

NEWS BREAK

Article: Weight training may help to ease or prevent depression

Section: NW ARTS & LIFE, G6

Sunday's News Break selects an article from **Sunday, June 17, 2018** of The Seattle Times print replica for an in-depth reading of the news. Read the selected article and answer the attached study questions.

You are encouraged to modify this lesson to fit the needs of your students. For example, some classrooms may be able to use this as a worksheet and others might need to ask and answer the questions in a small group or larger, class discussion.

Please be sure to preview all NIE content before using it in your classroom to ensure it is appropriate for all of your students.

Standards:

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.1

- Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.4.2

- Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

Objectives:

Students will read an article about weight training and how it's positively impacting people that have depression. Students will talk about how exercise impacts the brain and influences moods. They'll discuss how they've felt differently after PE class, playing sports or exercising.

Pre-Reading Discussion:

- Do you exercise? What do you do?
- How do you feel after you workout?
- Is exercising good for your body? What are the benefits you've heard about prior to reading this article.
- How does weight training impact your health?

Vocabulary Building:

Read this sentence, what do you think the highlighted words mean using *context clues*? A **context clue** is a word or words that are hints and refers to the sources of information outside of words that readers may use to predict the identities and meanings of unknown words.

There already is considerable **evidence** that exercise, in general, can help to both stave off and treat depression.

Write your guess and then look up the definition and write it below your guess. How close did you come to the correct definition?

Evidence Guess:

Evidence Definition:

Comprehension Questions:

1. Lifting weights might also lift _____, according to an important new review of dozens of studies about strength training and depression.
2. It finds that _____ exercise often substantially reduces people's gloom, no matter how melancholy they feel at first, or how often — or seldom — they actually get to the gym and lift.
3. A large-scale 2016 review that involved more than 1 million people, for instance, concluded that being physically fit substantially reduces the risk that someone will develop what?
4. What have the majority of past studies and reviews focused on?
5. If you have anxiety does it mean you have depression?
6. So for the new study, which was published in May in JAMA Psychiatry, the same researchers who earlier had examined anxiety and resistance exercise now turned their attention to depression.

They wanted to see whether the available research could tell us what two things?

7. What experiments are the gold standard for testing the effects of exercise and other interventions?
8. The researchers ultimately found _____ experiments that met their criteria. The studies involved almost 2,000 men and women of various ages, some of whom had been diagnosed with depression, while others had not.
9. What did they find from the results of the study?
10. The mental-health impacts were similar for what groups?

Discussion Questions (small/large groups), Journal Prompts or Essay Questions:

This kind of review cannot tell us, though, how strength training might be influencing mental health.

- How do you think strength training influences mental health?

The exercise probably has both physiological and psychological consequences, said Brett Gordon, a graduate student at the University of Limerick in Ireland, who led the new review. The weight training could be changing aspects of the brain, including the levels of various neurochemicals that influence moods, he said.

- Do you think exercise could change your brain and influence moods?
- Have you felt differently after PE class, playing sports or working out?

“Expectancy could also be at work,” he said. People expect the workouts to make them feel more cheerful, and they do.

- Do you expect that you’ll feel better and have more energy after exercising? Why or why not?

The review’s results do not indicate that resistance training is better for combating depression than other kinds of exercise, Gordon said. Nor do the results suggest that exercise can, or should, replace traditional therapies, including medication.

But as a whole, he said, the data do suggest that visiting the gym and lifting weights a few times a week might be an effective way to buoy mental health.

- Do you think including both aerobic activity and weight lifting are important for your overall health and well-being? What if you did one and not the other? Do you think a combination of the two is the best option? Why or why not?

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Newsbreak Answer Key: June 17, 2018

Pre-Reading Discussion:

Answers will vary

Vocabulary Building:

Evidence: The available body of facts or information indicating whether a belief or proposition is true or valid. "The study finds little evidence of overt discrimination."

Comprehension Answers:

1. Moods
2. Resistance
3. Clinical depression
4. Aerobic exercise, such as walking or jogging
5. Anxiety is not depression.
6. If lifting weights meaningfully affects the onset and severity of depression. They also sought to determine if the amount of the exercise and the age, health or gender of the exercisers would matter.
7. The researchers began by gathering all of the best past studies related to resistance exercise and depression. They were interested only in **randomized experiments with a control group**, meaning that some people had been assigned to start exercising while others had not. These experiments are the gold standard for testing the effects of exercise and other interventions. The experiments also had to include testing for depression before and after the training.
8. 33
9. What they found was that resistance training consistently reduced the symptoms of depression, whether someone was formally depressed at the start of the study or not. In other words, if people began the study with depression, they usually felt better after taking up weight training. And if they started out with normal mental health, they ended the experiment with less chance of having become morose and sad than people who did not train.

Perhaps most interesting, the amount of weight training did not seem to matter. The benefits essentially were the same, whether people went to the gym twice a week or five times a week and whether they were completing lots of repetitions of each exercise or only a few.

10. Men and women and for younger lifters (often college students) and people who were middle-aged or elderly.

Discussion Questions (small/large groups), Journal Prompts or Essay Questions: Answers will vary