

UNIT 1: MY STROKE OF INSIGHT

A. LISTEN AND TAKE NOTES Read the topics in the chart that introduce important ideas. Listen to the interview and use the chart to take notes on what Dr. Bolte Taylor says about them.

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Introduction

Topics	Notes
1. The right hemisphere and the big picture	
2. The left hemisphere and language	

Call-in Show

Topics	Notes
3. Memories and a sense of identity	
4. Stroke victims and English speakers in a foreign country	

TIP FOR SUCCESS

Remember that main ideas are always complete sentences, with a controlling idea, while topics are just the key words or phrases that introduce the subject.

B. RESTATE Use your notes to write the main ideas about each topic that Dr. Bolte Taylor explains to her listeners. Compare your sentences with a partner.

Introduction

1. The right hemisphere and the big picture

LISTENING 1 5

2. The left hemisphere and language

Call-in Show

3. Memories and a sense of identity

4. Stroke victims and English speakers in a foreign country



The right and left hemispheres
of the human brain

C. IDENTIFY Listen again. Circle the answer that best completes each statement.

Introduction

1. When Dr. Bolte Taylor had her stroke in 1996, she was working at (Harvard / Indiana) University.
2. Dr. Bolte Taylor describes her feeling during her stroke as one of (peace and tranquility / panic and fear).
3. The right hemisphere of the brain is concerned with (overall perception / details).
4. The right and left hemispheres (have to / don't have to) work together for people to have a normal perspective.
5. During Dr. Bolte Taylor's stroke, she lost use of the (right / left) hemisphere of her brain.

Call-in Show

6. The behavioral psychologists mentioned by the caller believed that language could be lost only if a person (remained conscious / lost consciousness).
7. Dr. Bolte Taylor lost her perception of (past and present / past and future).
8. When Dr. Bolte Taylor lost the basic human ability to use language, she (no longer saw herself / still saw herself) as a human being.

F. EVALUATE Circle the best answer for each question.

1. ~~What main purpose did Dr. Bolte Taylor have for agreeing to a radio interview?~~
 - a. to help sell more copies of her book
 - b. to teach listeners about neuroanatomy
 - c. to explain the effects of a stroke
 - d. to raise money for brain research
2. Which phrase explains what Dr. Bolte Taylor was referring to when she said "that person went offline"?
 - a. her loss of the ability to use a computer
 - b. her loss of consciousness
 - c. her loss of the ability to use language
 - d. her loss of data connected to memories
3. Which quotation supports the concept that Dr. Bolte Taylor did *not* picture herself as less than perfect?
 - a. "... I was now an infant in a woman's body."
 - b. "... there's a whole part of us that is non-language ..."
 - c. "... I lost all of the consciousness of the language center."
 - d. "... the rest of my left hemisphere was, was swimming in a pool of blood."

G. EXPLAIN Read the statements. Write whether you would use the left hemisphere or right hemisphere of your brain. Explain your answer.

1. You call your friends by their names. _____

2. You go outside and think it's cold. _____

3. A picture reminds you of when you were younger. _____

4. You remember your home address. _____

5. You enjoy the movie you're watching. _____

H. VOCABULARY Here are some words from Listening 1. Read the paragraphs. Then fill in the blanks with the correct words from the list.

boundary (n.)

fascinating (adj.)

overall (adj.)

regain (v.)

consciousness (n.)

function (n.)

perception (n.)

structure (n.)

external (adj.)

insight (n.)

recovery (n.)

tranquil (adj.)

The brain is one of the most mysterious and _____
1
organs in the human body. It is studied by doctors called neurologists
and neuroanatomists, who hope to gain an understanding and
_____ into the way the brain works. First, they study the
2
_____ of the brain. It is divided into two equal sections called
3
hemispheres. One part, the cerebral cortex, coordinates what we think and
feel with what we see and our _____ of the outside world. Each
4
part of the brain has a specific _____, and if injured, it may
5
become unable to perform this role.

A stroke occurs when blood flow to part of the brain is cut off due to a hemorrhage (heavy bleeding); this can result in an inability to speak or move. Stroke victims sometimes lose _____⁶ and later have no memory of what has happened. They may not be aware of _____⁷ events or things around them. The line between what is real and unreal may become unclear, and the inability to understand the _____⁸ between the two may cause confusion. However, some patients experience the opposite feeling. They may feel calm and _____⁹, as if they are disconnected from the real world. For all stroke victims, their progress and _____¹⁰ depend on the seriousness of the stroke. However, with a lot of physical and speech therapy, patients can _____¹¹ their ability to walk and communicate. Although the _____¹² survival rate for stroke victims is not bad, 40 percent still have some resulting disability.



A. EVALUATE Listen to the excerpts from Listening 1. Circle the best inference for each one.

1. a. People have no idea how the brain works.
b. People don't understand the exact functions of the different parts of the brain.
2. a. A normal, healthy person uses both hemispheres of the brain.
b. Different people prefer to use different hemispheres of the brain.
3. a. Dr. Bolte Taylor found an advantage in the consequences/effects of her stroke.
b. Dr. Bolte Taylor was very upset about losing some of her brain's abilities.
4. a. Dr. Bolte Taylor feels that foreign tourists function somewhat as if they were brain-damaged.
b. Dr. Bolte Taylor feels that foreign tourists make up for the lack of language skills by increasing other communicative abilities.