

Name:

Day One

VRET: Virtual Reality Exposure Therapy

Part 1: Silent read

→ Doctors came up with a new way to help vets with problems. Read silently.

Many Iraq War veterans easily resumed their lives at home. However, for veterans with PTSD, readjusting to civilian life was difficult. PTSD, or post-traumatic stress disorder, develops in some people who have had frightening experiences. PTSD can cause flashbacks, empty feelings, insomnia, and nightmares. Sadly, many war veterans return home with PTSD. In fact, almost a third of Iraq combat veterans suffer from PTSD or depression.

Many people try to deal with PTSD by ignoring their emotions. However, doctors say that this actually makes PTSD worse. Instead, PTSD sufferers must face their feelings. Without help, this can be difficult. Scientists developed a program to help veterans explore their memories. This program is called Virtual Reality Exposure Therapy, or VRET.

In VRET, veterans wear video glasses that show computer-generated scenes from Iraq. The scenes appear very realistic. Veterans experience sights, sounds, and even smells from the war zone again. For example, they may be involved in a virtual firefight with enemy forces. They can explore the war scenes, much like playing a video game. As they relive war experiences, veterans with PTSD can face their fears.

During VRET, veterans also talk about their feelings with a therapist. Dr. Albert Rizzo helped create the program. He was motivated by the plight of veterans with PTSD. In an interview with *NPR* he said, “It’s about dealing with your own emotional memories and processing it and hopefully healing.” For a veteran with PTSD, healing is the key to a brighter future.

Source: “Virtual Iraq game aims to help vets with PTSD,” *NPR*, May 27, 2008.



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Part 2: First timed read

WPM _____

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50
66
67

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81
94
107
119
120

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133
145
161
177
187

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201
217
231
247
249

Part 3: Comprehension and discussion

How does VRET help veterans with PTSD?

How common is PTSD or depression for Iraq combat vets?

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Part 4: Phrase-cued reading

- Read the passage **out loud** in phrases to your partner.
- Pause at each / mark for a phrase.
- Also pause at each // mark that shows the end of a sentence.

Many Iraq War veterans easily resumed their lives at home. // However, / for veterans with PTSD, / readjusting to civilian life was difficult. // PTSD, / or post-traumatic stress disorder, / develops in some people who have had frightening experiences. // PTSD can cause flashbacks, / empty feelings, / insomnia, / and nightmares. // Sadly, / many war veterans return home with PTSD. // In fact, / almost a third of Iraq combat veterans suffer from PTSD or depression. //

Many people try to deal with PTSD / by ignoring their emotions. // However, / doctors say that this actually makes PTSD worse. // Instead, / PTSD sufferers must face their feelings. // Without help, / this can be difficult. // Scientists developed a program / to help veterans explore their memories. // This program is called Virtual Reality Exposure Therapy, / or VRET. //

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I read the passage in phrases out loud to my partner.