INHIBITORS 39. HUMOUR 40. MONITORED Cite this guide: (2013). Team-based learning. Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching. Retrieved [today's date] from . Team-based learning (TBL) is a structured form of small-group learning that emphasizes student preparation out of class and application of knowledge in class. Students are organized strategically into diverse teams of 5-7 students that work together throughout the class. Before each unit or module of the course, students prepare by reading prior to class. In the first class of the module, students participate in a "Readiness Assurance Process," or RAP. Specifically, students complete a test individually (the "Individual Readiness Assurance Test," or IRAT), and then complete the test with their group members (the "group Readiness Assurance Test," or gRAT). Both the individual scores and the group scores contribute to the students' grades. The tests are typically multiple choice, and students often complete the group test using a "scratch-off" sheet and score themselves, reducing grading time and promoting student discussion of correct answers. After the students complete the group test, the instructor encourages teams to appeal questions that they got incorrect. The appeals process encourages students to review the material, evaluate their understanding, and defend the choice they made. To conclude the Readiness Assurance Process, the instructor gives a mini-lecture that focuses on concepts with which students struggled the most. Importantly, this work serves as preparation for the in-class application activities that complete the module. These application activities require the teams to make a specific choice about a significant problem. Importantly, all teams work on the same problem and report their decisions simultaneously. This structure requires teams to articulate their thinking, and gives teams an opportunity to evaluate their own reasoning when confronted with different decisions that other teams may make. Peer evaluation is an important part of team-based learning; it is essential for keeping students accountable to their teammates. L. Dee Fink uses a method in which students are given 100 points to distribute among their teammates (but don't evaluate themselves). Based on all team members' evaluations, a student is assigned a score (out of 100) that is used as a multiplier for the score they receive for group activities. Thus, if a team member does not contribute to group activities, her or her score for the group activities will suffer, while a team member who contributes very effectively benefits. Larry Michaelson uses a variation of this method in which a student evaluates the other members of her team and distributes a set number of points among them. The points the students receive from each of their teammates determine the peer evaluation score that is a direct component of their grade for a given module. Theoretical basis Patricia Hrynchak and Helen Batty provide an excellent analysis of the theoretical basis of team based learning (2012). They argue that team-based learning incorporates the main elements of constructivist learning, in which the "focus is on the mental representation of information by the learner" (Svinicki 2004, p. 242; Kaufman 2003); The teacher is a guide to facilitate learning. Learners should encounter inconsistencies between preconceptions and new experiences to provide a basis for development of new understandings. A focus on relevant problems accompanied by group interaction promotes learning. Learning requires reflection. Team-based learning is consistent with all of these elements. The teacher establishes the learning objectives and chooses the problems on which the students will focus but then acts as a guide while teams work toward their solution to the problem. A careful choice of problems can help reveal common student misconceptions, and the constant interaction and debate among team members allows learners to compare their current understandings with those of other team members and to construct new understandings. Group interaction and a focus on relevant problems is an inherent element of team-based learning. Finally, team-based learning provides several opportunities for reflection: during the group readiness assessment test; while hearing other teams' reports of their conclusions; and during the peer evaluation process, which often includes self-evaluation. Does it work? Team-based learning is one version of a flipped classroom, which is supported by a 1998 study by Richard Hake. Hake gathered data on 2084 students in 14 introductory physics courses taught by traditional methods (defined by the instructor as relying primarily on passive student lectures and algorithmic problem exams), allowing him to define an average gain for students in such courses using pre/post-test data. Hake then compared these results to those seen with interactive engagement methods, defined as "heads-on (always) and hands-on (usually) activities which yield immediate feedback through discussion with peers and/or instructors" (Hake p. 65) for 4458 students in 48 courses. He found that students taught with interactive engagement methods exhibited learning gains almost two standard deviations higher than those observed in the traditional courses (0.48 +/- 0.14 vs. 0.23 +/- 0.04). More specifically, team-based learning has been shown to produce learning gains in a variety of healthcare education classrooms. A selection of those studies are described here. Levine and colleagues incorporated team-based learning into a psychiatry clerkship curriculum, replacing half of the lectures with TBL activities including readiness assurance tests and application exercises (2004). Following implementation of team-based learning, students performed significantly better on the National Board of Medical Examiners psychiatry subject test. They also scored higher on attitudes about working in teams and reported the team learning activities to be more effective learning strategies. Paul Koles and colleagues compared medical students' test performance on questions that assessed concepts learned by TBL methods or by other methods (2010). Students exhibited higher mean scores on questions that assessed knowledge of content learned via TBL than on questions assessing content learned using other methods. Importantly, students within the lowest quartile showed the greatest gains: average improvement of 7.9% for students in the lowest quartile as compared to average improvement of 5.5% for all students. Zgheib and colleagues investigated the impact of team-based learning for second year medical students in a pharmacology course (2010). They found that team-based learning approaches were more effective than traditional lecture-based pedagogy for improving student learning of difficult concepts but were not more effective for easier concepts. Where can I learn more? The best source of information about team-based learning is the Team-Based Learning Collaborative website. The website provides an introduction to TBL, specific information about elements to consider when implementing TBL, and books and articles on TBL. Reference: Hake R (1998). Interactive-engagement versus traditional methods: A six-thousand-student survey of mechanics test data for introductory physics courses. 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