Does employing reading activities significantly enhance Iranian EFL Learners' Reading Proficiency?

Abbas Jalilnejad Masooleh

English Department, Islamic Azad University, Khurasgan Branch, Isfahan, Iran.

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Since in Iranian university context, reading comprehension is the most important skill to be acquired by the students, this study wanted to show whether implementing pre-, while-, and post-reading activities has a significant impact on Iranian EFL Learners' reading proficiency or not. 28 sophomore students at Islamic Azad University in Lahijan (Iran) participated in this study and were divided into two groups: experimental and control group. The former received teaching reading activities such as deducting, inferring, note-taking, etc. as the treatment while the latter did not receive such a treatment. The treatment proved to be effective, that is, the experimental group surpassed the control group according to the post-test. Finally, it is hoped that material developers, teachers and testers will benefit from the findings of this study. © 2014 Elixir All rights reserved

Introduction

Day & Bamford (2000) argue that reading is the construction of meaning from a printed or written message. In the modern age of information, reading truly is a fundamental survival skill. Eighty-five percent of college work requires reading. Therefore, a strong correlation may be found between reading proficiency and academic success. Those who read may enjoy more finely-tuned brains than those who prefer more passive activities. Those who read:

1. Develop their Verbal Abilities

Those who read tend to have a more varied range of words to express how they feel and to get their point across. This gives them a higher level of vocabulary to use in everyday life.

2. Improve their Focus and Concentration

Sitting down with a book takes long periods of focus and concentration, which at first is hard to do. Being fully engaged in a book involves closing off the outside world and immersing themselves into the text, which over time will strengthen their attention span.

3. Improve their Imagination

The worlds described in books, as well as other peoples views and opinions will help them expand their understanding of what is possible. By reading a written description of an event or a place, their mind is responsible for creating that image in their heads, instead of having the image placed in front of them when they watch television.

4. Enjoy greater knowledge

Books offer an outstanding wealth of learning. Reading gives them a chance to consume huge amount of research in a relatively short amount of time. Heavy readers tend to display greater knowledge of how things work.

5. Expose themselves to New Things

Through reading, they expose themselves to new things, new information, new ways to solve a problem, and new ways to achieve one thing. Who knows – they might find their new hobbies within it. Who knows – they might actually explore one thing they really like and it may end up becoming their career and success in the future. Exploration begins from reading and understanding.

6. Become More Prepared for *Action*

Before they take action on anything, where should they seek for help and guidance? Reading is an essential way which can help them out. In today's world, getting reviews and feedback from other people can make a great impact on their next decision, and the pros and cons of each choice. Read about how to cook a meal; how to play chess; which place is nice for the holiday family trip. These all can help them become more prepared before they really get into it.

7. Gain Experience from Other People

When they are reading, they are actually gaining the knowledge and experience of someone. It can hasten their success toward a goal, as you don't need to repeat the same mistake while focusing on the right path in achieving something. It's like a mountain of gems for them to discover in books, which contain people's successes, failures and advice. Life is too short for them to keep repeating the mistakes that had been done by other people in the past.

8. Entertain themselves

All the benefits of reading mentioned so far are a bonus result of the most important benefit of reading: its entertainment value. If it were not for the entertainment value, reading would be boring. Reading is not only fun, but it has all the added benefits that have been discussed so far. Moreover, L2 readers can enjoy other benefits (Day& Bamford, 1998; Krashen, 2004):

1. affective benefits: Affective benefits include increased self-esteem an confidence, leading to motivation to go on reading more, as well as the pleasure of getting lost in a book.

2. cognitive benefits: Cognitive benefits include knowing more about the world. When we read widely, we necessarily come across more information which we integrate with what we know already.

3. linguistic benefits: Linguistics benefits include better reading comprehension, writing style, vocabulary, spelling, and grammatical development. Tomlinson (2013), citing Day, states that even pronunciation improves.

L2 learners need to be familiar with about 95-8 percent of the words in a text before they can read it fluently (Hirsha & Nation, 1992, p. 2). However, the prior knowledge may be more

Tele:
E-mail addresses: jalilnejadabbas@yahoo.com

important than the calculation of numbers of unfamiliar words; therefore, its importance may be concealed by such percentages. But how can the readers activate their background knowledge? In most cases a common problem students experience in reading classes is the feeling that they know absolutely nothing about the subject they are reading about. However, the problem may not be the lack of background knowledge, but rather the failure to activate that knowledge. For Ringler and Weber (1984), pre-reading activities provide a reader with necessary background to organize activity and to comprehend the material. The present study intended to investigate the effects of reading activities on reading comprehension of a group of students. In this respect the following question was under consideration: *Will reading comprehension be facilitated if students employ reading activities?* But what are the reading activities? Is strategy training valuable? Teachers who are teaching English are in a regular search of various strategies that may develop learners reading comprehension skill. Cohen & Macaro (2007) and Grabe (2010) have stressed the importance of training students in such reading strategies as skimming, scanning, deducing meaning from context, identifying the points, topic sentences, and so on. Oxford and Crookall (1989) elaborated that reading strategy is a process used by the learners to improve reading comprehension and overcome comprehension failures. Language instructors are often frustrated by the fact that students do not automatically transfer the strategies they use when reading in their native language to reading in a language they are learning. Instead, they seem to think reading means starting at the beginning and going word by word, stopping to look up every unknown vocabulary item, until they reach the end. When they do this, students are relying exclusively on their linguistic knowledge, a bottom-up strategy. One of the most important functions of the language instructor, then, is to help students move past this idea and use top-down strategies as they do in their native language. Effective language instructors help students develop a set of reading strategies and match appropriate strategies to each reading situation. Readers use such purposeful strategies to construct and maintain meaning before, during, and after they read. Strategies that can help students read more quickly and effectively include:

1. Before Reading

a. Set a Purpose for Reading.

Before reading the text, think if you will be reading to find out what happens in a story or to learn specific information. Ask yourself what you already know about its topic. Try to recall as much information as you can. Think of related ideas you've learned in the past. Make brief notes about your thoughts or discuss what you remember with others.

b. Preview the Text.

Look at the title, pictures, captions under pictures, headings, bold-faced print and other graphics. Background information may appear on book covers and inner flaps of book jackets. Many books include an introductory section and a mini-biography about the author. Book publisher's websites may also include background information. Think about the information you read. Ask: What kind of text is this? What new information did I learn, and what do I expect to learn? Is this text informative or entertaining, fact or fiction? What interests me about this book?

c. Activate Background Knowledge.

Think about what you already know about the content of what you will read.

d. Predict.

Think what might happen in the story, what words may be used, or what information the text might contain.

2. During Reading

During-reading activities include both things that students themselves do as they are reading and things that you do to assist them as they are reading. Like pre-reading activities, during-reading activities are frequently recommended (Martinez, and Wood

2011; Snow 2001). In creating the list of possible during-reading activities, some types can be suggested.

a. Cross-check.

Check one cue with another. Ask yourself, "Does this word look right, sound right, and make sense?"

b. Reread. When problems occur, return to the beginning of a sentence or paragraph and read it again.

c. Predict and Confirm.

Ask yourself, "What word do I expect to see?", "What do I think will happen next?", "Did that make sense?", or "Am I finding the answers to my questions about this topic?"

d. Skip, Read On, and Go Back.

Sometimes you can skip an unfamiliar word and read to the end of the sentence or paragraph, thinking about what would make sense. Then, using the context, go back and reread to try to determine the word. For example, you were reading the following sentence and wanted to know what 'pessimist' means: *My mother is always happy and optimistic, the total opposite of my brother, the pessimist.* So from the sentence, you can gather that 'pessimist' means the opposite of happy, so pessimist means being moody and angry.

e. Connect Background Knowledge to the Information in the Text. Think about what you already know about the subject and the kind of material you are reading. Think about how the information is similar to what you already know about the topic, event, or person.

f. Think About Explicit and Implicit Information.

Think about what information is given directly. Also think about what you know from reading that is not directly stated in words such as how a character's actions show feelings or why things may have happened based on the clues the author gave.

3. After Reading

Post-reading tasks are intended to verify and expand the knowledge acquired in the reading. These last tasks also lead the readers to discuss and analyze issues presented in the reading. Post-activities are tasks in which learners, after interacting with the reading, reflect, argue and give their points of view:

a. Retell and Summarize.

Tell someone or write what happened in the story, including characters, plot, and important events. If you read a nonfiction piece, review what information was presented.

b. Draw Conclusions.

Think about what predictions you made before and during reading. Look back and think about what you have read. Consider how the information read relates to what you already knew about the topic. Were your questions answered? Do you have more questions about the subject?

c Reread.

Reread the text or a section of the text to help you understand it better.

d. Discuss and Respond.

Talk with someone about what you have read. Ask each other some questions.

e. Write to Support Understanding.

Write about what you have read and what you have learned.

As mentioned before, many current researches on reading have agreed that meaning is not found in the texts only. In other words, understanding results from a communicative processes between readers and texts. Readers try to match their knowledge or activate their schemata with the new information that they receive from the text. The stages of reading that may help readers activate schemata and background knowledge can be classified into 1. pre-reading, 2. while reading and 3. post-reading. As it was mentioned before, the present study intended to investigate whether such reading activities on reading comprehension of a group of students.

Review of Literature

Most scholars would agree that reading is one of the most important skills for educational and professional success (Alderson, 1984). Rivers (1981:147) also, in highlighting the importance of reading comprehension, stated that "reading is the most important activity in any language class, not only as a source of information and a pleasurable activity, but also as a means of consolidating and extending one's knowledge of the language". Reading reinforces the learner's other language skills. Krashen (1981) confirms that those who read more, have larger vocabularies, do better on test of grammar and write better (Kim & krashen, 1997). Chastain (1988:

218), while accepting the significance of reading for meaning, claims that all reading activities serve to facilitate communication fluency in each of the other language skills.

A significant body of literature posits that reading is an interactive process (Carrell, Devine & Eskey 1988; Grabbe, 1991; Rumelhart & Ortony 1977). According to Grabbe (1991:385) the notion of reading as an interactive process refers to "a kind of dialogue between the reader and the text". The notion of reading as an interactive process evolved from the schema theory and is often termed top-down approach to reading. Carrell (1983) distinguishes between formal schemata the readers' knowledge of formal structure of the text and content schemata – previous knowledge which the reader possesses.

A good deal of the current research in the field of EFL reading is embedded in a psycholinguistics framework (Goodman, 1970, Coady, 1979). In this view, the reader is seen as an active processor of information, one who selects only the most productive cues from the printed page in order to interact with the text. One way of facilitating the reader's interaction with a text for triggering and building background knowledge is through pre-reading activities (Hudson, 1982). Pre-reading activities provide orientation to content and context. These activities vary according to first the nature of the text, second the reader's purpose and finally the context of situation (Wallace, 1992).

Studies of pre-reading activities for native speakers have demonstrated the facilitative effects of activating readers' prior knowledge relevant to the understanding of the new text (Mayer, 1994). Pre-reading activities prepare native speakers; they also make the reading task easier (Hansen, 1981).

Several reading researchers like Langer 1984, Adams and Collins 1979, have highlighted the point that readers' participation in using their knowledge and experience while reading a text plays a great role in reading comprehension. In order to use readers' knowledge and experience while reading, pre-reading activities are of great necessity. There are various pre-reading activities. The type of the activities depends on the teacher and the type of the text that learners will read. A teacher must provide pre-reading activities that would match with the text to be read. According to Tierney and Cunningham (1984)

pre-reading activities act as a way to access the readers' former knowledge and "provide a bridge between his knowledge and the text" (p.610).

Criticism of reading activities

Although there are many affirmative approaches to the view that pre-reading activities are helpful, there are still negative views to this as well. Bamford and Day (2004) believe that there is little or no evidence to suggest that activities and questions make any difference to the quality of the reading experience or to the learning that derives from it.

Valencia and Stallman (1989), in the study of prediction activities and prior knowledge, based on their experiment on reading, came up with a view that "prediction activities do not improve comprehension (p. 166):

These patterns seem to indicate that, overall, engaging in a particular type of prior knowledge task does not facilitate better comprehension.

There were also no consistent comprehension differences between students who engaged in these activities and students who did not use any prior knowledge activity at all (p. 166).

However, Maley (2008) claims that the prior knowledge may be more important than the simple calculation of numbers of unfamiliar words; although, Hirsha & Nation (1992: p. 2) believe that L2 learners need to be familiar with about 95-8 percent of the words in a text before they can read it fluently.

Moreover, according to Tomlinson (2013: 50), what emerges from classroom research is a rather depressing picture of the teacher preventing language acquisition. Tomlinson argues that in many classes that he observed over the world during the last 45 years, teachers give no thinking time to learners, that is, the learners are not encouraged to think for themselves. This may spoil an otherwise satisfactory situation or occasion. That is to say, giving thinking time and background support to readers and activating their prior knowledge can enliven an otherwise dull class. In other words, reading by itself does not seem to be sufficient to enhance reading comprehension. Fenton-Smith (2010) stated that we may experience good results by creative post-reading activities. According to Meissner and Yun (2008), Sweet and Snow (2003), reading comprehension proficiency is constructing meaning and thinking before, during and after reading by integrating reader's background knowledge with the information presented in the context. Thus, without any background support, for instance, readers may have great difficulty in understanding new texts; they should know at least something about the topic before reading. Some topics may be unfamiliar to them, such as recreational activities at the beach if they have never been to the beach before. Pictures, drawings, or short skits can help develop relevant background information.

Since reading comprehension, in Iranian university context, is the most important skill to be acquired by the students, and it plays a vital role in their success, this study intended to show whether giving readers thinking time in reading classes has a significant impact on their reading proficiency or not. In other words, this paper tried to show whether the pre-, while-, and post-reading activities significantly enhance reading comprehension proficiency or not. It actually tried to answer the following question. Will reading comprehension be enhanced if students employ reading activities? To deal with this question, a null hypothesis was made: There is no relationship between employing reading activities and improving Iranian sophomore students' reading proficiency. It was revealed that pre-reading along with other activities played an important role in improving reading comprehension.

Methodology

28 sophomore students at Islamic Azad University in Lahijan (Iran), participated in this study and were divided equally into two groups: experimental and control group. In order to find out whether the two groups were at the same level of reading comprehension proficiency or not, the subjects in each of these two groups performed on the TOEFL subtest of reading comprehension. This subtest, which consisted of five passages each followed by ten questions functioned as the pre-test that allowed the homogenized students to enter the study. The maximum score possible to obtain on this test was 50. The time allotted to answer the test was 50 minutes. The participants were scored one point for each correct answer and penalized for every wrong answer.

The two groups received their natural academic procedure during the course. Moreover, the EG received treatment, that is, employing reading activities but the CG did not receive any treatment. The treatment consisted of three different types of activities: pre-, while-, and post-reading activities. In the pre-reading phase, in the pictorial context condition, for instance, a picture about the content of the reading passage was shown to the students, then the researcher encouraged discussion by having them describe the content of the picture on the basis of which they finally made a guess about the content of the reading passage. Moreover, the students were encouraged to make brief notes, predict, and think what might happen in the story, what words may be used, or what information the text might contain.

In the during-reading phase, the students tried to guess at the meaning of unfamiliar words through using the context clues. Finally, in the post-reading phase, the students wrote short summaries of the texts and drew conclusions. More examples of such activities can be found in the appendix.

These reading activities were carried out in 14 weekly sessions by the experimental group; these weekly activities lasted 30 minutes before, while, and after reading the passage from TOEFL, and the participants in the control group received the same passages but they were not given such activities.

At the end of the experiment, a post-test on the TOEFL subtest of reading comprehension which consisted of five passages each followed by ten questions was administered to both groups. It was aimed at measuring the reading performance of the participants to see if the treatment had made a significant difference in the reading performance of the two groups. The results obtained through post-test were to be analyzed and interpreted statistically by t-test formula to determine how confident the researcher can be to state that the difference is not due to chance.

Data Analysis

The statistical technique of t-test formula was performed to determine whether the null hypothesis of the study is confirmed or rejected. The computation and analysis of the t-test provided us with the empirical answer to the research question posed, and the impact of employing reading activities on reading comprehension ability was confirmed. In other words, the experimental group that was exposed to reading activities gained more considerable abilities in comprehension than control group.

1. Analysis No. 1

Table 1. t-test for the comparison of the performance of the two groups at the pre-test stage

Group	Mean Score	SD	t-value	df
EG	30.2	4.9	.6	26
CG	29	4.8		

$p<0.05$

t-critical = 2.000

As revealed in Table 1, the mean score for the CG was 29 while it was 30.2 for the EG. However, this mean difference could not suffice to claim the group difference. Therefore, an independent t-test was applied to compute the two means of the two groups in order to capture the initial differences.

2. Analysis No. 2

In order to be post-tested, the participants in each of the two groups performed on a reading comprehension test similar to the one administered at the pre-test stage. In order to find the answer to the question of the study, that is, will reading comprehension be facilitated if students employ reading activities? , the two means of the two groups were compared. In other words, through applying the independent t-test, it was demonstrated whether the two groups scored differently on the final test of reading proficiency or not. The result is presented in table 2 below.

Table 2. t-test for the comparison of the performance of the two groups at the post-test stage

Group	Mean Score	SD	t-value	df
EG	35.3	5	3.13	26
CG	30	3.9		

$p<0.05$

t-critical = 2.000

3. Analysis No. 3

The statistical technique of matched t-test was applied twice. Once, to compare the performance of the EG on the pre-test with that of the same group on the post-test, and then to compare the same two performances but this time for the CG. The results are tabulated in table 3 below.

Table 3. Matched t-test for comparing the performance of each group at the pre- and post-test stages

Group	Mean Score		t-value	Df	t-critical
	pre-	post-			
EG	30.2	35.3	2.8	13	2.16
CG	29	30	.62	13	2.16

The mean score of the EG rose from 30.2 on the pre-test to 35.3 on the post-test, giving a gain score of 5.1 points of improvement, but the mean score of the CG increased from 29 on the pre-test to 30 on the post-test giving a gain score of 1 point of improvement.

Result and Discussion

1. Discussion of Analysis No. 1

On the basis of the results in table 1, it can safely be asserted that this study included two groups which were not statistically different in terms of their reading proficiency at the outset of the study. Having 26 degrees of freedom, we need at least a value of 2 before we could safely reject the null hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance. As manifested in table 1, the observed t-value 0.6 is smaller than the critical t-value 2 with 26 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the difference between the two groups at the 0.05 level of probability proved not to be significant before the experiment.

2. Discussion of Analysis No. 2

As table 2 indicates, the difference in the reading comprehension proficiency between the two groups was statistically significant. More specifically, the EG improved much more than the CG from the pre-test stage to post-test stage. In other words, the observed t-value 3.13 is greater than the critical t-value 2 with 26 degrees of freedom at the 0.05 level of significance (t- observed = 3.13> t-critical = 2). Therefore, it can be concluded that employing reading activities is a very effective means for the improvement of reading proficiency. Thus, the null hypothesis of the present study, that is, "There is

no relationship between employing reading activities and improving Iranian sophomore students' reading proficiency" was rejected.

3. Discussion of Analysis No. 3

According to table 3, reading proficiency of both groups improved from pre-test stage to post-test stage. In other words, the mean score of the EG rose from 30.2 on the pre-test to 35.3 on the post-test, giving a gain score of 5.1 points of improvement, and the mean score of the CG rose from 29 on the pre-test to 30 on the post-test, giving a gain score of 1pointof improvement.

Although reading proficiency of these two groups improved from pre-test stage to post-test stage, the improvement in the EG was much more statistically significant than that of CG. In other words, the experimental group which was equal to CG in terms of reading proficiency before receiving the treatment came to differ from it after receiving the treatment. Thus, the interpretation one can have here is that this difference is the result of the treatment that the EG received. In other words, assigning Iranian sophomore students some reading activities was a very effective means for the development of reading proficiency. Hence, the null hypothesis of this study, there is no relationship between reading activities and improving reading proficiency, is rejected: t-observed for EG = 2.8> t-critical = 2.16> t- observed for CG = .62.

Although much has been said about reading comprehension in first or second language learning, most writers conclude that we really know very little about the reading process and perhaps less about what should be done to facilitate it. The present study, however, provided some support for the idea that reading activities can have powerful effects on reading comprehension.

The results of this study paved the way for acceptance of the belief that employing some activities can have a large impact on reading comprehension. Therefore, there will be some guidelines for teachers and syllabus designers and testers regarding reading pedagogy.

This study showed that readers need to activate their knowledge of the world in order to understand what they read, and teachers play a great role in this respect. They may explicitly help the students how to properly use reading strategies to monitor their reading comprehension. Through employing reading strategy, EFL learners will be able to improve their reading comprehension and experience a higher level of competency which will further motivate them to read on a regular basis (Block, 1992). Chamot (2005) stated that in order to become motivated and selective strategy users, EFL learners should selfmonitor their reading strategy. In other words, EFL learners need to consciously know what and when to apply appropriate reading strategy. Moreover, teachers may consider knowledge of the world and or familiarity with the text, on the part of readers, as a criterion in selecting reading materials. Providing the readers with background knowledge through reading activities seems to be a good strategy for teachers to come up with the problems students have in reading comprehension.

Material developers and syllabus designers may also take the reading activities that proved to have positive effect on reading comprehension into consideration.

Moreover, language testers may construct better reading comprehension tests through being concerned with the reading activities suggested by this study.

While this study demonstrated the importance of employing reading activities, there were some limitations to the study that must be mentioned. The primary limitation was the small sample size. Other researchers can employ larger samples that help them feel more confident in their findings. The other factor that other researchers may find necessary and determining is that of gender. Better results may be obtained through taking the gender variable into consideration in such a study. It is hoped that this small-scale study will truly highlight the effect of reading activities on improving the students' reading comprehension proficiency.

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Appendix

Caffeine

Caffeine can lead to a condition known as caffeinism if large amounts, and especially over extended periods of time are taken. Although a lot of Americans use caffeine just few people face social problems. Some doctors agree that caffeine intoxication may lead to physical and mental conditions including nervousness, irritability, anxiety, insomnia headaches among others. Caffeine is a common ingredient for soft drinks such as cola. Also, other products such as chocolate, tea, energy drinks, shampoo, and soap and even medication may contain some. Caffeine is a central nervous system and metabolic stimulant and it is used both recreationally and medically to reduce physical fatigue and restore mental alertness when unusual weakness or drowsiness occurs. Nevertheless, some people think that caffeine can help to sober up a drunk person or to heat a hypothermia victim but fast beating or acceleration of cold temperatures on the body may occur. Here are some products with the amount of caffeine:

1. Soft drinks typically contain about 10 to 50 milligrams of caffeine per serving 2. Red Bull contains as much as 80 milligrams of caffeine per serving 3. one serving of coffee ranges from 40 milligrams to about 100 milligrams for a cup 4. one serving of tea ranges from 20 milligrams to about 100 milligrams for a cup 5. cocoa may contain 4 milligrams per cup

Symptoms

The absorption and distribution of caffeine is quickly in the body, but the body does not store it. It takes less than an hour for caffeine to begin affecting the body and a mild dose wears off in three to four hours. Caffeine does not diminish the alcohol level on a person but it can be used as treatment for some health problems such as migraine or fatigue. In large amounts, caffeine can cause the heart to beat fast, irritability, insomnia, tremulousness, depression, headaches, and peptic ulcers.The stimulating effects of caffeine are caused by a central nervous reaction. The heart rate increases, blood vessels expand and the brain receives more oxygen. Birth defects and behavior in children are examples of studies researchers have made.

Caffeine tolerance develops very quickly, especially among heavy coffee and energy drink consumers. Complete tolerance to sleep disruption effects of caffeine develops after consuming 400 mg of caffeine. Thus, about 250 to 350 mg. of caffeine daily (three cups of coffee) can be considered a moderate amount in order to avoid health problems. Abrupt withdrawal may lead to cause symptoms such as headaches, irritability, nausea, and others. It is a good idea to reduce caffeine intake gradually in order to prevent symptoms of withdrawal.

Recommendations

Moderate caffeine intake may not lead to health problems. There is no scientific evidence for the mistaken but common belief that caffeine consumption causes stunted growth in children. However, as with adults, nausea, urinary urgency, nervousness, or other effects from an elevated caffeine intake via chocolate milk, sodas, cold medicines, iced tea, coffee and other products that are widely used, may be reasons to limit the amount of caffeine that is consumed each day in children. It is recommended that pregnant women should limit their caffeine intake to less than 300 mg. of caffeine a day – the equivalent of 2-3 cups of coffee a day. A higher intake may be associated with miscarriage.

Pre-reading Activities

Activity 1: Chose the best answer. How many cups of coffee do you drink a day?

a. Between 1 and 2 cups   b. Between 3 and 4 cups
c. Between 5 and 6 cups   d. More than 6 cups

What kind of people should not drink coffee?

a. Pregnant women, children, people with coronary heart disease or peptic ulcers   b. Teachers, students, people who practice sports   c. Sick people, adult people, people who have problems to sleep   d. Dentists, patients, and people who are on a diet

What foods contain caffeine?

a. Chocolate   b. Tea   c. Some soft drinks   d. a, b, and c

Activity 2: Answer the following questions. What do you think the answers are?

a. What is caffeine?_____

b. What are the negative effects of drinking coffee?_____

c. What are the positive effects of drinking coffee?_____

d. How is caffeine related to health problems?_____

Activity 3: Tick (√) the words or expressions that you think coffee involves. ___ anxiety   ___ sleep disorder ___ central nervous system stimulant ___ energy   ___ raises the temperature in the body   ___helps migraine headaches ___ reduces the effects of alcohol   ___ some medication may contain caffeine   ___ it tastes good Add others:_____

While-reading Activities

Activity 4: Read the article that is below and answer these questions.

a. What is the concept of caffeine?_____

b. What are the negative effects of caffeine?_____

c. What are the positive effects of caffeine?_____

d. How many cups of coffee should a child drink?_____

e. What is a moderate coffee drinker?_____

Activity 5: Mark True (T) or False (F) based on the reading.___ Some doctors see caffeine as a social problem.___ Coffee helps to heat the body of a person.___ Caffeine has a fast process in the body.___ Caffeine may be used as medication because it helps to cure migraine headaches, fatigue or drowsiness.___ If you only drink three cups of coffee daily you may not have health problems.___ If you stop drinking coffee suddenly you will not have health symptoms.___ If a child drinks coffee

he/she may have some health problems___ Excess in caffeine may lead to hospitalization.

Activity 6: Number the events as they appear in the reading ___ The article gives evidence that some people have studied caffeine. ___ Some examples of food containing caffeine are presented. ___ The article gives a guide for excess intake of caffeine. ___ Some examples of food containing amount of caffeine are presented. ___ The article mentions some people who should not drink coffee. ___ Some symptoms are given. ___ A definition is given. ___ An idea of moderate intake of coffee is given.

Post-reading Activities

Activity 7: Write a short summary of the reading._____

Activity 8: Think of the different foods or medication you have every day, which ones contain caffeine?_____
How much caffeine is there in those items? _____

Activity 9: Read the following and support your argument based on the reading and your points of view. Richard is 12 years old and practices basketball three times a week. He loves drinking a cup of coffee before practicing it; could he have any health problem?_____

Abbas Jalilnejad Masooleh is currently a PhD candidate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Islamic Azad University, Khorasgan Branch. He is also a faculty member at Islamic Azad University, Lahijan Branch, Iran.