

## **the ARTICLE (for instructors)**

### **The Shorter Lives of Men Explained**

Women live longer than men. It's true in most countries, and has been a well-documented fact since the 18th century. Studies have been done, and there have been many possible explanations. There is the difference in work habits, stress, diet, and bad genes, just to name a few. But a new theory suggests something entirely different. Men have shorter life spans because attracting a mate takes a lot of energy. And that loss of energy may reduce the number of years a man lives.

Daniel Kruger at the University of Michigan suggests that many animals advertise their suitability to females. Some animals butt heads, for example, or have beautiful feathers and decoration. Of course, humankind doesn't butt heads. Men don't usually fight for a woman's hand either. Men compete for resources and social status, two factors valued in the selection process. Accumulation of both advertise the male's proven ability to provide for a future family.

But what about males with a lower economic position?

Another study published last year stated that these single men are more likely to behave riskily. This is especially true of young, single men. They take many risks, are more aggressive, and hold back their emotions. These actions act as a substitute for wealth and social status.

Both studies conclude that women remain choosy when selecting a potential mate, because of the survival and success of their offspring. All that energy used to impress women means shorter life spans for men.

**Teacher's Notes:**

\* Underlined words in **red typeface** may be vocabulary unfamiliar to the students.

**the ARTICLE (for students)**

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**Notes:**

# The Shorter Lives of Men Explained – February 11, 2007

Upper-Intermediate - Speaking

## STEP ONE

**Brainstorm:** Brainstorm with a partner(s) words and ideas associated with "life span" for 2 minutes. Spend another 5 minutes or less discussing the words and ideas together.

## STEP TWO

**Discuss:** Do you agree or disagree? Why?

- |    |  |
|----|--|
| a. | Women live longer than men because they have easier lives.   |
| b. | Stress from work is the number one reason why men don't live as long as women.                       |
| c. | Single men are quite aggressive towards other men when in a new relationship.                        |
| d. | When attracting a partner, money and social status is important.                                     |
| e. | Older, successful men are desirable. (Or most women think that older, successful men are desirable.) |

## STEP THREE

**The Article:** Read the article, and work with a partner to understand it. Lastly, summarize in your own words.

## STEP FOUR

**Discuss (part I):** Talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Remember to support your answers!

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| a. | Did you like this article?  |
| b. | Do you agree with the article's findings? Why/not?  |
| c. | The lifespan of women has been decreasing recently. Why do you think this has happened?                       |
| d. | List as many stereotypes as possible about young men. With this list, do you agree that they are risk-takers? |
| e. | List as many stereotypes as possible about young women. Do you think they affect men's behavior?              |
| f. | Is it possible to limit the risks young men take, or does it goes against millions of years of evolution?     |

## STEP FIVE

**Discuss (part II):** A new drug will hit the stores soon. It limits male aggressiveness, and is especially recommended for teens and twenty-somethings. List the positives and negatives with such a drug, then debate with a partner.

positives:	negatives: