

Functional Skills English | Level 2 | Group Reading Activity 1

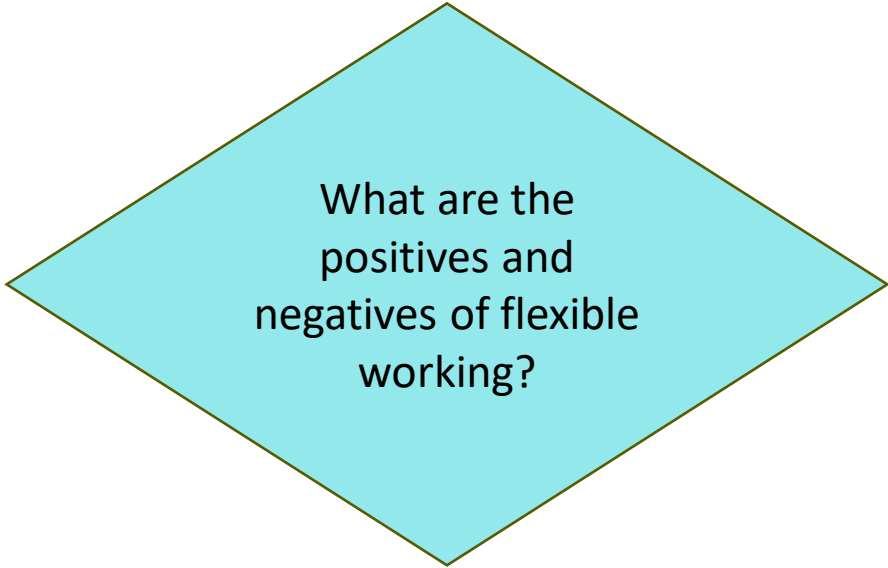
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Product Manager Post 16 English, Maths and Digital Skills



Group Reading Activity | Level 2 | Pre-Reading

In pairs, consider the following and make a list. You have two minutes



What are the
positives and
negatives of flexible
working?

Group Reading Activity | Level 2 | Reading Task 1

Individually, read your texts. How many of your answers were in the text?

Article

Survey shows benefits of flexible working
by Grant Bailey

Paragraph 1
Workers who are offered the option of flexible working are benefiting UK business by working more productively, a new survey claims. The poll compared the productivity of 1,500 workers who set their own hours or working location against 500 who do not. The findings suggest that flexible working could mean larger profits for companies.

Paragraph 2
The flexible workers surveyed said they felt they worked more effectively than those working a traditional nine-to-five job. A quarter of these people said they work hours that suit them better than normal office hours in their new flexi-routine.

Paragraph 3
'Flexible working has a huge number of benefits for employees and employers alike', said Olivia Hill, Chief HR Officer at AAT, which commissioned the study. 'In this connected world, all many people need to work is a laptop and a stable internet connection. These can be found in many places other than the office environment.'

Paragraph 4
'It seems employers are also becoming more likely to allow flexibility with hours as well as with location. The view is that as long as the job gets done, it doesn't really matter when and where it happens. The most important thing is strong levels of productivity.'

Paragraph 5
The main reason people gave for wanting to work flexibly was to balance their home and family life with work. Wanting more time with the kids was a common theme. Half of the workers also said that they wouldn't want to take a job if flexible working wasn't offered to sweeten the deal.

(Source: adapted from independent.co.uk, Flexible Workers take less leave and are more productive, Grant Bailey)

Web forum

www.myviews.web/jobs

File Edit View Favourites Tools Help

What people look for in a job

C Craig
I've had several different jobs and the most important consideration for me is to have a supportive team of colleagues who appreciate my work. If you enjoy working with the people you interact with every day then it makes the time fly by. It's also a bonus to be able to work flexibly and to have good benefits, but nothing beats feeling part of a happy team and looking forward to going to work.

T Tamara
Sorry to be mercenary, but the first thing I look for with any job is a generous pay package. It's important to enjoy your work, but this doesn't help you with your mortgage or other expenses and money makes the world go round. I also believe that it's crucial for a company to have a good computer network because this really helps with completing tasks quickly and efficiently.

D Devon
I agree that both decent wages and membership of a strong team are important. However, as a parent, the first thing I look for is **flexibility** – it's important to me to take my children to school and so I need start and finish times that accommodate this. I also find that I work much more productively at home and so managing my workload is straightforward, even with flexible working hours.

K Kendra
You all make interesting points, but I would say that work-life balance is definitely the most important thing with any position. I've had jobs that took over my life and didn't leave me with any time for myself or my family. Now, I always ask at interviews about company policies concerning flexible working and staff wellbeing and I wouldn't work for a company where these weren't a priority.

A Aziz
I'm lucky with my current position because I have an encouraging manager. That's something that is important to me, as I've had bosses in the past who were incredibly difficult to work for. I work hard and am dedicated and it's great to feel that my contribution is recognised. As long as this is the case then I'll be staying in my job – I'd be reluctant to risk what I have here.

Group Reading Activity | Level 2 | Reading Task 2

Individually, reread your texts and answer the questions.

Article

Survey shows benefits of flexible working by Grant Bailey

Paragraph 1

Workers who are offered the option of flexible working are benefiting UK business by working more productively, a new survey claims. The poll compared the productivity of 1,500 workers who set their own hours or working location against 500 who do not. The findings suggest that flexible working could mean larger profits for companies.

Paragraph 2

The flexible workers surveyed said they felt they worked more effectively than those working a traditional nine-to-five job. A quarter of these people said they work hours that suit them better than normal office hours in their new flexi-routine.

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'Flexible working has a huge number of benefits for employees and employers alike', said Olivia Hill, Chief HR Officer at AAT, which commissioned the study. 'In this connected world, all many people need to work is a laptop and a stable internet connection. These can be found in many places other than the office environment.'

Paragraph 4

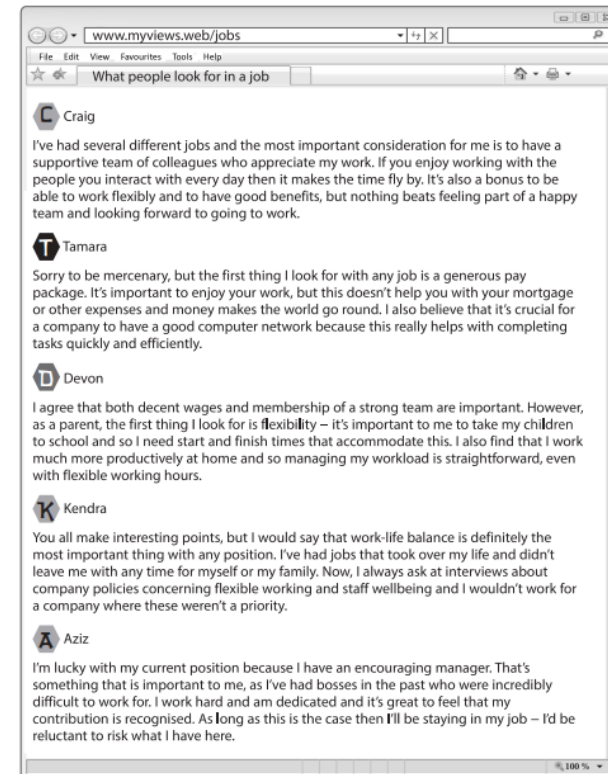
'It seems employers are also becoming more likely to allow flexibility with hours as well as with location. The view is that as long as the job gets done, it doesn't really matter when and where it happens. The most important thing is strong levels of productivity.'

Paragraph 5

The main reason people gave for wanting to work flexibly was to balance their home and family life with work. Wanting more time with the kids was a common theme. Half of the workers also said that they wouldn't want to take a job if flexible working wasn't offered to sweeten the deal.

(Source: adapted from independent.co.uk, Flexible Workers take less leave and are more productive, Grant Bailey)

Web forum



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying 'www.myviews.web/jobs'. The page title is 'What people look for in a job'. There are five user posts, each with a profile picture and a name:

- Craig**: I've had several different jobs and the most important consideration for me is to have a supportive team of colleagues who appreciate my work. If you enjoy working with the people you interact with every day then it makes the time fly by. It's also a bonus to be able to work flexibly and to have good benefits, but nothing beats feeling part of a happy team and looking forward to going to work.
- Tamara**: Sorry to be mercenary, but the first thing I look for with any job is a generous pay package. It's important to enjoy your work, but this doesn't help you with your mortgage or other expenses and money makes the world go round. I also believe that it's crucial for a company to have a good computer network because this really helps with completing tasks quickly and efficiently.
- Devon**: I agree that both decent wages and membership of a strong team are important. However, as a parent, the first thing I look for is **flexibility** – it's important to me to take my children to school and so I need start and finish times that accommodate this. I also find that I work much more productively at home and so managing my workload is straightforward, even with flexible working hours.
- Kendra**: You all make interesting points, but I would say that work-life balance is definitely the most important thing with any position. I've had jobs that took over my life and didn't leave me with any time for myself or my family. Now, I always ask at interviews about company policies concerning flexible working and staff wellbeing and I wouldn't work for a company where these weren't a priority.
- Aziz**: I'm lucky with my current position because I have an encouraging manager. That's something that is important to me, as I've had bosses in the past who were incredibly difficult to work for. I work hard and am dedicated and it's great to feel that my contribution is recognised. As long as this is the case then I'll be staying in my job – I'd be reluctant to risk what I have here.

Group Reading Activity | Level 2 | Reading Task 3

Pair up with someone who read a different text to you.

Compare Text One and Text Two to find similar ideas about flexible working.

In your answer you should:

- give **two** similarities from these texts about flexible working
- give **one** quotation from Text One and **one** quotation from Text Two to support **each** similarity.

Group Reading Activity | Level 2 | Reading Task 3

Did you get any of the following ideas?

It is beneficial

Choose when you work

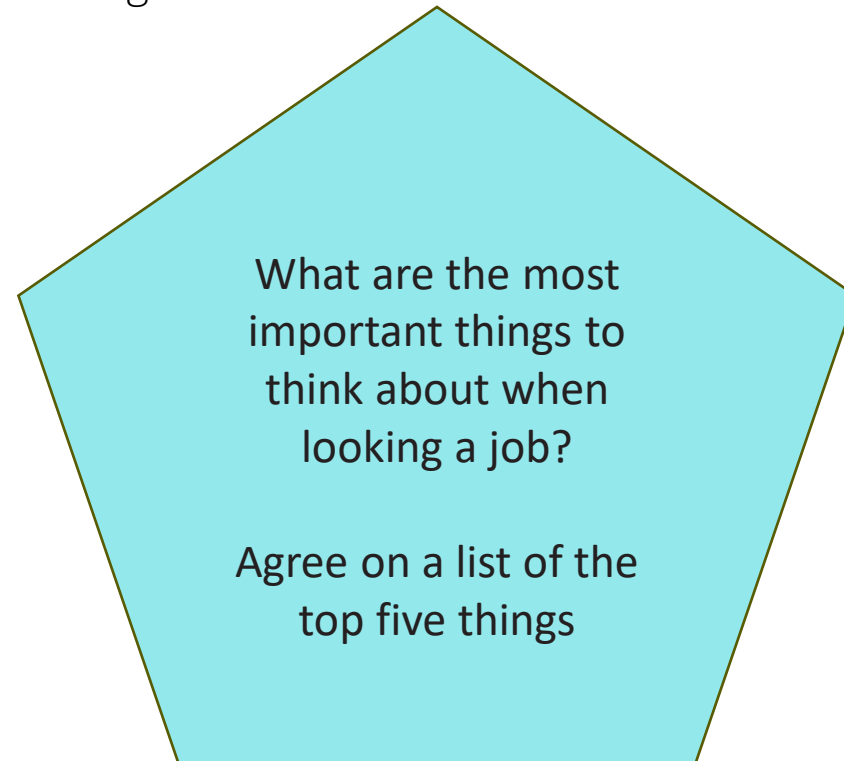
Work-life balance

Allows more time with children

Supports working more productively

Group Reading Activity | Level 2 | Discussion Task

In small groups discuss the following:



Be prepared to share your findings with the class.