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**"1,000 IDEAS & ACTIVITIES FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS"**

**The Breaking News English.com Resource Book**

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/book.html>

## **Singing helps stroke victims talk**

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1002/100222-strokes.html>

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# THE ARTICLE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1002/100222-strokes.html>

Scientists in the USA have found that singing helps stroke victims with their speech difficulties. Doctors at two different medical schools said they had great success with getting patients to sing words instead of speak them. The treatment is called Music Intonation Therapy (MIT). One of the researchers, Gottfried Schlaug, gave an example of a success story. He showed a video of someone who had a stroke who could not speak the words of a birthday song. The person could only repeat the letters N and O. When Dr Schlaug asked him to sing the song, the words "happy birthday to you" came out. Schlaug said: "This patient has meaningless utterances when we ask him to say the words but as soon as we asked him to sing, he was able to speak the words."

The research team is still unclear why MIT works. Dr Schlaug has one theory. He points out that the brain processes music in a different part from that which deals with speech but that there are areas of overlap. "Music-making is a multisensory experience that simultaneously activates several systems in the brain and links and loops them together. It engages many regions of the brain," he said. MIT treatment is a very long process. It can last for up to 16 years and requires hourly sessions five days a week. The good news is the benefits of the therapy are usually permanent. Two thirds of patients who tried MIT with Dr Schlaug reported they could say more words. MIT could potentially help up to 70,000 stroke victims in the USA alone.

# WARM-UPS

**1. SINGING:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about singing. 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.

*scientists / stroke victims / medical schools / success stories / birthday songs / words / unclear / theories / brain processes / the brain / therapy / good news / therapy*

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

**3. WORDS:** What's the best way to pronounce them? Complete this table with your partner(s). Change partners and share what you wrote. Change again and share again.

	Your experiences of this	Good? Bad?
Singing them		
Copying a recording		
Looking at your lips		
Recording yourself		
Using symbols		
Guessing		

**4. STROKES:** Students A **strongly** believe scientists will be able to prevent all strokes in the future; Students B **strongly** believe the opposite. Change partners again and talk about your conversations.

**5. SINGING:** Is it good for you? Rate these and share your ratings with your partner: 10 = absolutely, totally agree; 1 = no way! Change partners and share your ratings again.

- singing helps English study
- singing is a good therapy
- singing makes you fit
- singing is best done in groups
- singing is best in the shower
- we should all sing on trains
- students need singing lessons every day
- singing is a waste of time

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

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1002/100222-strokes.html>

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Read the headline. Guess if a-h below are true (T) or false (F).

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| a. Singing may be a new remedy for people who had a stroke.          | T / F |
| b. Two different medical schools tested a therapy called MIT.        | T / F |
| c. A woman on a video could not speak the words to a birthday song.  | T / F |
| d. A doctor said the patient sang a dozen songs fluently.            | T / F |
| e. The research team know exactly how and why MIT works.             | T / F |
| f. The brain processes music and speech in different places.         | T / F |
| g. MIT therapy usually lasts around 16 years.                        | T / F |
| h. The MIT therapy could help 70,000 lonely American stroke victims. | T / F |

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

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. difficulties | a. worthless   |
| 2. great        | b. possibly    |
| 3. success      | c. parts       |
| 4. meaningless  | d. huge        |
| 5. utterances   | e. problems    |
| 6. links        | f. uses        |
| 7. areas        | g. continue    |
| 8. engages      | h. achievement |
| 9. last         | i. connects    |
| 10. potentially | j. words       |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** (Sometimes more than one choice is possible.)

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. singing helps stroke victims with their | a. a birthday song     |
| 2. they had great success with getting     | b. utterances          |
| 3. an example of a                         | c. still unclear       |
| 4. speak the words of                      | d. up to 16 years      |
| 5. meaningless                             | e. speech difficulties |
| 6. The research team is                    | f. in a different part |
| 7. the brain processes music               | g. patients to sing    |
| 8. Music-making is a multisensory          | h. in the USA alone    |
| 9. It can last for                         | i. success story       |
| 10. help up to 70,000 stroke victims       | j. experience          |

# WHILE READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1002/100222-strokes.html>

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

Scientists in the USA have found that singing helps stroke victims with their \_\_\_\_\_ difficulties. Doctors at two different medical schools said they had \_\_\_\_\_ success with getting patients to sing words \_\_\_\_\_ of speak them. The treatment is called Music Intonation Therapy (MIT). One of the researchers, Gottfried Schlaug, gave an example of a \_\_\_\_\_ story. He showed a video of someone who had a stroke who could not speak the words of a birthday song. The person could only \_\_\_\_\_ the letters N and O. When Dr Schlaug asked him to sing the song, the words "happy birthday to you" came out. Schlaug said: "This \_\_\_\_\_ has meaningless \_\_\_\_\_ when we ask him to say the words but as soon as we \_\_\_\_\_ him to sing, he was able to speak the words."

*patient*  
*success*  
*great*  
*asked*  
*instead*  
*speech*  
*utterances*  
*repeat*

The research team is still \_\_\_\_\_ why MIT works. Dr Schlaug has one theory. He points out that the brain \_\_\_\_\_ music in a different part from that which deals with speech but that there are areas of \_\_\_\_\_. "Music-making is a multisensory experience that simultaneously activates \_\_\_\_\_ systems in the brain and links and loops them together. It engages many regions of the brain," he said. MIT treatment is a very long \_\_\_\_\_. It can \_\_\_\_\_ for up to 16 years and requires hourly sessions five days a week. The good news is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the therapy are usually permanent. Two thirds of patients who tried MIT with Dr Schlaug reported they could say more words. MIT could \_\_\_\_\_ help up to 70,000 stroke victims in the USA alone.

*benefits*  
*process*  
*processes*  
*potentially*  
*unclear*  
*several*  
*last*  
*overlap*

## LISTENING – Listen and fill in the gaps

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1002/100222-strokes.html>

Scientists in the USA have found that singing \_\_\_\_\_ their speech difficulties. Doctors at two different medical schools said they \_\_\_\_\_ getting patients to sing words instead of speak them. The treatment is called Music Intonation Therapy (MIT). One of the researchers, Gottfried Schlaug, \_\_\_\_\_ success story. He showed a video of someone who had a stroke \_\_\_\_\_ the words of a birthday song. The person could only repeat the letters N and O. When Dr Schlaug \_\_\_\_\_ song, the words "happy birthday to you" came out. Schlaug said: "This patient has meaningless utterances when we ask him to say the words but as soon as we asked him to sing, \_\_\_\_\_ the words."

The research team \_\_\_\_\_ MIT works. Dr Schlaug has one theory. He points out that the brain processes music in a different part from \_\_\_\_\_ speech but that there are areas of overlap. "Music-making is a multisensory experience that simultaneously activates several systems in the brain \_\_\_\_\_ them together. It engages many regions of the brain," he said. MIT treatment is a very long process. It \_\_\_\_\_ 16 years and requires hourly sessions five days a week. The good news \_\_\_\_\_ therapy are usually permanent. Two thirds of patients who tried MIT with Dr Schlaug reported \_\_\_\_\_ words. MIT could potentially help up to 70,000 stroke victims in the USA alone.

# AFTER READING / LISTENING

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1002/100222-strokes.html>

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

stroke	victim

- 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"><li>• difficulties</li><li>• great</li><li>• treatment</li><li>• repeat</li><li>• happy</li><li>• able</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• theory</li><li>• deals</li><li>• loops</li><li>• hourly</li><li>• usually</li><li>• help</li></ul>
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# STUDENT SINGING SURVEY

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1002/100222-strokes.html>

Write five GOOD questions about singing 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.

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## **SINGING 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 'stroke'?
- c) What happens to people when they have a stroke?
- d) Do you think singing is an effective therapy?
- e) What part did a birthday song have to play in this story?
- f) What do you think of the idea of Music Intonation Theory?
- g) Would you like to work as a researcher?
- h) What songs really change your feelings?
- i) What would life be like if you couldn't speak?

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## **SINGING DISCUSSION**

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

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What do you know about the brain?
- c) Do you agree that music is a multi-sensory experience?
- d) Do you think singing changes things in your brain or makes you healthier?
- e) What questions would you like answered about strokes?
- f) What's the difference between a stroke and a heart attack?
- g) What do you think of the 16-year treatment time?
- h) How does singing change you?
- i) What questions would you like to ask Dr Schlaug?

# LANGUAGE – MULTIPLE CHOICE

From <http://www.BreakingNewsEnglish.com/1002/100222-strokes.html>

Scientists in the USA have found that singing helps stroke victims with their speech (1) \_\_\_\_\_. Doctors at two different medical schools said they had great success with getting patients to sing words instead (2) \_\_\_\_\_ speak them. The treatment is called Music Intonation Therapy (MIT). One of the researchers, Gottfried Schlaug, gave an example of a (3) \_\_\_\_\_ story. He showed a video of someone who had a stroke who could not speak the words of a birthday song. The person could only (4) \_\_\_\_\_ the letters N and O. When Dr Schlaug asked him to sing the song, the words "happy birthday to you" came out. Schlaug said: "This patient has (5) \_\_\_\_\_ utterances when we ask him to say the words but as soon as we asked him to sing, he (6) \_\_\_\_\_ able to speak the words."

The research team is still unclear why MIT works. Dr Schlaug has (7) \_\_\_\_\_ theory. He points out that the brain processes music in a different part from that which (8) \_\_\_\_\_ with speech but that there are areas of overlap. "Music-making is a multisensory experience that simultaneously (9) \_\_\_\_\_ several systems in the brain and links and (10) \_\_\_\_\_ them together. It engages many regions of the brain," he said. MIT treatment is a very long process. It can last for up to 16 years and requires (11) \_\_\_\_\_ sessions five days a week. The good news is the benefits of the therapy are usually permanent. Two thirds of patients who tried MIT with Dr Schlaug reported they could say more words. MIT could potentially help (12) \_\_\_\_\_ to 70,000 stroke victims in the USA alone.

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

- |     |                |                  |                 |                  |
|-----|----------------|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1.  | (a) difficult  | (b) difficulties | (c) difference  | (d) different    |
| 2.  | (a) by         | (b) to           | (c) of          | (d) at           |
| 3.  | (a) success    | (b) successful   | (c) succeed     | (d) successfully |
| 4.  | (a) repeats    | (b) repeated     | (c) repetitive  | (d) repeat       |
| 5.  | (a) meaning    | (b) meanings     | (c) meaningless | (d) meant        |
| 6.  | (a) was        | (b) has          | (c) as          | (d) were         |
| 7.  | (a) once       | (b) only         | (c) on          | (d) one          |
| 8.  | (a) dealing    | (b) deals        | (c) dealt       | (d) dealers      |
| 9.  | (a) activities | (b) actions      | (c) actively    | (d) activates    |
| 10. | (a) hoops      | (b) whoops       | (c) loops       | (d) poops        |
| 11. | (a) hours      | (b) hourly       | (c) hour        | (d) one hour     |
| 12. | (a) up         | (b) across       | (c) down        | (d) over         |

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# 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 strokes. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. SINGING:** Make a poster about singing and its uses in therapy. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. SPEECH:** Write a magazine article about someone with speech difficulties. Include an imaginary interview with that person.

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 Gottfried Schlaug. Ask him three questions about singing therapy. Give him three ideas for other things he could use to help people with speech difficulties. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE:

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

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. difficulties | a. problems    |
| 2. great        | b. huge        |
| 3. success      | c. achievement |
| 4. meaningless  | d. worthless   |
| 5. utterances   | e. words       |
| 6. links        | f. connects    |
| 7. areas        | g. parts       |
| 8. engages      | h. uses        |
| 9. last         | i. continue    |
| 10. potentially | j. possibly    |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. singing helps stroke victims with their | a. speech difficulties |
| 2. they had great success with getting     | b. patients to sing    |
| 3. an example of a                         | c. success story       |
| 4. speak the words of                      | d. a birthday song     |
| 5. meaningless                             | e. utterances          |
| 6. The research team is                    | f. still unclear       |
| 7. the brain processes music               | g. in a different part |
| 8. Music-making is a multisensory          | h. experience          |
| 9. It can last for                         | i. up to 16 years      |
| 10. help up to 70,000 stroke victims       | j. in the USA alone    |

## GAP FILL:

### Singing helps stroke victims talk

Scientists in the USA have found that singing helps stroke victims with their **speech** difficulties. Doctors at two different medical schools said they had **great** success with getting patients to sing words **instead** of speak them. The treatment is called Music Intonation Therapy (MIT). One of the researchers, Gottfried Schlaug, gave an example of a **success** story. He showed a video of someone who had a stroke who could not speak the words of a birthday song. The person could only **repeat** the letters N and O. When Dr Schlaug asked him to sing the song, the words "happy birthday to you" came out. Schlaug said: "This **patient** has meaningless **utterances** when we ask him to say the words but as soon as we **asked** him to sing, he was able to speak the words."

The research team is still **unclear** why MIT works. Dr Schlaug has one theory. He points out that the brain **processes** music in a different part from that which deals with speech but that there are areas of **overlap**. "Music-making is a multisensory experience that simultaneously activates **several** systems in the brain and links and loops them together. It engages many regions of the brain," he said. MIT treatment is a very long **process**. It can **last** for up to 16 years and requires hourly sessions five days a week. The good news is the **benefits** of the therapy are usually permanent. Two thirds of patients who tried MIT with Dr Schlaug reported they could say more words. MIT could **potentially** help up to 70,000 stroke victims in the USA alone.

## LANGUAGE WORK

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

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