

Pardon the Interruption

Grade: GESE Grade 9 (CEFR level – any)

Time: 50 minutes

Exam task focus:

- ▶ To practise handling interruptions
- ▶ To respond to requests for clarification and returning to the topic at hand

Description of the activity

Stage 1

1. Tell students that they are going to play the 'interruption game' and that for this game they are going to talk about a simple topic of their choice (not their chosen exam Topic yet).

Examples: 'My weekend', 'What I'll do when I finish school/my studies/this course', 'The best football match I've ever seen', 'Something that made me laugh a lot'.

2. To play the game, organise the class into groups of 3. Tell them to decide who is going to speak first and to think about topics they could talk about in the game.
3. Tell students that the aim of the game is for one person in the group to speak for two minutes about a topic of their choice. The other two students need to interrupt the speaker with questions about the topic.
4. The students are competing; the speaker is aiming to say everything they want to say within the two minutes while the interrupters are trying to ask so many questions that the speaker can't finish.
5. Demonstrate the game with two volunteer students before playing.
6. When everyone is ready set the timer to two minutes.
7. At the end of two minutes, stop the class and see which speakers managed to say everything they'd wanted to say.
8. Now the students in the groups change roles. Set the timer again.
9. The game continues till everyone in the group has had a turn to be the speaker.
10. The winner is the speaker who was able to give the most information about their topic despite the interruptions.
11. Give students feedback. Make a note of recurring errors while monitoring during the game and then address them with some board work without drawing attention to 'who' said 'what'.

Stage 2

12. Now tell the students they're going to do the same activity but this time they're going to talk about their chosen exam Topic. They're going to have 4 minutes each to do this. (NOTE: Although the Topic Phase is 5 minutes, the examiner will ask questions and make comments, and the candidate will be expected to do the same. So the students should not prepare too much material to cover).
13. Remind students that they absolutely should not memorise a script for their chosen Topic. Point out that the frequent interruptions from the other students should help to keep them away from being able to recite and will help to keep the discussion more open and free-flowing.
14. Ask students to give feedback to the speaker about their Topic after each round.
15. Set the timer and repeat the activity, giving each student a turn to be the speaker and to get feedback.

Follow up

Students can write an email to a third person describing one of the speakers' topics.