Australians happiest people in the world

URL:  http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0510/051006-happiness-e.html

Today’s contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Article</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Warm-ups</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before Reading / Listening</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While Reading / Listening</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Reading</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening Gap Fill</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homework</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answers</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Buy the Breaking News English.com Resource Book
“1,000 Ideas & Activities For Language Teachers”
$9.99

6 October, 2005
Australians happiest people in the world

BNE: Australians are the happiest people in the world. This is according to a new survey from the market research company GfK NOP. Interviewers asked 30,000 people in 30 different countries about their levels of happiness. Forty-six percent of Australians said they were “very happy”. Following them was the USA (40 percent), Egypt (36 percent), India (34 percent) and the UK and Canada (32 percent). Hungary finished top of the “miserable” list. Thirty-five percent of its citizens said they were “very unhappy”. Second most miserable were Russians, at 30 percent.

The research showed that money and age affected how happy people are. The study did not show that money can buy happiness, but it did reveal a link between a lack of money and unhappiness. Unhappier people were in lower income groups or unemployed. The study also suggested the older we become, the less happy we are. Globally, teenagers are the happiest people. The least happy age group is 50-59 – only 16 percent of those in their fifties said they were very happy. The things that make us happy include good health, financial security and a happy marriage, not cars and clothes.
**WARM-UPS**

1. **HAPPY ME:** Are you happy today? Have you been happy recently? Walk around the classroom and talk with other students about how happy they are. When you have finished, sit with your partner(s) and talk about who was happy and who was not so happy.

2. **HAPPINESS:** What makes you happy? What affects your quality of life? Look at the items below and rank them in order of what makes you most happy.

   - Hiking
   - Good health
   - Money
   - Owning your own home
   - Sunshine
   - Things (cars, clothes, gadgets, etc.)
   - A happy marriage / relationship
   - Children
   - Watching television
   - Exercise

3. **CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words are most interesting and which are most boring.

   - Australians / happy people / market research / being miserable / Hungary / Russians / money / teenagers / financial security / happy marriages / cars

   Have a chat about the topics you liked. For more conversation, change topics and partners frequently.

4. **HAPPY:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word “happy”. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

5. **HAPPY PEOPLE:** In pairs / groups, talk about the happiest and most miserable people you know from the following:

   - baby
   - child
   - teenager
   - adult
   - student
   - co-worker
   - old person

6. **HAPPY OPINIONS:** Do you agree with these opinions on happiness? Talk about them with your partner(s).

   a. Money makes you happy.
   b. The older you become, the happier you are.
   c. You can take lessons on how to be happy.
   d. Men are happier than women.
   e. Married people are happier than single people.
   f. People in warmer climates are happier than people in colder climates.
   g. It’s hard to be happy in today’s world.
   h. Every country should have a Minister of Happiness.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

1. TRUE / FALSE: Look at the article’s headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

a. A new study says Australians are the world’s happiest people. T / F
b. Interviewers carried out 30,000 telephone interviews. T / F
c. Egyptians and Indians were among the top five happiest populations. T / F
d. Hungary was bottom of the happiness list. T / F
e. The survey showed that money can buy happiness. T / F
f. Unemployed people were shown to be very happy. T / F
g. The survey found that the older we become, the happier we are. T / F
h. Cars and clothes do not make us so happy. T / F

2. SYNONYM MATCH: Match the following synonyms from the article:

a. survey revealed
b. interviewers unhappy
c. following 50-59-year-olds
d. miserable after
e. citizens show
f. showed study
g. reveal connection
h. link economic
i. those in their fifties residents
j. financial researchers

3. PHRASE MATCH: Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

a. the happiest people money and unhappiness
b. according to research company
c. market those in their fifties
 runaway
f. levels a new survey
e. Hungary finished top happy people are
g. reveal a link between a lack of groups
h. lower income of the “miserable” list
i. only 16 percent of security
j. financial of happiness
WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words in the column on the right into the gaps in the text.

Australians happiest people in the world

BNE: Australians are the happiest people in the ________. This is according to a new ________ from the market research company GfK NOP. Interviewers ________ 30,000 people in 30 different countries about their ________ of happiness. Forty-six percent of Australians said they were “very happy”. ________ them was the USA (40 percent), Egypt (36 percent), India (34 percent) and the UK and Canada (32 percent). Hungary finished ________ of the “miserable” list. Thirty-five percent of its ________ said they were “very unhappy”. Second most ________ were Russians, at 30 percent.

The research ________ that money and age affected how happy people are. The study did not ________ that money can buy happiness, but it did reveal a ________ between a lack of money and unhappiness. Unhappier people were in lower income ________ or unemployed. The study also suggested the older we become, the ________ happy we are. Globally, teenagers are the happiest people. The least happy ________ group is 50-59 – only 16 percent of those in their ________ said they were very happy. The things that make us happy include good health, financial ________ and a happy marriage, not cars and clothes.
Australians happiest people in the world – 6 October, 2005

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words ‘financial’ and ‘security’.
   • Share your findings with your partners.
   • Make questions using the words you found.
   • Ask your partner / group your questions.

2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS: Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.
   • Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
   • Ask your partner / group your questions.

3. GAP FILL: In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the gap fill. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

4. VOCABULARY: Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

5. STUDENT “HAPPINESS” SURVEY: In pairs / groups, write down questions about happiness and how we get it.
   • Ask other classmates your questions and note down their answers.
   • Go back to your original partner / group and compare your findings.
   • Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

6. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:
   • Australians
   • survey
   • interviewers
   • following
   • Hungary
   • second
   • age
   • link
   • lower
   • older
   • fifties
   • financial

Find this and similar lessons at http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com
**DISCUSSION**

**STUDENT A’s QUESTIONS** (Do not show these to student B)

a. What did you think when you first read this headline?
b. Do you agree with the headline?
c. Are the people in your country generally very happy?
d. Are you very happy most of the time?
e. What makes you unhappy?
f. What’s the most miserable you’ve been?
g. How happy are you compared with your friends?
h. Do you wake up happy every morning?
i. Do you agree with the survey that older people are less happy?
j. What is there to be happy about in the world today?

**STUDENT B’s QUESTIONS** (Do not show these to student A)

a. Did you like reading this article?
b. What do you think about what you read?
c. What affects your levels of happiness?
d. Does your happiness change during different times of the day, week, month or year?
e. What is or was the happiest time of your life?
f. Do you need money to be happy?
g. What do you think of the idea of a government Happiness Minister who is responsible for the happiness of the population?
h. Do you think some nations are happier than others?
i. What is missing in your life that would make you very happy?
j. Did you like this discussion?

**AFTER DISCUSSION:** Join another partner / group and tell them what you talked about.

a. What question would you like to ask about this topic?
b. What was the most interesting thing you heard?
c. Was there a question you didn’t like?
d. Was there something you totally disagreed with?
e. What did you like talking about?
f. Do you want to know how anyone else answered the questions?
g. Which was the most difficult question?
SPEAKING

HAPPY DAYS: In pairs / groups, talk about your level of happiness throughout the day. What kinds of things make you happy or unhappy during the times written in the left hand column? What increases or decreases your happiness?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>% OF TIME HAPPY</th>
<th>THINGS THAT INCREASE HAPPINESS</th>
<th>THINGS THAT DECREASE HAPPINESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waking up</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going to work / school</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunchtime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Going home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bedtime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Change partners and tell each other about what you talked about earlier.
- Are there any things affecting happiness that people have in common?
- Repeat the activity by focusing on different times of the week, month or year.
LISTENING

Listen and fill in the spaces.

Australians happiest people in the world

BNE: Australians are the _________ people in the world. This is according to a new _________ from the market research company GfK NOP. Interviewers asked 30,000 people in 30 different countries about their _________ of happiness. Forty-six percent of Australians said they were “very happy”. _________ them was the USA (40 percent), Egypt (36 percent), India (34 percent) and the UK and Canada (32 percent). Hungary _________ top of the “________” list. Thirty-five percent of its citizens said they were “very unhappy”. Second most miserable were Russians, at 30 percent.

The research _________ that money and age affected how happy people are. The study did not show that money can _________ happiness, but it did _________ a link between a lack of money and unhappiness. Unhappier people were in _________ income groups or unemployed. The study also suggested the older we become, the less happy we are. _________, teenagers are the happiest people. The least happy age group is 50-59 – only 16 percent of those in their _________ said they were very happy. The things that make us happy include good health, financial _________ and a happy marriage, not cars and clothes.

Find this and similar lessons at http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com
HOMEWORK

1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION: Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google’s search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

2. INTERNET: Search the Internet and find more information on happiness. Share your findings with your class in the next lesson.

3. SECRETARY FOR HAPPINESS: You are the new Happiness Secretary for your country. It is your job to improve the level of happiness for the people in your country. You have one year to do this. Write a plan showing how you will achieve this. Show your plans to your classmates in your next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?

4. HAPPIEST MOMENT: Write an essay on the happiest moment in your life. Read your essay to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all write about similar things?
ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

a. T  

b. F  

c. T  

d. T  

e. F  

f. F  

g. F  

h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

a. survey  

study  

b. interviewers  

researchers  

c. following  

after  

d. miserable  

unhappy  

e. citizens  

residents  

f. showed  

revealed  

g. reveal  

show  

h. link  

connection  

i. those in their fifties  

50-59-year-olds  

j. financial  

economic

PHRASE MATCH:

a. the happiest people  
in the world

b. according to  
a new survey

c. market  
research company

d. levels  
of happiness

e. Hungary finished top  
of the “miserable” list

f. that money and age affected how  
happy people are

g. reveal a link between a lack of  
money and unhappiness

h. lower income  
groups

i. only 16 percent of  
those in their fifties

j. financial  
security

GAP FILL:

Australians happiest people in the world

Australians are the happiest people in the world. This is according to a new survey from the market research company GfK NOP. Interviewers asked 30,000 people in 30 different countries about their levels of happiness. Forty-six percent of Australians said they were “very happy”. Following them was the USA (40 percent), Egypt (36 percent), India (34 percent) and the UK and Canada (32 percent). Hungary finished top of the “miserable” list. Thirty-five percent of its citizens said they were “very unhappy”. Second most miserable were Russians, at 30 percent.

The research showed that money and age affected how happy people are. The study did not show that money can buy happiness, but it did reveal a link between a lack of money and unhappiness. Unhappier people were in lower income groups or unemployed. The study also suggested the older we become, the less happy we are. Globally, teenagers are the happiest people. The least happy age group is 50-59 – only 16 percent of those in their fifties said they were very happy. The things that make us happy include good health, financial security and a happy marriage, not cars and clothes.

Find this and similar lessons at http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com