

"1,000 IDEAS & ACTIVITIES FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS"

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Acupuncture good for a bad back

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/0905/090513-acupuncture.html>

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THE ARTICLE

Many people think twice about doctors sticking needles in them. However, research into acupuncture might change people's opinions. A new study into this ancient Chinese therapy shows it is better than usual hospital treatments at relieving back pain. The research team found acupuncture is "better" for a bad back than the care given in the West. This may be good news for millions of people who suffer from back pain. Up to 85 per cent of us will experience a painful back at some time in our life. The research team surveyed 638 patients with lower back pain. Researcher Dr Daniel Cherkin said all the varieties of acupuncture in the study "had beneficial...effects" when compared to usual treatment. He said acupuncture was both safe and effective.

Acupuncture is growing in popularity around the world. It is a technique in which very thin needles are pushed into specific points on the body. Experts say each point has access to a special energy flow. The needles can stop the flow of energy that causes pain. They also say acupuncture is painless. Western doctors do not understand how or why these lines of energy work. The WHO recommends acupuncture for over 20 different medical problems. Dr Cherkin's study showed acupuncture worked. After eight weeks, up to 69 per cent of the test patients having acupuncture said their back pain improved. This compares to just 39 per cent for the patients who received conventional care.

WARM-UPS

1. NEEDLES: Walk around the class and talk to other students about needles. Change partners often. Sit with your first partner(s) and share your findings.

2. CHAT: In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

thinking twice / people's opinions / ancient therapies / back pain / patients / effective / things growing in popularity / energy flow / pain / medical problems / conventional

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

3. ACHES AND PAINS: With your partner(s), talk about the best remedies / therapies for these aches and pains. Change partners and share your ideas.

Ache / Pain	Your solution	How effective?
back pain		
stress		
toothache		
hangover		
stomach ache		
broken heart		

4. ACUPUNCTURE: Students A **strongly** believe acupuncture is better than taking medicine; Students B **strongly** believe acupuncture is not a proper therapy and medicine is better. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

5. THERAPIES: How good are these therapies? Talk with your partner(s). Change partners share your ideas. Vote as a class on which is the best therapy.

- acupuncture
- massage
- sauna
- hypnosis
- aromatherapy
- laughing
- art therapy
- a good holiday

6. PAIN: Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'pain'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

BEFORE READING / LISTENING

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

- a. Doctors ask patients to think more than once before they use needles. T / F
- b. Acupuncture may be better than Western cures for treating bad backs. T / F
- c. Over four-fifths of us will have a bad back at some stage in our life. T / F
- d. A team of researchers based their results on 638 different people. T / F
- e. Acupuncture isn't as popular as it used to be. T / F
- f. The acupuncture needles cause the patient a little bit of pain. T / F
- g. European and American doctors know why acupuncture is effective. T / F
- h. The World Health Organization approves of the use of acupuncture. T / F

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

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. sticking | a. stream |
| 2. ancient | b. questioned |
| 3. relieving | c. positive |
| 4. surveyed | d. centuries-old |
| 5. beneficial | e. slim |
| 6. growing | f. poking |
| 7. thin | g. normal |
| 8. flow | h. increasing |
| 9. improved | i. reducing |
| 10. conventional | j. got better |

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

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. Many people think | a. causes pain |
| 2. this ancient | b. patients with lower back pain |
| 3. millions of people who suffer | c. on the body |
| 4. The research team surveyed 638 | d. conventional care |
| 5. He said acupuncture was both safe | e. twice |
| 6. Acupuncture is growing | f. and effective |
| 7. needles are pushed into specific points | g. Chinese therapy |
| 8. needles can stop the flow of energy that | h. worked |
| 9. Dr Cherkin's study showed acupuncture | i. from back pain |
| 10. patients who received | j. in popularity |

WHILE READING / LISTENING

GAP FILL: Put the words into the gaps in the text.

Many people think _____ about doctors sticking needles in them. However, research into acupuncture might change people's _____. A new study into this ancient Chinese therapy shows it is better than usual hospital treatments at _____ back pain. The research team found acupuncture is "better" for a bad back than the _____ given in the West. This may be good news for millions of people who _____ from back pain. Up to 85 per cent of us will experience a painful back at _____ time in our life. The research team surveyed 638 patients with lower back pain. Researcher Dr Daniel Cherkin said all the _____ of acupuncture in the study "had beneficial...effects" when compared to usual treatment. He said acupuncture was _____ safe and effective.

suffer
care
opinions
varieties
twice
both
some
relieving

Acupuncture is _____ in popularity around the world. It is a technique in which very thin needles are _____ into specific points on the body. Experts say each point has access to a special energy flow. The needles can stop the flow of energy that _____ pain. They also say acupuncture is _____. Western doctors do not understand how or why these lines of energy _____. The WHO recommends acupuncture for over 20 different _____ problems. Dr Cherkin's study showed acupuncture worked. After eight weeks, up to 69 per cent of the test patients having acupuncture said their back pain _____. This compares to just 39 per cent for the patients who received conventional _____.

improved
causes
pushed
work
care
growing
painless
medical

LISTENING: Listen and fill in the gaps.

Many people _____ doctors sticking needles in them. However, research into acupuncture might change people's opinions. A new study _____ Chinese therapy shows it is better than usual hospital treatments at relieving back pain. The research team found acupuncture is "better" for a bad back than _____ the West. This may be good news for millions of people who suffer from back pain. Up to 85 per cent of us will experience a painful back _____ our life. The research team surveyed 638 patients with lower back pain. Researcher Dr Daniel Cherkin said _____ of acupuncture in the study "had beneficial...effects" when compared to usual treatment. He said acupuncture _____ effective.

Acupuncture is _____ around the world. It is a technique in which very thin needles are pushed into specific points on the body. Experts say each point _____ special energy flow. The needles can stop the flow of energy that causes pain. They also say acupuncture is painless. Western doctors do not understand _____ lines of energy work. The WHO recommends acupuncture _____ medical problems. Dr Cherkin's study showed acupuncture worked. After eight weeks, up to 69 per cent _____ having acupuncture said their back pain improved. This compares to just 39 per cent for the patients who received _____.

AFTER READING / LISTENING

1. WORD SEARCH: Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words '**back**' and '**pain**'.

back	pain
-------------	-------------

- 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 activity. 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. TEST EACH OTHER: Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall how they were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• sticking• ancient• good• life• varieties• both	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• thin• each• painless• 20• eight• 39
---	--

STUDENT THERAPY SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about therapy 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.

ACUPUNCTURE DISCUSSION

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

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'acupuncture'?
- c) Have you ever tried, or would you like to try acupuncture?
- d) What do you think of needles and injections?
- e) Do you think acupuncture is better than Western medicine?
- f) What do you do / recommend for a bad back?
- g) Do you suffer from any aches and pains?
- h) What kind of things have you thought twice about recently?
- i) Do you think there are any dangers in acupuncture?
- j) What other ancient remedies do you know of?

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ACUPUNCTURE DISCUSSION

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) Why do you think acupuncture is growing in popularity around the world?
- c) How do you think the Chinese discovered the body's energy flow?
- d) How does acupuncture work?
- e) If you had acupuncture, would you look at the needles in your skin?
- f) Do you know anyone who has tried acupuncture?
- g) What kind of training does an acupuncturist need?
- h) What do you think of the word 'acupuncture'?
- i) Are there any other Eastern remedies you are interested in?
- j) What questions would you ask Dr Daniel Cherkin about acupuncture?

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LANGUAGE

Many people think (1) _____ about doctors sticking needles in them. However, research into acupuncture might change people's opinions. A new study (2) _____ this ancient Chinese therapy shows it is better than usual hospital treatments at relieving back pain. The research team found acupuncture is "better" for a bad back than the (3) _____ given in the West. This may be good news for millions of people who suffer from back pain. (4) _____ to 85 per cent of us will experience a painful back at some time in our life. The research team surveyed 638 patients with (5) _____ back pain. Researcher Dr Daniel Cherkin said all the varieties of acupuncture in the study "had beneficial...effects" when compared to usual treatment. He said acupuncture was (6) _____ safe and effective.

Acupuncture is growing (7) _____ popularity around the world. It is a technique in which very thin needles are pushed into specific points on the body. Experts say each point has (8) _____ to a special energy flow. The needles can stop the flow of energy that causes pain. They also say acupuncture is (9) _____. Western doctors do not understand how or why these lines of energy (10) _____. The WHO recommends acupuncture for over 20 different medical problems. Dr Cherkin's study showed acupuncture worked. After eight weeks, up to 69 per cent of the test patients (11) _____ acupuncture said their back pain improved. This compares (12) _____ just 39 per cent for the patients who received conventional care.

Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.

- | | | | | |
|-----|----------------|--------------|------------|----------------|
| 1. | (a) paired | (b) double | (c) two | (d) twice |
| 2. | (a) into | (b) onto | (c) out of | (d) on |
| 3. | (a) cares | (b) care | (c) cared | (d) caring |
| 4. | (a) At | (b) Down | (c) Up | (d) On |
| 5. | (a) lowly | (b) low | (c) lower | (d) lows |
| 6. | (a) bother | (b) both | (c) booth | (d) bothersome |
| 7. | (a) on | (b) an | (c) of | (d) in |
| 8. | (a) access | (b) excess | (c) assess | (d) axis |
| 9. | (a) pained | (b) painless | (c) pains | (d) painfully |
| 10. | (a) workaholic | (b) workable | (c) works | (d) work |
| 11. | (a) had | (b) has had | (c) having | (d) has |
| 12. | (a) to | (b) by | (c) at | (d) of |

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 out more about acupuncture. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

3. THERAPIES: Make a poster about different therapies. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

4. ACUPUNCTURE: Write a magazine article about acupuncture. Include imaginary interviews with people who had the therapy.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

5. LETTER: Write a letter to Dr Daniel Cherkin. Ask him three questions about acupuncture. Give him three ideas on how he could promote acupuncture around the world. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

ANSWERS

TRUE / FALSE:

- a. F b. T c. T d. T e. F f. F g. F h. T

SYNONYM MATCH:

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| 1. sticking | a. poking |
| 2. ancient | b. centuries-old |
| 3. relieving | c. reducing |
| 4. surveyed | d. questioned |
| 5. beneficial | e. positive |
| 6. growing | f. increasing |
| 7. thin | g. slim |
| 8. flow | h. stream |
| 9. improved | i. got better |
| 10. conventional | j. normal |

PHRASE MATCH:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 1. Many people think | a. twice |
| 2. this ancient | b. Chinese therapy |
| 3. millions of people who suffer | c. from back pain |
| 4. The research team surveyed 638 | d. patients with lower back pain |
| 5. He said acupuncture was both safe | e. and effective |
| 6. Acupuncture is growing | f. in popularity |
| 7. needles are pushed into specific points | g. on the body |
| 8. needles can stop the flow of energy that | h. causes pain |
| 9. Dr Cherkin's study showed acupuncture | i. worked |
| 10. patients who received | j. conventional care |

GAP FILL:

Acupuncture good for a bad back

Many people think **twice** about doctors sticking needles in them. However, research into acupuncture might change people's **opinions**. A new study into this ancient Chinese therapy shows it is better than usual hospital treatments at **relieving** back pain. The research team found acupuncture is "better" for a bad back than the **care** given in the West. This may be good news for millions of people who **suffer** from back pain. Up to 85 per cent of us will experience a painful back at **some** time in our life. The research team surveyed 638 patients with lower back pain. Researcher Dr Daniel Cherkin said all the **varieties** of acupuncture in the study "had beneficial...effects" when compared to usual treatment. He said acupuncture was **both** safe and effective.

Acupuncture is **growing** in popularity around the world. It is a technique in which very thin needles are **pushed** into specific points on the body. Experts say each point has access to a special energy flow. The needles can stop the flow of energy that **causes** pain. They also say acupuncture is **painless**. Western doctors do not understand how or why these lines of energy **work**. The WHO recommends acupuncture for over 20 different **medical** problems. Dr Cherkin's study showed acupuncture worked. After eight weeks, up to 69 per cent of the test patients having acupuncture said their back pain **improved**. This compares to just 39 per cent for the patients who received conventional **care**.

LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - d 2 - a 3 - b 4 - c 5 - c 6 - b 7 - d 8 - a 9 - b 10 - d 11 - c 12 - a