

The effect of collaborative learning...

THE EFFECT OF COLLABORATIVE LEARNING IN BEGINNERS' READING  
COMPREHENSION

By

Luis Javier Narváez Hernández

And

Nyla Rosero Quintaz

School Of Human Sciences

Linguistics and Languages Department

English and French Program

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Luis Javier Narváez Hernández

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Nyla Rosero Quintaz

Advisor

Jesús Alirio Bastidas A., Ph.D.

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## **CHAPTER ONE: THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

This research includes information about the research problem, characteristics, objectives and information that permits to understand the significance of the study and the reason why the collaborative learning method is selected to work on.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the process of learning English as a foreign language we can use different methods to enhance conditions for learning students' knowledge; one of them is Collaborative learning method in which the interaction between students and teachers is vital for their learning process. (Jhonson and Jhonson, 1991).

Collaborative learning approach gives a variety of activities to increase reading comprehension in which teachers help students learn in a natural situation, they are more likely to be motivated and involved actively in learning. They discuss what they are reading with others to enable students to expand their understanding, clarify misunderstanding, learn to support their thinking and explain what they understand. In collaborative learning students are expected to learn, to participate and to be successful. They are held accountable for their progress and their learning but are supported in their efforts to learn.

Students respond positively when they are expected to assume responsibility for their own reading assignments within clearly defined limits,

are given some independence in meeting the assignments, and are held accountable for those assignments. (Gerlach, 1994)

The population chosen for this study is students of 10<sup>th</sup> grade from an educational institution located in downtown Pasto, this group has previous knowledge of English and they might be able to increase their reading comprehension through collaborative learning method.

### **Problem description**

Nowadays in schools and high schools, some teachers follow traditional methods and students do not have many hours dedicated to foreign language instruction, for this reason the learning process is theoretical rather than practical, in which grammar is considered the most important thing in the classroom excluding other abilities such as listening, speaking, reading and writing.

This study was focused on reading comprehension because we think it is important to focus on this ability in high schools with the application of a collaborative learning technique in which students develop activities to understand what they are reading and giving coherent ideas in an oral form without taking into account possible mistakes in grammar instruction.

If teachers continue teaching with traditional methods, students might not be able to participate actively in the classroom because they might not have motivation to express their opinion spontaneously about topics presented by the teacher in the classroom, at the same time students could

be passive and the class may be monotone and the teachers will have to require the students to speak and their participation will be poor.

That is why we wanted to apply the collaborative approach in order to create a good environment in which students and teachers enjoy the English class and everyone will interact supporting an idea or an answer without the stress that normally students feel when they have to speak in front of others.

To solve the problem found in a specific high school we create a variety of activities which were short, and innovative, with vocabulary which is easy to understand, and focused on increasing their reading comprehension in the classroom.

### **Research question**

What is the effect of collaborative learning on reading comprehension in 10<sup>th</sup> grade students in an educational institution located in Pasto?

### **General objective**

To analyze the effect that the collaborative learning method has in 10<sup>th</sup> grade students in a state high school in Pasto to increase reading comprehension.

### **Specific objectives**

To determine the reading comprehension level of students at the end of the treatment.

To compare reading comprehension before and after the implementation of the collaborative learning method.

## **Definitions of terms**

### **Collaboration**

Collaboration is a philosophy of interaction and personal lifestyle where individuals are responsible for their actions, including learning, and respect the abilities and contributions of their partners. (Panitz, 1995)

### **Collaborative learning**

It is an educational approach to teaching and learning that involves groups of learners working together to solve a problem, complete a task, or create a product. Collaborative learning is based on the idea that learning is a naturally social act in which the participants talk among themselves. It is through the talk that learning occurs. (Smith and Mc Gregor, 1992)

### **Reading comprehension**

According to Goodman (1998), it is the process of constructing meaning from text. The goal of all reading instruction is ultimately targeted at helping a reader comprehend a text. Reading comprehension involves at least two people: the reader and the writer. The process of comprehending involves decoding the writer's words and then using background knowledge to construct an approximate understanding of the writer's message.

### **Population**

The populations chosen for this study were 64 students of 10<sup>th</sup> grade from an educational institution located in downtown of Pasto aged between 15 to 17 years old, who are considered beginners to carry out this study; we

also consider the population context: family background, the school location and the behavior in classroom.

### **Significance of the study**

This study is relevant because collaborative learning encourages each student to be responsible not only for their learning but also their creation of an environment of achievement. This study is possible to apply because students should use their knowledge to communicate with others. The motivation of the students to participate actively in the activities which will be designed for them is the main tool to make this study work.

This research topic was chosen because the collaborative learning approach focused on reading comprehension has not been carried out in the University of Nariño. There is only one study that is “Does collaborative learning help children with special educational needs to understand basic English vocabulary”, developed in 2005. This study demonstrated that Collaborative Learning was useful in improving the interpersonal relationships and social skills. Learning English through Collaborative learning approach helps not only teachers but also students who work together to achieve a goal. For this reason, the collaborative learning approach will be implemented by teachers in the classroom through activities to facilitate reading comprehension that is why we chose this topic to give possible solutions and contribute to implement new methods to facilitate the process of teaching and learning in high school.

### **Limitations**

Some possible limitations that we can found carrying out this research, could be that the teachers of the control group develop different activities to improve reading comprehension with another method without taking into account the collaborative learning approach. Or the results of this treatment could be the same in the control and experimental group.



## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this chapter, we present the literature review related to the problem of our study. This literature refers to collaborative learning, principles of collaborative learning approach, importance of collaborative learning, interaction, collaborative learning activities and techniques, types of collaborative learning groups, reading comprehension, levels of comprehension, the role of teachers and students in collaborative learning and some research studies about collaborative learning focused on reading comprehension.

### **Collaborative learning**

Interest for collaborative learning, raised in the early nineties and soon became dominant in advanced educational technology research. At the same time other important focal point emerged, such as the interest for learning what occurs in informal settings (situated cognition and situated learning), communities of learning, etc. (Pea, 1995).

According to Smith and MacGregor (1992) the term “Collaborative learning” is an umbrella term for a variety of educational approaches involving joint intellectual effort by students, or both students and teachers. Usually, students are working in groups of two or more, mutually searching for understanding, solutions, or meanings, or creating a product. Collaborative learning activities vary widely, but most center on students’ exploration or application of the course material, not simply the teacher’s presentation or explication of it.

According to Bruffee (1995), basically, collaborative learning is any approach to education in which students work together in small groups to solve problems. Within this general framework, there can be many variations in the composition of the group and the role of the instructor. Normally the groups are relatively small.

When students or teachers hear the phrase collaborative learning, they automatically assume a work group context, harken back to their own unpleasant experiences with work or study groups, and dismiss the notion of collaboration as an unworkable approach that attempts to transfer the burden of teaching from teacher to student. Such anxiety is worth noting because it represents an acute misunderstanding of what has become a most viable approach to teaching and learning. (Orr, 1997)

In our opinion, collaborative learning is an approach for teaching and learning in which students are organized in groups to work in order to complete a task and achieve a common goal. With the implementation of collaborative learning approach the students could increase their reading comprehension level by interacting with their partners and with the teacher.

### **Principles of Collaborative Learning Method**

According to Orr (1997) in the Collaborative Learning approach, there are five principles that we as teachers have to take into account:

1. A collaborative work results in a greater understanding than would likely have occurred if one had worked independently.

2. The speaking and writing interactions contribute to this increased understanding.
3. The opportunity to become aware, through classroom experiences, of relationships between social interactions and increased understanding.
4. Some elements of this increased understanding are idiosyncratic and unpredictable.
5. The students' participation is voluntary and must be allowed to join a group freely.

### **Importance of Collaborative Learning**

Collaborative learning advocates distrust structure and allows students to create friendship and interest groups. Student talk is stressed as a means for working things out. Discovery and contextual approaches are used to teach interpersonal skills.

Collaborative learning is important because it provides an environment to increase and enrich the learning process through interactive activities in an educational system in order to create more realistic social contexts, thereby increasing the effectiveness of the system. Such an environment would help sustain the student's interests and would provide a more natural learning habitat and we can see that it not only increases interest among the participants but also promotes critical thinking. According to Johnson and Johnson (1986), there is persuasive evidence that collaborative teams achieve higher levels of thought and retain information longer than students who work quietly as individuals. The shared learning gives students an

opportunity to engage in discussion, to take responsibility for their own learning, and thus to become critical thinkers.

According to our experience, collaborative learning approach provides many benefits to the students, for example, it develops higher level thinking skills, builds self-stem, promotes a positive attitude towards the subject and encourages students the responsibility for learning. We as teachers could give more possibilities to improve the interpersonal relationship and social skills creating a pleasant environment to learn in the process of learning.

### **Interaction**

In Collaborative learning approach, the interaction is considered to be very important because the collaborative work require a close relationship between the participants that is why we refer to this topic bellow.

Interaction is an event that takes place between a learner and the learner's environment. Its purpose is to respond to the learner in a way intended to change his or her behavior towards an educational goal. Wagner (1994) defined three types of interaction: Learner-content, learner-learner and learner-instructor.

### **Learner-content interaction**

Learner-content interaction is the interaction that results from students examining and studying the course content. The focus is on the understanding and perspectives that students gain from the knowledge they construct while interacting with the content. In our study, the students had to interact with the reading test throughout the study.

### **Learner-learner interaction**

The interaction between learners can occur between one student and another, between one student and several other students, or between several students as a group. The interaction between students is intended to stimulate and motivate learning the course content. This type of interaction was practiced every week in this study.

### **Learner-instructor interaction**

The interaction that transpires between students and faculty is intended to help reinforce student understanding of the material or clarify meanings. In our study, the teachers interacted with the students in order to understand the reading and develop a specific collaborative activity.

### **Collaborative Learning Activities**

There are many activities used in Collaborative Learning approach, these activities include a positive interdependence among group members and face-to-face interaction among students and with the instructor.

The following activities are easy to implement; they should provide a loose structure for student practice with readings, lecture material, or their own writing and they should require student preparation, In addition, each of these activities involves various possible sizes of groups and various amounts of in-class group activity.

1. Encouraging Reading outside the Classroom: A reading review sheet of 3-12 questions is distributed before a given reading assignment. Small groups begin the class by comparing their answers to the review

questions. Groups might be asked to pinpoint a particular difficult question and to reach a consensus on the answer to report to the class. Alongside this activity's primary goal of increasing the number of students completing reading assignments in a timely fashion, the collaborative group work gives more students' confidence to participate in class-wide discussion. Students are motivated for coming to class prepared, lest they be unprepared for the small group discussion with their partners. This activity can be used for insuring preparation for any in-class activity.

2. Dialectical Notebook: All students read an article. A pair of students, A and B shares a notebook for responding to the article. For example, student A chooses and comments upon a series of excerpts that particularly characterize the article's meaning. Student B then writes a response to A's commentary; A then responds to both the initial choices and B's response; and B then completes the sequence by responding to A's last entry. These steps could be abridged, but the essential ingredient of this activity is the peer interaction in written form. This writing needs not happen during class time; notebooks could be exchanged in class at each stage. At the end of the sequence, at the time the reading is scheduled for class discussion, all students will have had plenty of opportunity to test and react to one another's ideas.

3. Pairs and Squares: Each student, individually, spends 5 minutes writing their answer to a given problem or question. Pairs of students then compare and discuss their responses. Groups of pairs (4 students) then

compare findings and try to reach consensus for presentation to the class as a whole. This activity encourages students to gradually increase the amount of feedback they receive on a particular problem. Individual accountability is preserved by the initial 5 minutes, followed by practice in developing consensus.

4. Two times four debates: Pairs of students take on one side of a given issue and prepare for a very brief, tightly structured debate with another pair that has prepared the opposing side. The debate itself might only involve a one-minute presentation by each side with 30 second rebuttals. The class could then reconvene to discuss the process and the results.

5. Bookends: Pairs of students work together before a lecture session starts to compile what they already know about a topic and what questions they have already developed. After the lecture, students are given time to consider what was added in the lecture and to go over any questions that have not yet been addressed.

6. Quiz/Test Questions: Here students are asked to become actively involved in creating quizzes and tests by constructing some (or all) of the questions for the exams. This exercise may be assigned for homework and itself evaluated (perhaps for extra credit points). In asking students to think up exam questions, we encourage them to think more deeply about the course material and to explore major themes, comparison of views presented, applications, and other higher-order thinking skills. Once suggested questions are collected, the instructor may use them as the basis of review sessions,

and/or to model the most effective questions. Further, we may ask students to discuss the merits of a sample of questions submitted; in discussing questions, they will significantly increase their engagement of the material to supply answers. Students might be asked to discuss several aspects of two different questions on the same material including degree of difficulty, effectiveness in assessing their learning, proper scope of questions, and so forth.

7. Evaluation of Another Student's Work: Students are asked to complete an individual homework assignment or short paper. On the day the assignment is due, students submit one copy to the instructor to be graded and one copy to their partner. These may be assigned that day, or students may be assigned partners to work with throughout the term. Each student then takes their partner's work and depending on the nature of the assignment, gives critical feedback, standardizes or assesses the arguments, corrects mistakes in problem-solving or grammar, and so forth. This is a particularly effective way to improve student writing.

8. Active Review Sessions: In the traditional class review session the students ask questions and the instructor answers them. Students spend their time copying down answers rather than thinking about the material. In an active review session the instructor poses questions and the students work on them in groups. Then students are asked to show their solutions to the whole group and discuss any differences among solutions proposed.



9. Pairs and Squares: Each student, individually, spends 5 minutes writing their answer to a given problem or question. This activity encourages students to gradually increase the amount of feedback they receive on a particular problem. Individual accountability is preserved by the initial 5 minutes, followed by practice in developing consensus.

10. Jigsaw: This activity is particularly suited to situations in which students require practice with content that is easily divided into constituent parts. Groups are assigned a specific aspect or element of the concept under consideration.

Some of the previous activities were chosen in the implementation of the Collaborative Learning method also using techniques that helped us to facilitate the application of the activities focused on reading comprehension (Moreillon, 2006).

### **Collaborative learning techniques**

There are several techniques that can be used to increase the reading comprehension level for a successful of implementation Collaborative learning approach including the lesson plan.

#### **1. Three-step Interview**

The three-step interviews are used as an ice breaker for team members to get to know one another or can be used to get to know concepts in depth, by assigning roles to students.

- The teacher assigns roles or students "play" them. The teacher also gives interview questions or information that should be "found".

- Student A interviews the student B for the specified number of minutes, listening attentively and asking probing questions. At a signal, students reverse roles and B interviews A for the same number of minutes. At another signal, each pair turns to another pair, forming a group of four. Each member of the group introduces her partner, highlighting the most interesting points.

## **2. Roundtable**

Roundtable structures are used as brainstorm ideas to generate a large number of responses to a single question.

## **3. Focused Listing**

Focused listing is used as a brainstorming technique or as a technique to generate descriptions and definitions of concepts. Focused listing asks the students to generate words to define or describe something. Once students complete this activity, you can use these lists to facilitate group and class discussion.

## **4. One Minute Papers**

The teacher asks students to comment on the following questions. The teacher gives them one minute. This activity focuses them on the content and can also provide feedback to us as teachers.

## **5. Paired Annotations**

The students pair up to review/learn the same reading text or reflection. Students discuss key points and look for divergent and convergent

thinking and ideas. Also students prepare a composition that summarizes the reading text.

### **Types of Collaborative learning groups**

In a written work by Peregoy and Boyle (2004) Collaborative group work provides opportunities for students in academic language development, those types were considered important for the application of the method mentioned above.

#### **Random grouping**

In this way of grouping, we organized the students according to the attendance list to promote social skills like tolerance and respect between the students in the Experimental group.

#### **Teacher selection grouping**

For this kind of grouping, first of all we as teachers made clear the reason they were grouping in order to avoid indiscipline and to promote students to work in a Collaborative group. Then we organized the groups according to the student's behavior and academic achievement to get a specific goal.

#### **Affinity grouping**

The teachers allow the students to organize their groups regarding their desire, friendship and empathy to create an excellent environment for working.

### **Proximity grouping**

Students group with their neighbor in order to avoid indiscipline and gain time to complete the activity in the classroom.

In summary in the collaborative learning approach, we have different types of groups to give the students the opportunity to work with confidence establishing an environment of collaboration for getting a specific goal.

### **Reading comprehension**

Comprehension is the reason for reading. If readers can read the words but do not understand what they are reading, they are not really reading.

Reading comprehension skills increase the pleasure and effectiveness of reading. Strong reading comprehension skills help in all the other subjects and in their personal and professional lives.

### **Reading comprehension theories**

There are many theories about reading comprehension, but we refer to the following ones, which seem to be more relevant: traditional view, cognitive view and metacognitive view.

### **The traditional view**

According to Dole et al (1991), in the traditional view of reading, novice readers acquire a set of hierarchically ordered sub-skills that sequentially build toward comprehension ability. Having mastered these skills, readers are viewed as experts who comprehend what they read. Some of the most important characteristics of this view are:

1. Readers are passive recipients of information in the text. Meaning resides in the text and the reader has to reproduce meaning.

2. According to Nunan (1991), reading in this view is basically a matter of decoding a series of written symbols into their aural equivalents in the quest for making sense of the text. He referred to this process as the 'bottom-up' view of reading.

3. McCarthy (1999) has called this view 'outside-in' processing; referring to the idea that meaning exists in the printed page and is interpreted by the reader then taken in their own ideas.

This model of reading has almost always been under attack as being insufficient and defective, the main reason being that it relies on the formal features of the language, mainly words and structure.

### **The cognitive view**

The 'top-down' model is in direct opposition to the 'bottom-up' model. According to Nunan (1991) and Dubin and Bycina (1991), the psycholinguistic model of reading and the top-down model are in exact concordance.

Goodman (1967) presented reading as a psycholinguistic guessing game, a process in which readers sample the text, make hypotheses, confirm or reject them, make new hypotheses, and so forth. Here, the reader rather than the text is at the heart of the reading process.

The schema theory of reading also fits within the cognitively based view of reading. Rumelhart (1977) has described schemata as "building blocks of cognition" which are used in the process of interpreting sensory

data, in retrieving information from memory, in organizing goals and subgoals, in allocating resources, and in guiding the flow of the processing system.

Rumelhart (1977) has also stated that if our schemata are incomplete and do not provide an understanding of the incoming data from the text we will have problems processing and understanding the text.

This model of reading seems to explain the process of a fluent reader, and has been supported by many authors.

### **The metacognitive view**

Metacognition involves thinking about what student is doing while reading. Klein et al (1991) stated that strategic readers do the following mental activities while reading:

1. Identifying the purpose of the reading before reading
2. Identifying the form or type of the text before reading
3. Thinking about the general character and features of the form or type of the text. For instance, they try to locate a topic sentence and follow supporting details toward a conclusion
4. Projecting the author's purpose for writing the text (while reading it),
5. Choosing, scanning, or reading in detail
6. Making continuous predictions about what will occur next, based on information obtained earlier, prior knowledge, and conclusions obtained within the previous stages.

We think that the metacognitive view is a theory in which students' knowledge and understanding are developed in their mind.

### **Levels of comprehension**

There are three levels of comprehension, or sophistication of thinking that are presented from the least to the most sophisticated level of reading: a) Least = surface, simple reading and b) Most = in-depth, complex reading (Kolstad, 2003).

#### **Level one: literal, what is actually stated?**

1. Facts and details
2. Rote learning and memorization
3. Surface understanding only

Tests in this level are objective tests dealing with true / false, multiple choice and fill-in-the blank questions.

Common questions used to illicit this type of thinking are who, what, when, and where questions.

#### **Level two: interpretive.**

What is implied or meant, rather than what is actually stated, is the objective of this level. Some of the strategies commonly used are:

1. Drawing inferences
2. Tapping into prior knowledge / experience
3. Attaching new learning to old information
4. Making logical leaps and educated guesses
5. Reading between the lines to determine what is meant by what is

stated.

Tests in this category are subjective, and the types of questions asked are open-ended, thought-provoking questions like why, what if, and how.

**Level three: applied.**

Taking what was said (literal) and then what was meant by what was said (interpretive) and then extend (apply) the concepts or ideas beyond the situation are strategies in this level. The most common activities in this level of comprehension are:

1. Analyzing
2. Synthesizing
3. Applying

In this level we are analyzing or synthesizing information and applying it to other types of information.

To summarize, the three levels of comprehension show us the different activities that the students are able to do according to their level of knowledge.

**The Role of Teachers and Students in Collaborative learning**

Collaborative learning is an approach which emphasizes active learning through interaction, where students act as partners with the teacher and with each other. The role players in collaborative learning are therefore teacher and students. The roles of both in collaborative learning groups are described below. (Jacques, 1984)



### **The role of the teacher in collaborative learning approach**

In the Collaborative learning approach there are some roles that teachers should take into consideration to obtain better results in the application of the method, according to Jacques (1984), in this method, teachers can play the following roles:

- The teacher observes and intervenes in-class group work.
- The teacher asks open-ended questions in-class group work.
- The teacher praises and encourages the student in-class group work.
- The teacher extends participation involves group members.
- The teacher facilitates student responsibility and self-evaluation.
- The teacher promotes student learning of social skills.

### **The role of the student in collaborative learning approach**

Each student involved in team work, should develop different roles according to the assigned task. These roles can be changed between the students to create a good environment and promote their class participation.

According to Jacques (1984), the roles of the students that can play in collaborative learning method are:

- The student could be a recorder to present the schedule meetings and records research.
- The student can be a team leader or a coordinator who organizes and presents the group.
- The student can be a data collector and can use resources to obtain more information to develop an activity.

- The student could be a materials manager for collecting data from different media.
- The student can be a checker who ensures all members to reach goals.
- The student could be a consensus taker and ensure task participation.
- The student can be an encourager to support all members in order to get fair contributions.
- The student could be a clarifier giving examples or alternatives.
- The student can be an initiator of the proposed tasks and procedures.
- The student could be a reconciler or mediator to overcome disagreements.
- The student is a group monitor to observe and balance the group dynamic.

### **Research studies about Collaborative learning focused on Reading Comprehension**

According to Nunan (1992), there have been numerous studies carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of Collaborative Learning. This innovating pedagogical method can give us excellent results if the teacher posses and gives the students appropriate skills and if the time and implementation is well organized.

In a study made by Jenkins, Antil, and Vadasy (2003) the teachers attributed more engagement, better comprehension, and active learning with collaborative learning method. Teachers also indicated that the students

increased self-esteem and increased class participation. However the teachers also suggested that the obtainment of these benefits often depended on the student. While some students felt less troubled by the assignment and were supported by their group, other students were excluded and either refused to participate or was denied a clear role within the group. In order to ensure successful collaborative learning, teachers are encouraged to closely monitor group dynamics and to intervene when it was necessary. With collaborative learning, the students gain access to one another's thinking processes because of the interaction and collaborative work that they are developing. (Fielding and Pearson, 1994).

Two authors, Kathi Bailey and Ted Dale referred to the following benefits of Collaborative learning. 1.) It provides greater opportunities for guidance, getting individual questions, answering and making one's own needs known, 2.) The teachers had the opportunity to share the lesson plan, 3.) Collaborative learning provides a built-in substitute and it also provides two perspectives on evaluation with some benefits in the learners' performance and in the teachers' performance. 4.) In terms of teacher evaluation working with Collaborative learning provides perspectives for self evaluation as well as the other person's perspective.

Findings from Stevens and Slavin (1991), on the use of Collaborative learning may also provide evidence to support the argument for the use of group reviews in classrooms. According to this study, the most important features to ensure the success of Collaborative learning is individual

responsibility and group rewards. The group reviews these requirements in that student are ultimately responsible for their own assignment; that is, they cannot rely other students to finish their own work. However, many teachers have also implemented a grade for quality of peer evaluations and pair interactions. In this type of grading, pairs of students share a portion of their grade based on their ability to work together. (Hanson, 2006).

According to the mentioned studies, we know that Collaborative learning approach has a positive effect in the learning process. We took into account these studies to apply and compare the effect of Collaborative learning in beginners' reading comprehension. These studies also provided us information and opinions about the implementation of Collaborative learning in the class room.

### **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHOD**

This chapter gives an explanation of the methodology to know the study design, features of participants and the setting, data collect and the instruments to analyze it.

#### **Design of the study**

This study was associated with the quantitative type, because it intends to measure reading comprehension in the classroom based on the implementation of the collaborative learning method.

The strengths of the quantitative paradigm are that its methods produce quantifiable, reliable data which is usually generalizable to some larger population. The Quantitative method measures and compares the data obtained in a study; statistics, tables and graphs are often used to present the results of this method.

The quantitative type was chosen because we consider that it is the most suitable in terms of exactness and it allows us to interpret the findings with more objectivity.

#### **Type of Research**

This study corresponds to the quasi-experimental research, because we applied the collaborative learning approach focused on reading comprehension with intact groups of a high school to analyze and compare the results obtained.

In this study the design that we used correspond to a pre-test and post-test, control group design in which the formula is:

G1 (IG) = T1      X      T2

-----  
G2 (IG) = T1                      T2

Here we can see the meaning of each item.

G1: Experimental Group.

IG: Intact group.

G2: Control Group.

T1 Pretest

X: treatment

T2: Posttest

### **Population**

The population chosen for this study was students of 10th grade: 10-3 and 10-9 from an educational institution located in downtown Pasto. Where 10-9 grades were considered the control group and the 10-3 grade were the experimental group. This study also considered the population context: family background, the school location and the behavior in and outside the classroom.

### **Sample**

The population or participants, who helped us to accomplish this study, were 32 students in the experimental group and 32 students in the control group of 10<sup>th</sup> grade from an educational institution located in downtown Pasto, with ages from 15 to 17 years old. They were essential for the study because

this group of students had previous knowledge of English and they were able to develop reading comprehension skills.

### **Setting**

This study took place in an educational institution located in the downtown of Pasto, Nariño.

### **Materials and data Collection techniques**

To carry out this study a written pre-test and post-test of reading comprehension were considered important to collect the data. Reading activities are basic to collect the data such as introduction, descriptions, note taking about their disciplinary behavior, class participation and academic achievement, interviews with the partners confirming this information, tape and video recording of the English classes.

### **Description of the procedure**

Two groups of 32 students in courses 10-3 and 10-9 were chosen for this study; the first group (10-3) was the experimental group where collaborative learning approach focused on reading comprehension was implemented using twelve activities over twelve weeks (from May to July). We started with a reading about "The Taliban militia"; students had time to understand what they were reading, then the teacher explained the vocabulary after that they had to answer simple questions about the topic and finally some students shared the answers. The second activity was a reading "Aztec Medicine in the past". The third activity was a reading "Buddhism" with comprehension questions. The fourth activity was a reading titled "Customs

for Sussex". The fifth activity was a reading titled "Titan A.E". For the sixth activity we chose the reading topic "Do you have a healthy life?" and the reading "Speech on the WTO" for the Seventh activity and "Borneo tribal" for the eighth activity. The ninth activity was related to the following reading "Hot water for itches", and then on the tenth activity we used a reading about "Coffee for asthma". The eleventh activity was related to a reading titled "Paris" and for the twelfth activity we used another reading titled "Rain forest".

All activities were designed with different techniques taking into account the level of the students and the hours of the class. The activities were given with clear directions by instructors to increase the students' reading comprehension.

The second group (10-9) was considered the control group in which the teacher used the traditional method. These activities are shown in the appendix.

### **Data analysis and interpretation**

This study took into account the quantitative method including steps such as: data organization, identification of the main ideas to be classified in categories and subcategories, analyze and infer some data.

The pretest and the posttest were the same before and after the application of this study to compare and analyze the results.

The quantitative analysis was done with the results obtained in the pre-test and the post-test which was entered in a data matrix where the reading comprehension was interpreted to establish similarities and differences in the



experimental group and the control group before and after the application of the method of collaborative learning. To facilitate comprehension we also used tables and graphics.

### **Variables**

Independent variable: collaborative learning method.

Dependent variable: reading comprehension of intermediate levels at a high school, located in the city of Pasto.

### **Ethical Issues**

To carry out this study we asked the permission of the staff of the high school and assured voluntary participation of the students and teachers, and their names were changed to protect their identity and integrity.

We thanked the teachers and students for facilitating the implementation of collaborative learning approach focused on reading comprehension in their classrooms, we will also give an oral presentation to show the results obtained in the study and to share the experiences acquired with this method to facilitate the learning process.

## CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

The objective of this research project was to analyze the effect of collaborative learning approach in beginners' reading comprehension.

In this research, we chose two groups of students in 10th grade (10-3 and 10-9) to analyze the effect mentioned above. This study started the first week of May 2009, and ended the middle of July 2009.

In the control group (10-9 Grade), we applied the traditional method of teaching grammar and reading comprehension activities. In the experimental group, (10-3 Grade), we applied the collaborative learning approach to study reading comprehension and grammar.

We applied the KET test (*taken from: University of Cambridge web page*) to the Control and Experimental groups as a Pretest at the beginning and as a Posttest at the end of the treatment.

In our research, KET was a relevant test, because it is designed for beginners and part of it serves to analyze the student' reading comprehension level. We used the following qualitative scores implemented by the high school: D = Deficiente, I = Insuficiente, A = Aceptable, S = Sobresaliente and E = Excelente. However, the "Deficiente" score, is not used to evaluate students, we chose that acronym to express that there are students who answered nothing in the pretest and in the posttest. In order to do a descriptive statistic analyzes, we assigned a quantitative score for each qualitative score, in the following way:

The “Deficiente” score = 1

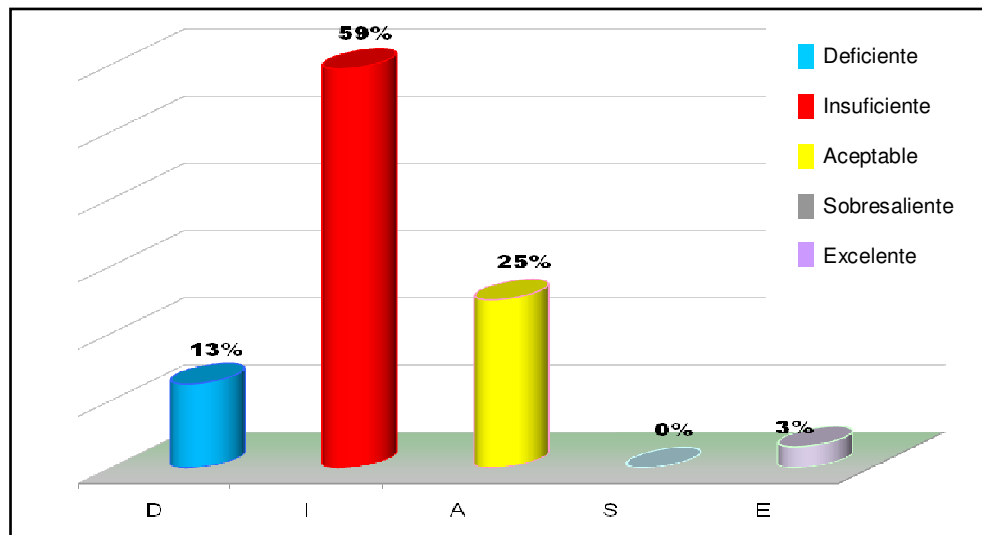
The “Insuficiente” score = 2

The “Aceptable” score = 3

The “Sobresaliente” score = 4

The “Excelente” score = 5

At the beginning, we applied the Pretest (KET) in the Experimental Group (10-3) obtaining the following results. Only 3% of the students got “Excelente” 0% got “Sobresaliente”, which means that they probably didn’t understand what they were reading and needed more knowledge of vocabulary. Twenty-five percent of the students got “Aceptable”, 59% of the students got “Insuficiente” and 13% of the students got “Deficiente”. This means that the highest score was Insuficiente. The students only answered in a correct way questions in a range from 11 to 20. Results of the Pretest percentage score are reported in figure 1.



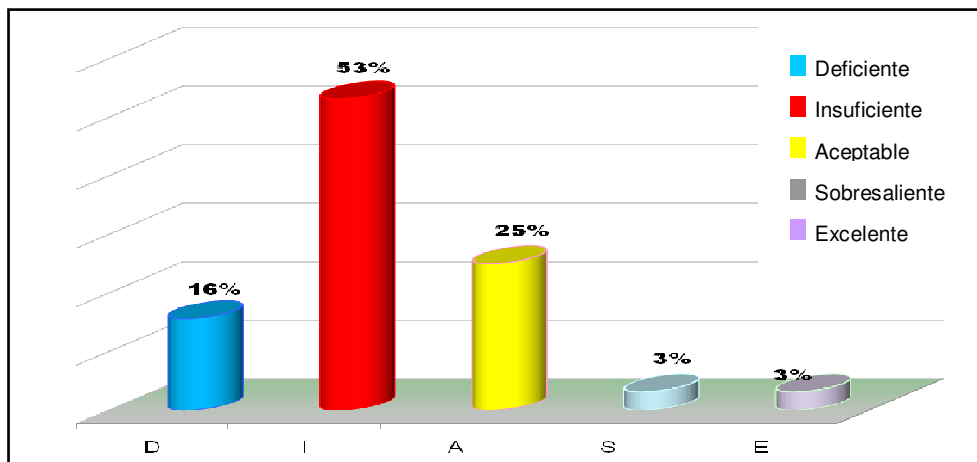
**Figure 1. Pretest results of Experimental Group**

We could see that before implementing our treatment, the mean in reading comprehension was 2,21875 in the Pretest, which represents an “Insuficiente” in the qualitative score. This is represented in table 1.

Pretest Experimental Group			
Score (x)	Frequency	Fx	$\bar{X}$
1	4	4	2,21875
2	19	38	
3	8	24	
4	0	0	
5	1	5	
<b>total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>71</b>	
Fx = (Frequency * Score)			
$\bar{X}$ (Mean) = $(\sum Fx / \sum F)$			

**Table 1. Results of the Pre-Test in the Experimental Group**

When we applied the same Pretest in the Control Group in order to determine the comprehension level of this group, the students got almost the same results as the ones in the Experimental group. We can say that both the Control and the Experimental groups at the beginning of the treatment were homogeneous in the level of English Reading Comprehension. Results of the Pretest percentage score are reported in figure 2.



**Figure 2. Pretest results of the Control Group**

In the Control group, the results of reading comprehension level was similar, the mean of the scores acquired was 2,25 according to the pretest.

This is represented in table 2.

Pretest Control Group			
Score	Frequency	Fx	$\bar{X}$
1	5	5	2,25
2	17	34	
3	8	24	
4	1	4	
5	1	5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>72</b>	
Fx = (Frequency * Score)			
$\bar{X}$ (Mean) = $(\Sigma Fx / \Sigma F)$			

**Table 2. Results of Pre-Test in the Control Group**

Prior to the application of the techniques, twelve collaborative activities were designed taking into account the high school` syllabus design to analyze the effect of Collaborative Learning to increase reading comprehension in the targeted students, that is, the Experimental group. Smith and MacGregor (1992) said that collaborative activities should be centered on students` exploration or application of the reading materials, not simply the teachers` presentation.

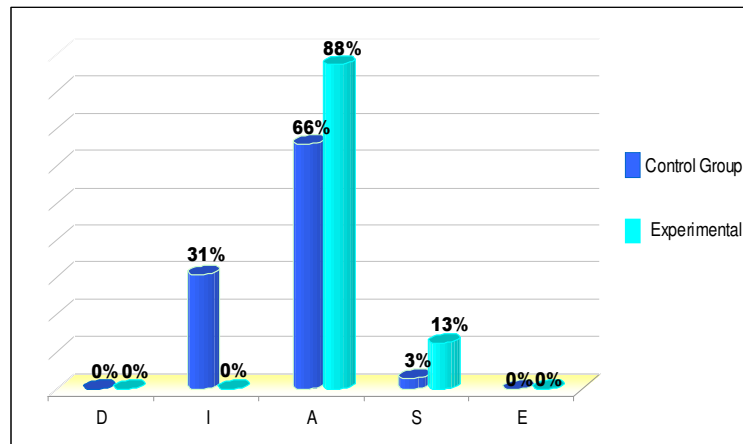
We taught the same grammar topics in both groups during a period of twelve weeks (From April 28<sup>th</sup> to July 18<sup>th</sup>). The activities done in both groups were evaluated using qualitative scores implemented by the high school: D = Deficiente, I = Insuficiente, A = Aceptable, S = Sobresaliente and E = Excelente.

Below, we describe the activities and the result of the evaluation, we used to test the progress and to compare the scores of both groups.

On the first two weeks (From April 28th to May 8th) we used two activities on reading comprehension titled “The Taliban militia” and “Aztec medicine in the past”, for presenting the use of present perfect and the use of past tense, through a Three-steps interview technique. This was used as an ice breaker for team members to get to know one another and it can also be used to get to know concepts in depth, by assigning roles to students who can "play" themselves in pairs. The teacher may also give interview questions or information that should be found and then Student A interviews the student B for ten minutes, listening attentively and asking probing questions. At a signal, students reverse roles and B interviews A for the same number of minutes.

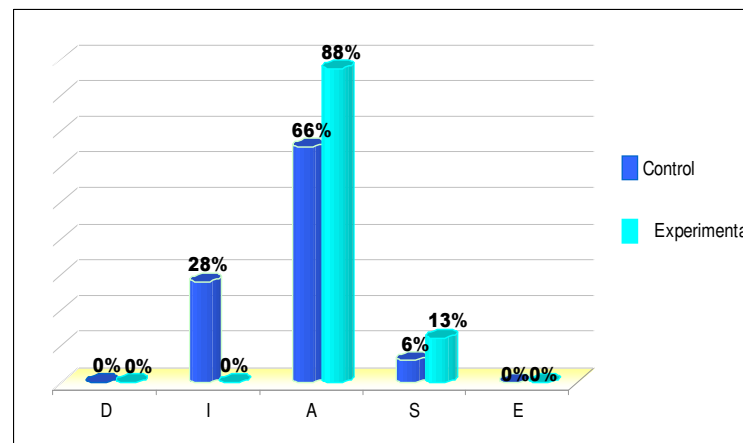
After each pair turns to another pair, forming a group of four. Each member of the group introduces her partner, highlighting the most interesting points. The data were compiled, averaged and analyzed in the Experimental group to compare with those ones of the control group.

During the first week students of both groups did the same activities but with a different learning method. We observed a normal behavior between them. In the Experimental group, we noted that the highest score was “Acceptable” with 88% of the results while in the Control group was 66%. Scores and results can be found in the following figure.



**Figure 3. Scores of both groups in week 1**

On the second week, the results obtained in the Experimental and Control groups were also similar. During the first and second week we could not observe major differences in the control and experimental groups because in these weeks students were in an adaptation process with the teacher and with the method. These results can be seen in figure 4.



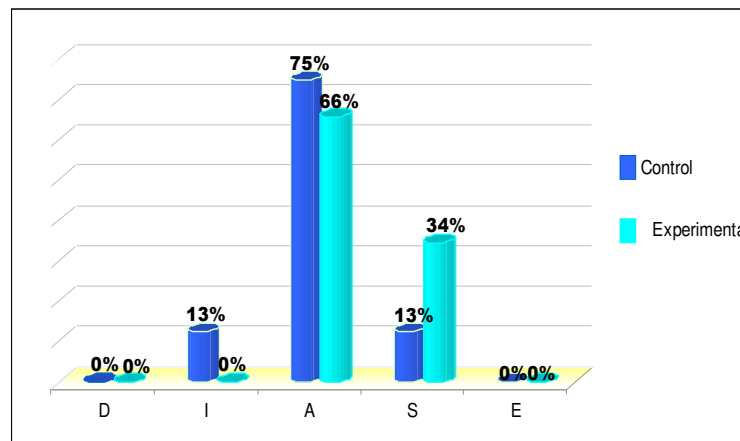
**Figure 4. Scores of both groups in week 2**

On the third and fourth week (From May 11<sup>th</sup> to May 23<sup>rd</sup>) we used two readings titled “Buddhism”, and “customs of success” in order to practice the

past tense, for this activity we make a roundtable which is used to brainstorm ideas and to generate a large number of responses to a single question.

We evaluated this activity with reading comprehension questions and individual and team class participation to obtain scores from “Deficiente” to “Excelente”.

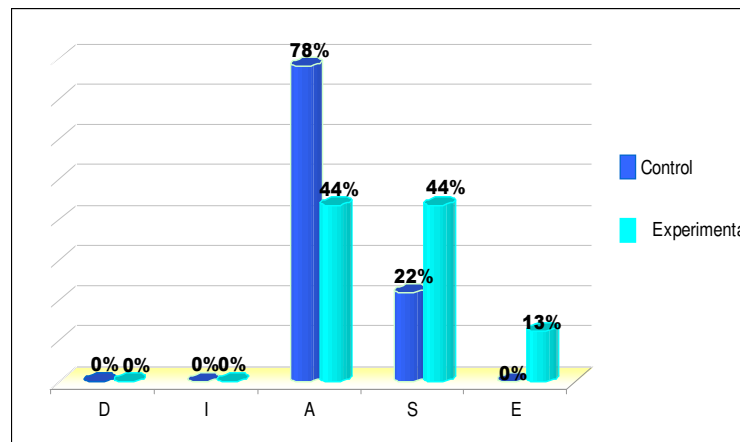
In the third week students of Control and Experimental group showed similarities in “Aceptable” scores but the Experimental group showed a little increase of 21% in relation to the first and second week. The results of this activity are shown in figure 5.



**Figure 5. Scores of both groups in week 3**

In the fourth Week we noted that in both groups, scores began to change showing some differences and similarities. These results are shown in figure 6.



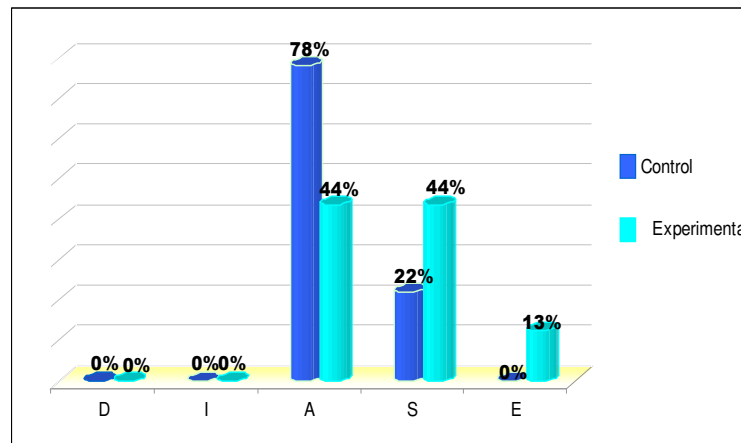


**Figure 6. Scores of both groups in week 4**

Through these weeks, we found that the “Excelente” and the “Sobresaliente” scores increased in the Experimental group, which showed that the method could have started to produce some positive effects, at the same time the “Aceptable” score started to decrease.

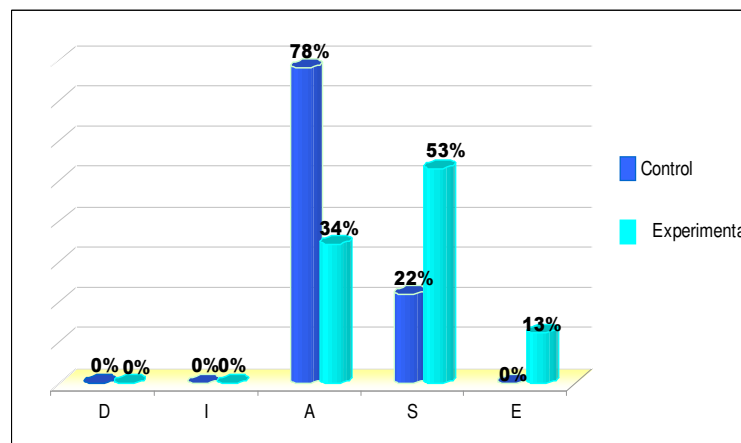
On the fifth and sixth weeks (From May 25<sup>th</sup> to June 5<sup>th</sup>) we used two reading texts titled “Titan A.E” and “Do you have a healthy life?” to present and to practice the use of Can. In this activity we used the Focused Listing Technique, as a brainstorming technique or as a technique to generate descriptions and definitions of concepts. Focused Listing asks the students to generate words to define or describe something. Once students have completed this activity, we used these lists to facilitate group and class discussion. To evaluate this activity, we took into account reading comprehension and class participation through an oral report in which every student and every group presented their own ideas. The results of this activity are shown in figures 7 and 8.

During the fifth week in the Experimental group we obtained the same percentage, 44%, for both the “Aceptable” and the “Sobresaliente” scores and the Control group got the same percentage as that one of the previous two weeks. The results of this activity are shown in figures 6 and 7.



**Figure 7. Scores of both groups in week 5**

In the sixth week, the scores of Experimental group, showed an increase of 9% on the “Sobresaliente” score, while students in the Control group got the same percentage in their scores. These results are shown in figure 8.



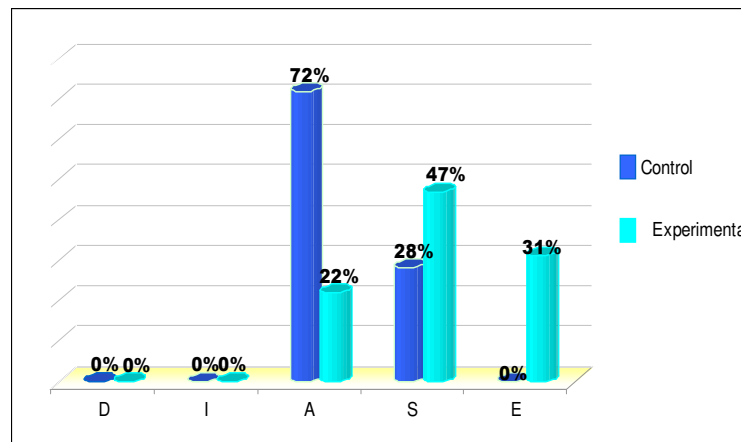
**Figure 8. Scores of both groups in week 6**

Over the previous weeks, there was an important raise in the “Sobresaliente” score, this could mean that students in the Experimental group started to adapt to the Learning method and showed good attitude to work. According to Wagner (1994), the interaction between English learners and the Learner’s environment intends to change their behavior and towards the students’ educational goals.

On the seventh and eighth week (From June 8th to June 20th) we worked on the reading titled “Speech on the WTO” to present and practice comparatives and superlatives, nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs.

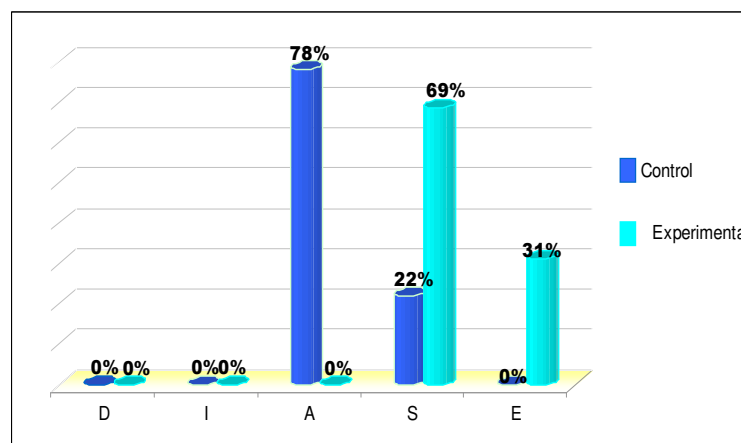
We formed small groups for giving a short reading to each one. In ten minutes, each member of the group had to understand and be ready to answer teacher’s questions with no help from the other members of the group.

In this activity, we got more participation and motivation in the Experimental Group obtaining an increase of 18% in the highest score, (Excelente). The “Sobresaliente” score decreased an average of 6% and at the same time the lowest score “Aceptable” decreased an average of 12%. In the control group we had a decrease of 6% in “Aceptable and Sobresaliente” scores .These results are shown in figures 9.



**Figure 9. Scores of both groups in week 7**

On the eighth week in the Experimental group the highest percentage was “Sobresaliente” (69%) and we observed a total decrease from 22% to 0% in the “Aceptable” score; according to the results of the previous week, the “Excelente” score had the same percentage while In the Control group the results were similar to the ones of the sixth week. The results are shown in figure 10.



**Figure 10. Scores of both groups in week 8**

From the seventh to the eighth week, in the experimental group students obtained a significant result with the application of our method: a

progress of 22% in the “Sobresaliente” scores. On the contrary in the control group the scores of the “Sobresaliente” decreased 6%. In the control group the “Excelente” score was 0%.

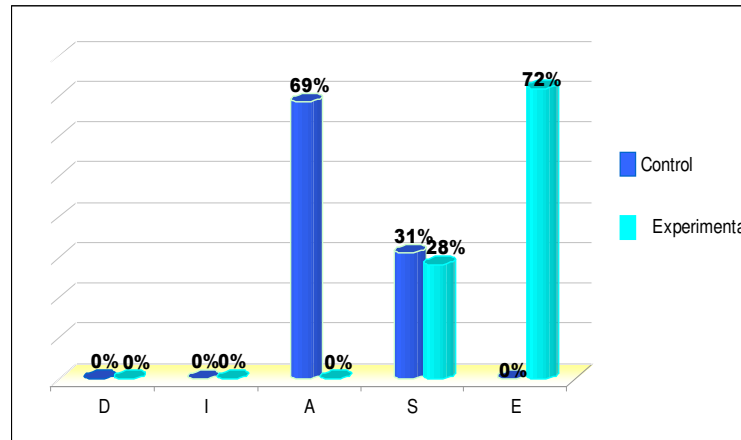
In the ninth and tenth week (From June 22nd to July 3rd) we used two reading texts titled “Borneo Tribal” and “Hot water for itches” to present and practice the use of relative pronouns (which and who).

These weeks are not represented in figures because we took into account the students’ participation in order to avoid apathy towards the activity and the teachers.

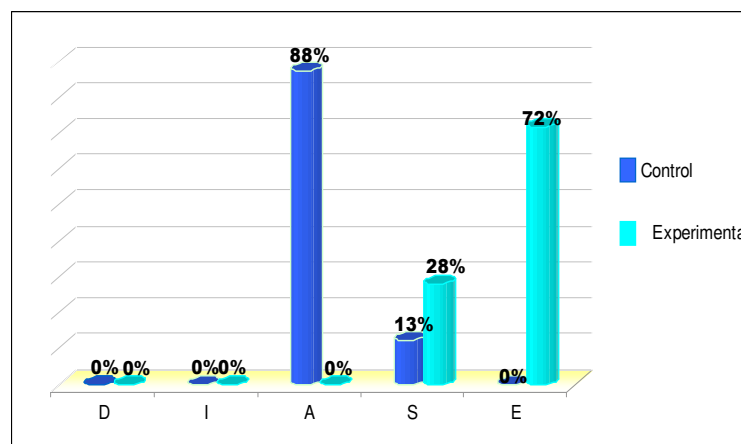
On the eleventh and twelfth weeks (from July 6th to July 18th) we finished our study by using three readings titled “Coffee for asthma”, “Paris” and “Rainforest” for presenting and practicing present simple tense and the use of Going to. We used the Paired Annotations Technique in which Students pair up to review/learn the reading text for reflection. Students discussed key points and looked for divergent and convergent thinking ideas. Also students prepared a composition that summarized the reading.

In the last weeks, we realized that students could work in a better way with these activities; they learnt new vocabulary easily in order to understand what they were reading in classroom. Contrasting the results obtained during the first week and the last week of implementation of Collaborative Learning approach, the students of the Experimental group got an increase of about 41% in the “Excelente” scores and a decrease of 41% in the “Sobresaliente”

scores. Figures 13 and 14 show the results of week 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> in both groups.



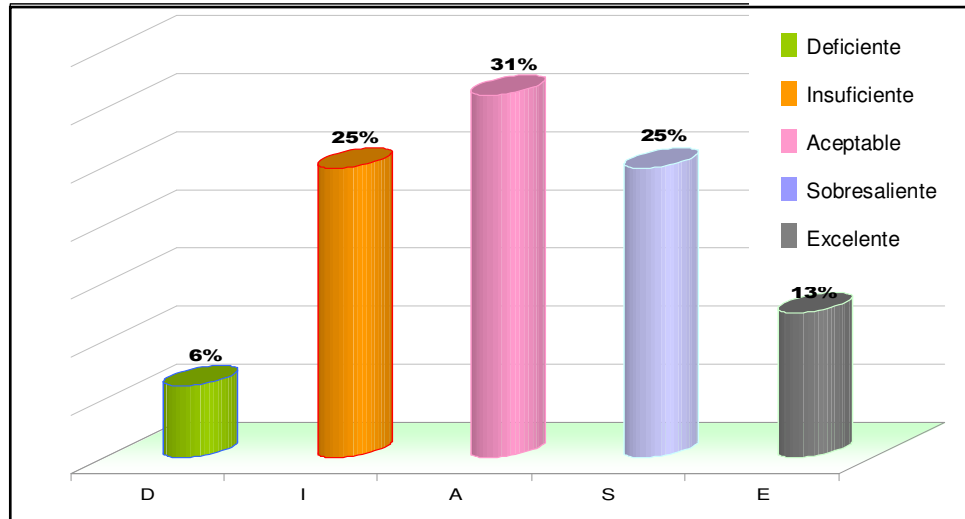
**Figure 13. Scores of both groups in week 11**



**Figure 14. Scores of both groups in week 12**

After working with collaborative activities during a period of three months, in the Experimental group, we applied the posttest in both groups. The Posttest (KET) was presented at the end of the twelve weeks. The following results indicate that there was a significant progress since the students of the Experimental group obtained high “Sobresaliente” scores and low “Deficiente” scores. Specifically 13% of the students got “Excelente”, 25%

of them got “Sobresaliente”, 31% got “Aceptable”, 25% got “Insuficiente” and 6% got “Deficiente”. These results are presented in figure 15.



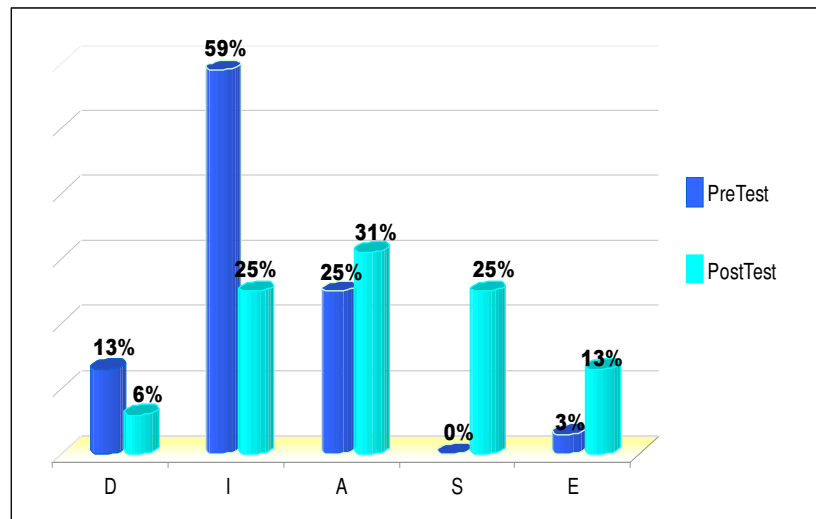
**Figure 15. Posttest results of Experimental Group**

Now we show the same results by means of descriptive statistics.

Posttest Experimental Group			
Score (x)	Frequency	Fx	$\bar{X}$
1	2	2	
2	8	16	
3	10	30	
4	8	32	
5	4	20	
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3,125</b>
Fx = (Frequency * Score)			
$\bar{X}$ (Mean) = $(\sum Fx / \sum F)$			

**Table 3. Posttest results of the Experimental group.**

The results presented in Table 3 indicated that the mean of the scores got by the Experimental group was 3.125. On a scale between 1 and 5, this means that our study in the Experimental group got “acceptable” results according to the qualitative scale used in the school. These results cannot be satisfactory, if we look at them in isolation, so let us look at the Pretest results in figure 16.



**Figure 16. Pretest and Posttest contrast in the Experimental Group**

Comparing and analyzing data from the Pretest and the Posttest we can see higher Pretest scores according to the qualitative scores for the “Deficiente” and “Insuficiente” scores, and lower pretest scores in the “Aceptable”, “Sobresaliente” and “Excelente” scale; in contrast, the Posttest shows higher scores in the “Sobresaliente” scale with a significant increase between 0% to 25% and “Excelente” with an increase from 3% to 13%.

Johnson and Johnson (1986) said that working with collaborative teams students will achieve higher levels of thought and retain information longer than students who work individually, this means that students at the end of the implementation of the Collaborative learning approach were able to understand what they were learning and answered reading comprehension questions. At the same time we noted that there was an important decrease from 59% to 25% in the “Insuficiente” scores.



The results of the pretest in the experimental group by using descriptive statistics are shown below in the table 4.

The average increase using the Collaborative Learning approach for reading comprehension is shown in the following table, where we compare the means of the Pretest and the posttest.

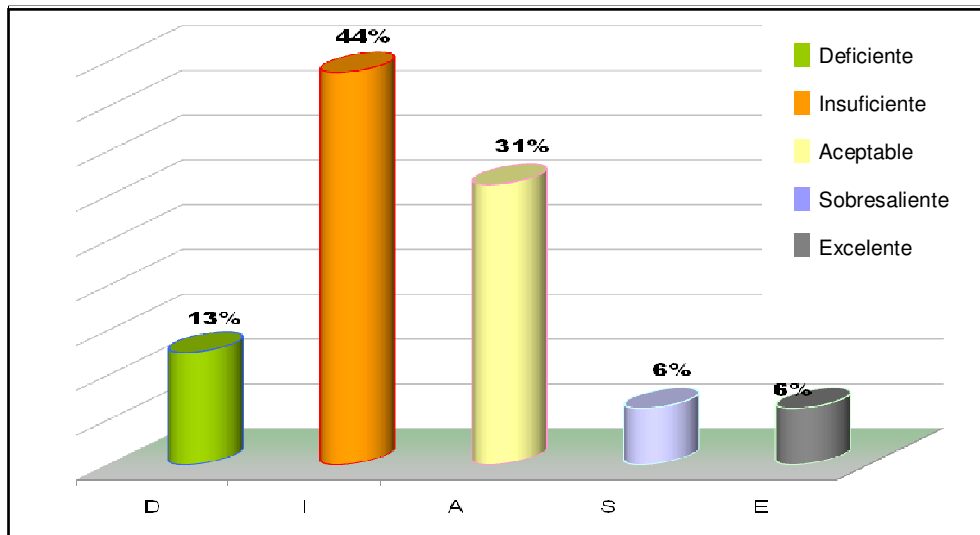
Pretest Experimental Group				Posttest Experimental Group			
Score	Frequency	Fx	$\bar{X}$	Score	Frequency	Fx	$\bar{X}$
1	4	4		1	2	2	
2	19	38		2	8	16	
3	8	24		3	10	30	
4	0	0		4	8	32	
5	1	5		5	4	20	
<b>total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>2,21875</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3,125</b>
Fx = (Frequency * Score)				Fx = (Frequency * Score)			
$\bar{X}$ (Mean) = $(\sum Fx / \sum F)$				$\bar{X}$ (Mean) = $(\sum Fx / \sum F)$			

**Table 4. Pretest and Posttest results of the Experimental Group.**

As it can be seen, there is a difference between the means of the Pretest ( $\bar{X} = 2.21$ ) and that of the Posttest ( $\bar{X} = 3.12$ )

According to Smith and McGregor (1992) creating a collaborative classroom can be a wonderfully rewarding opportunity but it is also full of challenges and dilemmas. We can demonstrate it because the average results obtained were not very satisfactory according to our own expectation.

After the application of the traditional method of teaching in the Control group during the twelve weeks, students had a little increase focused on reading comprehension because they were in the same environment and their learning process was more theoretical rather than Practical. Results are shown in figure 17.



**Figure 17. Posttest results of the Control Group**

The average score that corresponds to the previous figure was 2,5 as we can see in table 5.

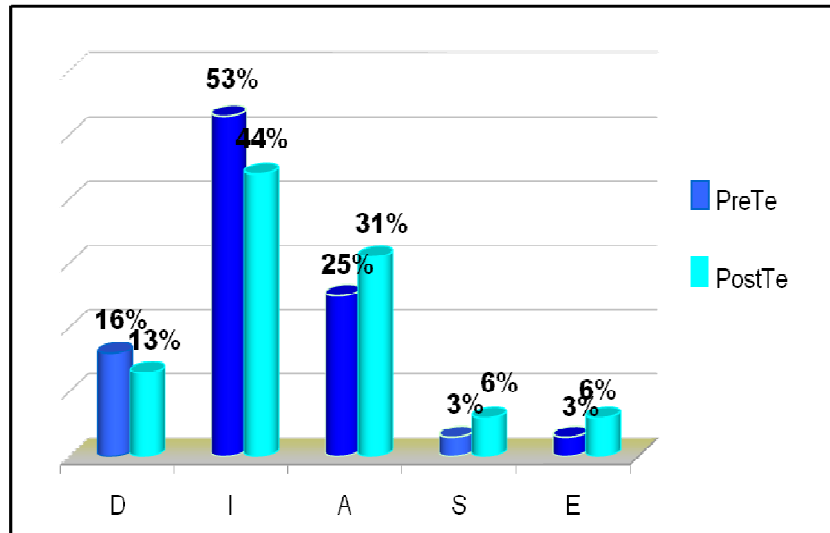
Posttest Control Group			
Score	Frequency	Fx	$\bar{X}$
1	4	4	2,5
2	14	28	
3	10	30	
4	2	8	
5	2	10	
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>80</b>	
Fx = (Frequency * Score)			
$\bar{X}$ (Mean) = $(\Sigma Fx / \Sigma F)$			

**Table 5. Posttest results of the Control Group**

Finally we compared the pretest and the posttest scores in the Control group to identify and to know the results with the traditional learning method in beginners' reading comprehension.

We can see that there weren't many differences between both tests, students in the Control Group didn't participate during the process of teaching with the traditional method, which means students' individual work only served to follow the teacher directions with no interaction between them. The

highest scores were “Deficiente” and “Insuficiente”. These results are shown in figure 18.



**Figure 18. Pretest and Posttest contrast in Control Group**

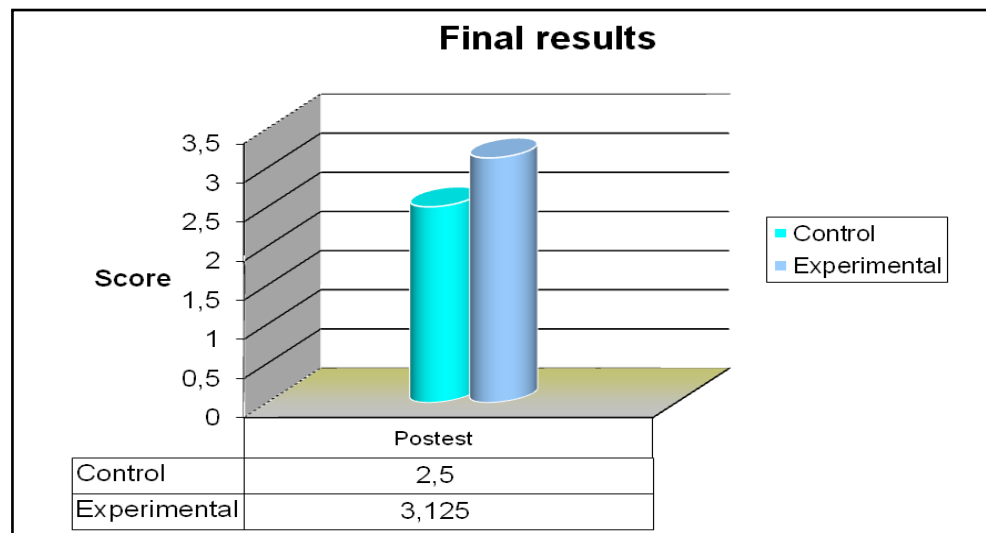
The average score between the Pretest and the Posttest in the Control group is represented in table 6.

Pretest Control Group				Posttest Control Group			
Score	Frequency	Fx	$\bar{X}$	Score	Frequency	Fx	$\bar{X}$
1	5	5	2,25	1	4	4	2,5
2	17	34		2	14	28	
3	8	24		3	10	30	
4	1	4		4	2	8	
5	1	5		5	2	10	
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>72</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>80</b>	
Fx = (Frequency * Score)				Fx = (Frequency * Score)			
$\bar{X}$ (Mean) = $(\sum Fx / \sum F)$				$\bar{X}$ (Mean) = $(\sum Fx / \sum F)$			

**Table 6. Pretest and Posttest results of the Control Group.**

This means that there was a very little increase between the mean of the scores of the pretest ( $\bar{X} = 2.25$ ) and the mean of scores of the posttest ( $\bar{X} = 2.5$ ) in the level of reading comprehension of the control group.

Finally, we present the results of the posttest gotten by the students of both the experimental group and the control group in the following figure.



**Figure 19. Posttest results of both groups**

As it can be seen, in the previous figure there was a difference between the mean of the score of the experimental group ( $\bar{X} = 3.125$ ), and the mean of the score of the control group ( $\bar{X} = 2.5$ )

Some Authors such as Nunan, Jhonson, Jacques and Slavin, suggest that collaborative learning brings positive results such as deeper understanding of content, increased overall achievement in grades, improved self-esteem, and higher motivation to remain on task. Collaborative learning helps students become actively and constructively involved in content, to take ownership of their own learning, and to resolve group conflicts and improve teamwork skills.

In our application we obtained acceptable results because we increased the reading comprehension level of the students and their interest in English was improved. However in contrast to some authors, we had some difficulties during the application of some activities and in the formation of

groups that was reflected in the students' indiscipline; for example, when some students were not interested in working in groups because they preferred to work on their own they left the group without contributing much, for this reason we had to focus them on social activities and academic team work.

On the other hand, we observed that in some groups there was too much dependence, because students only participated if the rest of the group participated, so, we as teachers had to promote first individual participation and then group participation.

Qualitatively, students' grades increased creating a good environment where the student and the teacher were pleased for the implementation of the method. Let us remember that 31% of the students got "passing" results, 25% got "good" results and 13% obtained "Excellent" results. This means that in the experimental group 69% of the students approved the course. On the contrary in the pretest, only 28% passed and 72% failed.

## CONCLUSIONS

In our research study, collaborative learning seemed to be effective at achieving a wide range of positive outcomes related to quality of learning and skill development, attitudes towards the educational experience, and self-confidence.

At the beginning, the lack of vocabulary did not allow us to develop a good level of reading comprehension. We can say that it was probably because the teaching method has always been traditional; it means that in our research place some teachers teach grammar and they did not worry for giving activities where students develop their ability to read and understand what they were reading.

Students in the Experimental and Control group started with an insufficient reading comprehension level, their statistic average was  $\bar{X}=2.25$  and  $\bar{X}=2.21$  so they were not able to answer some simple questions presented in the Pretest. At the end of this investigation, students in the Experimental group obtained  $\bar{X}=3.125$  while in the Control group; students only got  $\bar{X}=2.5$ , according to the statistic analysis with the SPSS software.

We conclude that reading comprehension in students with traditional methods is low because the classes are traditional and oriented towards the knowledge of grammar; working with traditional methods students did not have the opportunity to express their ideas because when they are working individually they do not have enough motivation and sometimes they feel embarrassed and afraid.

Working with Collaborative Learning approach based on Reading comprehension, students showed that they acquired not only more vocabulary but also more knowledge in components such as pronunciation, spelling, reading and writing.

Collaborative learning approach tends to reduce the anxiety and students are more confident when the classroom responsibilities are shared. Each student has the opportunity to express ideas and feelings about the successful work in the activities that they are doing. We observed it from the tenth week until the end of the implementation of the method.

Structured group work provides excellent opportunities for teachers to listen in a discrete distance and to record language and concept development to observe individual learning styles and generally to improve their running scores.

In collaborative learning the teacher often becomes a facilitator rather than the primary source of knowledge or the controller of the class. Collaborative learning also has a range of generic skills benefits, including the development of general communication abilities, empathy, and social skills.

The opportunity to strengthen reading skills as well as interpersonal skills in educational studies, can play an important part in the overall success of new students and the development of critical thinking (Graves & Avery, 1997) the use of collaborative activities is essential to ensure that students develop thinking skills, understanding and remembering important

information. It has been found that vocabulary instruction and reading comprehension go hand-in-hand (Santa, 2002).

We hope that this paper will be useful for English teachers and students to create good environments towards reading comprehension.



## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is important to note that incorporating collaborative learning in a course does not mean that small group work must be used all of the time. Teachers need to consider the course objectives, the instructor's style, the students' experience level, and the complexity of the course to determine when it is and is not appropriate to embrace group work.

Using collaborative learning as a teaching method appears to be a valuable way for students to learn new material while encouraging peer interaction and success. The strategies used motivated students to stay on task and accomplish the goal of learning new vocabulary focused on reading comprehension.

Collaborative learning approach could be incorporated into other subject areas, because this method is an effective approach for increasing comprehension, however the teacher needs to know and understand this method to apply it, we have to take into account that some students prefer to work alone, but these students will have to learn to get on with others and defend their points of view. Working in collaborative groups provides a less threatening way to do this, rather than having to speak out in front of the whole class.

Once teachers have specified the objectives of the topics in class, they should establish the grouping ways and numbers of the members of the groups. In that way, teachers can be more aware of the groups and their activities.

For further research, it would be a good idea to take into account the size of the classroom, as you may need students to change places when grouping.

It is relevant the teacher's opinion and/or judgment of students, as this will help them decide on how to form the groups. Of course, this needs the teacher's perception and knowledge of their students. This may take some time before teachers can get to know each of the students' behavior in class to be able to assign individual roles.

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## APPENDICES


### KET (Key English Test)

The following test was given to the students in both groups as Pretest and Posttest, without any previous information to measure their English reading Comprehension level. Taken from:

<http://www.cambridgeesol.org/exams/general-english/ket.html>

1

#### PAPER 1: READING AND WRITING



**UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE**  
ESOL Examinations

**KEY ENGLISH TEST**  
**for Schools**

**PAPER 1**    Reading and Writing

**Sample Paper**

**Time**        1 hour 10 minutes

**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

Do not open this question paper until you are told to do so.

**Write your name, Centre number and candidate number on your answer sheet if they are not already there.**

Read the instructions for each part of the paper carefully.

Answer all the questions.

Read the instructions on the answer sheet.

Write your answers on the answer sheet. Use a pencil.

You **must** complete the answer sheet in the time allowed.

**INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

There are nine parts to the test.

Questions **1 – 55** carry one mark.

Question **56** carries five marks.

---

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PAPER 1: READING AND WRITING

Part 1 (questions 1–5) and Part 2 (questions 6–10)

**Reading and Writing • Part 2**

Questions 6 – 10

Read the sentences about an internet café.  
 Choose the best word (A, B or C) for each space.  
 For questions 6–10, mark A, B or C on your answer sheet.

**Example:**

0 Last month an internet café ..... near Ivan's house.  
 A opened B began C arrived      Answer:  A  B  C

6 The internet café quickly became ..... with Ivan and his friends.  
 A favourite B popular C excellent

7 It only ..... Ivan five minutes to get to the café.  
 A takes B has C gets

8 Ivan often ..... his friends there after school.  
 A waits B meets C gives

9 The café has different ..... of computer games that they can play.  
 A things B ways C kinds

10 Ivan thinks there is a lot of ..... information on the internet.  
 A certain B sure C useful

Turn over ▶

**Reading and Writing • Part 1**

Questions 1 – 5

Match notice (A–H) with title (1–5).  
 For questions 1–5, mark the correct letter A–H on your answer sheet.

**Example:**

0 You connect to your phone.  
 Answer:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H

1 You should put things back in the right place.

2 Go here if you have lost something.

3 You must walk in this place.

4 These students do not have a lesson.

5 You cannot go in through here.

A No contact to cell phone  
USE OTHER DOOR

B TURN OFF ALL MOBILE  
DURING LESSONS

C **PHONE**  
Students in this  
area must walk in calmly

D **Class 4B**  
No history class today  
Teacher: M

E Start 6.15 to Science Museum  
Bus leaves Secondary 8.20 am

F **DO NOT LEAVE BAGS  
IN FRONT OF THIS DOOR**

G *No running in  
school hall*

H **Study Centre**  
Please return all books  
to service staff

2




1

**PAPER 1: READING AND WRITING**


Part 3 (questions 11–20)

**Questions 11 – 15**  
Complete the five conversations.  
For questions 11 – 15, mark A, B or C on your answer sheet.

**Examples:**



Where do you come from?



A New York  
B School  
C Home

Answer:  A  B  C

**Questions 16 – 20**  
Complete the telephone conversations between two friends.  
What does John say to Matt?  
For questions 16 – 20, mark the correct letter A – H on your answer sheet.

**Examples:**

Matt: Hi, John. It's Matt.  
John: O .....  
Answer:  A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H

---

**11** Why didn't you come to the pool yesterday?  
**A** I didn't see them there.  
**B** It was a great time.  
**C** I was doing something else.

**12** I have to go home now.  
**A** Have you been before?  
**B** It's still quite early.  
**C** How long was it for?

**13** Whose phone is that?  
**A** It's not there.  
**B** Wharrt! It?  
**C** I'm not sure.

**14** There weren't any more tickets for the match.  
**A** That's a pity.  
**B** It isn't enough.  
**C** I hope so.

**15** Shall we play that new computer game?  
**A** It's all right.  
**B** Yes, it is.  
**C** If you'd like to.

**16** Oh, sorry. I'm phoning about the skateboarding competition this afternoon.  
**A** I'd like a new one but I don't think I'm good enough to win.  
**B** I didn't see it. Is the competition on all afternoon?  
**C** Hi. You're calling early!  
**D** Do the winners get CDs like last year?  
**E** I wasn't very good then.  
**F** I didn't know that was today.  
**G** I haven't got one of those.  
**H** Maybe, well see. Shall we meet in the park at 2.00?

**17** Just from 2.30 till 5 pm. They give out the prizes at 6 pm.  
**A** The prizes are before this time. The top prize is a skateboard.  
**B** You're much better than you were last year!  
**C** Great! See you then.


Turn over ▶

**PAPER 1: READING AND WRITING**  
Part 4 (questions 21–27)

**Reading and Writing • Part 4**

Questions 21–27

Read the article about a young swimmer. Ana Johnson is a 13-year-old swimmer who lives in Melbourne in Australia. Find time to swim for Australia in the next Olympics. She swims in both long and short races and she has already come first in many important competitions.



**Ana Johnson**

As well as spending many hours in the pool, Ana also makes time for studying and for friends. 'I have lots of friends who swim and we're very close. It's much easier to have friends who are swimmers because they don't have to get up early to practice like me and they understand the kind of life. But it's not so different from other people my age. In my free time I also enjoy going to the movies and parties. There are also some good things about swimming for a club. I travel a lot for competitions and I've made friends with swimmers from other Australian cities and from other parts of the world.'

Ana is becoming well known in Australia and she believes it is important to get more young people interested in swimming. 'I don't mind talking to journalists and having my photograph taken. But last year I was on TV and that was much more fun.'

Turn over ▶

---

**Example:**

0 Ana's home is in Melbourne.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

Answer:  A  B  C

7

21 Ana hopes she will become an Olympic swimmer.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

22 Ana knows that the 1500m is shorter than 1000m.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

23 Ana has won a lot of swimming competitions.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

24 It is difficult for Ana to make friends with other people who swim.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

25 Ana likes doing the same things as other teenagers.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

26 Ana has met people from different countries at swimming competitions.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

27 Ana prefers speaking to journalists to being on television.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

7

1

**PAPER 1: READING AND WRITING**

Part 5 (questions 28–35)

Example	O	A	in	B	at	C	to	Answer:
28	A	from		B	by	C	of	
29	A	played		B	plays	C	playing	
30	A	their		B	his	C	its	
31	A	some		B	all	C	enough	
32	A	more		B	much	C	most	
33	A	this		B	it	C	there	
34	A	One		B	Each	C	Both	
35	A	need		B	must	C	has	


Turn over ▶

**Reading and Writing • Part 5**

Questions 28 – 35

Read the article about a circus.  
Choose the best word (A, B or C) for each space.  
For questions 28 – 35, mark A, B or C on your answer sheet.

**A famous circus**



The circus, Cirque du Soleil, began (28) ..... Montreal, Canada. It was started (29) ..... the Canadian Guy Laliberté in 1984. When he left college, Laliberté travelled around Europe and earned money (30) ..... with (31) ..... friends, Daniel Gauthier. During the 1990s, Cirque grew quickly. It now does shows (32) ..... over the world and the number of people working for it has grown from 73 to (33) ..... then 3,500.

The Cirque does not have any animals, but (34) ..... is music and dance and each show tells a story. (35) ..... show, which is called *Variété*, is about a man who could fly. The show starts with him falling from the sky and tells the story of how he (36) ..... to learn to fly again.

8

**PAPER 1: READING AND WRITING**

Part 6 (questions 36–40) and Part 7 (questions 41–50)

### Reading and Writing • Part 6

Questions 36 – 40

Read the descriptions of some words about the free time that people have. What is the word for each one? There is one space for each other letter in the word. For questions 36 – 40, write the words on your answer sheet.

Example:

0 If you like reading about music and festivals, you may buy this. m \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Answer:

---

36 People who like watching football often go to the place. s \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

37 If you enjoy taking photographs, you will need this. c \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

38 People who like swimming in the sea often go here. b \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

39 You may play this instrument if you like music. g \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

40 If you enjoy dancing, you will need to take this with you. t \_ \_ \_ \_

### Reading and Writing • Part 7

Questions 41 – 50

Complete the message left on the Internet by a girl from Mexico City. Write ONE word for each space. For questions 41 – 50, write the words on your answer sheet.

Example:

0

My name (0) ..... Eva Valdez. I'm twelve and I live in Mexico City. I (41) ..... two brothers, Emilio and Miguel. Both of (42) ..... are a few years older (43) ..... me. My sister, María, is (44) ..... youngest in my family and it was her birth birthday (45) ..... week.

I love spending time (46) ..... my friends. We often (47) ..... shopping or play volleyball together. I really enjoy dancing too. I joined a dance school five years (48) ..... and I go there twice (49) ..... week to practise. I've learned a (50) ..... of interesting things about my country's music and dancing.

10

11 Turnover ▶

1

**PAPER 1: READING AND WRITING**

**Part 8 (questions 51–55) and Part 9 (question 56)**

**Reading and Writing • Part 8**

Questions 51 – 55

Read the invitation and the email. Fill in the information in Louisa's notes. For questions 51 – 55, write the information on your answer sheet.

**Come to an ice-skating party**  
on Sunday  
at  
Park Ice Park  
Starts at 7.30 p.m.

You won't need any money but bring a warm sweater. Let me know if you can come by the endy.

Sara

From: Carla  
To: Louisa

Shall we go to Sara's ice-skating party together? My dad will take us in the car but we'll need to come back by bus. We'd like to see you and get you at 12.30. Ring me this afternoon on my mobile (07816 212166) or at 6 p.m. at home (960387) to let me know.

**Reading and Writing • Part 9**

Question 56

Read the email from your English friend, Alex.

From: Alex  
To:

It's great you can come to my house this evening to watch a DVD. What time are you coming? Which DVD do you want to watch? What would you like to eat?

We're an email to Alex and answer the questions. Write 25 – 35 words. Write the email on your answer sheet.

**Do not write your answer here.**

**You must write your answer for Part 9 on your Answer Sheet.**

**Louisa's Notes**

Ice-skating party

Sara

Person having party: \_\_\_\_\_

Day:

Time:  p.m.

Take:

Travel there by:

Card's evening phone number:

12

**PAPER 1: READING AND WRITING**

Answer key

Reading and Writing

PART ONE	PART TWO	PART THREE	PART FOUR	PART FIVE
1 H	6 B	11 C	21 A	28 B
2 C	7 A	12 B	22 C	29 C
3 C	8 B	13 C	23 A	30 B
4 D	9 C	14 A	24 B	31 B
5 A	10 C	15 C	25 A	32 A
		16 F	26 A	33 C
		17 B	27 B	34 A
		18 D		35 C
		19 A		
		20 H		

PART SIX	PART SEVEN	PART EIGHT
36 stadium	41 have	51 Saturday
37 camera	42 them	52 (starts at) 1.30 (p.m.)
38 beach	43 than	(starts at) 13.30
39 guitar	44 the	(starts at) one thirty (in the afternoon)
40 tent	45 last	(starts at) half past one (in the afternoon)
	this	53 (a) (warm) sweater
	46 with	54 car
	47 go	55 366387
	48 ago	
	49 each	
	every	
	a	
	per	
	50 lot	

Brackets ( ) indicate optional words.

## Reading comprehension activities

The following readings were given the students in experimental group as collaborative activities. These reading were taken from the students' English book assigned for the school staff.

### 1. THE TALIBAN MILITIA

**Read:**

*Since September 1996, when the Taliban militia group took over the Afghan capital city of Kabul, the majority of women in Afghanistan have been sentenced to a "living death." The Taliban and their decrees have:*

- *forced women to beg on the streets simply to feed their children, for only a tiny percentage of women are allowed to work;*
- *banned girls from attending school after the age of eight;*
- *prohibited women from leaving their homes unless accompanied by a close male relative;*
- *forced women who leave their homes to be covered from head to toe in a "burqa," or "chadari" with only a mesh opening to see and breathe through;*

- *required that ground or street level homes where women live in the cities have their windows painted opaque so the women inside cannot be seen from the street;*

- *and severely limited women's access to medical services because male physicians are not allowed to treat women and only a few selected female physicians can work only if they are veiled and treat only women in segregated wards.*

The Taliban militia

Answer the following question according to the text you read:

1. What have the Taliban forced women to do?

---

---

2. What have they required for ground or streets level homes where women live?

---

---

3. How have they limited women's access to medical services?

---

---

4. How have women who lived home dressed?

---

---

5. How have the Taliban decrees been considered?

---

---



## 2. AZTEC MEDICINE

### Read:

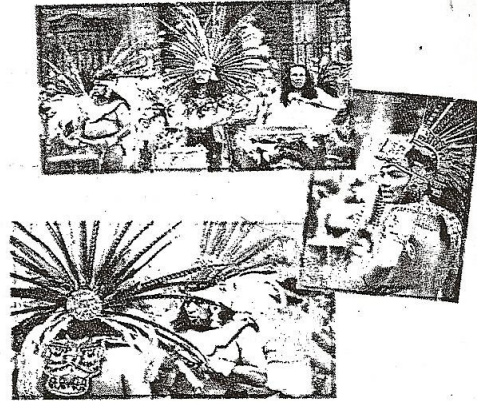
*If you or I get sick, we see a doctor, usually follow the advise of our physician and generally recover. The Aztec operated in a similar matter, however, the causes of the illness were treated quite differently.*

*You or I don't attribute our illnesses to the eruption of volcanoes or the fancy of an obscure deity that we somehow slighted, the Aztec did. Often the Aztec family would view illness in their homes as a punishment or destiny with no hope for cure or reversal of the illness.*

*The treatment of any illness could be approached from quite a few different angles including, physical treatment, drugs, or a spiritual cure. The herb knowledge was extensive and effective. The spiritual, or magical cures, were just as important and deserve equal study and consideration as they apply to general medical treatment.*

*The Aztec had a love-hate relationship with their deities. An illness could be seen as retribution for not strictly following a rather extensive set of daily homage routines. Sickness might also be inflicted for no other reason than the amusement of a particular deity.*

*Another form of divine intervention in the health of the Aztec was pre-ordained illness. The Aztec had a well established birth sign structure, much like modern astrology. Babies born during certain days were expected to develop into sickly children and die early of disease. Conversely babies born on other days could expect favor from the gods and live happy, disease free lives. Should one of these favored*



*people develop illness, he or she surely must have forgotten to properly pay homage to the gods.*

*Some fifteen hundred different plants, pastes, potions, and powders were catalogued soon after the conquest by a variety of historians. The Mexica were sophisticated enough to wrap flower petals around certain medicines to form a type of capsule, or "pill" for easy consumption.*

*The various medical practitioners must have sought each other out and traded recipes, stories and secrets. The discoveries made by each tribe were discussed, tried and experimented with. The good ones eventually would have been accepted into general daily practice.*

*The Mexica even had a crude dental industry in practice. Common tooth decay among the Mexica was treated with crude fillings and drugs were used for anesthetic. Feather quills and cactus spines were used as simple instruments. Ground seeds and roots of the nettle plant were used for the treatment of festering gums.*

Aztec medicine

Answer the following question according to the text you read:

1. What were the causes of illness according to the Aztec illness?

---

---

2. What were the treatments of an illness? How many treatments were there?

---

---

3. How did the Aztec decide what treatments to use?

---

---

4. How was tooth decay treated? How

---

---

5. How was festering gums treated?

---

---

### 3. BUDDHISM

**Read:**

**What Is Buddhism?**

*For more than 2,500 years, the religion we know today as Buddhism has been the primary inspiration behind many successful civilizations, the source of great cultural achievements and a lasting and meaningful guide to the very purpose of life for millions of people.*

*Today, large numbers of men and women from diverse backgrounds throughout our world are following the Teachings of the Buddha.*

**The Buddha**

*Siddhattha Gotama, Buddha, was born around 2,600 years ago as a Prince of a small territory near what is now the Indian-Nepalese border.*

*He was raised in splendid comfort, enjoying aristocratic status, but material pleasure could not satisfy the enquiring and philosophic nature of the young man.*



*At the age of 29 he left the palace and his family to search for a deeper meaning in the forests and mountains of North-East India.*

*He studied under the wisest religious teachers and philosophers of his time, learning all they had to offer.*

*He developed his mind in deep but luminous, tranquil meditation.*

*Using the extraordinary clarity of such a mind with its sharp penetrative power generated by states of deep inner stillness, he turned his attention to investigating the hidden meanings of the mind, universe and life.*

*Thus, he gained the supreme Enlightenment experience and from that time on he was known as the Buddha.*

*His Enlightenment consisted of the most profound and all-embracing insight into the nature of the mind and all phenomena.*

*This Enlightenment was not a revelation from some divine being, but a discovery made by Himself.*

Buddhism

Answer the following question according to the text you read:

1. When was Buddha born?

---

---

2. Where did he find a deeper meaning of life?

---

---

3. What helped him to develop his mind?

---

---

4. What did his enlightenment consist of?

---

---

5. What did he turn his attention to?

---

---

#### 4. CUSTOMS OF SUSSEX

**Read:**

*The funeral customs of Sussex present a few unusual features and customs. There are slight traces of an old belief that to put salt on coffins afforded them protection against evil forces.*

*More frequently mentioned is a charming custom at the burial of shepherds; a lock of wool was laid in their hands in the coffin, so that on the Last Day they could prove what their work had been, and so be forgiven for the many times they had had to miss Sunday church.*

*The custom was sometimes kept up in this century, for instance at Alfriston and Flamer in the 1930's; in Falmer, a shepherd was buried with crook, shears and sheep-bell at his side.*

*When a sick man was at the point of death, certain rituals could ease his passing. Doors and windows should be opened, to let the soul leave freely; if he still lingered, drawers and cupboards should be opened too. It was often held that if there were game-birds' or pigeons' feathers on the pillows or bed, the dying man would remain in agony.*

*Nowadays we associate death with black color, but this was not always the case. The bearers at many funerals in past centuries wore their best white smocks. Sometimes it was the women who wore white. In 1798 a journeyman carpenter was buried in Salehurst churchyard, with the pall being supported by six young women dressed in white.*

Custom of Sussex

Answer the following question according to the text you read:

1. How did the custom begin?

---

---

2. Why did people in Sussex put salt on coffins?

---

---

3. What was the custom at the burial of shepherds?

---

---

4. How did people in Alfriston and Flamer bury the shepherd?

---

---

5. What kind of ritual helped a dead person to easy his passing?

---

---

## 5. TITAN A.E

Read:

*"Titan A.E." is clearly a film for boys and girls between the ages of 11 and 15. A video-arcade version of the movie is already in place, as is a comic book, action figures and CD, of course. The movie shows Earth being destroyed by the Drej.*

*Not too many humans are left, and the few who are spend their time moping around on other alien planets and feeling nostalgic over their decimated home — everyone except the angry Cale, a slouchy teen who holds his late scientist father responsible for the whole mess, for playing around with fate. He's also alienated from the other remaining humans.*

*In "Titan A.E.", which stands for "After Earth", the only hope against the Drej is something called The Titan Machine, a spaceship-like gizmo concocted with the powers, thanks to some DNA and scientific data lodged in it, to re - create Earth. But where is it?*

*Akima, the female character, is tough, independent, and very modern. Akima, Cale and the adventurer Korso have to navigate their way through a dangerous landscape of reflective ice crystals and a strange, glowing planet which houses equally dangerous trees of hydrogen that explode. They are accompanied by three non-human aliens.*



*The film has a splendiferous grandeur to it visually, but none of the characters has any depth and the action, although vigorous, visceral and admirably violence - free, gets to be joyless as one predictable chase and cliff-hanger follows another.*

Joe Baltake, Bee Movie Critic

Titan A.E

Answer the following question according to the text you read:

1. What audience can have access to Titan A.E?

---

---

2. What others versions of Titan A.E can this audience find?

---

---

3. What can humans do to survive according to Titan A.E?

---

---

4. Where can humans go?

---

---

5. What can the Titan machine do?

---

---



## 6. DO YOU HAVE A HEALTHY LIFE?

### Read:

To protect yourself from the AIDS virus, it's imperative that you understand how it is spread. AIDS is fatal. Knowing the facts can keep you from harm.

### SEXUAL TRANSMISSION

Homosexuals and heterosexuals alike are at risk of AIDS. Any infected person can pass on HIV to anyone he or she has sex with. Men can infect a female or male partner, as can women.

If you're promiscuous, you increase your chances of encountering someone who is infected. It's believed the virus enters the bloodstream through cuts or sores on sexual organs and the rectum.

### DRUG AND NEEDLE USE

Injecting drugs or steroids with someone who is HIV positive also puts you at risk. Dried blood can stay on a needle or inside a syringe, then be transferred to the next user.

Since you cannot tell by looking at a person whether he or she is HIV positive, sharing

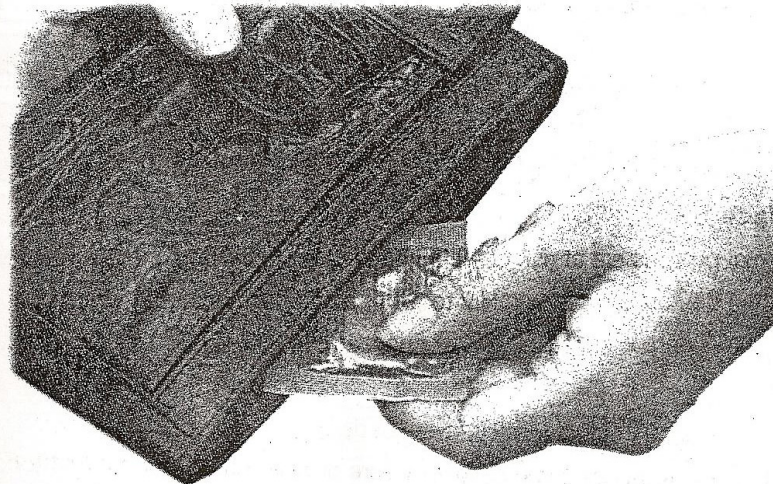
needles is always dangerous. You're also at risk if you have your ears or body pierced or get a tattoo. If you have either of these procedures done, make sure the person providing the service uses only new or sterile needles and equipment.

### TRANSFUSIONS

There is a chance you could be infected with AIDS by receiving a blood transfusion, especially if you receive one in another country.

**The following steps can help you prevent the spread of AIDS.**

- a. Practice safe sex.
- b. Have an HIV test if you've had unsafe sex or shared needles.
- c. Don't inject drugs of any kind.
- d. Don't share needles or syringes.
- e. Seek medical help if you have a drug problem.



Do you have a healthy life?

Answer the following question according to the text you read:

1. How can a person prevent AIDS?

---

---

2. How can a person passed on HIV to another person?

---

---

3. Can using a needle be a form of transmitting AIDS? Why?

---

---

4. Can a blood transfusion pass on AIDS?

---

---

5. Can knowing the facts of AIDS keep you from harm? Why?

---

---

## 7. SPEECH ON THE WTO

Read the following text and underline the nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs that you find. Use a different color for each category:

*This speech was delivered by Free Youth Internet editor James Russell at a November 30th Rally in the town of Amherst, Massachusetts, against the World Trade Organization, occurring simultaneously with the main Anti-WTO protest in Seattle.*

*"Today, on this international day of action, I speak of a problem that is hidden away from our eyes. Child labor, that most insidious form of worker exploitation, that turns a helpless child into another cog in the machine of the global economy.*

*It is something most of us may not know much about, but which the staff of the World Trade Organization knows perfectly well occurs, and they are consciously and willfully ignoring the plight of child laborers in their runaway pursuit of profits, no matter what the cost.*

*Imagine your child, or one you care about, forced to work*



*long hours under hellish conditions for the profit of a far-off company. Even the coldest heart must find this picture shocking. But the hearts of the WTO leaders must be colder than ice.*

*In their undemocratic show trials, the WTO has consistently ruled against anything that is considered a barrier to "free trade", such as laws protecting children from exploitation.*

*According to WTO policy, it is illegal for a nation to ban or boycott a product for how it is made, even if it is made by children or slaves, such as the soccer ball industry of Pakistan.*

*Nations can even be punished by fines for refusing to buy products made by children! The WTO is an organization without one iota of conscience.*

*Its support of so-called "trade liberalization" is a shallow euphemism for beating every ounce of profit they can get out of workers, no matter what their age or the conditions they work in."*

Speech on the WTO

Answer the following question according to the text you read:

1. According to the reading what is the most insidious form or worker exploitation?

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2. Why is it considered to be the most insidious form worker exploitation?

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3. How does the reading described WTO people's attitude toward child labour?

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4. What is the biggest promoter of child labour abuse?

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5. What is the biggest punish to nations refusing to buy products made by children?

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## 8. BORNEO TRIBAL

### Read:

*Borneo is the largest island of the great Malay archipelago. Most of the indigenous peoples of Borneo live in massive communal structures known as longhouses.*

*A longhouse is essentially a village under a single roof where dozens of families live.*

*Inside the longhouse, each family lives in a separate apartment set along a central corridor that serves as the village "street."*

*Kenyah-Kayan society is traditionally divided into several hereditary social classes: high chiefs, minor nobility, commoners, and, formerly, slaves.*

*Women were, and are, largely responsible for rice agriculture and child rearing, while men, until the early twentieth century, carried on warfare and headhunting.*

*In the Kenyah-Kayan worldview, all of these activities brought life and vitality to the community.*

*Though acquired through the death of an enemy, heads were the sustainers of life.*

*Displayed in the longhouse gallery and kept "comfortable" with their own fire,*



*enemy skulls were believed to bring health and prosperity to the village and fertility to its rice fields.*

### The Spirit World

*Borneo is home to a number of distinct artistic traditions. Of these, the Kenyah-Kayan tradition is among the most aesthetically accomplished.*

*The imagery of Kenyah-Kayan art abounds with fearsome, otherworldly creatures.*

*They appear on everything, from the massive wooden beams of the longhouse to the delicately carved ornamentation of warriors' swords.*

*These monstrous beings protect the individual and community by driving off dangerous spirits.*

Borneo tribal

Answer the following question according to the text you read:

1. What is Borneo?

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2. Who lives in longhouses?

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3. Which are women's biggest responsibilities?

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4. What is the best know sustainer of life according to the test?

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5. What is the most ancient believe to bring health and prosperity?

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## 9. HOT WATER FOR ITCHES

**Read:**

**Hot water for itches**

*We discovered this technique in the book *Dermatology: Diagnosis and Treatment*.*

*Moderate itching (the sort of thing you get from a mosquito bite or mild case of poison ivy without blisters) often responds to a hot water application.*

*The water needs to be hot enough to be slightly uncomfortable but not so hot that it burns.*

*If you let the hot water tap run for a few minutes this should be about right. A few seconds' exposure is all you need to produce several hours of relief.*

*Rubbing an insect bite with ammonia takes away itching.*

Hot water for itches

Answer the following question according to the text you read:

1. What is the title of the book in which the technique was discovered?

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2. What is the technique recommended and how do you use it?

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3. What is the definition of moderate itching?

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4. What water temperature is needed according to this technique?

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5. What is the product which takes away itching?

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## 10. PARIS

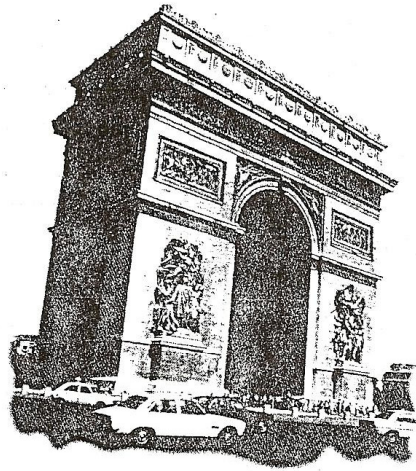
**Read:**

*Paris is very compact, and most of its picturesque quarters are within walking distance of each other.*

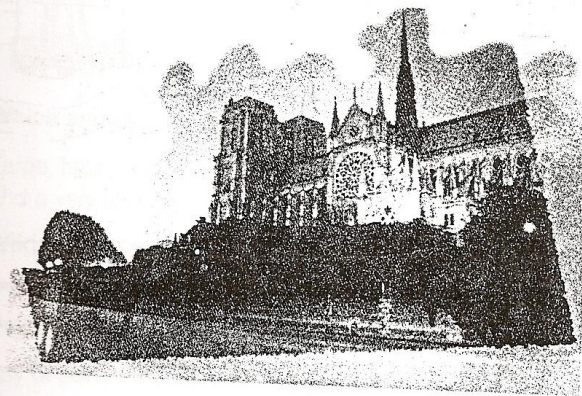
*You can spend hours strolling the quays of the Seine River, the cobblestone streets of the St.-Germain-des-Prés quarter, or the courtyard of the Palais Royal without spending a single centime.*

*Along the way you'll pass some spectacular churches, including the famous Notre-Dame Cathedral and, atop Montmartre Hill overlooking the city, the Sacré-Coeur Basilica. Entry into their sanctuaries is free, although fees are charged to visit their crypts or ascend their towers.*

*One of the most popular excursions in Paris is a visit to the Père Lachaise Cemetery, where entry is free, although you might want to buy a map on sale at the entrances.*



*It will help you find the graves of many of France's latest and greatest—including Colette, Molière, Edith Piaf, Marcel Proust, Simone Signoret, and Yves Montand—as well as distinguished foreigners who died in Paris, such as Oscar Wilde, Amedeo Modigliani, and Jim Morrison of the Doors, whose tombstone has been a pilgrimage for the young for many years.*



*Yet one of the great pleasures of a visit to Paris is to put away the map and just wander. Your path will inevitably cross one of the city's famous parks and gardens. Many were once the private domains of French royalty, but today they are free to all.*

*Michael Balter*

Paris

Answer the following question according to the text you read:

1. What touristic places are going to see when strolling Paris' streets?

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2. What do you need to buy when you are going to visit the Père Lachaise Cemetery?

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3. Whose graves are going to find in the Père Lachaise Cemetery?

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4. What places are you going to pass when crossing Paris?

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5. How much are you going to spend when walking around the city?

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## 10. RAINFOREST

**Read:**

**Facts:**

*The rainforest is the earth's natural laboratory, from where one quarter of today's pharmaceuticals are derived. One seemingly insignificant plant, the rosy periwinkle, gave us medicines which revolutionized the treatment of leukemia in children.*

*According to the National Cancer Institute, 70 percent of the plants used in fighting cancer can only be found in the rainforest.*

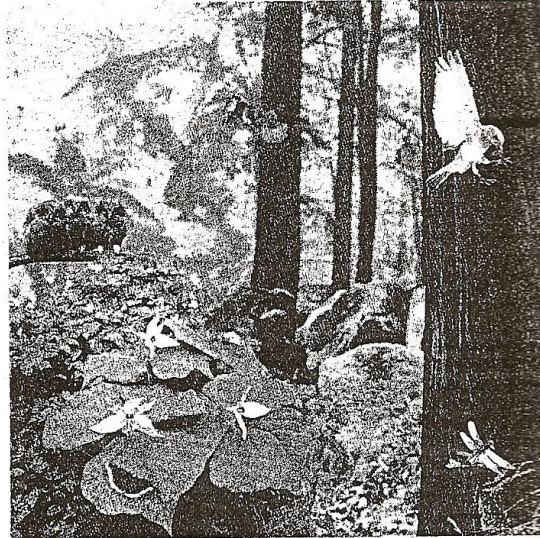
*But less than 1 percent of tropical forest species have been thoroughly examined for their medicinal properties. As rainforests are being destroyed, at least three species are extinguished every day. The treatment for presently incurable diseases may vanish with these species.*

***Rainforests stabilize the climate***

*With its incredible capacity to store humidity and heat, the tropical rainforest around the equator functions as a giant pressure pump, forcing a steady stream of hot and humid air towards the colder temperate zones, thus stabilizing the climate.*

*It is believed that large scale deforestation will break this natural mechanism.*

*Also, when rainforests are burned, massive amounts of carbon dioxide*



*are released, significantly contributing to global warming.*

*Together, deforestation and burning contribute to increased storm activity and climatic chaos.*

***Rainforests are precious***

*Beneath its ancient, ever-green appearance, the rainforest hides an astounding variety of plants and animals.*

*Although it presently covers only 3.5 percent of the planet's land surface, the rainforest contains more than half of all life forms.*

*It is also home to more than a thousand indigenous tribes. Their culture and wisdom reflect an intricate and intimate knowledge of the complexity of the rainforest.*

*When we destroy the rainforest, not only do we destroy priceless ecosystems, it also means the death of hundreds of unique cultures.*

Rainforest

Answer the following question according to the text you read:

1. What has the Rainforest become a laboratory?

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2. How many species have examined the medical properties?

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3. What factors have contributed to climate chaos?

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4. How has to the tropical rain forest stabilized the climate?

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5. What has revolutionized the treatment of Leukemia in children?

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## 12. COFFEE FOR ASTHMA

Read:

### Coffee for Asthma

*Asthma can be a serious disease that requires medical management, not home remedies. But if you are caught without medicine, a couple of cups of strong coffee may help open airways.*

*We recently heard from a young woman who forgot to take her asthma medicine with her on her honeymoon. A walk on the beach left her wheezing, but she remembered this remedy and it saved the day.*

*We also heard from someone who was stuck at 30,000 feet on an airplane. The asthma medicine was packed in a carry-on bag that had been checked by the flight attendant. Coffee once again came to the rescue.*

*Two or three cups can provide short-term benefit. Caffeine is very similar to a tried-and-true asthma medicine called theophylline.*

Coffee for asthma

Answer the following question according to the text you read:

1. What is the definition of Asthma according to the reading?

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2. What can a person do in case of Asthma attack?

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3. What did the woman who forgets to take her medicine do?

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4. What are the benefits of coffee?

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5. What happened to the persons on an airplane's medicine?

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