

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

Week 8

#188 The great mind, Einstein, and his God Letter

Skills/ Objectives: Reading, Listening and Writing Skills

PART 1: Before you read...

Preparatory questions

- Do you know who was Albert Einstein.
- Do you know anything about his God Letter?

The answers to relevant questions in the preceding set of exercises (How powerful is our brain?) are as follows:

Qt 1: Do you think the brain or the computer is more powerful?Ans: The most powerful computer known is the brain. The [human brain](#) possesses about 100 billion neurons with roughly 1 quadrillion – 1 million billion – connections known as synapses wiring these cells together.

Qt 2: Have you heard of “neurons”? Do you know what functions they play in your brain?Ans: Neurons each act like a relay station for electrical signals.

Vocabulary

- Inexorable (adj): continuing and not stopping
- Émigré (n): a person who has to leave his country forever for political reasons.
- Gnostic (adj): used to describe something spoken or written that is short, mysterious, and not easily understood, but often seems wise:
- Exquisite (adj): beautiful and delicate
- Awesome (adj):extremely good
- Grouch (v): to complain in an angry way

PART 2: Article for Reading

With the help of the above vocabulary explanations, read the following article by Louis Menand telling us about the God Letter of Albert Einstein:

<https://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/reading-into-albert-einsteins-god-letter>

Reading Into Albert Einstein's God Letter

PART 3: Listening Comprehension

Listen to the following video script posted on YouTube to learn more about the Einstein while practicing your listening skills:

Albert Einstein's God Letter
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1gvvpoS50g>

PART 4: Writing Practice

Did you notice the following nicely put sentence in the article:

Not only does the letter contain the words of a great genius who was perhaps feeling the end fast approaching, it addresses the philosophical and religious questions that mankind has wrestled with since the dawn of time: Is there a God?.

The above sentence naming two items in the same nature joins them together with the expression "not only.... it does...". The strength of this expression is that it joins two items together without causing confusion. See the following other examples:

*Not only does Peter dislike lemon, he also hates anything sour.
Not only do we know their secrets, we have also collected a lot of evidences about the bad things they have done.*

Can you write a few similar sentences in this way of expression? **Send your writing to:** see.u@cccu.edu.hk. Remember! Our SEE U teachers are always ready to give you feedback.