

LESSON

1

Laughter

Laughing is something that we do naturally every day.
Now, scientific research is making its amazing effects known.



When do we laugh?



Goals & Activities



LISTENING

Understanding conversations and explanations related to laughter.



READING

Understanding the main idea, key points, and details of a text about laughter.



TALKING & ASKING

Talking and asking about topics related to laughter.



GIVING A TALK

Talking logically about information and ideas on topics related to laughter.



WRITING

Writing logically about whether or not laughing makes a person healthier.

Target Task: Talking about one example of traditional Japanese comedy performances.

Warm-up



Listen to the conversation between Aya and Jim.

- ① What made Aya smile?
 - A. A clever joke.
 - B. An interesting photo.
 - C. A funny sound.
- ② What does “contagious” mean?
 - A. Spread to others.
 - B. Tell jokes to others.
 - C. Make others surprised.



*chimpanzee : チンパンジー



Choose one picture from page 14 and describe it.



Talk in pairs about the following questions:

- ① About how many times do you laugh a day?
- ② What is the funniest thing that you experienced recently?



New Words

2. **poem** [póuəm]
5. **mood** [mú:d]
11. **preverbal** [pri:və:rbəl]
11. **caregiver(s)** [kéəgɪvə(r)]
12. **trigger(ed)** [trɪgə(r)]
13. **activate(s)** [æktə'veɪt(s)]
16. **involve(d)** [ɪnvə:lv(d)]
17. **modification(s)** [mɒ:dəfɪkəɪʃən(z)]
17. **breathing** [brɪ:ðɪŋ]
21. **majority** [mədʒɔ:rəti]

“Laugh, and the world laughs with you.” This saying comes from an 1883 poem by Ella Wheeler Wilcox. She understood something about laughter that is still true today. When you laugh, people around you will too. Laughter has the power to change our mood, affect others, and more. 5 But what is laughter? And what is its magic power?

Laughter is part of the universal human vocabulary. All members of the human species understand it. The first laughter appears at about 3.5 to 4 months of age, long before we’re able to speak. Laughter, like crying, is a way 10 for a preverbal infant to interact with caregivers.

We know that laughter is triggered by many sensations and thoughts, and that it activates many parts of the body. When we laugh, we alter our facial expressions and make sounds. When we laugh loudly, the muscles of the arms, 15 legs, and trunk are involved. Laughter also requires modifications in our breathing pattern.

One interesting fact about laughter is that we rarely 20 laugh when we are alone. In a study, children were asked whether they enjoyed watching anime more when they were alone or with other children. Although the majority



(p.16) 2. Ella Wheeler Wilcox [éla wi:lə(r) wilkɔ:ks] エラ・ウィーラー・ウィルクス (1850-1919)
 11. a preverbal infant = an infant who hasn't started speaking yet
 (p.16) 8. 何を指しているか。21. the majorityの意味は何か。= the majority of the ()
 (p.16) 5. to change our mood, affect others, and more 3つを列挙する際の読み方に注意

replied that there was no difference, they were observed to laugh 8 times more when watching the anime in a group than when watching it by themselves. Obviously, we do not laugh simply because something is funny.

New Words

3. obviously

[ˈɒbvɪəsli]



1 2 3



Key Ideas

1. According to the passage, what is laughter?

Laughter is _____.

2. What causes us to laugh?

_____.

3. What is the last paragraph of this passage mainly about?

A. How children laugh more than adults do.

B. How being with others leads to laughter.

C. How laughter makes people happy and healthy.



The Gist

Laughter has the power to change our () and affect others. We first laugh before we can even (), because laughter is a form of communication. When we laugh loudly, our muscles are involved and our () is also modified. Interestingly, research shows that we usually laugh more when we are with () than when we are by ourselves.

activate breathing involve mood others speak

*余分な語(句)が2つあります。

*modify: ~を修正する

*interestingly: 面白いことに



Think and Talk

Talk in pairs. What makes you laugh?

- I don't laugh so often.
- I laugh when I watch [read]
- I laugh when my friends



New Words

5. **bear** [béə]
5. **conduct(ed)** [kəndákt(id)]
6. **participant(s)** [pɑ:rtísəpənt(s)]
6. **threshold** [θréʃhəʊld]
7. **placing** [pléisiŋ] <place
10. **deem(ed)** [dí:m(d)]
12. **withstand** [wiðstænd]
17. **giggling** [gígliŋ] <giggle
17. **chuckling** [tʃákliŋ] <chuckle
18. **physiological** [fiziəló:dʒikl]
18. **uncontrollable** [ʌnkəntróuləbl]

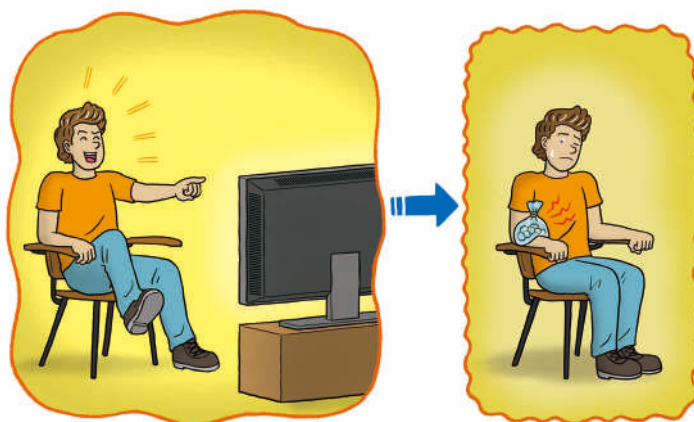
Phrases

3. **have a ~ effect on ...**
8. **split ~ into ...**
12. **up to ~**
13. **to one's surprise**
17. **appear to ~**

Everyone knows that laughter makes you feel good. In English we say, “Laughter is the best medicine.” But can laughter really have a positive effect on health?

Experiments have shown that, if we laugh, our ability to bear pain increases. In one study conducted by Oxford University researchers, participants’ pain threshold was tested by placing a bag of ice on their arms to see how long they could bear it. They were then split into two groups. One was shown 15 minutes of comedy videos, while the other was shown material the researchers deemed boring.

The study showed that subjects who had watched comedy videos were able to withstand up to 10% more pain than they had before watching them. To the researchers’ surprise, it was also found that the other group was actually less able to bear pain after watching 15 minutes of the “boring” programs. The type of laughter was also important. Just giggling or chuckling did not appear to have any physiological effects. It was only uncontrollable laughter that produced results.



<p.18> 6. pain threshold = the level at which someone feels pain

📖 <p.18> 8. itは何を指しているか。8. Theyは何を指しているか。19. resultsはどのような内容か。

🎵 <p.18> 11. The study showed ... 音読の際はshowed, videos, pain の後で区切るとよい

This effect is thought to occur because laughter releases brain chemicals called endorphins, which dull pain and stress signals, into the body. ²⁻²⁻³ Laughter can also activate immune cells, which combat bacteria and viruses.

5 Scientists and researchers all over the world continue to investigate the amazing effects that laughter can have on the human body.



1 2 3

New Words

1. **release(s)** [rɪlɪːs(ɪz)]
2. **endorphin(s)** [endɔːrfin(z)]
2. **dull** [dʌl]
3. **signal(s)** [sɪɡnl(z)]
4. **combat** [kəmbæt]
4. **bacteria** [bæktɪriə]
4. **virus(es)** [vaɪrəs(ɪz)]
6. **investigate** [ɪnvɛstəɡeɪt]



Key Ideas

1. What positive effect does laughter have on health?

When we laugh, _____.

2. In the experiment, which group was more able to bear pain?

The group that _____.

3. According to the passage, what type of laughter is likely to release endorphins more?

- A. Polite laughter.
- B. Giggling and chuckling.
- C. Laughter that cannot be controlled.



The Gist

A saying goes, “Laughter is the best ()” and, in fact, research has shown that our ability to () pain increases after we laugh. In an experiment, () who watched comedy videos could bear pain longer compared to those who watched boring videos. This may be because laughter releases brain chemicals which dull pain and reduce stress ().

bear giggle medicine participants signals threshold



Think and Talk

Does laughter make you feel good?

- I think so. When I laugh, I
- I’m not sure. Even when I laugh, I don’t



New Words

3. **decadelong**
[dékaidlò:ŋ]
3. **survey** [sá:rvei]
4. **naturally**
[nætʃərəli]
6. **obvious** [á:bviəs]
6. **humor** [hjú:mər]
9. **playful** [pléifl]
10. **strengthen**
[stréŋθn]
11. **foster** [fá:stər]
11. **emotional**
[imóuʃənl]
12. **bond** [bá:nd]
13. **buffer** [báfə]
13. **disappointment**
[disəpóintmənt]
16. **fully** [fúli]
19. **apparently**
[əpérəntli]

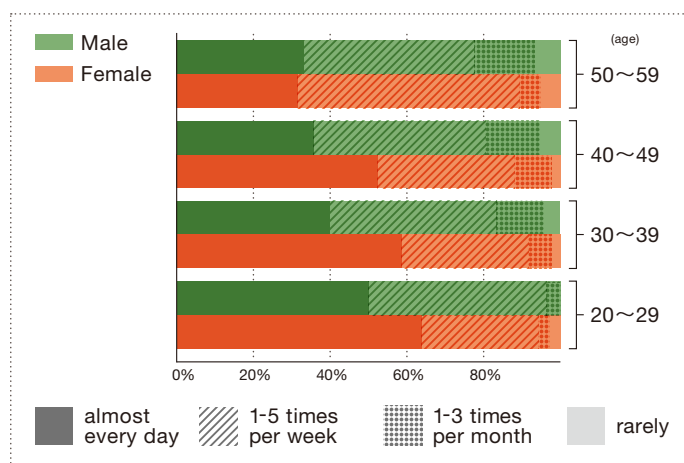
Phrases

1. **play a ~ part**
7. **Here comes ~.**
14. **draw ~ together**

Scientists have found that laughter plays an important part in maintaining human relationships. In one decadelong survey, researchers studied over 2,000 cases of naturally occurring laughter. Surprisingly, they found that, in most cases, laughter did not actually follow jokes or obvious humor. People even laughed after comments and questions, such as “Here comes Mary!” and “How did you do on the test?”

Such laughter and other forms of playful communication strengthen our relationships by acting as a kind of social glue. They trigger positive feelings and foster emotional connections, forming a positive bond, which acts as a strong buffer against stress and disappointment.

We know that laughter draws people together in ways that cause healthy physical and emotional changes in the body. However, data shows that we do not fully utilize the power of laughter. According to one study, 60% of women surveyed replied they laughed out loud, while only 40% of men did. Women apparently laugh a lot more than men.



frequency of laughing out loud

資料：『笑いの頻度（男女別、年齢別）2003年』（大平哲也）

〈p.20〉 6. obvious humor = clear, direct, and simple humor

📖 〈p.20〉 9. Such laughterとはどのようなものか。 19. didはここではどのような意味か。

🎵 〈p.20〉 17. 60% of women surveyed 音読の際は意味のまとまりとして一息で読む

Age also seems to make a difference to how much people laugh. When asked if they laughed a lot, 65% of participants in their 30s replied affirmatively, compared to 45% of those in their 50s. Another study noted that elementary school pupils laugh 300 times a day on average, while people in their 70s only laugh twice a day. Once we recognize the power of laughter, we need to bring it into our everyday lives regardless of gender or age!



1 2 3

New Words

3. **affirmatively**
[əfəˈrmativli]
5. **pupil(s)** [pjuːpl(z)]
8. **regardless**
[rɪɡəˈrdləs]
8. **gender** [dʒɛndə]

Phrases

3. **compare ~ to ...**
7. **bring ~ into ...**
8. **regardless of ~**



Key Ideas

1. What have scientists learned about laughter?

They have learned _____.

2. What surprising fact about laughter did the survey find?

_____.

3. Which is mentioned in the passage? Choose all that apply.

- A. Laughter promoting a social bond.
- B. Reasons why women laugh more than men.
- C. The relationship between age and laughter.



The Gist

Laughter helps to () human relationships. Often, it is not caused by humor, but follows comments and questions. In this way, laughter makes connections between people stronger, and these bonds can be a () against stress. Studies show that women laugh more than men, and children laugh more than the (). We should use the () of laughter more in our daily lives.

buffer elderly gender maintain power strengthen



Think and Talk

Talk in pairs. When was the last time you laughed? What made you laugh?

- Yesterday during class, I laughed because
- Last night while I was watching TV, I laughed and laughed because

Comprehension Check



A Listen to the statements and answer T (true) or F (false).

1. () 2. () 3. () 4. () 5. ()



B-1 Fill in the blanks in the graphic organizer below about Lesson 1.

Fact

Evidence

• People rarely
(①)
when alone.

Study:

- Children watched anime alone or in a group.
- They laughed 8 times more when ② _____.

• Laughter helps us
to bear
(③).

Study:

- One group watched comedy videos, and the other watched ④ _____.
- The group that watched comedy videos was able to bear ⑤ _____ more pain than they had before watching them.

• (⑥)
may influence
how much
people laugh.

Study:

- People were asked if they ⑦ _____.
- 65% of participants in their 30s agreed.
- 45% of participants in their 50s agreed.



B-2 Explain each picture based on the information obtained in the lesson.
Add your comments at the end.

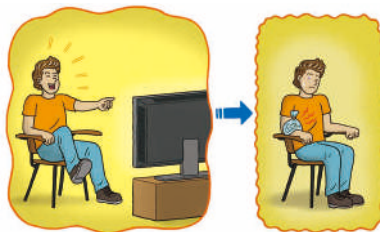
[Sentence starters]

- ① One interesting thing about laughter is In a study,
- ② Laughter is the best medicine. For example,
- ③ Gender and age may make a difference to how much people laugh. For example,

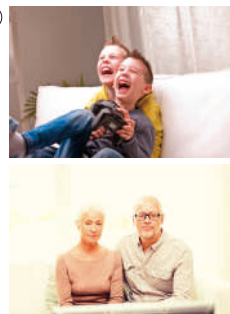
①



②



③



Share Your Thoughts



Write your ideas about the following questions.

- What kind of things make you laugh? Do you think laughing makes you healthier?

[Example]

Watching short videos of funny animals always makes me laugh. Laughing makes me feel happy and relaxed, so I believe it makes me healthier. I will explain two advantages of this hobby and how it helps me stay healthier.

First, watching funny animal videos gives me a calm, warm feeling. I don't have any pets, and I don't have a favorite animal, but watching such animal videos never fails to make me laugh. I feel happy and relaxed then, and this reduces my stress.

Second, these funny animal videos often give me chances to laugh together with my friends and family. When I find one that I like, I show it to them. I feel even happier when I laugh with someone close to me. Sharing a moment and laughing about it with someone else like this gives me a comfortable, cheerful feeling.

I think laughing makes me stay healthy. Watching short animal videos is one of the best ways for me to stay happy, relaxed, and positive.



Share your ideas with your partner.

Language in Action

① Fill in the blanks with words from the box. Change the form if necessary.

1. It is not possible for humans to () under water.
2. While other players have (), Emily has speed.
3. Lack of sleep can contribute to the development of () problems.
4. Some people say the right brain controls () and the left brain controls logic.

breathing emotional obviously physiological pupil strengthen


*logic: 論理

② Fill in the blanks with the most suitable words that start with the given letter.

1. We will use this room for the next event. It's our biggest room and (u) (t) 100 people can be seated in it.
2. Because I got home late, I thought my mother was angry but, (t) my (s), she smiled.
3. The professor is one of the pioneers in vaccine research, and is (p) a leading (p) in this field.
4. My little brother is sometimes too honest. He says what he thinks (r) (o) other people's feelings.

*vaccine: ワクチン *leading: 先導的な

Next Step

 You will talk about the culture of laughter with the students of your sister school. One of them is going to introduce their culture of laughter.

STEP 1 Listen to the speech and answer the questions.

What is the name of a popular type of comedy performance in their country?

— () comedy.

Don't look at Step 2 yet!



Complete the table using words or phrases from the speech.

 Places performances are held (3 or more)	
Content of performance	
Length of performance	
How to become a professional performer	

*stand-up comedy: 一人漫談 *basically: 基本的に

STEP 2 Listen again and fill in the blanks.

Hello. I am going to talk about the culture of laughter in the U.S. In our country, there are many kinds of comedy performances that _____ laughter to people. The most popular one is stand-up comedy. Stand-up comedy is a _____ show held in comedy clubs, comedy festivals, bars, colleges, or theaters. Usually one stand-up comedian talks _____ to the audience and makes them laugh by telling funny stories or jokes. The time of the performance is different: three minutes to over 45 minutes, _____ the types. Basically, stand-up comedians _____ their skills by themselves to become professionals. They write jokes and stories and find opportunities to perform all by themselves. Sometimes we need the same shared cultural or historical _____ in order to laugh at their performance, but _____ watching some on the Internet.





In order to introduce the Japanese culture of laughter, choose one example of comedy performances of Japan and talk about it.

Expressions

Hints: style, place, content, time, how to become the performer



[Example]

Rakugo is the art of storytelling by one person. Most of the stories are funny stories and have punch lines called *ochi* or *sage*. The *rakugoka* or performer needs to keep the audience attracted and make them laugh toward the punch line. Each performance is 15 to 20 minutes. The longest one is over one hour, and the shortest one is only three seconds! In order to become a performer, usually you ask a master to let you be his or her apprentice or student first. Then, you keep performing, raising your rank and developing your skills until you become a master. Some *rakugoka* perform in English, too. You can find *rakugo* in English on the Internet, so you can enjoy the atmosphere.

*punch line: (ジョークなどの) オチ *apprentice: 弟子



[memo]

Check Your Progress!



I can understand conversations and explanations related to laughter.


☐ ☐ ☐


I can understand the main idea, key points, and details of a text about laughter.

☐ ☐ ☐


I can talk and ask about topics related to laughter.

☐ ☐ ☐


I can talk logically about information and ideas on topics related to laughter.

☐ ☐ ☐


I can write logically about whether or not laughing makes a person healthier.

☐ ☐ ☐

Target Task:

I can talk about one example of traditional Japanese comedy performances.

☐ ☐ ☐