

From: Rick

To: IELTS Prep Group

Subj: IELTS Reading/Writing lesson 5-22/23-2019

Lesson Objective

The student shall be able to use “power words” as part of their oral vocabulary, read and comprehend both social and business language and demonstrate effective oral communication skills

Section One

Vocabulary

Match the correct word in column A with the definition in column B, then use in a sample sentence

Evaluation Criteria: Ability to understand definitions of English vocabulary

Column A

Column B

VOCABULARY	DEFINITION
1. MOURN (VERB)	A. serious in intention, purpose, or effort; sincerely zealous.
2. EARNEST (ADJECTIVE)	B. to lessen the courage of; dishearten.
3. DAUNTING (VERB)	C. common; ordinary; banal; unimaginative.
4. MAINSTAY (NOUN)	D. to charm or captivate.
5. MUNDANE (ADJECTIVE)	E. causing detriment, as loss or injury; damaging; harmful.
6. ENAMORED (VERB)	F. to give vigor to; fill with life and energy; energize.
7. DETRIMENTAL (ADJECTIVE)	G. to take pleasure in; like; enjoy.
8. INVIGORATE (VERB)	H. keen relish; hearty enjoyment; gusto.
9. RELISHING (VERB)	I. a person or thing that acts as a chief support or part.
10. ZEST (NOUN)	J. to feel or express sorrow or grief

Section Two

Reading Comprehension and Pronunciation skills.

Evaluation Criteria: Ability to effectively read and comprehend written English in a social or business environment.

ARTICLE A

[Source](#)

How to Live in the Moment and Stop Worrying About the Past or Future

1. We sometimes hear people talk about the importance of living in the moment. We might hear about the different ways it will benefit us. It all sounds wonderful, but how exactly can we live in the moment when our mind is constantly racing?

In this article, we'll discuss some of the benefits of living in the moment you may not be aware of. Then we'll look at some of the obstacles, and why we worry. Finally, and most importantly, I'll show you how to live in the moment and stop worrying using some simple practices that you can easily incorporate into your busy schedule.

2. Why Live in the Moment?

“The secret of health for both mind and body is not to mourn for the past, worry about the future, or anticipate troubles, but to live in the present moment wisely and earnestly.” – Buddha

Living in the moment has innumerable benefits. Here are just a few that will enhance your life tremendously:



Better Health

By reducing stress and anxiety, you avoid many of the associated health consequences, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, and obesity. Studies have shown that being present can also improve psychological well-being.[1]

3. Improve Your Relationships

Have you ever been with someone who is physically present, but mentally he's a million miles away?

Being with unavailable people is a struggle and makes relationships with them extremely difficult.

How about being with someone who is fully present? We enjoy being with him because we can make a much deeper connection with him.

By living in the moment, you can be that person other people enjoy being with, and you make relationships much easier.

Greater Self-Control

You have greater control over your mind, body, and emotions. Imagine how much better your life would be if it weren't at the mercy of a racing mind, and unpredictable emotions. You would certainly be more at peace, and much happier.[2]

4. Why Do We Worry?

Before we answer this question, it's important to distinguish between worry and concern.

When we are concerned about something, we are more likely dealing with a real problem with realistic solutions. Then once we do whatever we can to address the problem, we're willing to live with the outcome.

Worrying, on the other hand, involves unrealistic thinking. We may worry about a problem that doesn't really exist, or dwell on all the bad things that can happen as a result. Then, we feel unable to deal with the outcome. Either way, we have difficulty dealing with uncertainty, which is a normal part of life.

Certainly, some of our problems may not have desirable outcomes, such as a serious health issue. Some problems may be beyond our control, such as civil unrest or economic downturn. In such cases, it can be hard to avoid worrying, but not impossible.

We sometimes worry when we don't know how to deal with a problem. For example, have you ever received a letter from the IRS telling you that you owe more money than you thought, and don't have the funds to pay it? This is enough to scare anyone who is not familiar with taxes.

5. How to Live in the Moment

Step 1: Overcome Worrying

In order to overcome worrying, we need to do two things:

Learn How to Live in the Moment

By living in the moment, you calm your mind, and are able to see more clearly.

The reason some problems seem so daunting is that our mind is racing so fast that we cannot see things as they truly are. So, we make up a bunch of possible scenarios in our mind, most of which are unlikely to come true.

In addition to seeing more clearly, living in the moment will help us think more realistically. Unrealistic thinking is fueled by confusion and uncontrolled emotions. Calming your mind will reduce confusion and calm your emotions.

6. Learn to Focus on Solutions Instead of Problems

Some people tend to be more solution-oriented, and others more problem-oriented. Some of the factors that may determine this are gender, upbringing, and education.

People with higher educations tend to be problem-solvers. That is what their years of education train them to do. In addition, their jobs probably reinforce this way of thinking.

7. Step 2: Identify Obstacles to Living in the Moment

In today's busy world, it can be a challenge to live in the moment. The reasons revolve around how our mind works, and outside influences.

Racing Mind

Many busy people have a racing mind that never seems to slow down. Their mind gets so agitated from too much sensory stimulation.

You see, anything that stimulates any of our five senses (sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell) will trigger a thought, and that thought leads to another, and then another, and so on.

If you have a busy life, all your activities will overstimulate your mind, and make it seemingly impossible to slow it down. And an agitated mind wants to go to another place and time. If you're not problem-solving oriented, don't worry. You can train yourself to worry less. We'll discuss that soon.

8. Unpleasant Situations and Troublesome Past

None of us want to be in unpleasant situations or remember those of the past. They can bring up painful emotions, which we don't want to feel.

So how do most people cope with painful emotions?

By doing whatever we can to avoid them, and we can avoid them by taking our mind to another place and time where things are more pleasant.

In other words, we avoid living in the present moment.

Some people resort to doing things that stimulate sensory pleasure, such as eating, alcohol or sex. Others will consume substances that dull their mind and keep them from thinking about unpleasant or stressful situations.

9. A Wandering Mind

From the moment we are born (likely sooner) until the time we die, our body and mind are active performing some function. So, it's natural for our mind to have some level of activity, whether conscious or unconscious.

Generally, a wandering mind is unproductive. As noted above, one thought starts an endless chain of thoughts. The reason is that one thought reminds us of something else, and this process can go on until we need our mind to perform a specific function, or until we get distracted with something else.

Now, there are times when a wandering mind can be productive, such as when creating works of art, or trying to find creative solutions to problems. In such cases, we need our mind to explore different possibilities.[3]

10. Outside Influences

Most of us are not fully aware of how our environment and social norms influence our thinking and behavior. People and institutions are constantly competing for our attention. The news media draw our attention to the past, and advertising usually to the future.[4]



Many people around us who dwell on the past or future try to draw us to their way of thinking. Even the whole concept of the American dream is geared toward the future. It tells us that if we acquire things like a good career, family, and house, then we'll be happy.

11. Step 3: Practice Mindfulness

So how can we live in the moment in a world that is constantly trying to draw our attention to the past and future?

Before we get into concrete actions you can take, it's important to understand what mindfulness is. You've probably heard the term before but may not fully understand what it means.

Understand Mindfulness

The concept of mindfulness is actually quite simple. To be mindful IS to live in the moment.

When you are mindful, your attention is focused on what is happening in the present moment. When you are mindful, you are fully in touch with reality because the present moment is where reality is taking place.

You are aware of what is happening in your body, mind, emotions, and the world around you. This is different than thinking about these things. To develop greater understanding, you don't have to think about them so much, but rather just observe them.

This may be counter-intuitive to many people, especially intellectuals, because they're so used to using logic to develop greater understanding. With mindfulness, we calm our mind and emotions so we can see clearer. Then much of our understanding will come from simply observation. When we develop mindfulness, we literally expand our awareness.

12. To develop mindfulness, we need to train ourselves to observe things more objectively, that is, without our emotions or preconceived ideas influencing our views.

You'd be surprised to find out just how much your emotions and past experiences influence your judgments. What many of us do, including intellectuals, is make a quick judgment about a person or situation, then add the reasoning afterwards. That is not logic, but rather rationalization.

When you are mindful, you reserve judgment until you have more information. Notice how I said, "more information," and not "complete information." It is impossible to have complete information about something because there are infinite numbers of factors affecting it. So, the best thing to do is be as objective as possible, and always be open to new information.

Viewing the world in this manner can be a challenge and takes some practice to overcome years of habitual thinking. But it can make our lives infinitely more fulfilling, as we'll be able to make much better decisions that will result in real happiness and inner peace.

So, if you're ready to live a better life, read on for some simple mindfulness practices that you can incorporate into your busy life to help you live in the moment, that is, reality.

You don't have to do all of them, but rather choose the ones that appeal to you, and suit your lifestyle.

13. Mindfulness Meditation

Mindfulness meditation is the mainstay of developing mindfulness and living in the moment. To practice mindfulness meditation, all you really have to do is sit quietly and follow your breathing. When your mind wanders off, just bring it back to your breath.

Notice how your lungs expand with each in-breath, and contract with each out-breath. Let your breathing become relaxed and natural.



You don't have to do it perfectly. The idea is to give your mind a rest from the constant sensory stimulation of all your activities, and just allow it to settle down naturally. Start with about 5 to 10 minutes per day and work your way up to about 20 minutes or longer.

This practice is highly effective and can have both short-term and long-term benefits.

14. Mindful Breathing

While this may sound the same as mindfulness meditation, all you're really doing is taking short breaks occasionally (10 to 15 seconds) to observe your breathing. Stop whatever you're doing, and take a few mindful breaths, then resume your activity. That's it.

You can do mindful breathing at any time of the day during your busy schedule. What it does is interrupt the acceleration of your mind. It is like taking your foot off the accelerator while driving. It's a nice refreshing break you can take without anyone noticing.

15. Mindful Walking

Walking is an activity that you perform several times throughout the day. We often think we're being productive by texting or calling someone while walking. But are we really?

Instead of getting on your cell phone, or letting your mind wander off, why not use your walking for training yourself to live in the moment?

Mindful walking is similar to mindful breathing. But instead of focusing on your breath, focus on your walking. Pay attention to each footstep. Also, notice the different motions of your arms, legs, and torso. When your mind wanders off, just bring your attention back to your walking.

You can even make a meditation out of walking. That is, go walking for a few minutes outside. Start by slowing down your pace. If you slow down your body, your mind will follow.

In addition to paying attention to your walking, notice the trees, sunshine, and critters. A mindful walk is enjoyable, and can really help your mind settle down.

16. Mindful Eating

Eating is an activity that most of us perform mindlessly. The reason is that it doesn't require your attention to perform. So what many of us do is try to multitask while we eat. We may talk on the phone, text, watch TV, or even hold a meeting.

The problem with not eating mindfully is that we don't eat what our body and mind need to perform at an optimal level. We may eat unhealthy foods, or too much. This can lead to various health problems, especially as we get older.

Mindful eating has many health benefits, such as reduced food cravings, better digestion, and even weight loss.[5]

17. So how do you eat mindfully? Start by slowing down and avoid the temptation to distract yourself with another activity. Here are 3 different aspects of eating where you can practice mindfulness:

Eating itself: Focus your attention on choosing a portion of food to insert into your mouth. Notice the smell, flavor, and texture as you chew it; then finally swallow it. As with following your breath during meditation, pay close attention to every aspect of eating.

Choice of foods: Although you've already chosen your food before you have begun eating, you can still take the opportunity to contemplate your choices. Think about the nutrients your body needs to sustain itself. Ask yourself, "Is this what my body and mind need to be healthy, and perform at an optimal level?" "Is it sufficient, or too much?" By asking yourself these questions, you will be more inclined to make better choices in the future.



Contemplating the sources: Most of us don't think about all the work it takes to provide us with the food we eat. While you're eating, consider all the work by the farmer, shipping company, and the grocery store. These are real people who worked hard to provide you with the food necessary for your survival.

You can find more tips about mindful eating here: [7 Simple Steps to Mindful Eating](#)

18. Mindful Activities

Choose an activity that you perform regularly, such as washing dishes. Focus all your attention on this activity, and resist the temptation to let your mind wander, or get distracted. When it does, then just bring your attention back to washing dishes.

Notice some of the specific movements, or sensations of washing dishes, such as how the soapy water feels on your hands, the circular motion of scrubbing the dish, or the rinsing. You'd be surprised at how such a mundane activity can truly expand your awareness.

You can choose any activity you like, such as ironing, folding clothes, mowing the lawn, or showering. Over time, you will begin doing all these activities with greater mindfulness.

Bonus Suggestion

Here is one activity that is not generally considered a mindful activity. It is physical training. For those of you who already workout, it may be easy to see how physical training requires you to live in the moment.

Here's how it works:

In order to perform an exercise to get the desired benefit, you need to use a proper technique. In order to use the proper technique, you need to pay close attention to how you are doing the exercise. In other words, you need to be fully present in the moment.

Another aspect of training that helps you live in the moment is tuning into what is happening in your body. First, during exercising, you need to pay close attention to how your body feels. Are you exercising hard enough, or not enough?

There are times to go easy, such as during warm-up exercises; and times to push yourself hard, such as when you're warmed up and want to stimulate growth.

Second, when you're not in the gym training, you need to pay close attention to the signals your body is sending you. What nutrients and how much do you need to consume to support your training? How much rest do you need?

By tuning in to your body, you force yourself to be in the moment. So, physical training done properly is just about as effective as meditation, or any mindful activity, for developing mindfulness. It's also great for your health.

19. Final Thoughts

Practicing mindfulness is like regularly putting small amounts of change in a jar. They will all add up over time. And this will add up to greater peace and happiness.

Remember, you don't have to do the mindfulness practices perfectly to get the benefits. All you have to do is keep bringing your mind back to the present moment when it wanders off.

Practicing mindfulness may be a bit challenging in the beginning; but I can assure you, it will get easier fairly quickly.

The benefits of living in the moment are well within your reach, no matter how much your mind is racing. If you stick with these mindfulness practices, you too will learn how to live in the moment and stop worrying; and when you do, a whole new world will open up for you. This is what Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh calls the ultimate reality.

ARTICLE B

[Source](#)

5 Reasons to Live in the Moment and Stop Planning Too Much

1. Live in the moment. It sounds simple enough but we as human beings have an incredibly difficult time enjoying the moment.

Why is that?

I believe we tend to spend so much time replaying past moments or planning too much for the future, that we miss out on the great moments that are unveiling right before us. So often we fail to stop and smell the roses. We don't take the time to enjoy the present moment. This is sad because we have no idea how many more moments, we will be fortunate to experience.

I am not proposing that we should spend less time planning. That would be misguided advice. Goal setting is important for us if we desire a contentment in our personal and professional lives. Setting achievable goals and taking the steps to accomplish them is a powerful way to cultivate personal responsibility. Implementing this kind of goal setting provides meaning in our lives because we exude dedication, a strong work ethic, and often perseverance in attainment of these goals.

I believe our society has become a society so enamored with planning. There is often way too much talk of building for the future but what about building for the now? We all desire genuine happiness, and in order to manifest this joy we have to live presently. Too much focus on the future often leads to stress and negative thinking.

2. Why should you be focused on living in the moment, rather than planning too much for the future?

1. The present moment is the only moment you have control over right now

No matter how much you plan you never know for sure how life is going to play out. The only time you will know is when you are in that moment.

The moment you experience right now is the only moment you can control. You can choose to enjoy the moment, or you can choose to loathe the moment. You can also choose to ignore the moment completely and waste it away, but either way, the present moment is yours to control.

Planning isn't going to take you out of the present. It might help you accomplish your goals, but it is not going to improve your quality of life for the present moment. Planning isn't going to guarantee you a desired outcome for the future so why not accept what you can control now?

3. 2. Each moment is a gift

There is no guarantee on the number of moments you will get to experience. This is extremely important to realize. No one knows when the next moment of their life is going to be taken away from them. Your next moment is not guaranteed, so why not take advantage of the one you are in?

You can't live with this unique perspective if you are constantly planning for the next stage of your life. You can only experience this zest for life if you are living in the present moment. It may even sound corny and unrealistic, but it makes perfect sense.



Don't take moments for granted. Plan when it is necessary but not at the expense of you enjoying the present moment. As the old cliché states that life is short, so you enjoy it while you can.

4. 3. Being present is a great stress reducer

Thinking too much about the future, and the past, are often causes of stress. Even though some stress can be beneficial, the stress caused from not living in the moment can be detrimental to one's mental, physical, and emotional health.

Over-planning can lead to unnecessary stress when the planning prevents you from living in the moment. Invigorate your life with present living strategies that will enable you to stay more focused on each moment.

You probably don't have the luxury of meditating five hours a day and not setting some type of plan for your future but implementing small changes into your life should help reduce stress.

Observe when your mind begins to focus on the future instead of the present moment you are experiencing. Ask yourself if this thought process is necessary. Simple awareness and recognition of your thoughts will assist you in being more present.

5. 4. Plans often don't manifest themselves the way you want or expect

This is a reality whether you want to believe it or not. How many times have you tried planning something, but it just didn't work out the way you want? How did you react? Did you get upset or did you handle the situation with acceptance and understanding?

Plans fail. As a member of a flawed species, you fail often. It is a part of life.

Attempting to plan for every step of your life is not only impossible but it is probably not healthy for you. The more you plan, the more likely you are to become irritated or upset when those plans don't come into fruition.

I am not suggesting you shouldn't plan with the attitude that the plan will fail, but I am proposing that you let life play its course and just be.

Go ahead and make plans if that is helpful for you but don't lose sight of the present moment. If your plans don't work out the way you want, then at least try to accept it.

6. 5. Living in the present will make you happier

I don't like to throw the phrase "make you happier" around too often because nothing makes you happy but yourself. In saying that, living in the present is one of the sure-fire methods you can adopt in order to manifest genuine happiness in your life.

Without delving into the all the data and research that is available, it is being discovered that present living is one of the most influential keys to well-being. Too much long-term planning is going to prevent you from enjoying the beauty of now.

Don't impede yourself from experiencing contentment. Practice living presently and observe how it makes you feel. Plan when you need to but don't lose sight of what is currently happening.

Find a balance between living in the moment and planning. You are only going to be able to control the moment you have right now.

The moment you have right now is a gift. Enjoy less stress by relishing the moment. Understand that plans don't always turn out as expected. Accept the present for what it is and be happy.

Plan as you feel it necessary. Save money for a family and house. Invest in yourself. Set goals for yourself and realize them. That is what you are supposed to do. In this pursuit of planning, don't forget about where you are in the present.

