

## Conversation task (Travel experiences)

**Level:** ISE I (CEFR B1)

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Focus:** Conversation task

**Aims:** To familiarise students with the requirements of the ISE I conversation phase and to practise holding a conversation about one of the subject areas for discussion

**Objectives:** Giving and asking for information about travel experiences and practising techniques to engage the examiner

**Subject area:** Travel

**Language functions:** Describing past actions in the indefinite and recent past, informing about future intentions and giving reasons

**Materials needed:** One copy of the student worksheet per student, blank paper, pens

### In class

1. Tell the students that they are going to practise the Conversation task for the ISE I Speaking & Listening exam. In this task, the candidate has to talk to the examiner about a specific topic for approximately two minutes. In this lesson they will be discussing travel, which is one of the subject areas for the level. For other subject areas see the ISE I Guide for Teachers.
2. Write the words 'Travel experiences' in the centre of the board. Elicit from the students the types of travel experiences this could include. Give them an example, such as 'camping'. Accept all answers and write them on the board.
3. Tell the students that in this lesson they will practise giving information about their travel experiences, asking others for information and then speaking about the experiences of others. Give each student a copy of the student worksheet.
4. Ask the students to read questions 1-3 in **task A** on the worksheet and check that they understand the differences between the types of holidays (question 3). Encourage them to use the correct phrases to ask for explanation if they do not understand a specific word or phrase. For example, 'Can you explain what this means?', 'What does this word mean exactly?', 'What is the difference between a city break and a weekend away?'. Write these phrases on the board while students are doing the task. Next, put the students in pairs and give them five minutes to interview each other. Monitor the interviews. Give feedback to the whole class at the end of **task A**.
5. Tell the students that they are now going to find out about their partner's experiences and future travel plans. They must interview each other using the questions in **task B** and write a few words in the appropriate box. Tell them **not** to write whole sentences. Encourage them to ask for reasons when their partner gives their answers. For example, 'What's the reason for that?', 'Why do you prefer to travel with your cousin and not your parents?'. Allow them 10 minutes to exchange information and write notes in the boxes. Give students some feedback on how well they have completed the task.
6. Put the students with a different partner and tell them to look at **task C**. They must recount the information they have learnt from their previous discussion using the words they wrote in the boxes. For example, 'Juan has been to Disneyland in Florida. He prefers to travel with his cousin'. Give the students five minutes to complete this task.
7. Tell the students to look at **task D**. In pairs, they must plan a few questions for each of the students they interviewed, based on the information they found out. For example, 'What exactly did you eat when you were in Florida?'. Allow them 10 minutes to write down their questions. Go around the class helping with their questions.
8. When the students have planned their questions, tell them to ask their question to that student in front of the class. The student who has to answer the question should answer so the whole class can hear. Tell the class they need to listen carefully, as you will ask them questions about what they have heard.
9. Ask the class the following questions (or write your own). Tell the students to put their hands up if they know an answer:
  - ▶ Who had an unusual holiday when they were a child?
  - ▶ Who did an exciting activity when they were a child?
  - ▶ What is a strange experience someone has had on holiday?
  - ▶ Do most people prefer to go on holiday with their friends or with relatives?

- ▶ *Who went to a surprising place for a holiday?*
- ▶ *Who would like to go to a place on the other side of the world?*

Remind the class that asking questions in a conversation and listening carefully to the answers shows interest and engagement with the other person, and this is a requirement of the Conversation task of ISE I.

10. Ask students to look at **task E**. Tell them that you are going to act as a candidate in the Conversation task and they must make notes on how well you interact with the examiner. Choose a student from the class who is quite confident and ask them to play the part of the examiner. Ask them to sit at the front of the class with you and ask you the questions in **task B**. Show a lack of interest by, for example, giving very short answers, not looking at the student, reading your notes, speaking with monotonous intonation or saying nothing. Give the students a few minutes to compare their notes in twos or threes and then feedback as a class. Ask them what they could do to show interest, such as asking questions, making comments (for example, they could say 'Really?'), giving longer answers, smiling, paying attention.
11. Tell the class that the ISE I Conversation task is not a formal question and answer interview, but is similar to a real-life conversation. Interacting and showing interest in this task will help them to do well.

### Extension activity

Students who have finished can write their own questions to ask their partner about their travel experiences.

## Student Worksheet – Conversation task (Travel experiences)

### Task A

Discuss these questions with your partner.

1. 'What kind of places do you enjoy visiting?'
2. 'What do you like doing when you are there?'
3. 'Which of the following have you experienced? Foreign holidays, city breaks, school trips, weekends away, day trips.'  
Choose one of these and tell your partner about your experience.'

### Task B

In pairs, use the questions below. Find out about your partner's travel experiences and complete the boxes in the diagram with key words.

#### As a child

- ▶ 'Where did you go on holiday when you were a young child?'
- ▶ 'What did you like doing on holiday at this time?'

#### The present

- ▶ 'Who do you like travelling with the most?'
- ▶ 'What kind of activities do you prefer doing when you go on holiday?'

#### Future travel plans

- ▶ 'If you can go anywhere in the world, where will you go?'
- ▶ 'How will you spend your time in this place?'

#### Life experience

- ▶ 'Where is the most interesting place you have ever been?'
- ▶ 'What is the strangest or most interesting thing you have done or seen on holiday?'

My partner's name .....

As a child

The present

Future travel plans

Life experience

**Task C**

Find another student and use your notes in the boxes to tell them what have you learnt about your previous partner's travel experiences.

**Task D**

In the same pairs, write some questions to ask about the previous students' travel experiences. Ask those students to tell their answers to the whole class.

1. Our questions to ..... (name)

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2. Our questions to ..... (name)

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**Task E**

Your teacher will act as a candidate in the Conversation task. How well does your teacher (the candidate) interact with the examiner? Make notes on what he or she does right and wrong.