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Level 2 – 9th August, 2020

Scientists discover why shaving blunts razors

FREE online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2008/200809-shaving-2.html>

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Please try Levels 0, 1 and 3. They are (a little) harder.

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THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2008/200809-shaving-2.html>

Scientists have discovered why razor blades become blunt after repeated use. They did research on why blades lose their sharpness. Razors are 50 times harder than hair. Even though hair is 50 times softer than the metal of a razor, the hair damages the edge of the blade. Razor blades are made from stainless steel and coated with tough materials like carbon. The scientists said each time a blade cuts a hair, the hair causes tiny amounts of damage. A blade can cut thousands of hairs. This means the life of a razor blade is limited. It needs to be replaced regularly.

The researchers used microscopes to look at how hair damages razor blades. They got a close-up view of what happens when the blade cuts a hair. One cause of damage is because a hair can make a tiny chip on the edge of a blade. This chip gets bigger as it cuts more hair. After more shaving, the blade loses its ability to cut cleanly. A researcher said he wanted to make metal stronger. He said it was interesting that, "if you cut something very soft, like human hair, with something very hard, like steel, the hard material would fail." He called this "an important engineering problem".

Sources: <http://news.mit.edu/2020/why-shaving-dulls-razors-0806>
<https://science.sciencemag.org/content/369/6504/689>
<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2251202-we-just-figured-out-why-shaving-soft-hair-blunts-steel-razor-blades/>

PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2008/200809-shaving-2.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. why razor blades | a. materials |
| 2. why blades lose | b. harder than hair |
| 3. Razors are 50 times | c. of the blade |
| 4. softer than the | d. of damage |
| 5. hair damages the edge | e. become blunt |
| 6. coated with tough | f. replaced regularly |
| 7. causes tiny amounts | g. their sharpness |
| 8. It needs to be | h. metal of a razor |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. look at how hair damages | a. problem |
| 2. They got a close- | b. more hair |
| 3. what happens when the blade | c. damage |
| 4. One cause of | d. to cut cleanly |
| 5. This chip gets bigger as it cuts | e. razor blades |
| 6. the blade loses its ability | f. soft |
| 7. if you cut something very | g. up view |
| 8. an important engineering | h. cuts a hair |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2008/200809-shaving-2.html>

Scientists have discovered why razor (1) _____ after repeated use. They did research on why blades (2) _____. Razors are 50 times harder than hair. Even though hair is (3) _____ than the metal of a razor, the hair damages the edge of the blade. Razor blades are made from stainless steel and (4) _____ materials like carbon. The scientists said each time a blade cuts a hair, the hair causes (5) _____ damage. A blade can cut thousands of hairs. This means the life of a razor blade is limited. It needs to (6) _____.

The researchers used (7) _____ at how hair damages razor blades. They got a (8) _____ of what happens when the blade cuts a hair. One cause of damage is because a hair can make a tiny chip (9) _____ of a blade. This chip gets bigger as it cuts more hair. After more shaving, the blade loses its ability (10) _____. A researcher said he wanted to make metal stronger. He said it was interesting that, "if you (11) _____ soft, like human hair, with something very hard, like steel, the hard (12) _____." He called this "an important engineering problem".

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2008/200809-shaving-2.html>

Scientists have discovered why razor blades become blunt after repeated use. They did research on why blades lose their sharpness. Razors are 50 times harder than hair. Even though hair is 50 times softer than the metal of a razor, the hair damages the edge of the blade. Razor blades are made from stainless steel and coated with tough materials like carbon. The scientist said each time a blade cuts a hair, the hair causes a tiny amount of damage. A blade can cut thousands of hairs. This means the life of a razor blade is limited. It needs to be replaced regularly. The researchers used a microscope to look at how hair damages razor blades. They got a close-up view of what happens when the blade cuts a hair. One cause of damage is because a hair can make a tiny chip on the edge of a blade. This chip gets bigger as it cuts more hair. After more shaving, the blade loses its ability to cut cleanly. A researcher said he wanted to make metal stronger. He said it was interesting that, "if you cut something very soft, like human hair, with something very hard, like steel, the hard material would fail." He called this "an important engineering problem".

SHAVING SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2008/200809-shaving-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about shaving in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) _____

b) _____

c) _____

d) _____

e) _____

f) _____

WRITING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2008/200809-shaving-2.html>

Write about **shaving** for 10 minutes. Read and talk about your partner's paper.
