

Five stars

by Elena Filimonova, Aislyu Ryukova & Dina Valieva

Activity type: Writing game**Student grouping:** Pairs**Time needed:** 20 minutes approx.**Skills practiced:** Information comprehension, vocabulary review, production and accuracy**Materials needed:** One of the Text 1 or Text 2 worksheets per pair; one sheet of writing paper per pair; enough copies of the Text 2: Example answers worksheet so each pair gets a set of one-star and five-star answers (optional)**Summary:** This writing game helps students practise summarizing texts.

Preparation

Divide student into pairs. Give each pair a copy of the Text 1 or Text 2 worksheet (alternate the texts) and a piece of paper. Explain to students that the aim of the game is to write the best summary of the text they've been given, in their pairs, and get the most number of stars (i.e. votes) for it from their classmates.

How to play the game

Ask students to write a summary of the given text in five sentences. Explain, if you need to, that a summary summarizes the *main idea* of a text. It is necessary to skip unrelated and unnecessary details. Depending on the level of your students, give them no more than 7–10 minutes to produce their summaries in pairs.

After students have finished, gather together all the summaries, in preparation for the voting. Ask pairs to swap texts, so those who summarized Text 1 now have Text 2, and vice versa. Then distribute the students' summaries, so that each pair has a summary of the new text in front of them. Pairs should read the text first and then the summary, awarding between one and five stars (one = not very good, five = perfect). When all students have voted on their first summary, ask them to swap so they have a new one. Continue until they've read and voted on all the summaries of the text they didn't analyse

themselves. Once voting is finished, collect the summaries back and count up the stars. The pair with the most number of stars is the winner.

Teaching notes

- This game helps students understand how summaries are created and what to pay attention to while analysing them. This skill reflects the ability of students to analyse texts, look for precise information in them and use the information in the summary. It can be in the form of paragraphs or separate sentences. Usually, the summary is limited by the number of words.
- Two texts are included in this lesson as examples, but you could use any suitable texts for this game. As an alternative, instead of using two texts for the whole class, you could use a different text for each pair.
- If students aren't sure how to judge each other's work, you could cut up and hand out the example summaries for Text 2, or use this to feed back on the groups' summaries as a whole once voting is complete.
- You may wish to ask students to write their names next to their votes, so you can check that each summary has been read and voted on by all the relevant pairs of students. Alternatively, if your group of students aren't sensitive or likely to be offended by a low vote on their work, you could ask them to share their votes after they've read each summary and keep a running total on the board.

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Making time for science



Chronobiology might sound a little futuristic – like something from a science fiction novel, perhaps – but it's actually a field of study that concerns one of the oldest processes life on this planet has ever known: short-term rhythms of time and their effect on flora and fauna.

This can take many forms. Marine life, for example, is influenced by tidal patterns. Animals tend to be active or inactive depending on the position of the sun or moon. Numerous creatures, humans included, are largely diurnal – that is, they like to come out during the hours of sunlight. Nocturnal animals, such as bats and possums, prefer to forage by night. A third group are known as crepuscular: they thrive in the low-light of dawn and dusk and remain inactive at other hours.

When it comes to humans, chronobiologists are interested in what is known as the circadian rhythm. This is the complete cycle our bodies are naturally geared to undergo within the passage of a twenty-four hour day. Aside from sleeping at night and waking during the day, each cycle involves many other factors such as changes in blood pressure and body temperature. Not everyone has an identical circadian rhythm. 'Night people', for example, often describe how they find it very hard to operate during the morning, but become alert and focused by evening. This is a benign variation within circadian rhythms known as a chronotype.

Scientists have limited abilities to create durable modifications of chronobiological demands. Recent therapeutic developments for humans such as artificial light machines and melatonin administration can reset our circadian rhythms, for example, but our bodies can tell the difference and health suffers when we breach these natural rhythms for extended periods of time. Plants appear no more malleable in this respect; studies demonstrate that vegetables grown in season and ripened on the tree are far higher in essential nutrients than those grown in greenhouses and ripened by laser.

Knowledge of chronobiological patterns can have many pragmatic implications for our day-to-day lives. While contemporary living can sometimes appear to subjugate biology – after all, who needs circadian rhythms when we have caffeine pills, energy drinks, shift work and cities that never sleep? – keeping in sync with our body clock is important.

The average urban resident, for example, rouses at the eye-blearing time of 6.04 a.m., which researchers believe to be far too early. One study found that even rising at 7.00 a.m. has deleterious effects on health unless exercise is performed for 30 minutes afterwards. The optimum moment has been whittled down to 7.22 a.m.; muscle aches, headaches and moodiness were reported to be lowest by participants in the study who awoke then.

Once you're up and ready to go, what then? If you're trying to shed some extra pounds, dieticians are adamant: never skip breakfast. This disorients your circadian rhythm and puts your body in starvation mode. The recommended course of action is to follow an intense workout with a carbohydrate-rich breakfast; the other way round and weight loss results are not as pronounced.

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Morning is also great for breaking out the vitamins. Supplement absorption by the body is not temporal-dependent, but naturopath Pam Stone notes that the extra boost at breakfast helps us get energised for the day ahead. For improved absorption, Stone suggests pairing supplements with a food in which they are soluble and steering clear of caffeinated beverages. Finally, Stone warns to take care with storage; high potency is best for absorption, and warmth and humidity are known to deplete the potency of a supplement.

After-dinner espressos are becoming more of a tradition – we have the Italians to thank for that – but to prepare for a good night's sleep we are better off putting the brakes on caffeine consumption as early as 3 p.m. With a seven hour half-life, a cup of coffee containing 90 mg of caffeine taken at this hour could still leave 45 mg of caffeine in your nervous system at ten o'clock that evening. It is essential that by the time you are ready to sleep your body is rid of all traces.

Evenings are important for winding down before sleep; however, dietician Geraldine Georgeou warns that an after-five carbohydrate-fast is more cultural myth than chronobiological demand. This will deprive your body of vital energy needs. Overloading your gut could lead to indigestion, though. Our digestive tracts do not shut down for the night entirely, but their work slows to a crawl as our bodies prepare for sleep. Consuming a modest snack should be entirely sufficient.

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The Dawn of Culture



In every society, culturally unique ways of thinking about the world unite people in their behaviour. Anthropologists often refer to the body of ideas that people share as ideology. Ideology can be broken down into at least three specific categories: beliefs, values and ideals. People's beliefs give them an understanding of how the world works and how they should respond to the actions of others and their environments. Particular beliefs often tie in closely

with the daily concerns of domestic life, such as making a living, health and sickness, happiness and sadness, interpersonal relationships and death. People's values tell them the differences between right and wrong or good and bad. Ideals serve as models for what people hope to achieve in life.

There are two accepted systems of belief. Some rely on religion, even the supernatural (things beyond the natural world), to shape their values and ideals and to influence their behaviour. Others base their beliefs on observations of the natural world, a practice anthropologists commonly refer to as secularism.

Religion in its more extreme form allows people to know about and 'communicate' with supernatural beings, such as animal spirits, gods, and spirits of the dead. Small tribal societies believe that plants and animals, as well as people, have souls or spirits that can take on different forms to help or harm people. Anthropologists refer to this kind of religious belief as animism, with believers often led by shamans. As religious specialists, shamans have special access to the spirit world and are said to be able to receive stories from supernatural beings and later recite them to others or act them out in dramatic rituals.

In larger, agricultural societies, religion has long been a means of asking for bountiful harvests, a source of power for rulers, or an inspiration to go to war. In early civilized societies, religious visionaries became leaders because people believed those leaders could communicate with the supernatural to control the fate of a civilization. This became their greatest source of power, and people often regarded leaders as actual gods. For example, in the great civilisation of the Aztec, which flourished in what is now Mexico in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, rulers claimed privileged association with a powerful god that was said to require human blood to ensure that the sun would rise and set each day. Aztec rulers thus inspired great awe by regularly conducting human sacrifices. They also conspicuously displayed their vast power as wealth in luxury goods, such as fine jewels, clothing and palaces. Rulers obtained their wealth from the great numbers of craftspeople, traders and warriors under their control, often leaving them with nothing.

During the period in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe known as the Age of Enlightenment, science and logic became new sources of belief for many people living in civilized societies. Scientific studies of the natural world and rational philosophies led people to believe that they could explain natural and social phenomena without believing in gods or spirits. Religion remained an influential system of belief, and together both religion and science drove the development of capitalism, the economic system of commerce-driven market exchange. Capitalism itself influences people's beliefs, values and ideals in many present-day, large, civilised societies. In these societies, such as in the United States, many people view the world and shape

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their behaviour based on a belief that they can understand and control their environment and that work, commerce and the accumulation of wealth serve an ultimate good. The governments of most large societies today also assert that human well-being derives from the growth of economies and the development of technology.

Rapid changes in technology in the last several decades have changed the nature of culture and cultural exchange. People around the world can make economic transactions and transmit information to each other almost instantaneously through the use of computers and satellite communications. Governments and corporations have gained vast amounts of political power through military might and economic influence. Corporations have also created a form of global culture based on worldwide commercial markets. As a result, local culture and social structure are now shaped by large and powerful commercial interests in ways that earlier anthropologists could not have imagined. Early anthropologists thought of societies and their cultures as fully independent systems, but today, many nations are multicultural societies, composed of numerous smaller subcultures. Cultures also cross national boundaries. For instance, people around the world now know a variety of English words and have contact with American cultural exports such as brand-name clothing and technological products, films and music, and mass-produced foods.

In addition, many people have come to believe in the fundamental nature of human rights and free will. These beliefs grew out of people's increasing ability to control the natural world through science and rationalism, and though religious beliefs continue to change to affirm or accommodate these other dominant beliefs, sometimes the two are at odds with each other. For instance, many religious people have difficulty reconciling their belief in a supreme spiritual force with the theory of natural evolution, which requires no belief in the supernatural. As a result, societies in which many people do not practice any religion, such as China, may be known as secular societies. However, no society is entirely secular.

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FUN WITH IELTS TEXT 2: EXAMPLE ANSWERS

1 star summary:



People believe in different things. They can trust to spirits, gods and influential leaders. People believe even in technology now. However, some societies don't have any beliefs. In China people don't practice a religion and they are called a secular society.

5 star summary:



Every single society has a special set of beliefs, which unite them and regulate different types of conduct. Beginning from ancient tribes, to the mediaeval societies, people used to believe in various supernatural spirits and influential gods, making sacrifices and worshipping them.

The Age of Enlightenment, with its development of science and rational philosophy, encouraged people to explain various phenomena out of the boundaries of something 'unreal'. Nowadays, people around the world form intercultural societies with a mixture of different cultural patterns and sets of behaviour.



1 star summary:



People believe in different things. They can trust to spirits, gods and influential leaders. People believe even in technology now. However, some societies don't have any beliefs. In China people don't practice a religion and they are called a secular society.

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Every single society has a special set of beliefs, which unite them and regulate different types of conduct. Beginning from ancient tribes, to the mediaeval societies, people used to believe in various supernatural spirits and influential gods, making sacrifices and worshipping them.

The Age of Enlightenment, with its development of science and rational philosophy, encouraged people to explain various phenomena out of the boundaries of something 'unreal'. Nowadays, people around the world form intercultural societies with a mixture of different cultural patterns and sets of behaviour.