Maximizing Performance through Practice (C1)

1 Warm-up

Discuss these questions with your teacher / partner:

1. Think of a skill that you recently tried to develop. How did you approach this?
2. What are some common challenges people face when trying to improve a skill through practice?
3. Are there any shortcuts or quick fixes when it comes to improving a skill?

2 Pre-listening

Let's match the words to their definitions:

1	sheath	a	a protective covering or layer that surrounds something, such as the myelin sheath that covers axons in the nervous system.
2	myelin	b	a long, slender projection of nerve cells that transmits electrical impulses to other cells in the body.
3	axon	c	a fatty substance that surrounds and insulates axons, allowing for faster transmission of nerve signals.

3 Here are some examples of these words being used in context:

1. The axons of a neuron transmit electrical signals to other neurons and muscles in the body.
2. Myelin is a fatty substance that acts as an insulator around axons, allowing for faster transmission of electrical signals.
3. The sheath surrounding the axon of a neuron provides structural support and helps maintain the nerve impulse's strength.

4 Listening: watch the video and answer the questions.

Entire Video
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2O6mQkFiiw

1. What is practice and how does it help us perform better?
2. What are the two kinds of neural tissue in our brains and what are their functions?
3. How does information travel from the brain to our muscles?
4. Do muscles have memory?

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5. What is effective practice and how does it differ from regular practice?
6. What are some tips for effective practice?
7. Can mental practice improve physical performance?

5 Match words to create collocations:

1	minimize	a	the inner workings of our brains
2	wrap	b	the secrets
3	prevent	c	along neural pathways
4	direct	d	our potential
5	affect	e	energy loss
6	attribute	f	successes
7	move	g	information
8	process	h	distractions
9	maximize	i	signals
10	unravel	j	with a fatty substance

6 Let's give advice on how to practice better. Finish each of these sentence starters with a separate idea. Use at least 5 collocations from the lesson.

1. "One thing that has worked for me is..."
2. "If you want to improve, try doing this..."
3. "Have you considered trying this approach?"
4. "You might find it helpful to..."
5. "Here's a tip that could make a big difference..."
6. "In my experience, it's been helpful to..."
7. "Something that could be worth trying is..."
8. "I've found that doing this has helped me..."
9. "It might be useful to consider..."
10. "Here's something that has worked well for others..."

7 Homework ideas:

Writing tasks:

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1. Write a social media post about your experience practicing a skill. Use the target vocabulary to describe how you process information and prevent energy loss while practicing, and how you attribute your successes to maximizing your potential and minimizing distractions.

2. Write a job advert for a coach or mentor to help others practice a skill. Use the target vocabulary to describe how the coach or mentor will direct signals and maximize potential, and how they will help their clients unravel the secrets to success.

3. Write a review of a book or online course about practicing a skill. Use the target vocabulary to describe how the book or course helped you process information and prevent energy loss, and how it helped you attribute your successes to maximizing your potential and minimizing distractions.

Target Vocabulary:

process information, direct signals, prevent energy loss, attribute successes, minimize distractions, unravel the secrets, maximize our potential

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Correct Answers

2 **Correct Answers:**

1 a 2 c 3 b

4 **Correct Answers:**

1. Practice is the repetition of an action with the goal of improvement.
2. Grey matter processes information in the brain, directing signals and sensory stimuli to nerve cells, while white matter is mostly made up of fatty tissue and nerve fibers.
3. Information travels from the brain's grey matter, down the spinal cord, through a chain of nerve fibers called axons to our muscles.
4. Muscles themselves don't have memory, but the myelination of neural pathways gives athletes and performers their edge with faster and more efficient neural pathways.
5. Effective practice is consistent, intensely focused, and targets content or weaknesses that lie at the edge of one's current abilities, while regular practice may not be as focused or targeted.
6. Tips for effective practice include focusing on the task at hand, minimizing distractions, starting out slowly or in slow-motion, frequent repetitions with allotted breaks, and practicing in vivid detail.
7. Yes, mental practice can improve physical performance by reinforcing physical motions that have already been established.

5 **Correct matches:**

1 h 2 j 3 e 4 i 5 a 6 f 7 c 8 g 9 d 10 b

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