

# The Science of Smiling

 | 45 min



**Category:** ✓ General English

**Topic:** ✓ People

**Media:** ✓ Video

**Level:** ✓ B2 Upper-Intermediate

**Grammar:** ✓ Auxiliaries

**Learning Focus:** ✓ Grammar, Listening, Speaking, Vocabulary



## Activity 1

### Warm-up and Introduction

**SPEAKING**



5 min

Ask the questions below to introduce the topic.

- Do you like meeting new people?
- Do you ever talk to strangers? Why or why not?
- What is your understanding of the phrase “loneliness in a crowd”?
- Which groups or kinds of people are significantly affected by it?
- Do you ever want to “escape” to a remote place?
- Does everyone need social interactions to feel good, both mentally and physically?
- What might be the consequence of feeling lonely for a long time?
- Is being alone the same as being lonely?
- Do you know any people who don’t mind, or even enjoy, being by themselves?
- Do you think social media and the pace of life destroy genuine relationships? How?



### Activity 2



10 min

### Video Comprehension

VIDEO, SPEAKING

Play the [video](#). Pause the video at 0:22 and ask the student(s) to predict what words they are talking about. Afterward, have the student(s) to complete task 1. Check and discuss the answers.



### Task 1

Watch the [video](#) and answer the questions.



1. What's the paradox related to the speaker's social life? *He has a lot of friends and a girlfriend, and yet he often feels alone.*
2. What does the speaker mean by calling the interactions "transactional"? *student's idea(s) (e.g., They are related to some task or activity and are not meaningful.)*
3. What are the findings of recent studies regarding loneliness? Do you find them surprising? *Nearly half of all Americans report feeling alone.*
4. What are the consequences of loneliness? *It can deteriorate our mental and physical health.*
5. What did Dr. Goulston find out while treating patients? *People need to feel felt, not just understood.*
6. What was the question the presenters had to ask every day? Who were they supposed to ask? *What made you smile today? Ask people who serve you.*



### Activity 3



10 min

### Video Comprehension and Discussion

VOCABULARY, SPEAKING

Ask the student(s) to complete task 2. Check and discuss the answers. You can ask the additional questions below.

- Do you think this method works?
- Are you worried or concerned about this issue (an epidemic of loneliness)?
- What causes this "epidemic"? Is it our lifestyle, pace of life, or something else?
- Are there any initiatives you know of to help overcome this problem?
- How would you answer the question, "What made you smile today?" Does talking about it make you feel better?



### Task 2

Explain the meaning of the underlined phrases. Next, answer the questions in each sentence.

- I have five words that tap into the hidden psychology of your mind.  
\_\_\_\_\_ *unconsciousness / subconsciousness* \_\_\_\_\_  
What effect do they have? \_\_\_\_\_ *It makes our lives better and can save lives.* \_\_\_\_\_
- That seems to go across all ages, all races, even all countries. \_\_\_ *It's a common problem.* \_\_\_  
Do you agree with this? \_\_\_\_\_ *student's idea(s)* \_\_\_\_\_
- Loneliness can deteriorate your mental and even your physical health. \_\_\_ *Make worse* \_\_\_  
What effect does it have? \_\_\_\_\_ *We feel worse; some people become suicidal.* \_\_\_\_\_
- When you're in front of a name-tagged, faceless person, ask them the question...  
\_\_\_\_\_ *Anonymous / a stranger* \_\_\_\_\_  
Who does it refer to? \_\_\_\_\_ *People we meet every day, e.g., those who serve us* \_\_\_\_\_



### Activity 4



5 min

### Emphasized Phrases and Speaking

GRAMMAR, SPEAKING

Ask the student(s) to complete task 3. Check and discuss the answers. Use the examples to discuss the difference between regular and emphasized statements.



### Task 3

Match the sentence halves. Next, answer the question.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. If <b>I do leave</b> my house, <i>b</i>                               | a) they felt really alone.  |
| 2. The interactions <b>I do have</b> <i>d</i>                            | b) it's to get a coffee or go to my coworking space.              |
| 3. <b>What I have discovered</b> with suicidal patients is that <i>a</i> | c) if you can pair with people in their despair, they get better. |
| 4. <b>What I learned</b> is <i>c</i>                                     | d) throughout my day just feel so transactional.                  |

**How do the sentences change if you use the bolded structures?**

\_\_\_\_\_ *We emphasize the verb or the phrase.* \_\_\_\_\_



### Activity 5



5 min

### Auxiliaries and the "What..." Structure

GRAMMAR

Review the use of auxiliaries and "What..." structures for emphasis. Ask the student(s) to come up with their own examples.

GRAMMAR REVIEW

### Auxiliary Verbs for Emphasis

We can emphasize what we say by adding an auxiliary verb in front of the main verb. There are a few situations when you might use this structure.

#### do / does / did + base verb

- **Emotive** (When we feel strongly about something we're saying)  
e.g., You **do look** nice!
- **Contrast**  
e.g., I don't now, but I **did exercise** a lot in the past.
- **Emphasis** (To make what we're saying have a stronger meaning)  
e.g., I **do apologize**.  
She **does know** a lot about this subject.
- **To describe something expected that actually happened**  
e.g., We believed we'd win, and we **did win**!

You can use a structure "**What...**" at the beginning of a sentence to emphasize the verb, phrase, or sentence.

#### Examples:

**What he does is** buy and renovate old houses. (*It has a stronger meaning than "He buys and renovates old houses."*)

**What I like** about him is his sense of humor. (*It has a stronger meaning than "I like his sense of humor."*)

**What happened was** we missed the bus and came late. (*It has a stronger meaning than "We missed the bus and came late."*)



Activity 6



5 min

Using Auxiliary Verbs

GRAMMAR, SPEAKING

Ask the student(s) to complete task 4. Check the answers and have them share their stories.



Task 4

Complete the sentences with an auxiliary verb (do/does/did) and the verbs from the box. Next, answer the question.

feel / love / realize / smell / work

- Oh, I \_\_\_\_\_ *did feel* \_\_\_\_\_ embarrassed at that moment.
- He/She \_\_\_\_\_ *does / did work* \_\_\_\_\_ really hard!
- I \_\_\_\_\_ *do / did realize* \_\_\_\_\_ it was my fault.
- Yes, it \_\_\_\_\_ *does / did smell* \_\_\_\_\_ a bit strange.
- I \_\_\_\_\_ *do love* \_\_\_\_\_ you, but I have to go.

Have you ever said these words? What was the situation? \_\_\_\_\_ *student's idea(s)* \_\_\_\_\_



Activity 7



5 min

Making Emphasis

GRAMMAR, SPEAKING

Ask the student(s) to complete task 5. Next, check the answers and discuss their ideas.



Task 5

Finish the sentences so that they are true for you. Next, rewrite them using the "What..." structure.

- When I'm really tired, I need \_\_\_\_\_ *student's idea(s)* \_\_\_\_\_  
What I \_\_\_\_\_ *need is...* \_\_\_\_\_
- I think the best thing about my work is \_\_\_\_\_ *student's idea(s)* \_\_\_\_\_  
What I really \_\_\_\_\_ *like/appreciate about my work is...* \_\_\_\_\_
- It's time for me to \_\_\_\_\_ *student's idea(s)* \_\_\_\_\_ in my life.  
What I'd like to \_\_\_\_\_ *change / focus on / do, etc. is...* \_\_\_\_\_
- It makes me furious when people \_\_\_\_\_ *student's idea(s)* \_\_\_\_\_  
What really \_\_\_\_\_ *annoys me / makes me angry/furious / infuriates me is...* \_\_\_\_\_
- I always start to laugh when I think about \_\_\_\_\_ *student's idea(s)* \_\_\_\_\_  
What always \_\_\_\_\_ *makes me laugh is...* \_\_\_\_\_
- I will never forget when \_\_\_\_\_ *student's idea(s)* \_\_\_\_\_  
What I \_\_\_\_\_ *I will never forget / will always remember is...* \_\_\_\_\_