

Welcome to 5 minutes of English!

Hi, this is Judy.

What is the Fun Theory?

First, what is a theory? A theory is an idea that we use to explain why something happens or is the way it is. It's not proven, it's not definitely true, it's just a maybe – an idea, a theory.

Back to our Fun Theory. This theory says that we can take a boring job or activity and change it to something fun by making it into an interesting, fun experience. There are many jobs or activities that when done, are good for you, or good for the environment or for something else. Getting people – either adults or kids – to do these things by turning it into a fun experience can be good for everyone.

Let's take a simple example: a mother wants her kids to eat their vegetables. The kids don't like vegetables so much. If she takes these vegetables and forms them into a smiley face, it makes it so much more interesting and exciting for the kids to eat. The cucumbers might be the eyes, a tomato for the nose, and a slice of pepper for the mouth – and now it's fun to eat. To prove this theory, there was a whole bunch of experiments done to see whether people would more happily do things that were fun to do.

The first experiment tried to get people to recycle glass. Many people recycle cans or plastic things that they get money for, but when no money is earned they just throw it in the garbage instead of recycling. So a special machine was built that makes exciting sounds and counts how many bottles were thrown into the machine. It was unbelievable to see. It was clear that people were throwing in more bottles just to get to hear these exciting sounds cheering them on, and to hear how many points they earned.



Exercise. It's so important for our health. How can people be encouraged to walk up stairs? Many people prefer to just take the escalators, it's the easy way – these stairs move on their own and you don't have to actually do the hard climbing. This same project was trying to get people to use stairs instead of the escalators, and decided to make it fun. Is it possible? The results say yes! Here what they did: The stairs were built to look like the keys of a piano, black and white, and every step a person takes on these stairs produces a different sound, like a piano, and a forms music. Of course, with these exciting stairs people were happy to take it rather than the escalators.



What's so hard about throwing trash in the garbage can instead of on the floor? Right. It's not hard. But many people still do it, still throw it on the floor. So this experiment built a garbage can that makes a loud sound as the garbage is thrown in and dragged down. Suddenly people were throwing many more things into the garbage can. People were even looking around the area to find garbage so they can put it in the can and hear the noise!



Summary:

Let's summarize the important words we learned today. Listen to the words, repeat them after me and then listen to what they mean.

Theory – an idea

To encourage – or another way we can say that is to motivate – and they both mean to make someone want to do something and be happy to do it. For example, you encourage your daughter to do her English homework.

On their own – by themselves. You encourage your children from 4 years old to get dressed on their own. Is it possible? Sometimes.

Experience – an event, something that happens which leaves an impression. For example when we go on a trip we have a good experience. Sometimes if something goes wrong it may *not* be a good experience.

Task:

Your task for today is: Think of a boring activity that you must do, or something that you want your kids to do, and turn it into a fun experience that will make you want to do it. Have fun and good luck!

YOUR NEW WORDS	
Theory	
Encourage	
On their own	
Experience	