**Reading Lesson 5**

**Description**

This lesson includes a series of activities to practise reading skills for multiple-choice comprehension questions on longer texts. The activities include language related to the topic of teamwork and prepare learners for the longer multiple-choice reading task in the Linguaskill Business Reading test.

**Teacher’s Notes**

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| **Aims of the lesson** | * to present and practise some key vocabulary related to teamwork * to raise awareness of the format and requirements of the longer multiple-choice reading task * to develop techniques and strategies for this task-type based on practising a sample task |
| **Time required** | * 45–60 minutes |
| **Level** | * Suitable for B2 level |
| **Materials required** | * Student’s Worksheets 1–4 |

**Procedure**

1. Explain that the lesson will be about working as part of a team and will help prepare learners for the longer multiple-choice reading task in the Linguaskill Business Reading test.
2. Divide the class into two halves. Ask one half to talk about the advantages of working as part of a team and the other half to talk about the advantages of working alone. Set a time limit of two to three minutes. Then put learners in pairs, one from each group, and ask them to compare their ideas. Class feedback – Ask learners to say which of the two ways of working they feel has more advantages. The language elicited here will be useful for the next stages.
3. Give learners **Student’s Worksheet 1** and ask them to work with a partner and discuss the skills and qualities needed to work successfully in a team, using the prompts on the worksheet.
4. Feedback on the task. If not suggested by learners, elicit or teach useful collocations (*solve problems, get on with people, resolve differences*) and synonyms (*solve>resolve>sort out, arguments>differences>disputes*). Explain that extending their vocabulary in this way is a useful skill to develop.
5. Give learners **Student’s Worksheet 2** and ask them to look at the two test questions. Draw attention to the words in bold (skilled/skill), which indicate that both questions have a similar focus. Ask learners to read the question and decide what the differences are.

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| **Student’s Worksheet 2**  **Exercise 1**  **Answer Key**  Question 1 focuses on Steve Barker’s past experience. ‘he needed time to become skilled in’ indicates that he did develop this skill.  Question 2 focuses on the present and a skill that Steve Barker does not have. It also focuses on Steve Barker’s opinion (‘feels’) rather than a statement of fact. |

1. Ask learners to look at the paragraph in **Exercise 2** of **Student’s Worksheet 2**. Tell them they need to decide if the words in bold match the information asked for in the first or second question in **Exercise 1**.

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| **Student’s Worksheet 2**  **Exercise 2**  **Answer Key**  The question and the paragraph both refer to the ‘first team’.  ‘soon discovered’ contradicts the question wording ‘needed time to become skilled’.  ‘I was already good at’ contradicts ‘become skilled’.  ‘it took me longer’ matches ‘needed time’. |

1. Discuss learners’ answers. Make them aware that reading both the question and the text closely for detail and to eliminate some information in this way is an important strategy in answering multiple-choice reading tasks. Ask them to use the same technique to answer the question in **Exercise 3**.

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| **Student’s Worksheet 2**  **Exercise 3**  **Answer Key**  Facts/general skills: each team member is responsible for the smooth running of a project/There are skills in helping the team to be motivated and to work well together/cooperation and encouragement of others are skills that every team player must develop/with experience colleagues learn to recognise and use each other’s strengths.  Personal opinion/skills: I leave that (being able to resolve differences) to others. |

1. Now ask learners to look at **Student’s Worksheet 3**, which has the questions, options and text. Using the information learners already have, ask them to work with a partner and agree on the correct answer for each question. Class feedback to check responses.

Draw learners’ attention to how the same words may appear in the question and the text (i.e. Q1 problem-solving/ideas/negotiating/crowded), but careful reading is required to confirm the answer is correct.

Also draw attention to how synonyms can help them identify the correct information (i.e. Q2 sorting out arguments > resolve differences/use > take advantage of).

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| **Student’s Worksheet 3**  **Answer Key**  1. C (‘It took me longer to train myself how to negotiate with others.’)  2. B (‘Being able to resolve differences between two members is a special talent, and I leave that to others.’) |

1. Now give learners **Student’s Worksheet 4**, which has the remaining questions and text from this Reading task. Ask learners to work on their own to answer the questions before checking with a partner.

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| **Student’s Worksheet 4**  **Answer Key**  3. D (‘it’s worth allowing time for people to get to know each other’)  4. D (‘estimate how long it will take realistically’)  5. A (‘suggest a team meeting. Offer to organise this yourself’)  6. A (‘people start looking for someone to blame, which is completely counter-productive’) |

1. Feedback on the task. If any answers are incorrect, discuss as a group why they are wrong, using example wording from the question and/or the text, as you demonstrated with the first two questions.
2. Now that learners have read the whole text, put them in small groups and ask them to discuss the two questions from the start of the lesson again (*What are the advantages of working in a team? What skills do you need to be a successful team member?*)*.* Ask learners if their opinions have changed at all.

**Student’s Worksheet 1**

**Work with a partner and discuss what makes a successful team worker. Use the examples and the prompts below to help you think of ideas.**

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| --- | --- |
| Checkmark | Close |
| An ability to get on well with colleagues | Preferring to work alone in silence |

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| colleagues arguments working environment  support problems opinions experience |

**Student’s Worksheet 2**

**Exercise 1**

**Look at the two questions below. What different information do they focus on?**

1. When Steve Barker joined his first team he needed time to become **skilled** in …
2. What **skill** does Steve feel he lacks?

**Exercise 2**

**Look at the paragraph below and decide whether the words in bold give information which is more relevant to Question 1 or Question 2 in Part 1 above.**

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| My name is Steve Barker and I work for a manufacturing company. I’ve been on several project teams, and have learnt a lot about teamwork over the years. I was taken on by my company because of my good college grades, but when I joined my **first team** I **soon discovered** there was a difference between studying in a quiet library and working in a crowded office. I found out that in order to get the tasks done, there were several important qualities required. I **was already** **good at problem-solving, and enjoyed sharing my ideas with my team-mates**. It **took me longer** to train myself how to negotiate with others – I like to get my own way. But it’s essential to be able to listen and understand where the other person is coming from. |

**Exercise 3**

**In the paragraph below underline the parts which focus on facts and general skills.**

**Where does the paragraph mention personal opinions and skills?**

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| A team may or may not have an official leader, but each member of a team is responsible for the smooth running of a project. There are skills in helping the team to be motivated and to work well together. Every project meets difficulties, and disputes can break out. Being able to resolve differences between two members is a special talent, and I leave that to others. But I’m in no doubt that co-operation and encouragement of others are skills that every team player must develop. Then with experience colleagues learn to recognise and use each other’s strengths. |

**Student’s Worksheet 3**

**Look at the full questions for these two paragraphs and choose which of the four options is correct.**

**How do you know you have the right answer? Why are the other options not correct?**

1. When Steve Barker joined his first team he needed time to become skilled in …

**A** problem-solving.

**B** explaining his ideas.

**C** negotiating with colleagues.

**D** working in crowded conditions.

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| My name is Steve Barker and I work for a manufacturing company. I’ve been on several project teams, and have learnt a lot about teamwork over the years. I was taken on by my company because of my good college grades, but when I joined my first team I soon discovered there was a difference between studying in a quiet library and working in a crowded office. I found out that in order to get the tasks done, there were several important qualities required. I was already good at problem-solving, and enjoyed sharing my ideas with my team-mates. It took me longer to train myself how to negotiate with others – I like to get my own way. But it’s essential to be able to listen and understand where the other person is coming from. |

1. What skill does Steve feel he lacks?

**A** finding ways to motivate people on his team

**B** sorting out arguments between team members

**C** co-operating with people he does not get on with

**D** taking full advantage of the strengths of fellow workers

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| A team may or may not have an official leader, but each member of a team is responsible for the smooth running of a project. There are skills in helping the team to be motivated and to work well together. Every project meets difficulties, and disputes can break out. Being able to resolve differences between two members is a special talent, and I leave that to others. But I’m in no doubt that co-operation and encouragement of others are skills that every team player must develop. Then with experience colleagues learn to recognise and use each other’s strengths. |

**Student’s Worksheet 4**

**The questions you have been working on are the first two questions of a multiple-choice comprehension task from the Linguaskill Business Reading test.**

**Using the techniques you have been practising, answer the remaining questions below. Please note that the text continues from the paragraphs on Student’s Worksheet 3.**

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| When you’ve got deadlines, there’s a temptation to rush into a project. Unless the members of the team have already been on projects together and have a positive working relationship, it’s worth allowing time for people to get to know each other. As a group you should thoroughly explore the topic you’re examining – that stage cannot be hurried. I think that meetings where everyone throws ideas into the pot aren’t always productive because ideas come up naturally as the project develops. What’s important is to keep a record of all useful suggestions. |
| People sometimes find it difficult to share tasks – they have their own idea of how something should be done. But with time constraints two heads are better than one. Project planning is complicated and its completion depends on many elements coming together in one time frame. So, whatever you’re responsible for, estimate how long it will take realistically, and complete the task on time. And don’t be embarrassed if you have to ask for help. |
| The next important point is to review progress. If your project manager is pre-occupied with strategy, and you feel you’re getting out of touch with what your colleagues are doing, suggest a team meeting. Offer to organise this yourself and encourage everyone to be involved. This way you can find out if an individual has taken a wrong direction or if time is being wasted because tasks are overlapping. This may seem obvious, but when a deadline is in sight, it’s easy to see meetings as time-consuming and something you can manage without. |
| Projects sometimes hit a crisis point – extra finance is needed but isn’t forthcoming, or it becomes clear that a deadline is impossible to meet. Then the combined skills of the team are particularly needed. This is when viewpoints tend to clash and people start looking for someone to blame, which is completely counter-productive. In all situations, make sure you value what others have to say, even if it’s different from what you believe. Solutions can come out of differences of opinion. This is when flexibility is needed. The way forward is to adapt your approach so that your goals can be achieved. |

1. In the third paragraph (i.e. first paragraph above), Steve says teams should spend time

**A** holding meetings to exchange ideas.

**B** recording results of each stage of the project.

**C** trying out different ways of reaching their goal.

**D** becoming familiar with their fellow workers if necessary.

1. In the fourth (second in the text above) paragraph, Steve emphasises the need for team workers to

**A** take account of individual differences.

**B** be allowed involvement in the planning of a project.

**C** be ready to offer help to a colleague who has problems.

**D** make an accurate measurement of the time required for a task.

1. In the fifth (third) paragraph, what does Steve say about meetings?

**A** A team member can take responsibility for organising a meeting.

**B** Project managers should call team meetings regularly to discuss strategy.

**C** The length of meetings should be strictly controlled to avoid wasting time.

**D** The progress of individual team members should be evaluated in one-to-one meetings.

1. Steve says that in times of crisis, team members should avoid

**A** making negative comments about colleagues’ performance.

**B** expressing opinions that differ from other people’s ideas.

**C** putting pressure on the finance department for extra funding.

**D** complaining that the goals cannot be achieved in the timescale.