

FCE Speaking Part Three- Working Together

An introductory lesson for this part of the exam, teaching students to work co-operatively through speaking games

Part of Exam: Speaking Part Three

Language/ Skill Practiced: Turn taking. Agreeing and disagreeing language will also naturally come up (see Tips for practice activities).

Materials: 2 to 4 FCE exam Part Three speaking tasks (pictures) per pair of students.

Time: 20 to 30 minutes

Preparation: This activity is best done after you have dealt with Speaking Part Two.

Procedure:

Part One: Warmer

- Tell students that the present class days, number of days per week, time and place are all impossible from next week. Put them in groups of three or four and ask them to decide on new days, time and place in the next three minutes.
- Interrupt after 3 minutes and ask them what they've decided. Tell them they have just completed an FCE Part Three speaking task with two variations- number of students per group and picture prompt. Tell them they are about to do the real thing.
- **NB.** When you tell them that in fact the classes aren't changing is entirely up to you!

Part Two- Exam Practice

- Read out the script for the exam task you have chosen, giving out the pictures to pairs of students (and possibly one group of three) as you speak.
- Say 'Okay?' at the end of your instructions (as per script), and answer any questions/ repeat if students ask you to. Do not prompt them to do so, though, as they should be well trained by now.
- Let them start and time them carefully (3 minutes). Monitor for task completion (actually answering the question given), turn taking and agreeing and disagreeing language.

- Interrupt them at the end of three minutes and say 'What did you decide?' Feedback for a couple of minutes.
- Feedback on task completion and revise 'checking the question' language (see Part Two Tips).
- Feedback on turn taking. Ask students how much talking they should each do (50%). Tell students you are going to practise this now.

Part Three- Turn-taking games

- Students will often ask at the previous stage 'What if my partner won't talk/ doesn't stop talking?' If not, introduce these questions here.
- Deal with the first question first. Brainstorm tactics and language to get the other person involved. This includes phrases like 'What do you think?' and 'Do you agree?' and tag questions ('isn't it?', 'don't they?') and intonation.
- Give out another exam task and tell students the person in each pair who will 'win' the task is the one who makes their partner talk most.
- Read out the instructions, time the task and monitor for turn taking. Ask each pair who 'won'.
- Now deal with the 'partner won't stop talking' question. Brainstorm polite interruption language. This is often similar to polite disagreement language, e.g. 'Yes, but..', 'I agree, but..' etc.
- Give out the third task and tell them this time the person who can speak most *without being rude or talking over the other person* wins. Monitor and interrupt groups if they are not using the language/ tactics mentioned. Stop after three minutes and give feedback.
- Now give an authentic exam task and feedback on how much their turn taking has improved.
- **Variation:** Rather than having different tasks each time, you can repeat the task with different pairings.