

Question strategies

Grade: GESE Grades 7-9 (CEFR B2)

Skill focus: To demonstrate understanding and appropriate responses to a wide variety of questions

Time: 45 minutes

Aims:

- ▶ A speaking activity to raise awareness of question types
- ▶ To practise use of and response to a variety of questioning strategies

Resources:

- ▶ Plain paper
- ▶ Question strategies handout (below)

Question strategies for conversation

- ▶ Divide class into groups of three. One student is to be observer and the other two have a conversation – give observers a slip of paper with the following instruction:

*You are going to hear a conversation between two people. Listen carefully and write down any **questions** that you hear.*

- ▶ **NOTE:** Don't let the rest of the group know what the observer is doing.
- ▶ Brainstorm a list of topics that the group would be interested in talking about and list these on the board. These should be topic conducive to language of B2.
- ▶ Divide class into groups of three. One student is to be observer and the other two have a conversation – give observers a slip of paper with the following instruction:

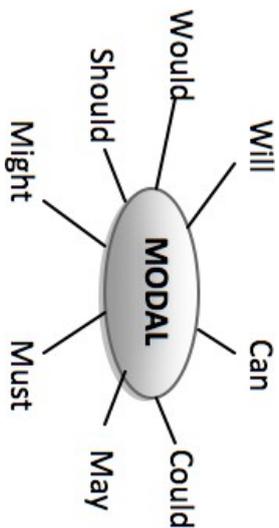
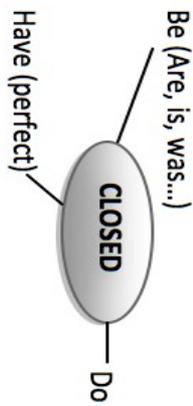
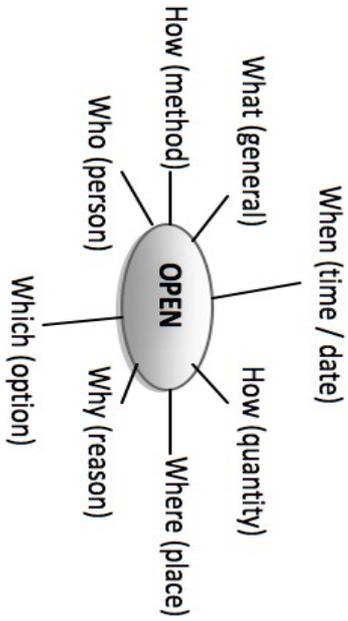
Example topics: *Pollution* *Public figures* *Technology*
Education *Village life* *Customs*
Society *Design* *Work*

- ▶ Ask the groups to choose a topic and then discuss for 3 minutes – the observer listens for questions used.
- ▶ Elicit feedback from the observers and list the question types on the board. These are likely to be predominantly open and closed questions.
- ▶ Elicit the different question types that teachers expect their students to use in a conversation task.
- ▶ Introduce different question types as per the handout below. This can be done using a role-play demonstration with a teacher using the different question types and asking the group to notice what different types of question are used.
- ▶ Students then repeat the discussion activity above. During the discussion the observer uses the check-list, like the example given below, to tick off the question types used as the activity progresses. The objective is for pairs to attempt to use all question types. Note: if language support is required, example questions could be provided on a separate handout.
- ▶ Feedback – ask observers what question types they heard in the second conversation. Check which types were easiest to use and which were the most effective.
- ▶ Explain that the most common question form in conversation is in fact statement questions and that open and closed questions have very similar outcomes.

Question Checklist

Question type	Used?	Question type	Used?
Open		Echo	
Closed		Conditionals	
Modal		Statement	
Question tags		Conjunctive	

Question strategies – Handout



QUESTION TAGS

You haven't been to Portugal before, **have you?** (- +)

You don't like chocolate, **do you?** (+ -)

ECHO

(Repeating key words to encourage conversation)

CONDITIONALS

If it rains will you call a taxi? (real)

If you go out, where will you go?

STATEMENT

You live in Sweden? (rising intonation)

The company is successful?

CONJUNCTIVE

Your company produces vehicles **and**...

You like Portugal **but**....