

Does an unhappy partner make you less happy?

Level 1: Elementary – Teacher's notes

Article summary: The article discusses new research on how each partner's mood affects the other person in a relationship.

Time: 60 minutes

Skills: Reading, Speaking, Writing

Language focus: Comparative adjectives

Materials needed: One copy of the worksheet per student

1. Warmer

- a. This activity aims to get students thinking and talking about emotional well-being and healthy relationships. Encourage students to share personal experiences and opinions if they wish.

2. Key words

- a. Ask students to do the exercise individually and compare their answers in pairs or small groups. As an extension activity, ask students to write the part of speech for each key word.

Key:

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

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

Key:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 1. evidence | 5. links |
| 2. mood | 6. experience |
| 3. recover | 7. data |
| 4. relationship | 8. movements |

3. Comprehension check

- a. Students answer the questions based on the information in the article. They may do this in different ways, e.g., in item 1, they may say, 'They become more like each other and mimic each other's behaviours' or similar.

Key (suggested answers):

1. They become similar to each other.
2. movements and expressions
3. If the happier person becomes unhappy or if the unhappier person becomes happier.
4. over 20,000
5. 37 years for the Germans and 14 years for the Dutch
6. The happier person became less happy. The unhappier person sometimes became happier, but not always.
7. negative ones
8. that they make people healthier
9. The other person may also become upset, or they can help them calm down.
10. the way you recover

4. Key language

- a. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs. As an extension activity, ask students to think of other adjectives they know that end in -y and form the comparative.

Key:

1. happier
2. unhappier
3. healthier
4. unhealthier

- b. Students could be asked to do this exercise individually and then compare their answers in pairs.

Key:

1. happier
2. healthier
3. unhealthier
4. unhappier

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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.

6. In your own words

- a. Ask students to research emotional well-being in relationships.
- b. Students could then present their reports to the class. Encourage students to share the information they have gathered and their opinions about the issue. Encourage students to use some of the given phrases in their presentations when stating facts and their views.