



The Deck of Conversations

Materials: A deck of playing cards (with the jokers)

Level: Pre-intermediate and intermediate

Note: This speaking class is ideal for small groups or one-to-one classes, with you acting as the questioner. For larger groups, nominate one person as the questioner or have students take it in turns.

Procedure:

Pre-speaking task

Draw the following symbols on the board.



Ask the students where they see them (in a deck of cards) and what they are (spades, clubs, hearts and diamonds). Go over the face cards: King, Queen, Jack. Are they similar in their language? Follow this up with a couple of questions about card games. Do the students have any favourite card games? Do they like playing cards? When do they play? Explain that today's speaking class is based around the deck of cards.

Speaking Activity

1. Remove the cards 2 to 8 from each suit of the deck.
2. Place the deck of cards face down on the table.
3. Ask the student to pick up the top card and read out what it is.
4. Read the corresponding question or task. They must answer in English.
5. Repeat steps two and three with the next student and so on.
6. At the end, conduct a short feedback slot where you highlight errors or interesting information people found out during the activity.

Follow Up

There are two possibilities that could follow up this activity:

- 1) students are each assigned the numbers 2 to 8 for different suits and write questions to find out interesting information about their classmates or their teacher. They bring this to class for the next day and you play again with their own questions.
- 2) Students think of a card game they know and like and prepare an explanation on how to play. The next day of class they bring in their own pack of cards and teach others in their group their favourite card game.

CARD TASKS / QUESTIONS



Spades: Questions

For the spade tasks, the speaker must ask a question to someone in the group. They can ask follow-up questions if they like.

- 9 – Ask someone to spell their first and last name
- 10 – Ask someone their phone number, address and email
- Jack – Ask someone what they did last weekend
- Queen – Ask someone about the last film they saw
- King – Ask someone about their family
- Ace – Ask someone the reasons they are learning English

Clubs: Descriptions

For the clubs tasks, the speaker must describe what is asked for at least one minute.

- 9 – Describe yourself
- 10 – Describe someone in your family
- Jack – Describe the room you are in
- Queen – Describe your flat
- King – Describe the city you are from
- Ace – Describe this game



Hearts: Feelings and Opinions

For the heart questions, everybody in the group must ask a follow-up question to the speaker after they have answered the question on the card.

- 9 – What do you like doing in your free time?
- 10 – What are the ingredients of a good marriage?
- Jack – Which do you prefer, summer or winter?
- Queen – What things make you angry?
- King – What would you like to change about yourself?
- Ace – What made you happy as a child?



Diamonds: Ideals

For the diamond questions, the speaker has to talk about an ideal of something on the card. The speaker has to talk for at least 30 seconds (or a minute!)

- 9 – My ideal house or flat would be...
- 10 – My ideal day off would be...
- Jack – My ideal job would be...
- Queen – My ideal teacher would be...
- King – My ideal partner would be...
- Ace – My ideal holiday would be...

JOKER CARDS

ASK ANY OF THE QUESTIONS OR GIVE ANY OF
THE TASKS TO THE TEACHER!