



ENGLISH PRACTICE MATERIAL

TEACHER'S MANUAL: SPEAKING

A2·B1



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The Teacher's Manual

This teacher's manual has been produced to support you in your planning of lessons using English Practice Material A2·B1. It includes suggestions on how to present the material, ideas for additional activities and further information on particular topics. You should use it as much or as little as you feel is necessary. Below are some general tips on using the four books.

American English vs. British English

English Practice Material A2·B1 has been written by experienced, native speakers of English from a variety of backgrounds. You will find both American English (AE) and British English (BE) expressions, phrases, vocabulary and spelling throughout the books. telc considers it essential to learning, that students are exposed to these differences. Both versions are correct and, as a teacher, you should feel comfortable teaching whichever version suits you.

Warm ups

Each unit in each of the books begins with a warm up exercise. This activity is always communicative (usually spoken) and usually conducted in pairs. The units have been constructed in such a way that the skill activities (i.e. listening in the Listening book) are interspersed with spoken communication activities. This varies the pace of the lesson and keeps students engaged. During the warm up phase you may need to give your own example to prompt students' thinking.

Talking about personal experiences

Much of the work at the A2·B1 level focuses on talking about personal experience. If students are uncomfortable sharing personal information or anecdotes, it is perfectly acceptable for them to talk about another person (e.g. a family member or friend).

Supplementing material

Each unit in English Practice Material A2·B1 includes a grammar point, however the focus of the material is skill practice. If you wish to practise a grammar point more thoroughly, it will be necessary to include complementary activities and exercises, either sourced from other publications or the Internet, or written by you.

Learner styles

Different learners respond to different types of activities. Learners can sometimes be categorised as visual, auditory, reading-writing or kinaesthetic (VARK) or a combination of all four aspects. When supplementing material (or when planning activities from the book), it may be useful to consider whether it is possible to present the material in a way that benefits a particular learner type. For more on learner styles, see: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Learning_styles#Neil_Fleming.27s_VAK.2FVARK_model

Authentic material

Where possible, bring authentic material into the class. Students respond better to 'real' material, such as menus, magazines, photos or realia. You can use this authentic material to substitute or supplement the book content, as appropriate.

Links and video clips

Where links have been suggested in the teacher's manual, please check them to ensure that they work and that their content is suitable for your class. For links to video clips, it is essential that you watch the clips before showing them in class to ensure that their content and language is appropriate for your class. telc is not responsible for any external material suggested in this manual.

Pair checking

Checking work in pairs is an important stage in feeding back answers and ideas to the whole class. Students are more likely to be forthcoming if they have built their confidence by discussing their answers with a partner. For listening and reading activities, in particular, where students have worked alone on a task, try to include a quick pair check.

Writing in pairs

Students, especially at the lower levels, may lack confidence in writing. It is therefore sometimes useful for students to write a single text in pairs, combining their ideas and language to produce work that is of a higher quality. Where students are writing alone, it is important to give them time to brainstorm their ideas (ideally in pairs or small groups), especially at A2 level. You should also help them with vocabulary and suitable language.

Listening to audio recordings

The Listening, Speaking and Reading books include an audio CD. For lower levels, you may need to play a recording more than once and to pause the recording between questions. Moreover, you can always refer the students to the audioscript in the back of each book for them to read and listen simultaneously. Note: the CD for the Reading book contains the written texts in the book in audio form.

Photographs and pictures

Where students are required to describe a picture from the book (as practice for part 2 of the Speaking subtest of the A2-B1 exam), it may be helpful to copy and blow up the picture so that students can see the detail more clearly.

Internet access in the classroom

If you have access to the Internet in classroom, make use of this resource by showing video clips, looking at texts online or allowing students to use their smartphones to look for ideas on a particular topic.

Answer key

For many activities, answers can be found in the Answer Key at the back of the student book. For others, there may be multiple answers or no 'correct' answer. You should decide which answers are correct in the context of the activity.

telc A2-B1 online

An online platform to practise the skills and grammar presented in the books will be available on the telc website from September 2015. For more information: <https://campus.telc.net/>

Topic TV programmes

Grammar Questions with “do/does” and “is/are”

CEFR Conversation

Aim Practise skills to find out about people's interests

Warm Up

If you have a quiet class, it may be useful for the students to discuss the questions in pairs or small groups before sharing with the class.

Nowadays, many people stream video content online or download movies to watch, rather than watching live television programming. Students at this level may not have the language to be able to explain this, so be prepared to help them with the vocabulary. Note: telly = BE.

Activity 1

1b Make sure the students are familiar with ‘talent show’, ‘drama’ and ‘children’s programme’ as they need this vocab for 1c.

Often students confuse ‘episode’ and ‘series’. It's also worth remembering that, in British English, ‘a series’ can be a whole programme, e.g. *Friends* or just one block (a year's worth) of episodes, e.g. series 2 of *Friends*. This block of episodes is often called a ‘season’ in American English, e.g. season 2 of *Friends*.

1c Ask the students if they can think of other examples of each of the different types of programme.

Activity 2

Students who complete this activity quickly can be encouraged to change the content of the questions, i.e. substitute another type of programme.

Activity 3

Make sure the students understand that you need to use an auxiliary (do/does) for questions when the verb is not ‘to be’. When the main verb is ‘to be’, we don't use the auxiliary.

Activity 4

For this activity, you will need to photocopy and cut out the cards from the appendix in the students' book. You will need a set of cards for each pair of students. Model the activity with a strong student so that the others get the idea. Monitor closely to make sure they are using the target language and structuring their questions properly. Also make sure they are using a variety of questions not just ‘are you interested in...’ all the time!

Activity 5

This is a good opportunity for students to share their knowledge and experience of using TV for learning English. They may have good ideas that other students can try out. Nowadays students have access to English speaking TV, films and videos on the internet and should be encouraged to use these resources. Sometimes, however, they can feel disheartened if they don't understand very much. Remind them that just hearing the language is an important part of training the ear and that it's perfectly acceptable to use subtitles, ideally in English but, if necessary, in their native language.

Topic	Comparing boring activities
Grammar	Grammar “me too/ neither”; comparatives and superlatives

CEFR Overall spoken interaction

Aim Practise skills to compare opinions on everyday topics

Warm Up

This is a really interesting activity and can bring up differing perspectives. Some students will use the time to relax, some will fidget. Others might find it difficult to sit with their eyes closed or may giggle with colleagues. Afterwards, ask them if they ever sit like this while at home? If not, could they do it or would they reach for their phones or the TV remote? How do they fill the time when on public transport?

Activity 1

More advanced students can also come up with their own ideas.

Activity 2

1a To make this activity more kinaesthetic, photocopy or copy out the statements and cut them up. Put the students into groups and ask them to arrange the conversation.

1b Do the students have any experience of mountaineering or mountain biking? Do they enjoy it or find it boring?

1c While the students are reading the dialogue, monitor them, listening especially for pronunciation and intonation of the language for agreeing and disagreeing. You could ask one pair to read the dialogue for the class.

Activity 3

This activity is practice for the second part of the telc English A2-B1 Speaking subtest. Emphasise that the students should talk about **what they can see** in the picture (in the foreground and in the background), using present simple (I can see two people), **what's happening** in the picture, using present continuous (they're fishing) and, ideally, what **the situation** is/ might be (maybe they're on holiday).

Activity 4

4a Explain that the students should only complete the 'Rating' box for this part of the activity, not the 'It's boring because...' box. This can wait for 4c.

4b This would be a good time to mix up the pairs, especially if the existing pairs know each other very well. You can do this in a number of ways, for example, ask students to walk or dance around the classroom to music and then stop the music. When the music stops, the students should pair up with the nearest person.

4c If absolutely necessary, the students can use a phrase more than once.

Activity 5

Prepare to take a show of hands and keep a tally on the board.

Topic	Public holidays and festivals
Grammar	Linking words: and, because, although

CEFR	Sustained monologue: describing experience
Aim	Practise talking about holidays and traditions

Warm Up

This unit is very culture-based, so teachers should choose which festivals and holidays are most appropriate and interesting for their students.

If you're doing this unit at a time near to a particular holiday, for example, Halloween in October, use that as your main focus. Making the work topical engages the students more. You can also use other public holidays if you prefer.

If you're teaching a class of students with similar backgrounds, see if the students can also add festivals from other countries/ traditions, such as Diwali, Yom Kippur or Chinese New Year.

Activity 1

1b Note that some of the words may fall into more than one category. Ask students who know the meaning of the trickier words to share their definitions with the rest of the class. You may want to make some flashcards for the really complex words (e.g. Jack-o'-Lantern). Once the students have added extra words to their own lists, elicit the new vocabulary to the board.

Activity 2

2a After completing this part of the activity you could ask the students to mime the verb-noun collocations for others to guess. This kind of activity appeals, particularly, to visual and kinaesthetic learners.

Activity 3

Ask the students to notice what tense Linda is using in her explanation and why. We use the present simple tense to talk about habitual activities such as routines and traditions.

Activity 4

Students enjoy talking about their own personal traditions. Ensure that they have enough preparation time to collect their ideas and make notes so they can express themselves fully. Be available if they need any additional vocabulary and encourage them to use linking words.

Monitor the students as they chat in pairs or groups and make sure they're using the correct tenses and linking words. Feed back useful observations to the class afterwards, especially if you've heard some nice language.

Activity 5

The questions in this activity are tricky so give the students a chance to think about their views and discuss them in pairs or small groups before discussing as a whole class. They may need additional vocab.

Topic Using appropriate responses to feel more confident

CEFR Sociolinguistic appropriateness (using the right language in the right situation)

Grammar Would you mind...?

Aim Learn and practise what to say in routine situations

The CEFR descriptor in the unit has been simplified. The complete descriptor is as follows:

- B1** Can perform and respond to a wide range of language functions, using their most common exponents in a neutral register. Is aware of the salient politeness conventions and acts appropriately. Is aware of, and looks out for signs of, the most significant differences between the customs, usages, attitudes, values and beliefs prevalent in the community concerned and those of his or her own.
- A2** Can perform and respond to basic language functions, such as information exchange and requests and express opinions and attitudes in a simple way. Can socialise simply but effectively using the simplest common expressions and following basic routines. Can handle very short social exchanges, using everyday polite forms of greeting and address. Can make and respond to invitations, invitations, apologies etc.



Warm Up

The first letter of each word is correct. To make the exercise more complicated for higher-level students, you could rearrange the letters and write the words on the board, or write each letter on a piece of card for the students to un-jumble in groups.

Activity 1

Explain to the students that being able to operate in a particular situation makes you more confident when you are next in that situation. Examples include making an appointment over the phone or ordering something in a restaurant.

Note: 'Would you like something to drink?' is correct and *not* 'Would you like to drink something?'

Activity 2

Ensure that the students recognise that photo A is an informal situation between friends and photo B is more formal, between work colleagues. In the informal situation, the language will be simpler and full of colloquialisms or slang. There may not be so many full sentences and the tone will be light and friendly. In the formal situation, the speakers will

be using more complex language and structures with full sentences and fewer slang terms. The voices will likely be lower and more serious. The topics will obviously be quite different in each.

Activity 3

This unit comprises elements of the test-teach-test method. In 3a, students are asked to come up with their own ideas on how to respond in situations. In 3b, they are given model language which they can employ the next time they are in the situations described. In Activity 4, the students use language they have learnt and should perform better than in 3a.

Activity 4

For this activity, you will need to photocopy and cut out the cards from the appendix in the students' book. You will need a set of cards for each pair of students.

Topic Extreme sports/dangerous hobbies (courageous or foolish)

Grammar Comparisons: "not as ... as"

Warm up

There are plenty of videos of extreme sports online. If you have the technological resources in class, try to show one or two of your favourites.

Explain the meaning of 'extreme' if it's unfamiliar and explain that it's a useful word for the purposes of circumlocution. Circumlocution is the ability to communicate meaning even when you don't know the precise word, usually by using multiple alternative words (e.g. if you don't know the word for 'scissors', you could say 'a tool for cutting paper'). It is a skill that is expected at the B1 level (see CEFR on General Linguistic Range and Vocabulary Range). Students can use the word 'extreme' in this way, e.g. for 'skydiving', they could say 'an extreme sport where you jump out of an aeroplane'.

This unit is technically complex in terms of vocabulary so you may need to give students the words they're looking for. A good strategy for practising circumlocution is to encourage the students to describe the sport in alternative words and then give them the correct term.

Activity 1

Again, as the vocabulary is technical, you may prefer to listen to the speakers again and read the audio script simultaneously.

CEFR Informal discussion (with friends)

Aim Practise skills to maintain a discussion

Activity 2

2a Other expressions could be: 'in my experience...'; 'In my experience' (giving opinions), 'that's true' (agreeing), 'that's not completely true' (disagreeing).

Correct students who suggest: 'according to me'. This is wrong. 'According to' can be used to describe a second person or third person's opinion (according to you, according to my teacher,) or, broadly spoken, a third agent or instrument (according to the survey, according to the research conducted by, according to the United Nations, etc).

2b For this activity, you will need to photocopy and cut out the cards from the appendix in the students' book. You will need a set of cards for each pair of students. Confident students should be encouraged to discuss the opinions further to promote natural discussion.

Activity 4

Ask the students to discuss the statements in pairs or small groups rather than as a whole class if you are concerned about quiet students avoiding speaking. You may need to explain 'reckless'.

Additional activity

There are statistics for the relative danger of various sports online, e.g.: <http://www.medicin.ox.ac.uk/bandolier/booth/risk/sports.html>

Topic Describing (missing) people

Grammar What is something like?

Warm up

Share an example of your own if you have one to encourage the students to share their experiences.

Activity 1

1a Let the students know that you will play the recording twice. You could get them to compare their notes with a partner before checking in the audioscript.

1b To extend the activity, you could get the students to add any other adjectives and nouns they know to the categories.

Note: you may hear 'handsome' used to describe women in classic literature, however, nowadays we only use it to describe men.

Activity 2

It might be worth taking in pictures of each of the items to be clear on the difference.

2b This is practice for part 2 of the Speaking subtest of the A2·B1 exam in which candidates have to describe a picture. The audio recording acts as a model answer and you should ask the students to take note for future use.

Note: the recording says that the scarf and top match the skirt. They do insofar as the colours don't clash, rather than having the same pattern!

CEFR Overall oral production

Aim Practise describing people in a photo / role play a story

Activity 3

Bring in a box or hat and strips of paper for the students to write their sentences on. Either read out the descriptions yourself or ask students to draw them out of the box and read them to the class.

Activity 4

4b When the students role play the conversation, get them to vary the questions and answers and add additional information as necessary. Other questions: What does Steve like for breakfast?; What is Steve's room like?; What was the weather like when Steve disappeared?

Activity 5

This is a difficult activity and should only be used with higher level students. Ask them to work in groups and to brainstorm the story about Steve. Encourage them to use the points 1-8 but to be creative and to invent other characters. Give them time to practise their skit before showing it to the rest of the class. Which version of events does the class think is the most interesting/ most plausible?

Topic Spelling names and difficult words

Grammar “say” vs. “speak” vs. “tell”

Warm up

Students might struggle to come up with eight letter words so have a few, yourself to give them. If you want to try backwards spelling, give an example first.

If you want to get the students up and moving at the beginning of the lesson, you could try a running dictation with them. Come up with some long, unknown words or place names before class, then put the class into two teams. Elect a writer for each team. Then have the students come to you one by one and show them the word. They need to memorise the spelling and then go back to their group and spell it to the writer. If they forget the spelling, they have to return to you. Score one point for the first team to finish all their words and then a point for each correct spelling.

Activity 1

1a You may need to explain this idea a bit further. The point is not to use the Alpha, Bravo, Charlie alphabet, but for the students to develop their own version (e.g. Apple, Boy, Cat). There is an example alphabet in the answer key of the student book.

1b You can find a nice video to teach students how to say Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BXKsQ2nbno>

CEFR Asking for clarification

Aim Practise language to ask for clarification

Activity 2

2b Remember that there is a strong element of sociolinguistic appropriateness here. “What?!” for example, would not be an acceptable way to ask for clarification from a stranger.

Activity 3

3a You may need to play the recording more than once and pause it between conversations for lower levels. If they really struggle, you could look at the audioscript together as a class.

3c You will need to make enough copies of the Appendix for each pair. Encourage the students to use the clarification phrases from Activity 2 and 3.

Activity 5

This can be a really fun, interesting class discussion. Try to think of examples that are true for you and tell the class in order to promote sharing. An amusing example for the third bullet point: when asked at a dinner table in France whether the guest would like some more food, she replied ‘Non merci, je suis pleine’. Though a direct translation of ‘No thanks, I’m full’, it actually means ‘No thanks, I’m a pregnant cow’. The correct expression is: ‘Non merci, j’ai assez mangé’ (No thanks, I’ve eaten enough).

Topic Weddings
Grammar Who vs. which

CEFR Vocabulary range
Aim Practise vocabulary needed to talk about weddings

Note on the content of this unit: The aim of the unit is to discuss weddings. The weddings described in Activity 1 and Activity 4 are based on traditional weddings. Nowadays many couples in the UK and US don't include all the aspects of the traditional wedding day.

Warm Up

A full list of wedding anniversaries can be found here: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wedding_anniversary#Celebration_and_gifts

Note that the items are different in the UK and US.

Activity 1

You will need to pre-teach the wedding vocabulary. A good way to do this might be to bring in a photograph of a wedding. The students will find your wedding or a wedding you have attended especially engaging.

Note: the bridegroom is also often called the 'groom'.

Refer the students to the sticky note and also mention that we usually say 'they got married'/'we're getting married in March' rather than 'they married'/'we're marrying in March'.

The wedding described in the blog post is quite traditional. More and more couples are deviating from tradition, either by having their ceremony in a register (also registry) office (a council building) or hotel or other venue. Traditionally a bride is 'given away' by her father, though this is also becoming less common.

Activity 2

2a For students who respond well to phonetics, the pronunciation of the words in bold is: **bouquet** /bʊ'keɪ/ ; **aisle** /aɪl/ ; **vows** /vaʊz/ ; **marriage** /'mæ.rɪdʒ/ .

2b Monitor the students for content and accuracy. Ask some students to tell their stories to the class.

Activity 3

3b For this activity, you will need to photocopy and cut out the cards from the appendix in the students' book. You will need a set of cards for each pair of students.

Activity 4

This is a guessing activity – the students aren't expected to know the answers, but to speculate.

4a1 While the bride's family traditionally pays for the wedding, this is changing, with couples contributing to or paying for the whole wedding, themselves.

4a2 Traditionally couples who were too young to marry would elope to Gretna Green in Scotland.

4a5 Couples who marry in a church do not need to attend the register office at all.

We sometimes talk about the wedding day as 'the big day', though this is colloquial.

Ask the students whether weddings in the students' countries are changing too?

Note: Same-sex marriage has been legal in the UK since March 2014. At time of press, many, but not all, US states had legalised same-sex marriage.

Additional activity

In the UK there is a TV programme called *Don't Tell the Bride* in which the groom has to plan the wedding without talking to his fiancé(e) about it. You could find a clip on the internet and show it in class. How would the students feel about planning their wedding in this way?

Topic Animal companions

Grammar Questions with
“what” and “how”

CEFR Turn-taking

Aim Practise skills to maintain
conversations

Warm up

This unit links well with Unit 20 on Calmness as pets often make us feel calmer about life. As the unit is about pets you could use flashcards to revise animal vocabulary before moving on to the warm up. You could also talk about or show a clip from a film about pets (e.g. *Beethoven*, *Babe*, *Homeward Bound*).

You may need to make the meaning of ‘companion’ clear. Ask the students to justify their choice of animal companion. If the class had to choose just one animal, what would it be?

Activity 1

1a If the students are unsure about the new vocabulary, you could get them to identify the parts of speech to see where they could fit in the gapped sentences. Then allow them to discuss the meanings within the context of the complete sentence. Explain that ‘four-legged friend’ is a colloquialism and how to use it. Practise the pronunciation too: /fɔːˈleɪd/ .

1b If the students seem to only be discussing a few animals, suggest some others or use flashcards to prompt their discussion.

Activity 2

The recording is the same as the sentences, so gap filling should not be too difficult. Go back over the sentences and analyse the phrases (e.g. ‘how about you?’, ‘what do you think?’), explaining how and when the students can use them.

Activity 3

Mention that ‘passed away’ is a softer term for ‘died’ and that it is commonly used.

Encourage the students to use the questions from Activity 2 by first giving their opinion and then asking for their partner’s.

Activity 4

Emphasise the rules:
what + noun; how + adjective/adverb.

Activity 5

Encourage the students to talk in depth about their experiences and to ask follow-up questions (such as those in Activity 4) as much as possible. The CEFR for this unit is skills for maintaining a conversation. On the whole, people enjoy talking about their pets but if the pairs do dry up, suggest they ask questions or propose another question for discussion.

You could ask the pairs to report back to the class about what they’ve learnt about their partner.

Topic Being proud of your country

CEFR General linguistic range

Grammar Adjectives word order

Aim Practise talking about your country

The CEFR descriptor in the unit has been simplified. The complete descriptor is as follows:

B1 Has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to express him/herself with some hesitation and circumlocutions on topics such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel, and current events, but lexical limitations cause repetition and even difficulty with formulation at times.

A2 Has a repertoire of basic language, which enables him/her to deal with everyday situations with predictable content, though he/she will generally have to compromise the message and search for words. apologies etc.

Can produce brief everyday expressions in order to satisfy simple needs of a concrete type: personal details, daily routines, wants and needs, requests for information. Can use basic sentence patterns and communicate with memorised phrases, groups of a few words and formulae about themselves and other people, what they do, places, possessions etc. Has a limited repertoire of short memorised phrases covering predictable survival situations; frequent breakdowns and misunderstandings occur in non-routine situations.



Warm Up

Collect as many ideas as possible as the students will need the ideas for the final activity.

Activity 1

1a As students make their suggestions, remember to explain to them which are formal and which are informal.

1d You could turn this exercise into a kind of Kim's Game. Give the students two minutes to memorise as many adjectives as they can, then get them to close their books. Give them three or four minutes to write down the adjectives and then elicit them to the board. Between them, the students might be able to come up with all 24.

Activity 2

2a You could blow up the photographs to make them clearer for the whole class. Read the audioscript before class so that you have all the facts at hand.

2c You will need to teach 'span' and perhaps 'right of way'.

Activity 4

Make sure the students choose a suitable idea to work with and encourage them to use adjectives (in the correct order) to describe it. You could suggest they use a mind map. If you choose to let the students work with their phones, make sure each pair has access to one.

Topic Food and eating habits
Grammar Verbs + ing / verbs with 'to' (enjoy cooking, like to cook)

CEFR Flexibility
Aim Practise using language more flexibly

Warm Up

This unit addresses conveying preference. This is a useful skill for part 3 of the Speaking subtest of the A2, B1 and A2·B1 exams. Although candidates need to agree on a course of action (solving a task/ consensus finding), in this part of the exam, they should also justify their suggestions based on preference. For example, if students have to plan a day out, they should say why they want to, for example, go to the zoo ("I'd like to go to the zoo because I like watching the animals"; "I would prefer to visit the butterfly house first and then I suggest having some lunch at the café").

You can extend the discussion with some further questions. Where did the students learn to cook? From a parent, at school, on a special cooking course? What is their 'signature dish'? If they threw a dinner party for the whole class, what would they cook?

Activity 1

The only way the students can remember which verbs take the gerund (-ing) form or the infinitive is to learn them. Practising thoroughly in 1b will help. Make sure the students understand the difference between 'like' and 'would like to'.

Note: stop + to + verb is not incorrect but it changes the meaning of the sentence. I stopped eating chocolate = I no longer eat chocolate; I stopped to eat chocolate = I stopped what I was doing and opened a bar of chocolate.

Activity 2

Before doing this activity, ensure that the students understand that they need to guess their partner's answer, not to ask their partner immediately or to give their own answer. After they have made their guesses, make sure they understand how to form the question (e.g. "Do you enjoy having a late night snack?"). Encourage higher level students to ask follow-up questions ("You do? What do you eat?").

Activity 4

Monitor the students as they discuss to make sure they are using the target language. Be aware that people are sensitive about the quality of their nation's food so if the discussion becomes a little combative, know when to move the students on to the next question!

Activity 5

Some idioms have been included in this unit to add colour to students' expression and to help them sound more natural. However, make sure they understand exactly when to use these idioms and not to overuse them as it can sound contrived and often inappropriate. You can leave this activity out altogether if you think your students aren't ready for idioms.

Topic Rescued children of India

Grammar Making suggestions*

CEFR Goal-oriented cooperation

Aim Practise technique for part 3 of Speaking subtest (A2-B1 exam)

Warm Up

You could show a clip from the film, Slumdog Millionaire to introduce the topic. 2) Mumbai has a population of about 18 million (2014), making it one of the top ten most populated cities in the world. 3) The Taj Mahal was commissioned in 1632 by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan as the tomb of his third wife, Mumtaz Mahal. It took about 22 years to complete. 4) India has a caste system of social stratification that comprises five castes. The lowest caste is the Dalits (or 'the untouchables'). Dalits make up almost a quarter of the Indian population. 5) India has an estimated population of 1.27bn to China's 1.37bn. 6) Chess is believed to have originated in India in the third century AD.

Activity 1

1a You may have to help the students with some vocabulary in the article, but don't do so until the students have already completed the gist questions. Difficult words might be: 'campaign', 'donate'.

1b Help the students to articulate themselves as they may be keen to talk but unable to find the right words.

Activity 2

Make sure the students read the statements carefully and think about alternative phrasing that they might hear in the recording. You may need to explain the concept of a 'sponsored walk'.

Activity 3

Go through the 'suggesting' and 'reacting to suggestions' phrases with the students.

Activity 4

This activity is an example of part 3 of the B1 and A2-B1 Speaking subtests (solving a task) as well as part 3 of the A2 test (consensus finding). In this part of the exam, candidates have to devise a plan and agree on a course of action. They should exchange ideas until they achieve a consensus on the details. The examiner speaks very little during this part of the exam and candidates should try to keep their dialogue going for about six minutes.

Further information

For further information on charities helping street children in India, see El Shaddai Charitable Trust: www.childrescue.net and Save the Children: www.savethechildren.in.

* Unit 1 (Writing) also addresses making suggestions

Topic Compensation strategies

Grammar Expressing purpose
(to + infinitive)

CEFR Compensation

Aim Practise skills to improve
oral communication

Warm Up

This is a nice topic as the students will have plenty to say! All language learners have concerns about their abilities and they shouldn't be afraid to talk about them. Point out the sticky note!

After discussing point b, you could ask the students what strategies they have for addressing their limitations in their weakest skills. This is a good opportunity to promote independent study.

Activity 1

This unit practises the skills required for the CEFR on compensating. Compensating is the ability to convey a message despite a lack of precise language and is a particularly valuable skill for students at the A2-B1 level whose vocabulary may be rather general. Compensating can be achieved by gesture or by using a less precise word and then describing it in more detail.

If appropriate, you could show this clip from *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GTCKAy3buxo>, where Bridget is trying to obtain a pregnancy test in a chemist's at a ski resort and can't speak German.

Activity 2

2b You could give the students a few more pictures of animals and get them to brainstorm ways to describe them. They will probably have questions about vocabulary.

2c Ask the students to write any additional adjectives or phrases on the board.

Activity 3

This is a really important and useful construction for students at this level. They may know the purpose of an item but not necessarily the name of that item.

You could bring in some items of your own that the students are unlikely to know the word for and get them to describe them using the language in Activity 2 (e.g. marble, thimble, trowel).

Activity 4

4c For this activity, you will need to photocopy and cut out the cards from the appendix in the students' book. You will need a set of cards for each pair of students. The students should already know the names of the items on the cards, so should be able to guess the item if their partner gives a good description.

Topic Embarrassing moments
in your life

Grammar Gerund

CEFR Phonological control

Aim Practise telling a story

Warm Up

Insist that the pairs agree on the order as they will have to justify their choices. Swap the pairs over to compare their answers. Can either partner convince the other to change his/her order?

Activity 1

1a Explain to the students that we often use the gerund form of the verb to make a noun. An example that they will already know might be 'swimming' or 'cooking'. Tell them that these gerund forms behave just like nouns.

1b Students are likely to have some good stories to share. Help them with vocabulary to express themselves fully and then invite them to share their pair discussion with the rest of the class. How did they feel after the situation they have described?

Activity 2

2a Have the students ever done something similar? Have you? Share with the class.

2c Stressing particular words when telling a story has a number of functions: it punctuates the story so that the listener understands the important points, it structures the story itself and it can enhance the tone of the conversation, building suspense or conveying emotion. The recordings in this unit are deliberately over-the-top so that the students can really hear the speaker's animation and to help them with their own pronunciation.

After the students have read the story from the book to each other, get them to close their books and try to tell the story without reading. Remember to stress the key words.

Activity 3

The sticky note gives introductory phrases for telling stories. Go through it with the students and get them to tick one or two that they like. Tell them to learn these one or two phrases.

3b Although this kind of pronunciation exercise may seem artificial, it's worth it because it not only helps students to tell better stories, it trains their ears to the differences of stress. And, of course, it can also be a very funny exercise. It can be especially amusing if you have a few students who are really enthusiastic and really go for it!

Activity 4

Collect ideas on the board. If the students are now parents themselves, are there any things they do that embarrass their children? How do they feel about it?

Activity 5

If this activity is too tricky for your students, you can skip it. It might help to share a story of your own to help them.

Instead of working in groups, students could walk around the classroom telling their story to students they meet. Let them know that it's fine to change their story a bit in terms of content and language if they find that parts don't work so well. We learn through practice and improvisation and gain confidence through repetition!

Topic Gift giving
Grammar “give something to somebody” vs. “give somebody something”

CEFR Overall spoken interaction
Aim Practise talking about familiar topics

Warm Up

As we don't know what's in the box, the students can speculate about the situation, the contents of the box and the relationship between the two people.

b Brainstorm ideas for when to give presents on the board. There are many situations when we give presents besides the obvious ones (e.g. taking a gift for your exchange host's parents, thank you gifts for someone doing a favour, gifts to cheer up sad friends).

Activity 1

1a Give the students time in pairs to come up with ideas for each of the situations. You could ask them to write their idea on the board. Once all the students have written their suggestions, you could take a show of hands from the whole class for the best present.

1b Share your own best/worst/most embarrassing gift experience to encourage the students to do the same. Give them some time to think about it.

Activity 2

What do the students think about gift cards? This website has a number of ideas about presenting a gift card so that it appears more personal: <http://www.buzzfeed.com/jreeve/diy-gift-card-holders-eeqg#.kaLEarWrg>. Do the students like the ideas? Would they try any out themselves?

Activity 3

You can supplement plenty of other material to this activity to practise the grammar point further.

Activity 4

This activity uses the skills required for part 3 of the Speaking subtest of all of the exams at this level. Candidates have to discuss a number of points and reach a consensus and/or course of action. Ask the students to share their choices with the rest of the class and to justify their choice. Afterwards, decide as a whole class, which present is the best idea.

Activity 5

- 1 In the UK, lilies are often funeral flowers;
- 3 In Japan, gift giving is often seen as a form of communication between giver and receiver;
- 4 Gift wrapping in blue or white is associated with funerals in China.

Even professionals make mistakes when giving gifts. In 2015, a British government minister experienced great embarrassment during a visit to Taiwan. She gave her host, the mayor of Taipei, a watch – a perfectly reasonable and even luxurious gift in Britain – however her host was less than impressed and chose to associate it with the act of giving a clock as a present! In Chinese culture, giving a clock to someone is taboo as the word is homophone to the word for death. It is actually questionable as to who committed the cultural gaffe! The Taiwanese were certainly very embarrassed by the behaviour of their mayor. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jan/27/british-minister-cultural-gaffe-taipei-mayor-taboo-watch>

Topic Things I dislike / hate
Grammar Conjunctions:
 although /even though*

CEFR Conversation
Aim Practise talking about
 unpleasant job situations

Warm Up

What do the students really hate doing? Do they try to avoid doing those things?

Activity 1

Draw the students' attention to the sticky note. The expressions in this exercise are followed by gerund forms of the verb.

1b You could ask the students to write their ideas on the board.

Activity 3

3a This is a good opportunity to practise describing a picture, which is part of the Speaking subtest for the A2·B1 exam.

Activity 4

'Although' and 'even though' have the same meaning and both introduce a contrasting statement.

4b You could use ideas that you collected on the board in Activity 1 to provide material for some additional sentences (e.g. Even though I'm quite a tidy person, I hate hoovering my flat'.

Activity 5

Students might need some support to be able to articulate themselves. See if there is a Top 5 of the Most-Hated Tasks among the students, i.e. tasks they all agree on. What suggestions do they have for motivating themselves to do these tasks?

"Mañana es el día más ocupado de la semana"
 (Tomorrow is the busiest day of the week)

Spanish proverb

- * **Unit 5 (Reading)** covers the difference between 'even though' and 'even if'.
- * **Unit 3 (Speaking)** discusses use of 'although' as a linking word.

Topic Things to do when you feel blue

Grammar “go to” / “go for” / “go on”

CEFR Spoken fluency-

Aim Practise skills to improve fluency

Note: This unit links well with Unit 20 on calmness.

Warm Up

You could get the students to write the names of as many colours as they can think of on the board. Or you could give them a colour and get them to write down as many things that are this colour (e.g. red = tomato, post-box, lipstick, blood). You can put them into teams to make this activity more competitive.

For theory on the meaning of colours: <http://www.color-wheel-pro.com/color-meaning.html>

Activity 2

For other ideas on beating the blues: http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/01/15/10-ways-to-cheer-yourself_n_2479613.html

2b Alternatively, you could get the students to make a poster and present their ideas on strategies to beat the blues. Give them a large piece of paper and some coloured pens. Remind them of the theories about colour meaning so that they choose appropriate colours. Stick the posters up on the wall of the classroom.

Activity 3

Draw the students' attention to the examples of the three forms in the sentences in Activity 2. Can the students think of other examples to go in the boxes?

You can supplement other material to practise the different forms. Can the students come up with alternative suggestions?

Activity 4

4b Monitor the students while they're speaking to ensure that they're using the phrases correctly.

Activity 5

You can put the students into pairs or small groups. Give them plenty of time to brainstorm ideas and then get them to report back to the class. Would the ideas make the other students feel better?

Further information

For information on depression: <http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/>

Topic Olympics / medals

Grammar Fewest / least*

CEFR Information exchange

Aim Practise exchanging information

Warm up

If you've won a medal, trophy or even just received a certificate, bring it into the class and talk about how you won it. How did you feel? This enables the students to start thinking about their own achievements and to share their experiences.

Activity 1

If you have time, you could show a video of the 'best bits' of the London 2012 Olympics, e.g. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TbsXUJITa40>. To work on vocabulary, you could get the students to write down the names of the sports they see. Afterwards, ask them to write all the sports on the board.

1a3 Michael Phelps took part in three Olympics. He won 6 gold medals and 2 bronze medals in Athens in 2004; 8 gold medals in Beijing in 2008; and 4 gold and 2 silver medals in London in 2012.

1b Some of the mistakes in the text are quite obvious, while others are less clear. Students will need to read the text especially carefully. See the audioscript in the student book for the corrected text.

Activity 2

The 2020 Olympics will take place in Tokyo, Japan. Bidding for the 2024 games began in 2015. So far, Rome, Hamburg and Boston are confirmed applicant cities. There are expected to also be bids from Nairobi, Casablanca, Doha, Ahmedabad, Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok. Other cities that have been suggested are Paris, Saint Petersburg, Kiev, Budapest, Istanbul, Baku, Los Angeles, Washington DC and San Francisco. The winning applicant city will be announced in late 2017.

If your students are working at quite a high level, you could supplement a reading comprehension exercise in here. There are plenty of articles about the benefits and risks of hosting an international event. You may need to adapt the text so that it is suitable for the level of the students and make up your own questions. This would be useful as it would give the students material to work with when they come to discuss the questions in the activity.

Activity 3

It's essential that you go through the answers to 3a before moving on to 3b. You could do this by writing the countries on the board to avoid students making mistakes.

You can supplement additional material to reinforce the grammar on countable and uncountable nouns, and comparatives and superlatives.

* Unit 19 (Writing) focuses on 'few' vs. 'a few' and 'little' vs. 'a little'.

* Unit 11 (Writing) focuses on countable and uncountable nouns.

Topic Trust and honesty;
white lies*

CEFR Cooperating

Grammar Because vs. because of

Aim Practise discussion skills

* While the units in this book can be used interchangeably and according to students' needs, it might be beneficial to cover this unit on Trust before moving on to the reading, listening and writing units. This unit covers the concept and language associated with trust more generally, while the other units take a particular, more topic-specific angle.

Warm up

Ask the students to explain why they have ticked the boxes they have and not ticked the ones they haven't. Why do they trust the people they do? What qualities does a person need to have to be considered trustworthy?

Activity 1

1a It's really worth comparing the students' responses to this question as they may have quite differing views. It can generate some interesting discussion.

1b Tricky vocabulary could be 'field' (sector, not land), 'law and order', 'to treat', 'stability' and 'rely on'.

Activity 2

After the students have completed the exercises in this activity, get them to come up with some of their own sentences.

Activity 3

Don't discuss the question posed in the rubric for this activity, rather save it for Activity 4. See how many different phrases the students can come up with for discussion.

Activity 4

4a Make sure the students understand the concept of the white lie. Put them into small groups and get them to discuss the questions before feeding back to the class. On what occasions might someone tell a white lie? Have the students told white lies?

4b If your students are working at a higher level and you think they might be ready for a class debate, divide the class into two groups (or four if you want to cover both questions and have enough students). Give each group one view of the question to argue (i.e. it's ok to lie in a job interview vs. it's not ok to lie in a job interview.) Give them time to develop their arguments. Then bring the two groups back together to debate. You will need to monitor who speaks to avoid particular students monopolising the discussion and others saying nothing.

Activity 5

Give the students time to come up with their three lies and a truth so that they can think of some good, plausible lies to really tax their classmates. It's also worth going around to check their writing as they may lack the confidence to write their sentences on the board without your corrections.

Topic Driving**CEFR** Informal discussion with friends**Grammar** Second conditional**Aim** Practise giving advice***Warm Up**

a Put the students into small groups to discuss the questions. For a more interesting discussion, try to mix the sexes of the students in the groups. Give them sufficient time to discuss before feeding back content and language to the class.

b Drivers in the UK and Ireland drive on the left. Drivers in much of southern and east Africa drive on the left, as do drivers in Australia, New Zealand, India, Pakistan and some countries in Latin America. Share your experiences of driving on the left if you're from a country that drives on the right or from driving on the right if you're used to driving on the left.

Activity 1

Note the different expressions in BE and AE: roundabout = BE; traffic circle, rotary = AE; overtake = BE; pass = AE. Other vocabulary that the students might ask about might be 'traffic lights', 'zebra crossing' or 'junction'.

Activity 2

The answers to the quiz can be found in the answer key of the students' book. What do the students think about their results? Do they sound accurate? Are they likely to change their driving style as a result? Have they ever been in trouble with the police over their driving? What are driving styles like in their countries?

Activity 3

This unit focuses on the fixed expression 'if I were you, I'd...'. It does not go deeper into the grammar of the second conditional. If you want to teach the second conditional at this point, please supplement additional material.

Activity 4

For this activity, you will need to photocopy and cut out the cards from the appendix in the students' book. You will need a set of cards for each pair of students. Model the language for the activity a few times with a stronger student, giving some example responses so that weaker students get the idea. Monitor to ensure that they are using the target language correctly.

Additional activity

In the UK and in other countries, new drivers must pass a theoretical and practical driving test. For examples of theoretical tests, see:

<http://www.safedrivingforlife.info/take-official-free-practice-driving-theory-test/car-practice-theory-tests/car-practice-test-one>

<http://www.mylicence.sa.gov.au/my-car-licence/practice-theory-test>

If you have the technical resources in the classroom, you could work through one of the tests together as a class or alternatively set the test for homework.

Creatively written by an international team of English language professionals and brought to life by telc, English Practice Material – vhs is a four-part series, using a fresh, flexible and practical approach. The parts are: Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking.

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