

Activity 1: Discussions & Presentations

Level:
Level 2

Time:
45 minutes x Activity

Resources:

- ✓ Access to Videos on TCL Website
- ✓ Discussion topics
- ✓ Audio recording devices

Aims:

- ✓ To develop skills and knowledge in speaking and listening at Level 2
- ✓ To explore vocabulary connected to L2 topics
- ✓ To practise discussing issues of global or national importance
- ✓ To practise responding to others' views, agreeing, disagreeing, expanding points and expressing ideas, facts and opinions
- ✓ To focus on pronunciation

Sub-skill focus: active listening skills, turn-taking, presenting and responding to questions

Exam task focus: Component 2 Task 4 & Component 1 Task

Procedure: Discussions and Presentations

Activity 1

- Establish a set of class discussion group ground rules. Learners create their own set of rules with tutor input if necessary to guide towards rules such as:
 - ✓ Listen to and acknowledge all points of views, including opposing opinions
 - ✓ Don't talk over someone who is speaking
 - ✓ Respect your classmates' opinions to help everyone retain their dignity
 - ✓ Make your point but beware the monologue: don't talk for too long – open the topic up to a classmate for their contribution
 - ✓ Where you agree, expand the points and offer further evidence and ideas to support them
 - ✓ Disagree diplomatically
 - ✓ Express concern or reservations if you are not convinced by something
 - ✓ Try to find common ground
 - ✓ Keep to the discussion topic until it is fully explored
- Watch a discussion, e.g. <https://www.trinitycollege.com/qualifications/english-language/ESOL-skills-for-life/ESOL-Skills-for-Life-Level-2-resources>.
- Ask learners - *What makes a good discussion?* Reinforce the ideas generated in the ground rules e.g. responding to view points, expanding on these and moving the discussion forward.
- Discuss the language techniques available to use in a group discussion. Here are some examples:

Verbal communication	Examples
Keeping a formal tone	Using indirect requests e.g. <i>Could you explain why you think this might happen?</i> (Rather than: Tell me why this might happen)

Express views and opinions e.g. future possibility	<i>I think that if companies continue to open up opportunities to work away from the office, city centres could become deserted.</i>
Express wishes and feelings	<i>I wish I could work from home all the time. I think it could get lonely though...</i>
Express agreement and strategies to express disagreement	<i>That's true in some ways, but if we think about...</i>
Respond to critical opinion and offer critical opinion constructively to offer the best solution	<i>I agree we have some control over this, however I think we need to be wary of the way mobile apps are designed to attract our attention.</i>
Using statements of fact to support your opinion and ways to introduce these	<i>If we were to look at the amount of time the average person spends checking their phones this shows how...</i>
Summarising and moving the discussion forwards e.g. seeking solutions	<i>We all seem to agree that checking social media feeds can be addictive so perhaps we could think of ways to overcome this.</i>
Make requests for opinions or information using a range of question types e.g. embedded questions	<i>Could you explain why you think marriage is important? Would you mind telling me how much time you spend in front of a screen each day?</i>

Tip:

Keep up-to-date as a group with current affairs by basing learning activities around national and global issues e.g. social issues, environmental issues. Online newspapers are a useful resource here with some aimed at learners of English. Follow up exploration of an issue with a discussion on the topic.

Activity 2

- Introduce the discussion topic:
Marriage is an outdated institution. Discuss to what extent you agree with this statement. Propose solutions for any problems you identify.
- Allow learners 20 minutes to brainstorm ideas and research this topic using the internet and any other available resources.
- Learners discuss the topic for 10 minutes.
- If learners are comfortable, the discussion could be recorded. The recording can be used to elicit comments and analysis from the learners and to provide a platform for tutor feedback on positives and areas for improvement.

Further discussion topics for class discussions:

- Working from home is becoming more commonplace. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of working from home. Propose solutions for any problems you identify.
- Social media and mobile phone usage is addictive. Discuss to what extent you agree with this statement. Propose solutions for any problems you identify.

Activity 3

- Give learners a menu of topics.
- Learners select a topic from the menu to research and plan a 6-minute-long presentation on this topic:

Menu of topics:

- The pros and cons of studying music at school.
- The advantages and disadvantages of life in Britain compared with another country you know
- The pros and cons of running your own company compared to being an employee
- The role technology plays in our lives and the advantages and disadvantages it brings.
- The pros and cons of online learning compared with classroom-based learning
- The gender pay-gap issue, the facts and possible causes and actions needed to close the gap.

- Learners give their presentations to the class. Ask them to keep to their 6-minute time limit. This is good for their time management skills and keeping to lesson plan timing.
- Instruct the learners in the audience to make notes and prepare questions on anything they need clarifying while they listen to the presentation. They should also assume opposing points of view and prepare questions and statements which will generate debate.
- After the presentation, learners in the 'audience' ask questions. The learner presenting should respond to questions and attempt to persuade the audience of their perspective. Allow 4 minutes for this part.