Small Changes, Big Results: The Science of Habits

Psychology and Human Behavior

PART 01 Pre-Reading & Visualization

> *"Is technology a tool to help us reach our goals, or is it a shortcut that erases our individual voices?"*

PART 02 The Reading Text

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The Habit Loop

Psychologists say that about 40% of our daily actions are not conscious decisions, but habits. Our brains create habits to save energy. Every habit follows a three-step "loop." First, there is a **cue** (a trigger like feeling bored). Second, there is the **routine** (the action you take, like checking social media). Finally, there is the **reward** (a shot of dopamine or a feeling of relaxation). If the reward is good, your brain will remember the loop next time.

The Power of 1%

Many people fail to change their behavior because they try to make giant changes overnight. However, behavioral psychology suggests the "1% Rule." If you improve a tiny behavior by just 1% every day, you will be surprised by the results after one year. For example, if you want to read more, don't try to read a whole book in a day. If you read just one page every night before sleep, your brain will slowly accept this as a new, "automatic" part of your identity.

Environment Matters

Human behavior is often a response to our environment. If you see a bowl of cookies on the kitchen table, you will probably eat one, even if you aren't hungry. To build better habits, you must change your surroundings. If you want to exercise in the morning, put your running shoes next to your bed the night before. If the cue is easy to see, the routine is more likely to happen.

PART 03 Active Reading (QAR)

1. Right There (Find the facts):

1. According to the text, what percentage of our daily actions are habits?

2. What are the three steps of the "habit loop"?

2. Think and Search (Connect the ideas):

3. Why does the human brain prefer to use habits instead of making new decisions every time?

4. How does the "1% Rule" help someone who wants to start a big project?

3. Author and You (Infer and analyze):

5. The author mentions putting running shoes next to the bed. Based on your own life, what is one "cue" you could change in your home to stop a bad habit or start a good one?

6. If you want to improve your English using the "1% Rule," what is one tiny action you can do every day?

PART 04 Glossary

- **Cue (noun):** A signal or trigger that tells you to start doing something.
- **Routine (noun):** A regular way of doing things in a fixed order.
- **Reward (noun):** Something given or received in return for a behavior.
- **Automatic (adjective):** Doing something without thinking; a natural reaction.
- **Environment (noun):** The conditions and objects around you in a specific place.

WORKSHEET CORE REFLECTION

Review your answers and vocabulary entries above. Prepare to discuss how these terms apply to real-world contexts.

TEACHER'S GUIDE & ANSWER KEY

Level: B1 (INTERMEDIATE)

Duration: **45 mins**

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

TOPIC CONTEXT

Small Changes, Big Results: The Science of Habits

OBJECTIVE

Learners will identify the psychological components of habit formation and apply the "1% Rule" to their own language learning or personal goals.

VOCABULARY TERMS

Cue | Routine | Reward | Automatic | Environment

GRAMMAR FOCUS

- First Conditional (Cause and Effect)

INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURE

1. **Pre-reading (10 mins):**
   - Show the image prompt or a real picture of a common morning routine.
   - Ask: "Is your morning routine the same in your home country as it is here?" This activates prior knowledge and cultural comparison.
2. **Reading & Chunked Tasks (20 mins):**
   - Have students read the first paragraph. Pause and ask them to identify a "cue" in their own life (e.g., "The alarm clock rings").
   - Proceed to the 1% Rule. Use a whiteboard to show the math: 1.01 to the power of 365 = 37.7 (37 times better!).
3. **Post-Reading & QAR Discussion (15 mins):**
   - Use the "Author and You" questions for a small group breakout.
   - **Grammar Extension:** Practice the First Conditional. Ask students to finish this sentence: "If I put my English book on my pillow, I will read one page every night."