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# WEIGHTLIFTING FOR THE ELDERLY

A TALKING POINTS LESSON FOR  
ENGLISH READING & SPEAKING

## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Do You Even Lift, Bro?.....	4
Reading Comprehension Questions.....	8
Essential Vocabulary.....	10
Discussion Questions.....	12
Writing.....	15
Credits.....	18

## Introduction

Do old people do exercise in your country?

What kinds of exercise do they do?

How about weightlifting?

What kinds of people do that?

## **Do You Even Lift, Bro?**

**When we think of weightlifting, we usually associate the exercise with younger people.**

Often young men in their twenties or thirties. We might also see one or two middle-aged people doing bench presses or squats.

### ***But old people?***

In the last few years, many doctors and sports experts have recommended weight training for senior citizens. It is not unusual to find people in their sixties, seventies — even in their nineties — sweating it out in the gym.

### ***Why has this phenomenon taken place?***

The answer is very simple.

**Weight training provides some great benefits to the elderly.**

As people age, they require exercise that boosts their physical strength. It helps to improve their posture, aid their balance and can help them with simple tasks like going up the stairs or lifting

something in the house.

Daily tasks become so much easier for old people after just a few weeks of weightlifting!

This is because the exercises in weight training emulate many day-to-day tasks — such as lifting something off the ground, pushing, pulling and the use of one's legs.

### **Weight lifting also helps in making bones stronger.**

As people age, their bones become more brittle. After a short period of weight lifting, old people's bones are much stronger.

It also helps with arthritis. A condition that many elderly people suffer from.

But after some weight lifting sessions, the muscles clamp tighter around the joints and this helps to reduce arthritic pain.

Then there are other benefits, such as the ability to walk further without feeling tired. It helps with sleep — an ailment that old people often suffer from — and research has found that it can even help with depression.

***That's fine, but how can old people get started on weightlifting?***

First, they should check with a doctor. If the doctor gives you the all-clear, then you can think about signing up at the local gym.

***The next thing is — start slow!***

It would be foolish to just jump into a routine where you are going to the gym five or six times a week and trying to lift twice your own weight.

By only going twice a week, one can see great benefits. It may not be possible to get that totally ripped look, but you can certainly see some of the benefits mentioned above.

And thirdly, start with just body-weight exercises. This means only using the weight of your body to exercise. Things like push-ups, pull-ups, and squats. These can provide great benefits alone, but if you feel you want to add some weight, do so — but take it slow at all times.

There is no real reason why we should not see old people down at the gym. They have a right to a long and healthy life as much

as anyone else.

So who knows? We might see old-age pensioners in articles on bodybuilding and in videos online.

***Don't forget leg day!***

## Reading Comprehension Questions

Who is typically associated with weightlifting according to the article?

What age group of people have doctors and sports experts recommended weight training for?

What benefits does weight training provide to senior citizens, according to the article?

Why do old people find daily tasks easier after weightlifting?

How does weightlifting help make bones stronger?

What condition can weightlifting help reduce in elderly individuals?

Besides physical benefits, what other benefits does weightlifting offer to old people?

What should old people do before starting weightlifting?

How often does the article suggest old people should go to the gym for weightlifting?

What types of exercises are recommended for old people to start with in weightlifting?

Can old people add weights to their exercises? How should they approach it?



What is the suggested frequency for weightlifting sessions per week?

What is mentioned as a possibility for old people in the future, according to the article?

What is the importance of leg day in weightlifting?

What is the significance of checking with a doctor before starting weightlifting?

Why does the article suggest starting slow in weightlifting?

Can old people achieve a totally ripped look through weightlifting, according to the article?

Can body-weight exercises alone provide benefits in weightlifting?

What does the article say about old people's right to a long and healthy life?

Where might we see old-age pensioners in the future, as mentioned in the article?

## Essential Vocabulary

bro	weightlifting	associate
middle-aged	bench press	squats
recommended	senior citizens	sweating
phenomenon	benefits	boosts
improve	posture	aid
balance	tasks	emulate
day-to-day	bones	brittle
arthritis	condition	suffer
sessions	clamp	tighter
joints	reduce	ailment
depression	all-clear	signing up
routine	ripped	body-weight
push-ups	pull-ups	old-age pensioners
bodybuilding		

### Exercise

Write down all the words and phrases in your vocabulary notebook. Look in your dictionary and find the meaning of each word. Write the definition next to each word.

Then make up your own sentences using each word or phrase.

For example:

**Bro** – *informal abbreviation of the word brother.*

**Weightlifting** – *a kind of exercise that requires the lifting of heavy weights in the form of dumbbells and barbells.*

Then write a sentence of your own that uses the new word or phrase correctly.

***Hey bro, long time no see! How are you?***

***I joined the gym because I wanted to start weightlifting and working on my body.***

Do this with all the vocabulary and, over time, this will help improve all your English skills – reading, writing, speaking and listening.



## Discussion Questions

Why do we usually associate weightlifting with younger people?

Do you agree with the article? Do you think old people should take up weightlifting? Tell the class your reasons.

What benefits does weight training provide for senior citizens?

Are there any dangers for old people doing weightlifting? What are they?

How does weightlifting improve posture and balance for the elderly?

How does weight training help with everyday tasks for old people?

Why does weightlifting make bones stronger for older individuals?

How does weightlifting help reduce arthritic pain?

What other benefits can weightlifting provide for seniors, aside from physical strength?

Would you recommend an older relative to take up weight lifting? How would you convince them to take the sport up?

Why is it important for older individuals to consult with a doctor before starting weightlifting?

What are some tips for getting started with weightlifting for senior citizens?

How often should old people go to the gym for weightlifting sessions?

Can elderly individuals achieve a "ripped" look through weightlifting?

What are some body-weight exercises that are suitable for older people?

How can adding weights gradually benefit older individuals during weightlifting?

Why is it important for old people to prioritize their long and healthy lives?

How can weightlifting contribute to better sleep for the elderly?

What is a sedentary lifestyle? Is it this that makes old people become weak? How can we prevent having a sedentary lifestyle?

What research has been conducted on the relationship between weightlifting and depression in older individuals?

Are there any precautions or modifications that need to be taken into account when weightlifting for seniors?

What role does leg day play in a weightlifting routine for the elderly?

How can weightlifting contribute to a sense of empowerment and independence for older individuals?

What are some misconceptions or stereotypes about weightlifting and ageing that need to be challenged?

Do your grandparents do any exercise? What do they do? Tell the class about it.

In your country's culture or society, do old people take care of their physical health through exercise?

What kind of exercise is popular for old people in your country? Is this exercise popular with younger people? Why/why not?

As you get older, what methods will you use to maintain your physical strength? Do you do any strength exercises now?

Do you think young people do enough exercise in your country? If not, why is this so?

Are there any gyms in your town/city?

What do you know about them?

Are they expensive? If so, why do you think so?

## Writing

**This is a writing exercise.**

Imagine you are a fitness instructor who specializes in training senior citizens. Write a short guide or advice column on weightlifting for elderly individuals. Include the following points in your writing:

### **Introduction**

Briefly explain the increasing trend of weight training among senior citizens.

Highlight the benefits of weightlifting for the elderly.

### **Getting Started**

Emphasize the importance of consulting with a doctor before starting any weightlifting program.

Provide recommendations for finding a suitable gym or fitness facility.

### **Starting Slow**

Explain the importance of starting with a manageable routine, such as going to the gym twice a week.

Encourage gradual progression over time.



## **Body-Weight Exercises**

Describe the benefits of body-weight exercises, such as push-ups, pull-ups, and squats.

Explain that these exercises can be performed without additional weights but can still provide significant benefits.

## **Adding Weights**

Discuss the option of gradually adding weights to body-weight exercises for increased resistance.

Emphasize the importance of taking it slow and listening to the body's limits.

## **Safety Measures**

Provide tips for maintaining proper form and technique during weightlifting exercises.

Remind readers to always warm up and cool down before and after workouts.

## **Long-Term Benefits**

Highlight the positive impact of weightlifting on physical strength, balance, posture, and daily tasks.

Mention the potential benefits for conditions like arthritis, sleep, and mental health.

## **Conclusion**

Encourage elderly individuals to pursue weightlifting as part of their fitness routine.

Reiterate the idea that age should not be a barrier to leading a healthy and active lifestyle.

When you have finished your article, you can read it out loud in front of your classmates.

***Or give it to your teacher for review.***

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