

**UOW College Hong Kong / Community College of City University**  
**Student English Enhancement Unit (SEE U)**  
**Daily English Practice**

Week 8

**#187 How powerful is our brain?**

**Skills/ Objectives: Reading, Listening and Writing Skills**

**PART 1: Before you read...**

**Preparatory questions**

Qt 1 : Do you think the brain or the computer is more powerful?

Qt 2: Have you heard of “neurons”? Do you know what functions they play in your brain?

The answers Qt1 to Qt2 will be provided in the next set of exercises.

*The answers to relevant questions in the preceding set of exercises (Fun Facts about the Brain: Interesting facts about the human brain) are as follows:*

*Qt1. Do you know what kind of food can help improve your brain memory?*

*Ans: According to the article, you can actually improve your memory if you choose to eat seafood regularly. The fatty acids in these foods improve the memory storing parts of your brain.*

*Qt2. Do you think dieting harms your brain?*

*Ans: According to the article, good nutrition is incredibly important to brain health. Dieting can force the brain to start eating itself.*

*Qt3. Do you think stress can kill your brain cells?*

*Ans: According to the article, chronic exposure to stress actually overloads your brain with hormones that are only intended for short-term emergency functions. In turn, that means that long-term exposure can kill brain cells.*

**Vocabulary**

- spike (n): a narrow, thin shape with a sharp point at one end, or something, especially a piece of metal, with this shape
- pipette (n): a thin glass tube used especially in biology and chemistry for measuring or moving a small amount of liquid
- raucous (adj): loud and unpleasant
- barrage (n): the action of continuously firing large guns to protect soldiers advancing on an enemy
- dendrites (n): one of the short parts like threads at the edge of

a nerve cell that carry messages to the cell

## **PART 2: Article for Reading**

Read the following article posted on the internet by NBC News to learn about how powerful our brain is:

The human brain may be more powerful than we thought  
<https://www.nbcnews.com/sciencemain/human-brain-may-be-even-more-powerful-computer-thought-8C11497831>

## **PART 3: Listening Comprehension**

Listen to the following video script posted by Bruce Lipton on YouTube to learn more about the subject while practicing your listening skills:

This Is How Powerful Your Thoughts Are | Most People Don't Know This

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFrtWvu8Qm8>

## **PART 4: Writing Practice**

Did you notice the wise use of the phrase “and if so” in the following sentence in the article:

It was unclear whether normal brain activity involved dendritic spikes, and if so, what role they might play.

The beauty of this short phrase is that it summarizes the long string of sentence which would otherwise have been expressed as the following:

It was unclear whether normal brain activity involved dendritic spikes, and if normal brain activity involved dendritic spikes, what role they might play.

Can you make use of this short phrase to write a few other sentences of your own? **Send your writing to:** [see.u@cccu.edu.hk](mailto:see.u@cccu.edu.hk). Remember! Our SEE U teachers are always ready to give you feedback.