

MEMBERSHIP

BOOK PUZZLE



About this activity

A puzzle in which students guess the title of a book by reading its synopsis

⚠ WARNING: This activity makes reference to certain bodily functions that some people might find distasteful or embarrassing. It also makes reference to heart attacks and skin cancer so please proceed with caution as these could be triggering topics.

- ▶ **Language level:** B1/B2
- ▶ **Age of learner:** Mature teenagers and adults
- ▶ **Duration of activity:** 20 minutes
- ▶ **Tasks:** Reading; collocations match
- ▶ **Topics:** Health and the body
- ▶ **Language focus:** Collocations related to health and the body; phrase stress

For this activity, you will need the following:

- **Two images** (see below)
- **A Canva slideshow** which contains all texts and images

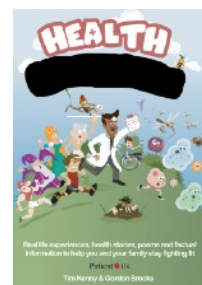


Note: For all materials and discussion, go to the corresponding page in the Resources section:

<https://membership.lessonstream.com/resources/book-puzzle/>

The images

This activity makes use of a book cover with a common play-on-words title. In the activity, students have to read the synopsis on the back cover and work out the missing word.



Activity outline

1. If you know your students well, start by asking them:

How are you all these days? How's your health?

Find out if anyone is suffering from aches, pains or everyday ailments, without sharing anything too personal. Write any useful/relevant language on the board.

Tip: In order to get the ball rolling, I strongly suggest that you lead by example. Tell students about your your tennis elbow, your bad back or your high cholesterol. If you are considerably older than your students, you can warn them that ageing hurts. They have to find this out sooner or later!

2. Show students the first image and ask if they can guess what the missing word is. Listen to students' ideas but do not confirm whether they are right or wrong at this stage.

After a few guesses, tell students that the title is a play on words with two meanings.

- The first meaning is: issues and topics related to health
- The second meaning is: health is important



Tip: If a student guesses the correct answer, do not panic. After all, they won't know that it's the correct answer unless you confirm it. Listen to their ideas with interest, give language feedback when necessary, and then move on.

3. Tell students that you are going to show them a synopsis of the book. (A synopsis = a short summary that tells us what the book is about, often on the back cover.) But before that, display slide 3 of the slideshow and ask students to match the white words on the left with the yellow words on the right to predict 11 collocations that they will see in the synopsis. They should write down all of their answers.

Period	A heart	problems
An itchy	A bad	back
Embarrassing	Hair	headache
A beer	A runny	nose
Bodily	A migraine	functions
Skin		attack
		bum
		loss
		cancer
		pains
		belly

Tip: For many students, this will be quite a difficult task. For this reason, you can let students work in pairs or groups. You can also encourage them to make use of monolingual English dictionaries to solve the puzzle.

4. Ask students to share their answers and then show the book synopsis which is included in the slideshow. Note that the second word of the book's title is still missing.

Everything you ever wanted to know about your body but were too afraid to ask!

This book answers all of your questions about lifestyles and disease risks, bodily functions and embarrassing problems.

Just how easy is it to avoid a heart attack? What are the best ways to prevent skin cancer? Ever wondered what causes hair loss?

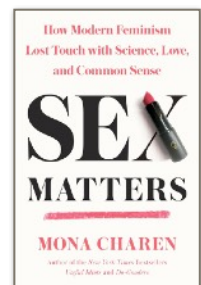
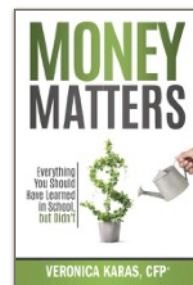
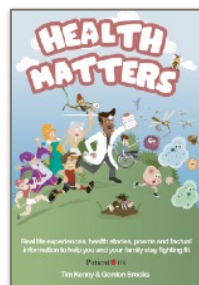
From period pains to migraine headaches; bad backs to beer bellies; runny noses to itchy bums; no subject is regarded as too trivial or too tragic. Health _____ and as long as you've got yours, nothing else does.

5. You can now play a game. Give students one minute to memorise the collocations in the text. Then put students into pairs or groups and use the definitions in the box below for a quiz. For each definition, students should confer and write down an answer.

- There is a danger of getting this if you spend too much time in the sun without taking care (**skin cancer**)
- The general medical word for this is alopecia (**hair loss**)
- You can get this if you lift heavy objects without taking care (**a bad back**)
- When you have a cold, you need tissues for this (**a runny nose**)
- You might suffer from this when it's your time of the month (**period pains**)
- Examples of these are breathing and digestion. You could also say that hiccuping, burping and passing wind (farting) are these (**bodily functions**)
- Dogs suffer from this when they have worms (**an itchy bum**)
- People might feel awkward or uneasy about these and it could prevent them from going to see a doctor (**embarrassing problems**)
- You might get this if you drink too much alcohol (**a beer belly**)
- An extremely painful kind of headache (**a migraine headache**)
- A sudden medical emergency which often causes chest pain (**a heart attack**)

6. Finally, show students the front cover of the book without the concealed word.

As far as book titles go, this one is a bit of a cliché. You will see the same play-on-words formula for many others. There are a few more examples included in the slideshow.



A note about pronunciation

As we have said, this title of this book is a play on words with two possible meanings.

Interestingly, it can be pronounced differently according to which meaning we are considering.

Meaning one

“Issues and topics related to health”

In this sense, “matters” functions as a noun

In this case, stress falls on the word

“health”

Health matters

Health matters

Ooo

Meaning two

“Health is important”

In this sense, “matters” functions as a verb

In this case, stress falls on the word “

Heath matters

Heath **mat**ters

oOo

