

Collaborative Task: Debating Game

At a glance

Level: ISE III

Focus: Collaborative task

Aims: Practising question formations and discussing authentic interactive *prompts* in small groups and pairs

Objectives: Using set phrases when debating, keeping a tally of scores and initiating and maintaining discussion

Topic: Universities, advertising, lifestyles, independence and celebrity role models

Language functions: Expressing sympathy and empathy, expressing reservations, expressing caution, challenging arguments and opinions, evaluating different standpoints and justifying an argument

Grammar: A high degree of grammatical accuracy

Lexis: Words related to the topics above and set phrases for the functions above

Materials needed: Student worksheets, whiteboard, pens and ISE specifications

Timing: 2 x 60 minute classes

Procedure

Preparation

Print one of the phrases hand-out cut-up into individual phrases (and divided by function,) per group of 6-8 students and one score card hand-out per group. For the second class, all of the above *and* one topic hand-out per group of 6-8 students.

In class

1. Tell the class that today they are going to focus on the Collaborative task of the ISE III Speaking & Listening exam.
2. Ask the class some questions about this part of the exam, for example:

How long is it? (Answer - up to 4 minutes).

What is it? (Answer - the examiner tells you something. You'll have to ask questions to find out more information and make comments).

*What does **collaborative** mean?* (Answer - two-way transfer of information).

3. Explain to the class that it is very important to ask the examiner questions to find out more information, so they will be practising this in the lesson.
4. Write **UNIVERSITY** in the middle of the board in large letters. Ask students to think of any questions containing the word *university* and to give them to you in open-class. Write some examples on the board, some possible questions include:

What is university? Who goes to university? Why do people go to university? Is it important to go to university? Why are universities so expensive? Are universities value for money? Where are the best universities?

5. Now divide students into small groups of between 6-8 students and ask them to ask and answer questions about universities for a few minutes.
6. In the meantime, write this *collaborative prompt* on the board:

"In the past, it used to be the case that a university education was a sound investment for the future, I'm doubtful whether this is still the case".

7. Bring the class together and review the discussion then read out the *collaborative prompt*. Tell the class that it is very important that they *initiate* the conversation (ask them what this means) so they need to think of questions they could ask the examiner about the topic. Possible questions include:

Why do you think that?; I can see your point, but don't you think a University education still has value?

8. Elicit further questions the students could ask the examiner and write them on the board.
9. Explain that in their small groups they are going to play a game using the prompt and certain phrases. Give each group a pack of *phrases* cards. Tell them to deal them out so that each member of the group has different phrases for each section, for example:

Expressing sympathy and empathy; expressing reservations; expressing caution; challenging arguments and opinions; evaluating different standpoints and justifying an argument.

10. Practise using some of the phrases with the students. Ask them who has an “expressing sympathy and empathy card” – ask them in which situations they could use these phrases (for example, if somebody is ill, if somebody didn’t get a promotion they wanted), do the same with the other categories until the students are familiar with some of the phrases. Now give each group a score card.
11. Ask the class to discuss the *prompt* using their phrases. Tell the students that they get 1 point each time they contribute to the discussion and 2 points every time they use a phrase correctly. They should write their names on the *score card* and keep a tally. Allow around 10 minutes for this activity.
12. Bring the class together and review how well the students have fulfilled the task, asking who won in each group. Go to point 14.
13. **Second class** – Follow the same procedure as above but use **AMBITION** as a starting topic. Now, *either* give each group a different topic card (from the topic worksheet) and ask them to do the same as the last class, *or* divide the class into different **pairs**. Deal the cards out again so they have a different selection. Allow 10 minutes for this.
14. Bring the class back together and review the activity, asking each group or pair to demonstrate their discussion for a few minutes.
15. Go through the main points of today’s lesson and re-emphasise the need for students to *initiate* and *maintain* the interaction using some of the phrases from today’s lesson.

Extension activity

More advanced students can be given another topic from the topic hand-out to discuss in pairs.

Further support activity

Weaker students can be given a smaller selection of phrases, and be asked to work in pairs *in their groups* to support each other (i.e. in a group of 6 there will be 3 pairs).

After class

Ask students to write a prompt about *ambition* and discuss this with a classmate using some of the phrases.

Student Worksheet

Phrases

(print on card and laminate if possible)

Cut-up the following phrases, keeping them in their categories (1-6). Give each group a set of cards and ask them to deal them out so that each member has a selection of each category.

<u>1 Expressing sympathy and empathy</u>	
1 I'm sorry to hear about	1 That must be awful.....
1 That's so sad	1 I do sympathise with you
1 I hope things get better soon	1 Oh dear!
1 I hope you feel better soon	1 Too bad!
1 That's a pity	1 That's unfortunate
1 I know how you must be feeling	1 I know what you mean

<u>2 Expressing reservations</u>	
2 I have my doubts about that	2 Do you think that...? I doubt it
2 You may have a point there, but I'm still not sure.....	2 OK, but.....

3 Expressing caution	
3 I can't say if...	3 I would be careful with that if I were you
3 Just be careful with that	3 If I were you I would wait until...

4 Challenging arguments and opinions	
4 I can see your point, but...	4 Yes, but don't you think...?
4 Well...maybe...possibly	4 I think that's debatable
4 Perhaps, but don't you think that...?	4 I agree to some extent but...
4 But what about...?	4 I'm not so sure about that

5 Evaluating different standpoints	
5 That's a very good point	5 I agree entirely
5 That's an interesting point, but...	5 You might be right
5 I'm not so sure about that	5 Yes, but don't you think...

6 Justifying an argument	
6 I think	6 I feel that
6 As far as I'm concerned	6 I think...is right because...
6 ...that's why I feel that...	6 ...and so I think that...

Student Worksheet

Topics

Cut-up these topics and give out a different topic to each group. Ask one person from the group to read out their topic and discuss them using the phrases they have been given

1. Advertising is harmful to our society

Advertising is everywhere in our modern world, wherever you look you see adverts. Although I understand that some people want it regulated, I think people should be free to choose for themselves.

2. Lifestyles

The government seems to be overly-concerned with the welfare of its citizens, insisting on a certain amount of fresh fruit and vegetables a day, and regular exercise. Personally, I think it is up to the individual what they eat and how much exercise they do.

3. Independence

I keep on hearing arguments that young people should be encouraged to leave home as young as possible – around age 18, so they develop their independence. Personally, I'm not so sure this is such a good idea.

4. Role models

It seems that all young people want today is to be rich and famous; they just aren't interested in working hard. I'm doubtful whether there are any celebrities who are positive role models.

Student Score Card for Topic Debates

Score 1 point for every time you contribute *meaningfully* to the discussion, and 2 points every time you use a phrase *correctly*.

Topic _____

NAME of STUDENT	Contributed to discussion	Used a phrase correctly	Total
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

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8.			