

Collaborative task: The internet – A waste of time?

Level: ISE III

Focus: Collaborative task

Aims: To understand the Collaborative task requirements at ISE III, to practise particular language functions such as defending/justifying an argument, challenging arguments and opinions, expressing beliefs, and summarising/paraphrasing information

Objectives: To make students aware of what is required in the Collaborative task and for students to role play the collaborative task at least twice

Topic: The use of the internet

Language functions: Developing and justifying an argument, evaluating options, and summarising – other ISE III language functions may also be used (see page 77)

Lexis: Language related to the above functions and lexis connected to the use of the internet

Materials needed: One student worksheet per student

Timing: 90 minutes (could be divided into 2 x 45 minute lessons)

Preparation

Print or copy one student worksheet per student.

In class

1. Go into class and say the following controversial statement: *'I think the internet is a total waste of time'* and let students react, mentally noting what they say in response, receiving a response from everyone if possible (depending on the size of the class). This could take up to five minutes.
2. Now tell the students that in today's lesson they will be focusing on the Collaborative task in the Speaking & Listening exam at ISE III level.
3. Ask students, in pairs or in groups of three, to ask each other if they know what they do in the Collaborative task, and what the language functions and requirements of ISE III are. Give the students two to five minutes depending on their prior knowledge.
4. Ask students to report back, and then see how their answers compare with the task requirements. Give out one worksheet per student and direct the students to look at the ISE III language functions. Alternatively, they could be put up on the board. It might be a good idea to point out that giving advice is NOT a requirement at this level (it is for ISE II).
5. Now write the following functions as headings on the board with space for students to write under each heading:
 - a) Developing and justifying an argument
 - b) Expressing beliefs
 - c) Summarising ideas and arguments
6. Depending on the size of the class, assign one of these headings to each group of students (could be in pairs, or groups of three or four), and ask the students to think of expressions that fulfil the function they have been given. Give the students five minutes to do this. Monitor and answer any questions. Please note that some expressions could fit different functions.
7. Ask one student from each group or pair to write their expressions on the board under the appropriate heading. When they have all done this, invite students to comment on whether the expressions fit the appropriate function or if they could apply to other functions too.
8. At this point, ask the students to look at the points for and against the internet on the student worksheet. Ask the students to discuss in pairs. While the students are completing this task, monitor and answer any queries students may have. Then ask students to add to the handout any additional phrases that they think are useful that they have previously written on the board.

Preparation activities for ISE III Speaking & Listening

9. Model the pronunciation stress and intonation of a number of the key expressions.
10. The above activities will take approximately 45 minutes.
11. Now dictate the following prompt: *'Many people have stated that the internet has been enormously beneficial for society. I often wonder if that really is the case.'*
12. After students have checked what they have written down is correct, divide the class into two. One half of the class makes a list of the benefits of the internet, the other half makes a list of the problems connected with it (some ideas can be found on the student worksheet). Ask one student from each group to write their ideas on the board. Do not invite comments on these ideas as this will overlap into the next activity.
13. Now divide the class into groups of three and tell them one will be the examiner (E), one will be the candidate (C), and one will be an observer (O). E will start by reading the prompt that was dictated in stage 10, and C will respond. The objective of C will be to use some of the expressions that were on the student worksheet and also the ones that were added by the students in stage 8.
O should do three things while E and C are speaking:
 - ▶ time the interaction for five minutes
 - ▶ count how many questions C asks
 - ▶ count how many expressions that were looked at earlier that both E and C use.When they have finished, O gives C and E feedback. While the students are completing this stage, monitor them, noting points for feedback later.
14. Ask the students to swap their groups. This time ask the students to complete the same activity but with different roles (eg if they were an O previously they can be either E or C). Repeat the activity.
15. Students could swap around again, so that everyone has had a chance to be an E, C and O. This can be skipped if time is running short.
16. Give the students some feedback on how well the students completed this activity. Ask the observers for their observations. Did C ask enough questions? Did C use enough of the required functions? Did C use the expressions examined earlier in an appropriate way? Did C challenge E enough, or did C just tend to agree with everything E said? How do you think C could improve his or her performance?

Extension activity

Students can write more expressions and phrases that map to the functions listed on the student worksheet. This could be continued for homework.

If time, students can consider the following prompt: *'Some people have stated that climate change has been totally exaggerated. I think I tend to agree with this point of view.'* They then think of arguments for and against this viewpoint.

Further support activity

Ask students finding the task difficult to concentrate on just a few of the most useful phrases and pieces of functional language that they have seen in the student worksheets, and which they think they will use in future. Students compare the functional language they have chosen with each other. The students can practise the intonation and stress of these pieces of language with each other.

Homework

Students could look at the Trinity website on ISE pages for the ISE III Collaborative task examples. They can make a note of useful expressions or strategies used by the candidate or examiner to share with the class before they next practise the Collaborative task.

Student worksheet: The internet – A waste of time?

Below are the language functions required at ISE III.

- ▶ Initiating and maintaining the conversation
- ▶ Developing and justifying an argument
- ▶ Evaluating options, past actions/course of events and different statements
- ▶ Speculating
- ▶ Hypothesising
- ▶ Staging (ie a logical signposted structure)
- ▶ Summarising
- ▶ Indicating understanding of points made by the examiner
- ▶ Establishing common ground

Some useful functional language at ISE III

Defending/Justifying an argument

- ▶ What I am trying to explain is ...
- ▶ I see your point, but ...
- ▶ Don't you think it might be ...?
- ▶ I probably agree with what you're saying, but in reality ...
- ▶ I think you might be making a few assumptions there ...
- ▶ I might be wrong but don't you think it might be ...?

Expressing beliefs

- ▶ I strongly believe ...
- ▶ I am a firm believer in ...
- ▶ What are your thoughts regarding ...
- ▶ What are your beliefs on ...
- ▶ You seem very definite on that point ...

Summarising/paraphrasing information

- ▶ So in other words, what you are saying/I am saying is ...?
- ▶ Are you saying/suggesting that ...?
- ▶ Could you explain that in another way? Can you expand on that?
- ▶ Essentially what are the main points to bear in mind ...?
- ▶ Basically, my main point is ...
- ▶ In just a few words can you summarise that for me?

Sample points for and against the internet

Arguments for the internet	Arguments against the internet
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ Can find out information at the touch of a few buttons▶ Resource for research for homework/other projects▶ No need to go to the library▶ Social networks helping us to keep in touch with old friends, or people far away▶ Helps reduce the amount of paper consumed▶ Anyone can use it as it is so simple▶ It has created many jobs in the IT world	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▶ People have become too lazy to research things in depth▶ Websites such as online dictionaries are often wrong as anyone can edit them▶ Searches often bring up student essays and opinions which are not authoritative (like books)▶ It has divided the world into haves and have nots (the rich world is further removed from places which have poor internet connection)▶ It excludes the elderly who may be scared to use it▶ It is killing libraries (and jobs)