

Conversation Task: The World of Work

At a glance

Level: ISE II

Focus: Conversation task

Objectives: To become familiar with the Conversation task of the ISE II Speaking & Listening exam

Aims: To practise speaking, to become familiar with vocabulary used for work and jobs and to gain fluency in presenting ideas

Topic: The world of work

Language functions: Expressing feelings/emotions/opinions, eliciting further information, expanding ideas and expressing agreement and disagreement.

Grammar: Forming and answering questions

Lexis: Jobs, adjectives used to describe jobs and work

Materials needed: One worksheet per student

Timing: 60 minutes

Procedure

Preparation

Print one student worksheet per student.

In class

1. Tell the class that today they are going to concentrate on the Conversation task in the ISE II Speaking & Listening exam. Ask the students what they know about this task.
2. Tell the class that in today's class they are going to talk about jobs. Write 'jobs' on the board and ask the students to list a few popular and a few unusual jobs.
3. Give out one student worksheet per student and ask the students to complete Task A. Task A asks the students, in pairs, to look at adjectives used to describe jobs and to decide on 2 jobs that they think each adjective describes and explain why.

4. Whilst the students are completing Task A, walk around and monitor to make sure the students are doing the task in English and to listen to what they are saying. Once they have finished the task, write up some of the jobs on the board. Check that everyone understands the meaning of the jobs.
5. Tell the students they are going to do 'Speed Job Interviews'. This is when half the class (Interviewers) will sit at tables around the edge of the room, and the other half of the class (Potential employees) will move around starting at one end and each person who is a potential employee has 3 minutes to talk to each person who is an interviewer. They all write 'yes' or 'no' on their own paper. At the end, everyone gives their paper to the organiser, who arranges for those who both said yes to get their email or phone number.
6. Before they start the 'Speed Job Interviews', ask the students to look at the jobs in Task B and to complete the table. Give the students approximately ten minutes to do this and then feedback in open-class.
7. Then give the students ten minutes in their pairs to brainstorm some popular interview questions. For example:
 - Why do you want this job?
 - What are your qualifications?
 - Are you prepared to work hard?
 - Are you available 24/7?
 - What had you done before your last job?
 - If I contact your last employer what will he/she say about you?
 - If you hadn't applied for this job what other type of job would you have applied for?

Ask the students to be a bit creative. Write up some of the more interesting questions on the board.

8. Set the classroom up, divide the class into two groups: interviewers and candidates and begin the activity. The interviewers should write some notes about the candidates that they interview (See Task C). Each interview should last three minutes. Those being interviewed should choose a different job for each interview that they carry out. Once the interview has finished, the teacher should shout 'stop' and ask the candidate to move to the next interviewer. You could ask the students to repeat this phase a total of six times.
9. Whilst the interviews are taking place, monitor the students and make a note of the common errors.

10. Address the common errors once the students have completed this part of the lesson by writing them on the board and asking the students to correct them.
11. Now put the students in groups of three and give them the conversation topics (see Task D). Ask each group to choose one topic and discuss it. Whilst they are discussing the topic, choose one student to interrupt from time to time to interrupt the flow of the conversation. This is to encourage the students to get used to someone interrupting and to encourage the students to keep the conversation going (this is something that could happen in the speaking test). Whilst they are completing this activity, walk around and monitor. Go through any common errors.

Extension activity

The stronger candidates can write an 80-100 word response to a number of the conversation topics.

Further support activity

If the weaker ones are really struggling with the conversation topics, re-group them in weaker only groups and they can brainstorm ideas of what they could say about the topics without having the conversation.

After class

Ask the students to choose one of the topics for discussion and to prepare a four minute presentation which they will give to the class in the next lesson. The presentation must show both sides of the argument and come to a conclusion.

Student Worksheet

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Task A

In pairs think of 2 jobs that you associate with each of the following adjectives. Talk about the jobs and say why you think the adjective describes the job.

dangerous

exciting

well paid

dirty

boring

challenging

only for men

stressful

interesting

Task B - Jobs for Speed Interviewing

Look at the jobs and complete the table.

Job	Skills needed	Experience needed
Actor / actress		
Footballer		
Toilet attendant		
President of the USA		
Astronaut		
Doctor		
Formula one driver		
Stuntman/woman		
Politician		
Midwife		

Task C - Note cards for interviewers

[illegible]

Task D - Topics for discussion

- Does school really prepare people for the world of work? Do you think it's preparing you?
- Would you do a job you didn't like for a lot of money? If you did that what problems do you think you'd have?
- Do you think some sportsmen e.g. footballers earn too much money? If they earn so much money should they be role models for the rest of society?
- Some people say that everyone must get the same salary no matter what the job is, do you agree? If not why not?
- If there were a law that said all students over 18 must do a holiday job, would you be happy about it? What are the advantages of working in the school holidays?
- Do you think companies have to pay for their employees to do sport to keep them fit?
- In companies it's a good idea for them to provide baby and childcare facilities to help their female staff?
- What sort of job do you want to do and why?
- Do you think it's accepted in society now for a man to be a house husband? Would you be prepared to do it? (For the boys only)