

Activity 1: Having your say in the Community

Level:

CEFR B2

Time:

60 minutes

Resources:

Handouts

Aims:

- ▶ To raise learners' awareness of how they can have their say in the local community
- ▶ To provide learners with the opportunity to describe their local community
- ▶ To make learners aware of the process of writing and the importance of planning, writing drafts and proofreading work
- ▶ To give learners practice completing a form with open and closed responses
- ▶ To raise learners' confidence in giving views and opinions; explaining and giving reasons; expressing feelings, likes, dislikes, hopes and asking others about feelings; making suggestions and recommendations; describing places

Exam task focus: Task 1

Procedure

1. Write the words 'local community' on the board and brainstorm words and / or phrases learners associate with local community. Brainstorming will be discussed later in the lesson when looking at planning writing. You might want to save your learners' ideas so they can be looked at later in the lesson. Alternatively, you could briefly discuss why we brainstorm and what we achieve from brainstorming.
2. Tell learners they are going to describe and talk about their local community. Display activity 1A. Elicit what learners understand by local amenities (local bus / railway stations, playgrounds, recreational areas, schools, libraries, cinemas and so on). Place learners in pairs or small groups.
3. Conduct whole class feedback. Invite learners to share what they found out about their partner's neighbourhood and comment on how similar / different their neighbourhoods are. Record new / emerging language on the board as this may be useful to learners later in the lesson. Highlight that different people want different things from their local community and this could be influenced by their age, lifestyle, cultural backgrounds, households and so on.
4. Display Activity 1B and deal with any words that might be problematic for learners. Explain that you want learners to rank what they find important. Consider sharing what you find important and in what order. Allow learners time to complete their choices before placing them in small groups. Explain that you want learners to not only share their choices but also to discuss the follow-up questions. Conduct whole class feedback and invite learners to provide a summary of

what they discussed in their groups. Focus on what learners have done or feel they can do to make a difference to their local communities.

5. Activity 1C is an **extension activity** if time permits. The aim is to raise learners' awareness of what they can do in their local communities to raise their concerns and be listened to. In other words, to have their say. Some learners may already belong to tenants' associations or be members of local community groups. Encourage them to share their experiences. Tell learners you want them to do some research and find out about one of the following where they live: neighbourhood watch schemes; local councillors' drop-in surgeries and local community projects / action groups. Learners do their research and then share what they find out. This could either be done as a whole class or in small groups. Explain what the aim of a councillor advice drop-in surgery is (an opportunity for members of the local community to meet their ward councillors and discuss local issues and raise concerns).
6. Set the context and display the flyer, Activity 2A. Ask learners to read the flyer and answer the questions. If necessary, explain how a false answer differs from a not given one. Allow learners to check their answers in pairs before conducting whole class feedback.

Suggested answers: 1.NG 2.T 3.T 4. F or NG

7. Tell learners they are going to express an interest in becoming a volunteer and will be completing some sections of an application form. At this point, focus on Task 1 and what learners are expected to do in this task. Refer to the specifications booklet and draw learners' attention to the purpose of Task 1 (to inform and persuade); the register (formal) and the word length (150 words). Then look at the exam box as a class and discuss the importance of planning and why / how it can help learners in their exams. Point out that learners will be expected to show their planning for at least one of the questions in the L1 Skills for Life Writing exam. Before asking learners to discuss the different planning techniques, briefly discuss what each involves. You could display examples and refer back to the brainstorming activity at the start of the lesson. You might find this activity lends itself to being discussed as a class rather than asking learners to work in pairs.
8. Display Activity 2C and ask learners to discuss how to plan their response. Tell them to focus on what they need to think about (content and language) and which technique they would consider using to show their planning. Conduct brief feedback.
9. Tell learners they are going to plan their answers based on what they discussed. Allow them time to plan their answers before sharing their planning with a partner. Encourage learners to ask each other questions about their planning and to make any suggestions they feel their partner would benefit from. Monitor and offer support as necessary. Conduct whole class feedback.

10. Depending on time constraints, you may feel learners would find it more beneficial to complete Activity 3B at home. Remind learners of the importance of checking their work before submitting it and briefly go to the prompts in Activity 3C.

Useful websites

Neighbourhood Watch

<https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/>

Information on local councillors

<https://www.gov.uk/find-your-local-councillors>

Community groups and associations

<https://www.gov.uk/find-a-community-support-group-or-organisation>

To find out about local councillors' surgeries learners will need to go on their local council's website.

Handout activity 1

Activity 1A Your local community

You're going to find out about your partner's local community. Ask each other questions about:

Location	My local community	Reasons you live where you do
Neighbours		Amenities*

Activity 1B

People want different things from their local neighbourhood. Look at the characteristics below, choose your top 5, and rank them in order of importance to you. 1= most important 5= least important

affordable housing	convenient access to essential services*	clean streets
easy access to medical care	family friendly activities	green areas
great schools	low crime rates	reliable public transport
	well-lit streets	low traffic zones

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____

Discuss your choices with your group.

Is there anything else you feel is important to you in your local community that hasn't been mentioned? Have you ever felt you wanted to make things better in your area? What do you think you can do *to bring about change* where you live?

Handout activity 2

Activity 2A

You attend a drop-in surgery at your local library and see this flyer. Read the flyer and answer the questions.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. LCIP is a charity. | True / False / Not Given |
| 2. The number of people working at LCIP is increasing. | True / False / Not Given |
| 3. LCIP is looking for volunteers to speak for others. | True / False / Not Given |
| 4. LCIP is primarily interested in tackling crime. | True / False / Not Given |

Local Community Improvement Association (LCIP)

We're looking for volunteers to join our growing team at LCIP. We believe we can work together to make our neighbourhood a better place to live.

Do you feel you have what it takes to represent people in your community?

Are you as determined as we are to make our neighbourhood an area where everyone feels heard?

If so, we can't wait to hear from you.

To express an interest, tell us more about yourself by completing our volunteer application form.

We can't wait to hear from you.

Together we know we can make a difference!

Activity 2B

Exam hint

In the Level 1 Skills for Life Writing exam, you will be asked to show your planning. Examiners want to see you know how to plan your writing. There will always be a section in your exam paper to plan your answer to one or two tasks in your exam. You need to produce a detailed plan for at least one task. This can be Task 1, 2 or 3 but not Task 4.

If you don't plan at least one question in detail, you will lose marks.

Why do you need to plan?

Planning helps you organise your ideas and decide what information you want to include in your writing.

How can you plan your answers?

There are different ways you can plan. Look at the following techniques you can use to plan your answers in the exam. Discuss them with your partner.

Have you used any of these techniques before?

- Mind maps
- Brainstorming
- Bullet points
- Flow charts
- Tables

Activity 2C

Look at part of the LCIP Volunteer Application Form.

Talk to your partner about how to plan your response. What do you need to think about? Which, if any, technique will you use from Activity 2B?

Name:

Address:

Date:

Please give a brief description of any previous voluntary or paid work experience you have had:

Please tell us about your personal qualities and /or skills that you think make you a suitable LCIP volunteer:

Explain what you hope to achieve in the local community by volunteering with us:

Handout activity 3

Activity 3A

Planning section

Use this section to plan your answer

Activity 3B

Complete the application form (150 words)

Name:

Address:

Date:

Please give a brief description of any previous voluntary or paid work experience you have had:

Please tell us about your personal qualities and /or skills that you think make you an ideal LCIP volunteer:

Explain what you hope to achieve in the local community by volunteering with us:

Activity 3C

Now check you have completed the form to the best of your ability. Look at the following:

1. Have you written in the right **style**? Look at the grammatical structures and your choice of vocabulary and check that they are formal and not informal.
2. Is your writing **organised**? Read through each response again and make sure what you have written is clear and appropriate. Have you given examples to support what you have written? Is your handwriting clear?
3. Is your writing **accurate**? Read through your answers again and check it for grammar, spelling, and punctuation. When you do this, think about typical mistakes you tend to make and focus on these.