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**Level 4** – 22nd April 2024

## UK leader cracks down on 'sick note culture'

**FREE** online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2404/240422-sick-note-culture-4.html>

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Please try Levels 5 and 6. They are (a little) harder.

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# THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2404/240422-sick-note-culture-4.html>

Britain is cracking down on the nation's "sick note culture". The UK's leader Rishi Sunak believes too many people are claiming welfare benefits because of mental health issues. The leader said this was a drain on the economy and was creating labour shortages. The most common reason for doctors to issue sick notes is mental health. Mr Sunak said: "We need to change the sick note culture, so the default becomes what work you can do, not what you can't."

Sunak wants people off benefits and back to work. He said: "We must be more honest about...over-medicalising the everyday...worries of life." He said half of people who became inactive recently cited depression and anxiety. Many people blame Sunak for this crisis. A charity said: "Services are at breaking point following years of underinvestment." Opposition politicians called Sunak's plans "another front for their culture wars".

Sources: <https://www.ft.com/content/c2ce5fc7-81d7-4f07-b339-c868bcd6df26>  
<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2024/apr/19/sunak-accused-of-making-mental-illness-another-front-in-the-culture-wars>  
<https://time.com/6969002/rishi-sunak-welfare-reform-sick-note-culture-uk/>

# PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2404/240422-sick-note-culture-4.html>

## PARAGRAPH ONE:

- |                                   |                         |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Sunak believes too many people | a. shortages            |
| 2. welfare                        | b. sick note culture    |
| 3. this was a drain               | c. are claiming         |
| 4. labour                         | d. what work you can do |
| 5. The most                       | e. benefits             |
| 6. issue                          | f. common reason        |
| 7. We need to change the          | g. on the economy       |
| 8. the default becomes            | h. sick notes           |

## PARAGRAPH TWO:

- |                                    |                       |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. We must be                      | a. point              |
| 2. medicalising the everyday       | b. politicians        |
| 3. depression                      | c. worries of life    |
| 4. people blame Sunak              | d. wars               |
| 5. Services are at breaking        | e. and anxiety        |
| 6. following years                 | f. for this crisis    |
| 7. Opposition                      | g. more honest        |
| 8. another front for their culture | h. of underinvestment |

# LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2404/240422-sick-note-culture-4.html>

Britain is cracking down (1) \_\_\_\_\_ "sick note culture".

The UK's leader Rishi Sunak believes too many people are

(2) \_\_\_\_\_ because of mental health issues. The leader

said this was (3) \_\_\_\_\_ the economy and was creating

labour shortages. The (4) \_\_\_\_\_ for doctors to issue

sick notes (5) \_\_\_\_\_. Mr Sunak said: "We need to

change the sick note culture, so the (6) \_\_\_\_\_ work you

can do, not what you can't."

Sunak wants (7) \_\_\_\_\_ and back to work. He said: "We

must be (8) \_\_\_\_\_...over-medicalising the everyday...

(9) \_\_\_\_\_." He said half of people who became inactive

recently cited (10) \_\_\_\_\_. Many people blame Sunak for

this crisis. A charity said: "Services are (11) \_\_\_\_\_

following years of underinvestment." Opposition politicians called Sunak's

plans "another front for (12) \_\_\_\_\_".

# PUT A SLASH ( / ) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2404/240422-sick-note-culture-4.html>

Britain is cracking down on the nation's "sick note culture". The UK's leader Rishi Sunak believes too many people are claiming welfare benefits because of mental health issues. The leader said this was a drain on the economy and was creating labour shortages. The most common reason for doctors to issue sick notes is mental health. Mr Sunak said: "We need to change the sick note culture, so the default becomes what work you can do, not what you can't." Sunak wants people off benefits and back to work. He said: "We must be more honest about... over-medicalising the everyday... worries of life." He said half of people who became inactive recently cited depression and anxiety. Many people blame Sunak for this crisis. A charity said: "Services are at breaking point following years of underinvestment." Opposition politicians called Sunak's plans "another front for their culture wars".

# BEING SICK SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2404/240422-sick-note-culture-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about being sick in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_\_\_

f) \_\_\_\_\_

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More free lessons at [breakingnewsenglish.com](https://breakingnewsenglish.com)

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## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_\_\_

f) \_\_\_\_\_

# WRITING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2404/240422-sick-note-culture-4.html>

Write about **being sick** for 10 minutes. Read and talk about your partner’s paper.

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