

# BEGLA-138 READING & SPEAKING SKILLS



**Conversations**



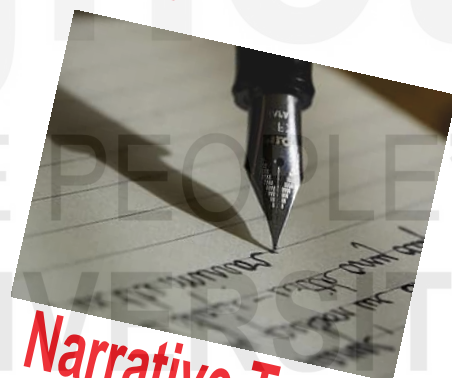
**Speaking**



**Comprehension**



**Pronunciation**



**Narrative Text**



**Expository Text**



**Reading**



**Writing**

**Block****4****PRACTICING SPEAKING SKILLS**

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## **BLOCK INTRODUCTION**

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All of you will agree with the fact that more than the study of language, it is the practical use of language that surrounds us every day in myriad situations. The purpose of this Block is to emphasize the aspect of language use, rigorously and repeatedly applying the ideas that you have acquired in the preceding Blocks of this Course. The keyword here is PRACTICE.

We must emphasise here that simply taking up the Course on Reading & Speaking Skills will not be adequate unless there is extracurricular dedication. The onus is on you all to tirelessly practice the skills of reading and speaking.

Why are we saying this?

As most of you learn English as a second language, the interference of the first language (regional language) creates a gap between your thought and its expression in English. The intermediary language always creates a latency in articulation or an Indianised version of what the expression would be for a native English speaker. Hence, it is extremely important for you all to read more of English content (depending on your interest, it can be a story or a novel or an article or an investigative report, etc.) and to speak more in English.

There is no substitute or shortcut for this. Improvement of your reading and speaking skills is directly proportional to the time and the effort that you invest in honing them through actual use.

We hope you find the Block useful.

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### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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# UNIT 1 PRONOUNCING CORRECTLY-1: SOUNDS OF ENGLISH

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## 1.0 OBJECTIVES

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After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

- identify the different sounds of English;
- understand the role of syllables and phonemes in pronunciation;
- hear the difference between the incorrect and the correct sound; and
- comprehend how to pronounce correctly.

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

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We will start with an activity in which you will work through an English pronunciation guide, at your level.

### Activity 1: English letters and sounds

The names of English letters can be very different from the sounds they make in words. Say the name of this English letter 'b'. It will sound something like 'bee'. What are some English words that start with this letter? You might think of 'bag', 'bus', or 'bell'. Say these words aloud. When you say these words aloud, you will hear the sound of the letter is something like 'bh'. Try to produce just the sound of 'b', and hear the sound in words such as 'bag' and 'boy'. Identify the difference between the name of the letter and the sound of the letter. Try this again and say the name of the English letter 'r'. What are some words that start with 'r'? Say these words aloud. What is the sound that 'r' makes in these words? Hear how the letter name 'r' sounds something like 'are', but the sound is something like 'rrr'. With the vowels of English ('a', 'e', 'i', 'o', 'u'), the sounds change depending on the word they are in.

Your turn: Practice each alphabet how it is named and how they sound in words starting with those alphabets.

English, like any language, has its own set of sounds, from which all words are made. (This set of sounds comprises its *phonology*.) If you want to speak English well, you have to teach yourself to recognize and pronounce the set of English sounds. There are two obvious reasons for this:

- If you can't pronounce the sounds of English, **people won't understand you very well**. Occasionally, this may lead to misunderstandings – for example, if your COME sounds too much like CALM, you may try to say "Can you come down?", but the other person will hear "Can you calm down?" More often, your listeners will have a hard time understanding you because you will produce sounds that do not sound like English sounds at all, but rather like sounds of your native language. They will ask you to repeat what you said, or they will understand only 50% of what you said.
- If you can't recognize the sounds of English, **you won't understand people very well**. You won't be able to correctly identify the words that you hear.

But there is also a third, less obvious reason: If you cannot recognize all the sounds of English, **you are not using spoken input fully**. One of the reasons to listen to English input, such as podcasts, TV, or movies, is to learn the correct pronunciations of words. But if your brain is not trained to recognize all the English sounds, **you won't hear what you need to hear**. For example, if you don't have separate "boxes" in your head when you hear TREE and THREE, you will hear the same thing, so you will remember them as homophones. If you cannot notice the differences between English sounds, you're actually learning the wrong pronunciations for many English words. At some point, you will have to re-learn them, which is a problem, because re-learning something is always more difficult than learning it right in the first place.

So, this unit will help you to recognize all the sounds of English that will help you speak correctly and effectively. We will begin with different alphabets and the sounds associated with them in the next section.

**Watch this video on Assessing progress and performance**

<http://tinyurl.com/video-assessingprogress>

### 1.1.1 English Alphabets

You all know the English language has 26 alphabets, each having an upper case and lower-case form. These are made up of **consonants** and **vowels**. There are five vowels (a, e, i, o and u) and 21 consonants (b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, x, y, and z). Although English has 26 Alphabets, it has 40 sounds. Thus, one letter is not equivalent to one sound each. The way in which a word is spoken is called pronunciation and the pronunciation centers upon syllables and not alphabets. You may be wondering now what a syllable is! Let's understand it in detail in the next section.

### 1.1.2 Syllables

A syllable is a sound of a vowel (A, E, I, O, U) that is created when pronouncing the letters, A, E, I, O, U, or Y. Please note that the letter "Y" is a vowel only if it creates an A, E, I, O, or U sound. For example, in *fry*, *try*, *cry*, and *dry*.

The number of times that you hear the sound of a vowel is the number of syllables in a word. Thus, a syllable is a unit of pronunciation which has one vowel sound, with or without surrounding consonants, forming the whole or a part of a word. For example, there are two syllables in water (wa/ter) and three in inferno (in/fer/no). Let us practice with the below-given examples speaking loudly:

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <u>Cake</u><br>• 1 syllable: cake<br>• pronounced: kay-k        | <u>Cheese</u><br>• 1 syllable: cheese<br>• pronounced: chees    | <u>Chicken</u><br>• 2 syllables: chick-en<br>• pronounced: chik-in        |
| <u>Checked</u><br>• 1 syllable: checked<br>• pronounced: chek-d | <u>Batted</u><br>• 2 syllables: bat-ted<br>• pronounced: bat-ed | <u>Worrying</u><br>• 3 syllables: wor-ry-ing<br>• pronounced: wah-ree-ing |

### 1.1.3 Phonemes

Next important thing is to know about phonemes. The sounds of spoken language are known as phonemes. Thus, /water/ has two syllables but it has four phonemes: w/a/t/er; similarly, /inferno/ has three syllables but it has seven phonemes: i/n/f/e/r/n/o. Do not be fooled into thinking that each letter has a corresponding phoneme, as in these two examples. A word like /tough/ has one syllable: t/ough and has three phonemes: t/ou/gh.

In English, the written equivalents of sounds or phonemes are known as graphemes, and the English alphabet made up of the 26 letters is called the orthographic alphabet. In a language such as English, not all words have

a phoneme/grapheme match. For example, the words *bough*, *through*, and *trough* all end in *-ough* but each is pronounced differently. English is thus classified as a semi-phonetic language: that is, sometimes graphemes correspond to phonemes, and sometimes they do not. In order to study the sounds of English, linguists devised an alphabet which contains symbols to capture all possible sounds in English, called the International Phonetic Alphabet which we will discuss in the next section.

### 1.1.4 The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)

The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is an alphabet of phonetic notation designed by the International Phonetic Association (1999) to capture all the different ways words in English can be pronounced, based on the Latin alphabet. It was designed as a standardized system for representing sounds of oral languages.

The IPA is particularly useful when it comes to describing individual sounds of spoken English. This is because in English there can be more ways of pronouncing the same graphemes. For example, in English, there are two main ways of producing the <a> sound: **bath** or **grass** with a long or short sound.

The standard form of spoken English or the reference accent for English is known as **Received Pronunciation (RP)**, and it is this accent of English upon which IPA is based. RP is also known as BBC English, the Queen's English, or 'Correct English' and is the spoken form to which many learners of English as an additional language aspire.

However, the idea of RP is wide-ranging and encompassing, and the IPA tries to capture how people actually speak. The English language, as a living language, is also subject to change, including the ways in which words are pronounced.

**Watch this video on 44 sounds of English:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KlMDwolcfzU>

The tables below illustrate the equivalence of each grapheme (or letter) in the orthographic alphabet to a phoneme in IPA. Table 1 gives consonant grapheme-phoneme correspondence, and Table 2, vowel grapheme-phoneme correspondence.

**Table 1: Consonants**

| Consonant grapheme | IPA phoneme | Representative words         | Consonant grapheme | IPA phoneme | Representative words  |
|--------------------|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|---|
| b                  | /b/         | <b>b</b> aby                 | r                  | /r/         | r <b>ab</b> bit, w <b>ro</b> ng                                   |
| d                  | /d/         | <b>d</b> og                  | s                  | /s/         | <b>s</b> un,<br>m <b>ou</b> se, c <b>it</b> y,<br><b>sc</b> ience |
| f                  | /f/         | <b>f</b> ield, <b>ph</b> oto | t                  | /t/         | <b>t</b> ap   |

|    |      |                            |    |      |                        |
|----|------|----------------------------|----|------|------------------------|
| g  | /g/  | game                       | v  | /v/  | van                    |
| h  | /h/  | hat                        | w  | /w/  | was                    |
| j  | /dʒ/ | judge, giant,<br>barge     | y  | /j/  | yes                    |
| k  | /k/  | cook, quick,<br>mix, Chris | z  | /z/  | zebra, please,<br>is   |
| l  | /l/  | lamb                       | th | /ð/  | then                   |
| m  | /m/  | monkey,<br>comb            | th | /θ/  | thin                   |
| n  | /n/  | nut, knife,<br>gnat        | ch | /tʃ/ | chip, watch            |
| ng | /ŋ/  | ring, sink                 | sh | /ʃ/  | ship,<br>mission, chef |
| p  | /p/  | paper                      | zh | /ʒ/  | treasure               |

Table 2: Vowels

| Vowel grapheme | IPA phoneme | Representative words | Vowel grapheme | IPA phoneme | Representative words |
|----------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------|-------------|----------------------|
| a              | /æ/         | cat, bat             | oo             | /ʊ/         | look, took           |
| e              | /e/         | peg, bed             | a              | /ɑ:/        | cart, jar            |
| i              | /ɪ/         | pig, give            | u              | /ɜ:/        | burn, churn          |
| o              | /ɒ/         | log, dog             | au             | /ɔ:/        | haul, maul           |
| u              | /ʌ/         | plug, tug            | e              | /ə/         | wooden, sister       |
| ai             | /eɪ/        | pain, gain           | ou             | /aʊ/        | shout, clout         |
| ee             | /i:/        | sweet, bee           | oi             | /ɔɪ/        | coin, loin           |
| ie             | /aɪ/        | tried, fried         | ai             | /eə/        | stairs, pair         |
| oa             | /oʊ/        | road, toad           | ea             | /ɪə/        | fear, hear           |
| ue             | /u:/        | sue, blue            | u-e            | /ʊə/        | pure, cure           |

**Note:** Spelling, or orthography, does not consistently represent the sounds of language. You might find some problems with ordinary spelling:

- The same sound may be represented by many letters or combination of letters:  
For example, 'e' in he, people, key, believe, seize, machine, Caesar, seas, see and amoeba
- The same letter may represent a variety of sounds:  
For example, 'a' in father, village, badly, made and many
- A combination of letters may represent a single sound:  
For example, shoot, character, Thomas, either, physics, rough, coat and deal
- A single letter may represent a combination of sounds:  
For example, in Xerox
- Some letters in a word may not be pronounced at all:  
For example, in autumn, sword, resign, pterodactyl, lamb, psychology, write and knot
- There may be no letter to represent a sound that occurs in a word:  
For example, in cute and use

## 1.2 THE 44 SOUNDS OF ENGLISH

When you want to learn the sounds of the English language, remember to choose words that demonstrate all 44 word-sounds or phonemes.

English contains 19 vowel sounds—5 short vowels, 6 long vowels, 3 diphthongs, 2 'oo' sounds, and 3 R-controlled vowel sounds—and 25 consonant sounds.



The following lists provide sample words to use when learning the sounds of the English language. You may choose to find more words to fill out word families or align with sight vocabulary lists.

### 1.2.1 The 5 Short Vowel Sounds

The five short vowel sounds in English are *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u*.

- **short a:** *and*, *as*, and *after*
- **short e:** *pen*, *hen*, and *lend*
- **short i:** *it* and *in*
- **short o:** *top* and *hop*
- **short u:** *under* and *cup*

Remember that these sounds are not necessarily indicative of spelling. Note that the above words all contain the vowel whose sound they make but this is not always the case. A word might sound as if it contains a certain vowel that is not there. Examples of words whose short vowel sounds do not correspond with their spelling are *busy* and *do*.



## 1.2.2 The 6 Long Vowel Sounds

The six long vowel sounds in English are *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u*, and *oo*.

- **long a:** *make* and *take*
- **long e:** *beet* and *feet*
- **long i:** *tie* and *lie*
- **long o:** *coat* and *toe*
- **long u (pronounced "yoo"):** *music* and *cute*
- **long oo:** *goo* and *droop*

Examples of words whose long vowel sounds do not correspond with their spelling are *they*, *try*, *fruit*, and *few*.

## 1.2.3 The R-Controlled Vowel Sounds

An R-controlled vowel is a vowel whose sound is influenced by the *r* that comes before it. The three R-controlled vowel sounds are *ar*, *er*, and *or*.

- **ar:** *bark* and *dark*
- **er:** *her*, *bird*, and *fur*
- **or:** *fork*, *pork*, and *stork*

It is important that students pay close attention to the 'er' sound in words because it can be created by an R-controlled *e*, *i*, or *u*. These vowels are all transformed into the same sound when an *r* is attached next to them. More examples of this include *better*, *first*, and *turn*.

## 1.2.4 The 18 Consonant Sounds

The letters *c*, *q*, and *x* are not denoted by unique phonemes because they are found in other sounds. The *c* sound is covered by *k* sounds in words like *crust*, *crunch*, and *create* and by *s* sounds in words like *cereal*, *city*, and *cent* (the *c* is found in the spelling of these words only but does not have its own phoneme). The *q* sound is found in *kw* words like *backward* and *Kwanza*. The *x* sound is found in *ks* words like *kicks*.

|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>b:</b> <i>bed</i> and <i>bad</i></li> <li>• <b>k:</b> <i>cat</i> and <i>kick</i></li> <li>• <b>d:</b> <i>dog</i> and <i>dip</i></li> <li>• <b>f:</b> <i>fat</i> and <i>fig</i></li> <li>• <b>g:</b> <i>got</i> and <i>girl</i></li> <li>• <b>h:</b> <i>has</i> and <i>him</i></li> <li>• <b>j:</b> <i>job</i> and <i>joke</i></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>l:</b> <i>lid</i> and <i>love</i></li> <li>• <b>m:</b> <i>mop</i> and <i>math</i></li> <li>• <b>n:</b> <i>not</i> and <i>nice</i></li> <li>• <b>p:</b> <i>pan</i> and <i>play</i></li> <li>• <b>r:</b> <i>ran</i> and <i>rake</i></li> <li>• <b>s:</b> <i>sit</i> and <i>smile</i></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>t:</b> <i>to</i> and <i>take</i></li> <li>• <b>v:</b> <i>van</i> and <i>vine</i></li> <li>• <b>w:</b> <i>water</i> and <i>went</i></li> <li>• <b>y:</b> <i>yellow</i> and <i>yawn</i></li> <li>• <b>z:</b> <i>zipper</i> and <i>zap</i></li> </ul> |
|--|---|--|

## 1.2.5 The Blends

Blends are formed when two or three letters combine to create a distinct consonant-sound, often at the beginning of a word. In a blend, the sounds from each original letter are still heard; they are just blended quickly and smoothly together. The following are common examples of blends.

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>bl:</b> <i>blue</i> and <i>blow</i></li> <li>• <b>cl:</b> <i>clap</i> and <i>close</i></li> <li>• <b>fl:</b> <i>fly</i> and <i>flip</i></li> <li>• <b>gl:</b> <i>glue</i> and <i>glove</i></li> <li>• <b>pl:</b> <i>play</i> and <i>please</i></li> <li>• <b>br:</b> <i>brown</i> and <i>break</i></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>cr:</b> <i>cry</i> and <i>crust</i></li> <li>• <b>dr:</b> <i>dry</i> and <i>drag</i></li> <li>• <b>fr:</b> <i>fry</i> and <i>freeze</i></li> <li>• <b>gr:</b> <i>great</i> and <i>ground</i></li> <li>• <b>pr:</b> <i>prize</i> and <i>prank</i></li> <li>• <b>tr:</b> <i>tree</i> and <i>try</i></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>sk:</b> <i>skate</i> and <i>sky</i></li> <li>• <b>sl:</b> <i>slip</i> and <i>slap</i></li> <li>• <b>sp:</b> <i>spot</i> and <i>speed</i></li> <li>• <b>st:</b> <i>street</i> and <i>stop</i></li> <li>• <b>sw:</b> <i>sweet</i> and <i>sweater</i></li> <li>• <b>spr:</b> <i>spray</i> and <i>spring</i></li> <li>• <b>str:</b> <i>stripe</i> and <i>strap</i></li> </ul> |
|---|--|---|

### 1.2.6 The 7 Digraph Sounds

A digraph is formed when two consonants come together to create an entirely new sound that is distinctly different from the sounds of the letters independently. These can be found anywhere in a word but most often the beginning or end. Some examples of common digraphs are listed below:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ch:</b> <i>chin</i> and <i>ouch</i></li> <li>• <b>sh:</b> <i>ship</i> and <i>push</i></li> <li>• <b>th:</b> <i>thing</i></li> <li>• <b>th:</b> <i>this</i></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>wh:</b> <i>when</i></li> <li>• <b>ng:</b> <i>ring</i></li> <li>• <b>nk:</b> <i>rink</i></li> </ul> |
|---|--|

Please note that there are two sounds that *th* can make and be sure to provide plenty of examples.

### 1.2.7 Diphthongs and Other Special Sounds

A diphthong is essentially a digraph with vowels—it is formed when two vowels come together to create a new sound in a single syllable as the sound of the first vowel glides into the second. These are usually found in the middle of a word. See the list below for an example.

- **oi:** *oil* and *toy*
- **ow:** *owl* and *ouch*
- **ey:** *rain*

Other special sounds include:

- **short oo:** *took* and *pull*
- **aw:** *raw* and *haul*
- **zh:** *vision*

**Practice the 44 sounds of English using the below-given URLs:**

[http://cambridgeenglishonline.com/interactive\\_phonemic\\_chart/](http://cambridgeenglishonline.com/interactive_phonemic_chart/)

<https://audio-class.ru/english-phonetics.php>

<https://www.talkenglish.com/lessondetails.aspx?ALID=17>

**You may also identify the final sound of the base verb:**

For example,

'play' ends in /ei/

'start' ends in /t/

etc.

We use "/.../" to show it is a sound.

Warning, we are speaking of **the final sound** - not the final letter. **The sounds are interesting here, not the letters.**

Example:

the verb 'fix' ends in the SOUND /s/ because we pronounce it: /fiks/

(the letter "x" is not interesting here")

Follow the rules:

Rule 1: **/d/ (general rule)**, we pronounce the verb as if there were a "d" at the end.

lived, arrived, enjoyed, played...

Rule 2: **/t/ after the sounds**: /p/, /k/, /f/, /s/, /tʃ/, /ʃ/.

worked (son /k/), watched (/tʃ/), stopped (/p/), washed (/ʃ/)

Rule 3: **/id/ after the sounds /d/ and /t/**:

decided, started, wanted, needed




#### How to pronounce the final -s (-es)

Speak loudly and Listen to the way that the 's' at the end of these words is pronounced

|                                |                                     |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| starts,<br>picks<br><b>/s/</b> | remembers,<br>gardens<br><b>/z/</b> | watches, buses<br><b>/ɪz/</b> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|

If a word ends with the letter 's' there are three different ways to pronounce this 's'

|            |            |             |
|------------|------------|-------------|
| <b>/S/</b> | <b>/Z/</b> | <b>/ɪZ/</b> |
|------------|------------|-------------|

|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
|  |  |  |
| The sound of a snake which hisses   | The sound of a bee which buzzes  | Similar to the word 'is'  |

1. /s/

| After a 'voiceless sound' |                     |                 |                 |                 |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| /f/                       | /k/                 | /p/             | /θ/ (th doux)   | /t/             |
| she laughs                | he asks             | two cups        | two moths       | two cats        |
| /la:f/ => /la:fs/         | /'a:sk/ => /'a:sks/ | /kʌp/ => /kʌps/ | /mʊθ/ => /mʊθs/ | /kæt/ => /kæts/ |

2. /z/

| After a 'voiced sound' |                   |                  |                   |                     |
|------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| /b/                    | /d/               | /g/              | /l/               |                     |
| pubs                   | beds              | bags             | owls              |                     |
| /pʌb/ => /pʌbz/        | /bed/ => /bedz/   | /bæg/ => /'bægz/ | /ɔ:l/ => /ɔ:lz/   |                     |
| <i>pubs</i>            | <i>lits</i>       | <i>sacs</i>      | <i>hiboux</i>     |                     |
| /m/                    | /n/               | /ŋ/ (ŋ)          | /v/               | /ð/ (th dur)        |
| drums                  | burns             | songs            | gloves            | breathes            |
| /drʌm/ => /drʌmz/      | /bɜ:n/ => /bɜ:nz/ | /sɒŋ/ => /sɒŋz/  | /glʌv/ => /glʌvz/ | /bri:ð/ => /bri:ðz/ |
| 'voiced sounds'        |                   |                  |                   |                     |
| car => cars            | shoe => shoes     | bow => bows      | she's a girl      |                     |
| /kɑ:/ => /kɑ:z/        | /ʃu:/ => /ʃu:z/   | /bəʊ/ => /bəʊz/  | /ʃi:/ => /ʃi:z/   |                     |

3. /iz/

| After these sounds:  |                  |                  |                  |                    |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| /dj/ (dʒ)            | /s/              | /z/              | /ʃ/ (ʃ)          | /tʃ/ (tʃ)          |
| wage => wages        | bus => buses     | buzz => buzzes   | bush => bushes   | watch => watches   |
| /weɪdʒ/ => /weɪdʒiz/ | /bʌs/ => /bʌsɪz/ | /bʌz/ => /bʌzɪz/ | /bʊʃ/ => /bʊʃɪz/ | /wɒtʃ/ => /wɒtʃɪz/ |

## Check Your Progress 1

A. Let us practice through a quiz in which you have to divide the given words into syllables:

1. Select the correct way to divide this word into syllables: GAIN
  - ☐ A: g-ain
  - ☐ B: ga-in
  - ☐ C: gain-n
  - ☐ D: gain
2. Select the correct way to divide this word into syllable: SOLAR
  - ☐ A: s-olar
  - ☐ B: so-lar
  - ☐ C: sol-ar
  - ☐ D: solar
3. Select the correct way to divide this word into syllables: BUTTER
  - ☐ A: butter
  - ☐ B: bu-tter
  - ☐ C: butt-er
  - ☐ D: but-ter
4. Select the correct way to divide this word into syllables: COOPERATE
  - ☐ A: coo-per-ate
  - ☐ B: coop-er-ate
  - ☐ C: cooper-ate
  - ☐ D: co-op-er-ate
5. Select the correct way to divide this word into syllables: CORNER
  - ☐ A: corn-er
  - ☐ B: co-rn-er
  - ☐ C: cor-ner
  - ☐ D: corner
6. Select the correct way to divide this word into syllables: DEHYDRATE
  - ☐ A: dehy-drat-e
  - ☐ B: de-hyd-rate
  - ☐ C: deh-y-dra-te
  - ☐ D: de-hy-drade

7. Select the correct way to divide this word into syllables: COLORING
- A: col-or-ing
  - B: co-lor-ing
  - C: color-ing
  - D: coloring
8. Select the correct way to divide this word into syllables: ARTIST
- A: ar-tist
  - B: artist
  - C: art-ist
  - D: arti-st
9. Select the correct way to divide this word into syllables: MONSTER
- A: mons-ter
  - B: monster
  - C: monst-er
  - D: mon-ster
10. Select the correct way to divide this word into syllables: MUFFIN
- A: muff-in
  - B: muf-fin
  - C: mu-ffin
  - D: muffin

B. Find the word which doesn't contain the same sound:

- |           |         |         |          |         |
|-----------|---------|---------|----------|---------|
| 1. Life   | Mine    | Live    | Ride     | Pie     |
| 2. Read   | Big     | Street  | Jeans    | Meet    |
| 3. Phone  | Bowl    | House   | Boat     | Home    |
| 4. Hair   | Wear    | Here    | Air      | Pear    |
| 5. Wanted | Watched | Decided | Repeated | Visited |
| 6. Box    | Yellow  | Phone   | Post     | Home    |

### Check Your Progress 2

A. Choose the right spelling.

1. I'm going t \_\_\_\_\_
- [ ]oo
- [ ]wo
- [ ]o

2. the park with my t \_\_\_\_\_.  
[ ]wo  
[ ]oo  
[ ]o
3. nieces. Ask Bob if he would like to come t \_\_\_\_\_.  
[ ]o  
[ ]wo  
[ ]oo
4. I make bl \_\_\_\_\_ berry jam every summer. It's delicious. I gather the berries myself, in the mountains.  
[ ]ew  
[ ]u  
[ ]ue
5. In North America, reindeer are called carib \_\_\_\_\_. They are wild animals.  
[ ]ou  
[ ]u  
[ ]oo
6. Cl \_\_\_\_\_ less is a comedy film based on Jane Austen's novel 'Emma'. It's also a TV show.  
[ ]ue  
[ ]ou  
[ ]u
7. Suzan feels very tired and weak. She has got the fl \_\_\_\_\_.  
[ ]ew  
[ ]ue  
[ ]u
8. The British crown j \_\_\_\_\_ els are kept in the Tower of London. They are looked after by the Beefeaters.  
[ ]u  
[ ]ou  
[ ]ew



B. Choose the word that contains the sound /u:/

|       |       |      |
|-------|-------|------|
| moon  | hoof  | loot |
| flood | hook  | look |
| wood  | hood  | loom |
| crook | food  | root |
| cook  | mood  | foot |
| cool  | blood | hoot |

### Check Your Progress 3

A. Practice to pronounce the final -ED in these verbs. What will be the phonemic realisation of -ED in these verbs?

- listen -> listened
- clean -> cleaned
- look -> looked
- work -> worked
- want -> wanted
- close -> closed
- accept -> accepted
- smoke -> smoked
- stay -> stayed
- visit -> visited

B. What will be the pronunciation of -ed in past simple in the following sentences:

- A prisoner has escaped (\_\_\_\_\_) from the jail.
- He is famous because he killed (\_\_\_\_\_) a lot of people.
- They laughed (\_\_\_\_\_) at her because she got a bad mark.
- We watched (\_\_\_\_\_) TV after doing our homework.
- We've waited (\_\_\_\_\_) for you for 2 hours!
- The customs officer stopped (\_\_\_\_\_) the car.
- He arrived (\_\_\_\_\_) from Paris at 5 p.m.
- France was invaded (\_\_\_\_\_) by German soldiers many years ago.
- He asked (\_\_\_\_\_) me to be polite.
- He convinced (\_\_\_\_\_) me to come with him.

## Activity

Read the poem loudly keeping in mind the sounds of English learned in this unit:

**I take it** you already know  
Of **tough** and **bough** and **cough** and **dough**  
Others may **stumble**, but not you  
On **hiccough**, **thorough**, **laugh**, and **through**.

And **cork** and **work** and **card** and **ward**  
And **font** and **front** and **word** and **sword**  
Well done! And now if you wish, perhaps  
To learn of less familiar traps.

Beware of **heard**, a dreadful **word**  
That looks like **beard** and sounds like **bird**.  
And **dead**: it's said like **bed**, not **bead**—  
For goodness sake don't call it **deed**.  
Watch out for **meat** and **great** and **threat**,  
They rhyme with **suite** and **straight** and **debt**.  
A **moth** is not a moth in **mother**,  
Nor **both** in **bother**, **broth** in **brother**.

And here is not a match for **there**,  
And **dear** and **fear** for **bear** and **pear**.  
And then there's **dose** and **rose** and **lose**—  
Just look them up—and **goose** and **choose**,

And **do** and **go**, then **thwart** and **cart**.  
Come, come, I've hardly made a start!  
A dreadful language? Man **alive**!  
I'd mastered it when I was **five**.

## Vocabulary

- I take it: I assume
- Tough: strong, difficult to break
- Bough: the main branch of a tree (uncommon)
- Cough: to shoot air out from your lungs with a harsh sound, generally when sick.
- Dough: the mixture of ingredients used to make bread, before being cooked
- Stumble: make mistakes while speaking
- Hiccough: an involuntary spasm that makes a funny noise and is almost impossible to stop
- Thorough: when something is done carefully and completely
- Cork: the brown stopper in the top of a wine bottle
- Ward: a room for patients in a hospital

- Font: a type/style of a text. Examples: Times New Roman, Arial, Georgia, etc.
- Dreadful: extremely bad
- Bead: a small piece of glass, stone, or other material, usually round and used in jewelry or clothing.
- For goodness sake: to be surprised or annoyed by something
- Deed: a brave or noble act
- Threat: promising to inflict pain, injury, or death to someone
- Suite: a fancy room in a hotel
- Debt: when you owe money to someone
- Moth: a colorless butterfly
- Bother: to annoy someone
- Broth: the liquid part of a soup
- Dose: a quantity of medicine or drug
- Rose: a beautiful flower (see photo)
- Goose: a large white bird, similar to a duck (see photo)
- Thwart: to prevent someone from accomplishing something
- Cart: a vehicle used for carrying stuff.
- Man alive: used to express shock (not very common)

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### 1.3 LET US SUM UP

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In this Unit, you have learned to:

- identify the different sounds of English.
- understand the role of syllables and phonemes in pronunciation.
- *perceive* the difference between the incorrect and the correct sound.
- to *produce* the correct sound.
- *recognize* (when reading, for example) when and how to make the correct sound.

There is no end to our study of grammar and vocabulary but phonemic symbols are limited, visual, and physical. They may seem challenging at first but it is like learning to swim or ride a bicycle. Once you can do it, it is easy and you never forget.

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### 1.4 SUGGESTED READINGS

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If you would like to learn more about sounds of English, you may consult:

Joseph D. O'Connor, *Better English Pronunciation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980)

Joseph D. O'Connor & Clare Fletcher, *Sounds English: A Pronunciation Practice Book* (Essex: Longman, 1989)

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## 1.5 ANSWERS

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### Check Your Progress 1

**A.** 1. D, 2. B, 3. D, 4. D, 5. C, 6. D, 7. A, 8. C, 9. D, 10. B

**B.** 1. Live, 2. Big, 3. House, 4. Here, 5. Watched, 6. Box

### Check Your Progress 2

**A.** 1. o, 2. wo, 3. oo, 4. ue, 5. ou, 6. ue, 7. u, 8. ew

**B.** Moon, cool, hoof, blood, look & foot

### Check Your Progress 3

**A.** 1. /d/, 2. /d/, 3. /t/, 4. /t/, 5. /id/, 6. /d/, 7. /id/, 8. /t/, 9. /d/, 10. /id/

**B.** 1. /t/, 2. /d/, 3. /t/, 4. /t/, 5. /id/, 6. /t/, 7. /d/, 8. /id/, 9. /t/, 10. /t/

### Activity

The tutors need to listen to the students' pronunciation of 44 sounds of English and correct them wherever required.

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## UNIT 2 PRONOUNCING CORRECTLY-2: STRESS AND RHYTHM IN CONNECTED SPEECH AND VOICE TRAINING

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### Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Rhythm
- 2.3 Stress
  - 2.3.1 Syllable stress
  - 2.3.2 Word stress
- 2.4 Influence of Stress on Rhythm in English
- 2.5 Intonation
  - 2.5.1 Falling Intonation (↘)
  - 2.5.2 Rising Intonation (↗)
  - 2.5.3 Rise-Fall Intonation (↗↘)
  - 2.5.4 Fall-Rise Intonation (↘↗)
- 2.6 Improve your English rhythm with 3 Pronunciation Activities
  - 2.6.1 Echo Activity
  - 2.6.2 Movement Activity
  - 2.6.3 Bouncing Ball Activity
- 2.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.8 Suggested Readings
- 2.9 Answers

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### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

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After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

- read (or produce) sentences with the stress on the right words;
- recognize the role of weak forms in contributing to the rhythm of English;
- identify the stressed syllable in words of more than one syllable;
- produce words with the primary stress on the right syllable;
- apply the rules for word stress to other words with similar endings; and
- produce utterances with correct stress and rhythm.

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In Unit 1 we learnt to recognize and produce the sounds of consonants and vowels of English, in different combinations in words. The unit familiarized us with the syllable in English – its structure and types. In this unit we look at the next higher unit – the word, which can be comprised of one or two or even up to seven syllables. Of the syllables in a word we will pay special attention to the one that receives primary stress. It is as much an essential part of the identity of English words as are the sounds that may form words. Thus, in this unit we would not only study the character and form of words as said in isolation, but also the relationship between stress and rhythm in utterances. Learning stress and rhythm in utterances is important as many English learners focus on improving their vocabulary and grammar without thinking much about **rhythm**—even though this is just as important for you to quickly improve your English pronunciation!

In English, some words are pronounced louder, higher and longer, while other words are very short and quiet. You have probably noticed this when watching an English movie with subtitles. Even though you might *see* a certain word (like “for” or “the”) in the subtitles, when you listen, it seems like the actor never said it. That is because some words are quiet and quick, making them hard to hear.

That is because English is a **stress-timed (or stress-based) language**. This basically means that when someone produces a sentence in English, they will emphasize certain words (or parts of words) according to how important they are in the sentence. Perhaps the best way to understand this concept is with an example. Look at these two sentences:

Sentence 1: I looked in the car but I didn’t see my keys.

Sentence 2: I don’t like tea unless it has milk.

The sentences are of different lengths: the first one is longer and has more words than the second one. However, because English is a stress-timed language, both of these sentences will take about the same amount of time for a native speaker to say.

This is because both sentences have the same number of important or “content” words. **These content words give meaning or critical information in the sentence.** Content words include verbs, nouns, negatives (not, don’t), question words (who, why, etc.) and more, depending on the sentence and what is important.

Using the same examples, now notice the content words (in bold):

Sentence 1: I **looked** in the **car** but I **didn’t** see my **keys**.

Sentence 2: I **don’t** like **tea** **unless** it has **milk**.

There are four content words in each sentence. The content words are stressed: they are pronounced higher, louder and longer. The other words are “de-stressed”: they are pronounced quieter, shorter and lower.

Though word stress in English is by and large unpredictable, it is possible to frame rules for primary stress on words with some derivational suffixes. Not all the derivational suffixes affect stress. We need to know the suffixes that affect stress and those that do not affect stress. When words are fitted into utterances they contribute to the rhythm of English. Utterances have strings of words, some of which are stressed and some are not. While the stressed syllables in words tend to occur at roughly regular intervals of time, the unstressed syllables between them are weakened. Indeed, some words that are predisposed to being unstressed even have weak forms.

You might be asking yourself, “What is English rhythm, and why does it matter? How important is all this and what or who should I try and sound like?”

After reading this unit you will find the answers to these questions, along with some practical pronunciation exercises that will help you identify and reproduce natural English stress-timing and rhythm.

In this unit, you would read about rhythm, intonation and stress in speech. Let’s have an overall idea what do these terms mean and how do they function in speech?

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## 2.2 RHYTHM

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The word rhythm is derived from *rhythmos* (Greek) which means, “measured motion.” Rhythm is a literary device that demonstrates the long and short patterns through stressed and unstressed syllables, particularly in verse form.

Rhythm is the speed and tempo of how you say a sentence. So, some beginner students might say – each - word- in – a - sentence - at - the - same - speed and sound a little like a robot. (Just the same way this sounded!) Developing different speeds and knowing when to slow down and speed up can give your spoken English more interest.

English rhythm is defined as “**a strong pattern of sounds, words, or musical notes that is used in music, poetry, and dancing.**” The rhythm of English language depends on two types of stress. When we say “**stress**” here, we mean that we emphasize or say a syllable or word more strongly than the other parts of the word or sentence, which makes those “stressed” syllables and words stand out and become more noticeable.

The beauty of the English language lies in pronunciation. Accent/stress lends naturalness and beauty to your English. In phonetics, accent/stress means expending extra breath on a particular syllable in a word. It is a matter of greater prominence and greater audibility.

Accent is very important to make your speech intelligible. For instance, look at the words *career* /kəˈrɪə/ and *carrier* /kəˈrɪə/. Looking at the transcription you can say there is a slight difference between the two in pronunciation. But you can bring out the difference between the two very clearly by accenting them on the right syllables. So, in the word *career* /kəˈrɪə/ the accent is on the second syllable; in the word *carrier* /kəˈrɪə/ the accent is on the first syllable.



The mark (') on the top of a syllable in a word indicates that the particular syllable is stressed. This is known as **primary stress**. Primary stress indicates that the syllable is more prominent than the other syllables. There might also be a mark below on a syllable in a word. This is known as **secondary stress**. This indicates that this particular syllable is the next most prominent syllable. But for our speech purposes primary accent is the most important one. Let's discuss stress in the next section.

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## 2.3 STRESS

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Stress is saying a syllable (refer Unit 1) or part of a word more strongly and can be at word level. REcOrd is the noun for example of an athletics world record perhaps, whilst reCORD is what you do to a song when you copy it onto a CD.

Stress is also important at sentence level where the meaning can be changed depending on which whole word you stress. Let's see in how many ways the meaning of the following sentence can be changed.

Note: the words underlined should be stressed. See how it changes the implied meaning.

I thought your brother was a bus conductor. [you thought someone else thought....]

I thought your brother was a bus conductor [you thought I knew he was a bus conductor]

I thought your brother was a bus conductor [not your friend's brother]

I thought your brother was a bus conductor [not your sister]

I thought your brother was a bus conductor [I didn't know he still is a bus conductor]

I thought your brother was a bus conductor [before I thought he was an orchestral conductor]

I thought your brother was a bus conductor [not a bus driver]

So, the implied meaning of this short sentence can be changed seven times depending on which word is stressed!

Thus, through the above given examples, you must have noticed that English has two basic types of stress:

- Syllable stress
- Word stress

Let's take a quick look at both of them in the sub-section.

### 2.3.1 Syllable stress

Syllable stress refers to a syllable (or segment of a word) that is stressed more than other syllables in the word.

Syllable stress patterns in English are not as regular as in some languages, and memorizing the rules for syllable stress requires patience—and **a lot** of listening practice! Knowing how to read the phonetic version of a word (found in dictionaries or pronunciation guides) is also very useful for English learners, as the phonetic pronunciation guide will also indicate which syllable is stressed.

While native English speakers find this intuitive, English learners can refer to patterns that will help them remember which parts of the words to stress. Here are some examples of syllable stress, with the stressed part in bold:

- **Happy birthday!**
- **English student**
- identification
- **explain**

In each of these cases, speakers say the parts in bold noticeably louder and with more emphasis. If you put the stress on the wrong syllable—for example, if you say “**Happy birthday!**”—there is still a good chance people will understand you, but they will definitely notice that something strange is going on with your pronunciation.

Notice two things about the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in the following sentences:

1. The stressed syllables occur on regular, evenly-spaced beats, even if there is more than one unstressed syllable between stressed syllables.
2. The regular stressed syllables (according to the dictionary) of the content words are the only stressed syllables of each sentence.

Try speaking the following sentences and notice the syllables that you stress more than others:

- I took a bus to the park.
- I'll build a fire in the fireplace.
- Josh is reading a newspaper article.

### 2.3.2 Word stress

Word stress refers to a word (or parts of a word) that is stressed more than others in a sentence.

Certain words are stressed for many different reasons. Sometimes it is because they are important to the meaning of the sentence, because they are

question words or because they clarify or distinguish something. Here are examples of word stress in a sentence:

- What **time** is it?
- I'm **going** to a **birthday party**.
- Would you like **coffee** or **tea**?

Note: Content words (key words) are always stressed; function words are not stressed. Usually stressed words are: nouns, main verbs, adjectives, adverbs; contracted negative forms of auxiliary and modal verbs; question words. Usually unstressed words are: auxiliary and modal verbs; personal pronouns; prepositions, conjunctions, articles.

When English is spoken, the speaker alternates between stressed and unstressed syllables in regular intervals, with the stresses falling within content words. This is called the Rhythm Rule. The stressed syllables of the sentence create beats. For example, the beats of the following sentence fall on the words 'bought,' 'car,' and the first syllable of 'Tuesday:'

I **bought** a **car** on **Tuesday**.

A speaker can stress a word in any combination of the following three ways:

1. by slightly changing the pitch of the stressed syllable of the stressed word compared to the syllables around it
2. by uttering the stressed syllable of that word for a longer period than normal
3. by uttering the stressed syllable of that word louder than the surrounding syllables.

In addition to stressing content words, function words are often reduced in spoken English. This allows greater contrast between stressed and unstressed words.

The Rhythm Rule is more of a guideline than a rule because it is often not followed exactly. The main idea is that stresses in spoken English happen in regular intervals, or beats. The stressed syllables create the beats.

Many linguists feel that the rhythm of spoken English is based on a regular pattern of stressed syllables. These follow each other at roughly regular intervals, and are pronounced more quickly and less clearly, and are fitted in between the regular stressed syllables. If several unstressed syllables come together, these are pronounced even more quickly so as not to disturb the rhythm. Compare the following two sentences. The second does not take much longer to say first although it has three more unstressed syllables; it has the same number of stressed syllables.

- She **KNEW** the **DOCTOR**.
- She **KNEW** that there was a **DOCTOR**.

Note, however, that this is a very complicated question, and not all experts agree about the way English rhythm works.

English is a very rhythmical language, so that a learner who can maintain the rhythm of the language is more likely to sound both natural and fluent. Rhythm is thus both a feature of and product of the phonological structure of English. The phonology of any language is a system, so that a change in one part of the system will affect some or all of the other parts.

‘It’s the **worst thing** that you could **do**’

Speed is also a factor in fluency. When we speak quickly, we speak in groups of words which are continuous and may not have pauses between them. This causes changes to the ‘shape’ of words. Unstressed words always sound different when used in a sentence as opposed to being said in isolation.

The most common features of connected speech are the **weak** grammatical forms and some lexical words (*and, to, of, have, was, were*) and contractions, some of which are acceptable in written English (*can't, won't, didn't, I'll, he'd, they've, should've*). However, we often ignore other features which preserve rhythm and make the language sound natural. The most common of these are:

- **Elision** (losing sounds)
- **Linking** (adding or joining sounds between words)
- **Assimilation** (changing sounds)

Added to these is the use of the **schwa**, the most common vowel sound in English. Many unstressed vowel sounds tend to become schwa, and because it is an important feature of weak forms, learners should be able to recognize and produce it.

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## 2.4 INFLUENCE OF STRESS ON RHYTHM IN ENGLISH

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You must have noticed that utterances in English are a series of close-knit groups each comprising stressed and unstressed syllables. Rhythmic grouping correlates with a stressed syllable followed by unstressed syllables up to the next stressed syllable but not including it.

Let us look at the following sentences for instance. They can have the rhythmic groups indicated by the vertical lines.

1. I'want to/'go to/'Delhi to-/'morrow.
2. 'Tell him to go to the /'market.
3. I'want you to/'stand there and /'hold it for me.
4. 'Make me some/'puppets for the /'show.
5. We 'went for a /'walk in the/'park.

The rhythmic groups in each of these sentences are closely knit. This does not imply that there is necessarily a pause between each group. In fact, there is no pause between each group, for it is held together in the utterance.

Please note that in each of the sentences above, the number of unstressed syllables between the stressed syllables is more or less the same, thus giving them a fairly regular rhythmic beat. In sentence 1 there is one unstressed syllable between two stressed syllables - to/to/to/-row/in to-morrow. Similarly, in sentences 2, 3, 4 and 5, there are two unstressed syllables between two stressed syllables.

2. him to/to the /ket in market.

In the third rhythmic group there is only one unstressed syllable.

3. you to/there and/if for me

only the last group has three unstressed syllables.

4. me some/for the/

5. for a /in the/

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## 2.5 INTONATION

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Intonation is the 'music' of the language. Often questions can be asked with a rising intonation where the pitch goes up. This might be a genuine question to which you don't know the answer. 'John's still on holiday?' said with a rising pitch means it's a question which needs answering. If it's said without a rising intonation it's information that you already know and you may just need confirmation. Intonation can also show emotions like surprise, etc.

Intonation and stress are closely linked. In fact, it's impossible to dissociate them. They go hand in hand.

Intonation is about *how* we say things, rather than *what* we say, the way the voice rises and falls when speaking, in other words the music of the language.

Just as words have stressed syllables, sentences have regular patterns of stressed words. In addition, the voice tends to rise, fall or remain flat depending on the meaning or feeling we want to convey (surprise, anger, interest, boredom, gratitude, etc.). Intonation therefore indicates the mood of the speaker.

Note: These are not rules but patterns generally used by native speakers of English. Just remember that content words are stressed, and intonation adds attitude or emotion.

This explanation on intonation is intended to serve as a general guide to help learners. It should in no way make them unnecessarily anxious!

It should be remembered that a written explanation can never be a substitute for a 'live' conversation with a native speaker.

Attitudinal intonation is something that is best acquired through talking and listening to English speakers.

There are two basic patterns of intonation in English: **falling intonation** and **rising intonation**.

In the following examples a downward arrow (↘) indicates a fall in intonation and an upward arrow (↗) indicates a rise in intonation.

### 2.5.1 Falling Intonation (↘)

(The pitch of the voice falls at the end of the sentence.)

Falling intonation is the most common intonation pattern in English.

It is commonly found in statements, commands, wh-questions (information questions), confirmatory question tags and exclamations.

- Statements
  - Nice to meet ↘you.
  - I'll be back in a ↘minute.
  - She doesn't live here ↘anymore.
  - Dad wants to change his ↘car.
  - Here is the weather ↘forecast.
  - Cloudy weather is expected at the end of the ↘week.
  - We should work together more ↘often
  - I'm going for a walk in the ↘park.
- Commands
  - Write your name ↘here.
  - Show me what you've ↘written.
  - Leave it on the ↘desk.
  - Take that picture ↘down.
  - Throw that ↘out.
  - Put your books on the ↘table.
  - Take your hands out of your ↘pockets.
- Wh- questions: requesting information (questions beginning with 'who', 'what', 'why', 'where', 'when', 'which', and 'how')
  - What country do you come ↘from?
  - Where do you ↘work?
  - Which of them do you ↘prefer?
  - When does the shop ↘open?
  - How many books have you ↘bought?
  - Which coat is ↘yours?
  - Whose bag is ↘this?

- Questions Tags: are statements requesting confirmation rather than questions.  
Not all tag questions are really questions. Some of them merely ask for confirmation or invite agreement, in which case we use a falling tone at the end.
  - He thinks he's so clever, doesn't↘he?
  - She's such a nuisance, isn't↘she?
  - I failed the test because I didn't revise, did↘I?
  - It doesn't seem to bother him much, does↘it?
- Exclamations
  - How nice of ↘you!
  - That's just what I↘need!
  - You don't↘say!
  - What a beautiful↘voice!
  - That's a↘surprise!

## 2.5.2 Rising Intonation ( ↗ )

(The pitch of the voice rises at the end of a sentence.)

Rising intonation invites the speaker to continue talking.

It is normally used with yes/no questions, and question tags that are real questions.

- Yes/no Questions: Questions that can be answered by 'yes' or 'no'.
  - Do you like your new ↗teacher?
  - Have you finished ↗already?
  - May I borrow your ↗dictionary?
  - Do you have any ↗magazines?
  - Do you sell ↗stamps?
- Question tags that show uncertainty and require an answer (real questions).
  - We've met already, ↗haven't we?
  - You like fish, ↗don't you?
  - You're a new student ↗aren't you?
  - The view is beautiful, ↗isn't it?

We sometimes use a combination of rising and falling intonation in the same sentence.

The combination is called Rise-Fall or Fall-Rise intonation.



### 2.5.3 Rise-Fall Intonation (↗↘)

(The intonation rises and then falls.)

We use rise-fall intonation for choices, lists, unfinished thoughts and conditional sentences.

- Choices (alternative questions.)
  - Are you having ↗soup or ↘salad?
  - Is John leaving on ↗Thursday or ↘Friday?
  - Does he speak ↗German or ↘French?
  - Is your name ↗Ava or ↘Eva?
- Lists (rising, rising, rising, falling) Intonation falls on the last item to show that the list is finished.
  - We've got ↗apples, pears, bananas and ↘oranges
  - The sweater comes in ↗blue, white pink and ↘black
  - I like ↗football, tennis, basketball and ↘volleyball.
  - I bought ↗a tee-shirt, a skirt and a ↘handbag.
- Unfinished thoughts (partial statements)

In the responses to the following questions, the rise-fall intonation indicates reservation. The speaker hesitates to fully express his/her thoughts.

  - Do you like my new handbag? Well the ↗leather is ↘nice... (but I don't like it.)
  - What was the meal like? Hmm, the ↗fish was ↘good... (but the rest wasn't great).
  - So, you both live in Los Angeles? Well ↗Alex ↘does ... (but I don't).
- Conditional sentences  
(The tone rises in the first clause and falls gradually in the second clause.)
  - If he ↗calls, ask him to leave a ↘message.
  - Unless he ↗insists, I'm not going to ↘go.
  - If you have any ↗problems, just ↘contact us.

### 2.5.4 Fall-Rise Intonation (↘↗)

(The voice falls and rises *usually within one word*.)

The main function of fall-rise intonation is to show that the speaker is not certain of the answer they are giving to a question, or is reluctant to reply (as

opposed to a falling tone used when there is no hesitation). It is also used in polite requests or suggestions.

- Hesitation/reluctance:
  - So, you'd be willing to confirm that? ...Well ... I ↘sup↗pose so ...
  - You didn't see him on Monday? I don't quite ↘re↗member ...
- Politeness-Doubt-Uncertainty: (You are not sure what the answer might be.)
  - Perhaps we could ↘vis↗it the place?
  - Should we ↘cop↗y the list?
  - Do you think it's ↘al↗lowed?

**Please read the following statements loudly to notice and practice the intonation**

• **Statements with one stress**

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| I \know.<br>I \see.<br>She \works.<br>We \laughed.<br>It \stopped.<br>I \like it.<br>He'll \buy it.<br>I \saw her.<br>She \knows him. | She \did it.<br>We \found it.<br>She has \done it.<br>We have \found it.<br>I can \drive.<br>We must \leave.<br>It may \change.<br>You should \call her. | She is \young.<br>He is \here.<br>I'm \tired.<br>They are \busy.<br>It is \late. It's \late.<br>It's \funny.<br>It's \interesting.<br>It's \difficult.<br>It's im\portant. | It's a \book.<br>It's a \present.<br>It's \John. It's \me.<br>It's \mine. It's \his.<br>It's \yours. |
|---|--|--|--|

• **Statements with two stress**

'People \work.

'Anna works.

'Birds \fly.

'Time \flies.

'Tom is \reading.

'Mike is \sleeping.

The 'car \stopped.

The 'weather has \changed.

'Peter is a \doctor.

'Mary is a \teacher.

'Lena is my \daughter.

The Sun is a star.

'Penguins are \birds.

'Monkeys are \funny.

'Bananas are \yellow.

'Cars are ex\pensive.  
The 'book was \interesting.

'Max is at \home.  
'Tanya is at \school.  
'Rome is in \Italy.

'This is \Alex.  
'That's his \room.  
'These are my \pictures.

I 'lost my \key.  
We 'eat a \lot.  
I 'need some \help.  
He 'likes to \read.  
This 'bag is \mine.

We 'did it \yesterday.  
She 'said it \loudly.  
He 'knows her \brother.  
Her 'name is \Anna.  
My 'children are \sleeping.

I 'live in \Moscow.  
I 'work in a \library.  
She 'works in an \office.  
They 'went to a \restaurant.

I 'want to \see you.  
I'm 'glad to \see you.  
I 'want to \buy it.  
I 'have to \do it.  
I'd 'like to \visit them.

She 'sent him a \letter.  
He 'gave me a \present.  
He 'asked us to \visit him.

She'll be 'back in an \hour.  
She will 'see him to\morrow.  
There is a 'bakery on \Green Street.

She 'likes \tea.  
I 'want \coffee.  
He 'left \early.

It's 'time to \go.  
It's 'ten o'clock.  
It's 'seven \thirty.

She is 'very \pretty.  
He is 'very \tall.  
He is 'always \busy.  
He has 'no \time.

It's a 'good \book.  
It's an 'interesting \film.  
It's a 'beautiful \town.  
It's a 'difficult \task.

I 'don't \know.  
She 'can't \swim.  
He 'isn't \busy.  
It 'doesn't \matter.

I 'don't \want it.  
He 'doesn't \have it.  
I 'don't \want to.  
I 'don't re\member.  
I 'don't under\stand it.

He 'doesn't \know them.  
She 'hasn't \seen him.  
He 'didn't \find it.  
We 'couldn't \find her.  
You 'shouldn't \do it.

It's 'not \funny.  
It's 'not \interesting.  
It's 'not \difficult.  
It's 'not \easy.  
It's 'not im\portant.

She is 'not \busy.  
They are 'not \interesting.  
I'm 'not \sleeping.

- **Statements with three stresses**

'Betty 'lives in \London.  
'Victor 'works at a \bank.  
I 'haven't 'read this \book.  
We 'went to the 'theater \yesterday.

'Children 'like to \play.  
The 'boy is 'reading a \book.  
The 'weather is 'going to \change.

'Lena is 'studying \English.  
The 'children are 'playing in the \park.  
My 'sister 'works as a \teacher.

'Mike 'likes \tea.  
'Kate 'bought a \book.  
'Mary 'wants \coffee.  
'Tom 'writes \stories.  
'Anna 'teaches \English.

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'Paris is a 'large \city.  
'Moscow is the 'capital of \Russia.  
'Ella is a 'good \student.  
'Elephants are 'strong \animals.

I 'bought a 'loaf of \bread.  
I 'have a 'younger \sister.  
He 'wants to 'buy a \car.  
She 'works in a 'small ho\tel.  
He 'knows it 'very \well.

He 'sent a 'letter to \Mike.  
He 'gave the 'book to \me.  
He 'brought a 'present for \Anna.

He is 'five 'years \old.  
It is 'three 'meters \long.  
She was 'two 'hours \late.

I 'don't 'know his \name.  
He 'doesn't 'want to \go.  
We 'didn't 'do it \yesterday.  
She 'didn't 'tell me a\bout it.

'Tony 'hasn't \called me.  
'Peter 'doesn't \live here.  
'Lena 'wasn't in\vited.  
'Bats are 'not \birds.

● **Statements with four stresses**

She 'wants to 'buy a 'new \car.  
He 'wrote the 'letters 'very \quickly.  
The 'teacher 'told her 'students a \story.

His 'train will ar'rive at 'four o'clock.  
He 'put his 'bag on the 'table in the \hall.  
Their 'new 'house is near a 'large \park.

She has 'swimming 'lessons 'twice a \week.  
He 'plays 'tennis 'every \Saturday.  
'Tom is 'leaving for 'Rome to\morrow.

I'm 'going to 'visit my 'relatives on \Sunday.  
He 'usually 'goes for a 'walk after \breakfast.  
He is 'reading an 'interesting 'book about \animals.

● **Statements with five stresses**

'Alex 'wrote the 'letters 'very \quickly.  
'Victor is 'going to 'London 'next \month.  
'Tanya is 'reading the 'book you 'brought \yesterday.

Ma'ria 'wants to 'buy a 'new \car.

My 'friends 'play 'tennis 'every \Saturday.

I 'think the 'first 'question is 'very \easy.

I 'don't 'want to 'watch this 'film a\gain.

We are 'not 'going to 'visit our 'relatives on \Sunday.

● **Special questions: Falling intonation**

'What is his \name?

'Where does he \live?

'When did you \call him?

'Why are you \late?

'What is your \name?

'What's your \name?

'Where are you \from?

'Where do you \live?

'What do you \do?

'What did you \buy?

'What did she \say?

'Where did he \go?

'Where have you \been?

'Where are your \friends?

'When will he re\turn?

'When did it \happen?

'Why was she \angry?

'Where can I \find her?

"What are you \doing?

'When are you \leaving?

'Where are you \going?

'Why are you \laughing?

'What did you \tell them?

'Who did you \talk to?

'What are you \looking for?

'What are you \talking about?

'Who 'brought the \books?

'Who 'wants to \go?

'Who 'told you a\bout it?

'What \happened?

'Who \did it?

'Who \said it?

'What \is it?

'What \are they?

'Who \is he?

'How \are you?

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'Where \is it?

'Where \are they?

'Where \were you?

'When \was it?

'How 'far \is it?

'How 'much \is it?

'How \old are you?

'How \far is it?

'What \time is it?

'What's the \matter?

'What's the \problem?

'What's the \difference?

'What is \this?

'What is \that?

'What are \these?

'Whose 'book is \this?

'Whose 'bag is \that?

'How 'much is this \bag?

'How 'much does it \cost?

'How 'much do I \owe you?

'How 'old is your \brother?

'How 'often do you \go there?

'How 'long did you \stay there?

'What 'time should I \call you?

'What are you 'going to \do?

'What are you 'going to \have?

'Where are you 'going to \be?

'What are you 'doing to \morrow?

'How 'many 'stories have you \read?

'How 'much 'money have you \lost?

● **Friendly interest, politeness: Rising intonation**

'What is your /name?

'Where do you /live?

'What did she /say?

'Where have you /been?

'What are you /reading?

'When is your /birthday?

'How /much is it?

'How /far is it?

'How 'much is this /bag, please?

'When is the 'next /train, please?

'Where is the 'nearest /bank, please?

- **General questions: Rising intonation**

Do you 'visit them /often?

Have you 'seen my /keys?

Are you 'ready to /start?

Have you 'read this /book?

Have you 'heard the /news?

Do you 'need some /help?

Do you 'have a /pen?

Are these 'books /yours?

Have you 'seen my /glasses?

Do you 'speak /English?

Do you 'want to /go there?

Will you 'see them to/morrow?

Would you 'like some /coffee?

Is 'Mike your /friend?

Is their 'house /large?

Is your 'sister a /journalist?

Is this 'book /interesting?

Are you 'going to 'wash the /car?

Is he 'planning to 'visit /Paris?

Does this 'bus 'go to the /airport?

Did 'Anton 'call you /yesterday?

Was 'Lena at 'home on /Sunday?

Are the 'students 'ready for the /test?

Does she /work?

Will they /come?

Do you /know him?

Do you /like it?

Have you /read it?

Did he /call you?

Can you /drive?

Can you /do it?

Shall I /read?

Should I /call him?

Am I /late?

Is he /here?

Is it /far?

Is it /true?

Is it /new?

Are you /sure?

Are you /tired?

Are you /hungry?

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Are you /serious?

Are they /ready?

Is it /raining?

Is he /sleeping?

Are you /listening?

Is she a /doctor?

Is he a /teacher?

Is this /Main Street?

Are you a /student?

Are they /students?

● **Requests: Rising intonation**

Could you 'give me a /pen, please?

Could you 'open the /window, please?

Would you 'mind /helping me?

May I 'speak to /Ella, please?

Could I 'speak to /Michael, please?

Can I 'borrow your /dictionary, please?

Could you /help me, please?

Can you /help me, please?

● **Alternative questions: Rising and falling intonation**

Do you 'want /coffee or \tea?

Does he 'speak /English or \German?

Would you 'like /coffee or \tea?

Are you 'studying /English or \French?

Does he 'play /football or \basketball?

Is he /young or \old?

Were they /happy or \angry?

Is she a /doctor or a \teacher?

Do you 'have a /dog or a \cat?

Would you 'like an /apple or a \pear?

Did she 'go to /Italy or \France last year?

Did you 'go to the /cinema or to the \theater yesterday?

Will you 'come 'back at /five or at \six?

Does she 'read 'books in the /morning or at \night?

Will you 'try to 'do it to/day or to\morrow?

● **Tag questions: Falling or rising intonation**

It's a 'beautiful \town, \isn't it?

She \knows him, /doesn't she?

'Nice \weather, \isn't it?  
You \live here, \don't you?  
You \know him, \don't you?  
You can \drive, \can't you?  
He will \help them, \won't he?

It's a 'nice \day, \isn't it?  
She 'speaks \English, \doesn't she?

'Peter 'gave you a \present, \didn't he?  
'Nina and 'Helen are \friends, \aren't they?

You 'don't \know them, \do you?  
They 'haven't 'found it, \have they?  
You 'weren't \late, \were you?  
I 'shouldn't \do it, \should I?

It's 'not 'too \late, \is it?  
It's 'not 'too \far, \is it?

'Nice \weather, /isn't it?  
You \live here, /don't you?  
You can \drive, /can't you?  
You \know it, /don't you?  
He will \help them, /won't he?

It's a 'nice \day, /isn't it?  
It's a 'beautiful \town, /isn't it?  
She 'speaks \English, /doesn't she?

You 'weren't \late, /were you?  
It's 'not 'too \far, /is it?

● **Commands: Falling intonation**

\Stop it! 'Sit \down.  
'Close your \books.

'Come \in.  
'Go \home.  
'Stop \talking.  
'Hurry \up!

'Open your \books.  
'Listen to the \story.  
'Wait for your \turn.  
'Go to your \room.

'Tell me the \truth.  
'Give me your \hand.  
'Do it your\self.  
'Ask him for \help.

'Turn 'left at the \bank.  
'Go 'back to the \hospital.  
'Write your 'name on this \line.

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'Sit \down, please.  
'Open the \door, please.  
'Close the \window, please.  
'Write your \name, please.

● **Requests: Rising intonation**

'Come \in, /please.  
'Come \here, /please.  
'Sit \down, /please.  
  
'Close the \window, /please.  
'Tell me your \name, /please.  
'Ask him to \call me, /please.

/Please 'come /in.  
/Please 'sit /down.  
/Please 'come /here.

● **Exclamatory sentences: Falling intonation**

'What a 'wonderful \present!  
'What a 'beautiful \day!  
'What a 'wonderful sur\prise!  
  
'How 'well she \sings!  
'How 'beautiful her \voice is!

'What a \pity!  
'What a \waste!  
'What a re\lief!  
'What a sur\prise!  
  
'How \nice of you!  
'How \strange it is!  
  
'How \nice!  
'How \strange!

'That's \great!  
'That's \wonderful!  
'That's a \lie!

It's 'good to \see you!  
It's an 'excellent oppor\tunity!  
I'm 'so \happy!

\Great!  
\Wonderful!  
Hel\lo!

It's \great!  
It's \wonderful!  
It's \terrible!  
We \did it!

'Good \morning!

'Good after\noon!

'Good-/bye!

- **Direct address: Rising intonation**

/Peter, can you /help me?

'Mrs. /Smith, 'this is 'Mary \Brown.

/Ella, can you /help me?

/Lena, are you /there?

/Tony, 'where \are you?

/Tom, could you /help me, please?

'Mrs. /Green, can I /talk to you, please?

/Mary, 'this is my 'son \Anton.

/Max, 'this is my \friend, 'Tom \Brown.

/Peter, 'this is Ma\rina, a \friend of 'mine.

'Mr. /Trent, your 'papers are \ready.

/Sir, you 'dropped your \pencil.

/Nelly, I'd 'like to \see you.

/Alex, 'read this \letter, please.

Hel\lo, /Tanya.

\Hi, /Jim.

'Good-\bye, /Tom.

'Good \morning, /Jane.

'Good \morning, 'Jane.

'Good \evening, 'sir.

'See you to\morrow, 'Nick.

- **Enumerating: Rising intonation**

/One, /two, /three, /four, \five.

She 'bought /bread, /cheese, /oranges, and \apples.

/Six, /seven, /eight, /nine, \ten.

/One, /two, /three, /four, /five, /six, /seven, /eight, /nine, \ten.

I 'bought /bread, /cheese, and to\matatoes.

We 'need /paper, /pens, and \pencils.

I 'saw /Tom, /Mary, /Anna, and \Victor.

They 'visited /France, /Spain, /Italy, and \Greece.

/Anton, /Nick, /Anna, and /Lena are my \students.

I'd 'like /orange juice, /omelet, /toast, /honey, and 'green \tea, please.

- **Responses**

\Yes.

\No.

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\Certainly.

\Sure.

\Thank you.

\Sorry.

Of \course.

'All \right.

'Very \well.

'No \problem.

'That's \true.

I \think so.

You are \welcome.

You are \right.

I'd be \glad to.

I'm \sorry.

'Thank you 'very \much.

\Yes, I \am.

\Yes, I \do.

\Yes, he \has.

\Yes, they \will.

\Yes, you \can.

\No, I \don't.

\No, I \haven't.

\No, he \won't.

\No, you \shouldn't.

\Yes, \certainly.

\Yes, of \course.

\Yes, 'please.

\No, \thank you.

I \can.

She \is.

He \will.

You \should.

I \can't.

He \didn't.

Oh, /really?

Ex/cuse me?

I'm /sorry?

Now it is time to practice these concepts with a few simple exercises.

## 2.6 IMPROVE YOUR ENGLISH RHYTHM WITH 3 PRONUNCIATION EXERCISES

These exercises are designed to be simple, fun and engaging! Since you will be pronouncing words and sentences out loud, you might prefer to find a quiet room. You do not need to have perfect pronunciation in these exercises—just try to relax so you can start to feel a more natural rhythm as you speak in English. Participating in a variety of related activities will result in a higher likelihood that you will internalize the principles of sentence stress in English. Practicing intonation will help you not only communicate more effectively; it will also help you understand situations better.

### 2.6.1 Echo Activity

This activity works well with a partner but you can do it alone, too. This activity uses rhyming patterns to help you become familiar with word stress within a sentence.

First, you read a word with a stressed syllable. Emphasize the stressed syllable as much as possible—it is good to exaggerate for the purposes of this exercise. Make sure the stressed syllable is loud, with a higher tone. Then, you will “echo” the word with a sentence that has a similar sound and a similar stress pattern.

| Word         | Echo                         |
|--------------|------------------------------|
| interruption | Let’s have <b>lunch</b> now. |
| interruption | He’s my <b>uncle</b> .       |
| interruption | I said, “ <b>under</b> .”    |

Remember that, because the two columns have the same stress pattern, they should take roughly the same amount of time to pronounce. Try to say the sentences as quickly as you say the words. If you are practicing with a partner, one person says the **Word**, and the other partner responds with the **Echo**. After you finish, switch parts and do the activity again. Here are a few more for practice:

| Word      | Echo                      | Word      | Echo                    |
|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| interact  | It’s a <b>fact</b> .      | entertain | I’ve been <b>paid</b> . |
| interact  | Here’s your <b>hat</b> .  | entertain | That’s <b>insane</b> !  |
| interact  | Where’s my <b>snack</b> ? | entertain | Let me <b>explain</b> . |
| committee | She’s <b>pretty</b> .     | committee | He’s <b>witty</b> .     |
| committee | It’s <b>tricky</b> .      |           |                         |

### 2.6.2 Movement Activity

Rhythm is not just something you say—it is something that you **feel**. Add movement to your stress practice activity to help you physically feel and remember the rhythm of English.

Say these sentences out loud. When you arrive at a stressed part, stand up quickly as you say it, then sit back down. You can also do this activity by raising both hands above your head, clapping your hands or tapping the table with both hands as you say the stressed parts.

Try to get through the list quickly. Do not worry about perfect pronunciation—just focus on stressing the correct part of the sentence.

Here we go! Stand, tap, clap or raise your hands when you pronounce the bold parts.

|                            |                           |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| I love <b>coffee</b> .     | I don't <b>see</b> it.    |
| It's in my <b>office</b> . | Try this <b>pizza</b> !   |
| I come here <b>often</b> . | I didn't <b>check</b> .   |
| Do you <b>read</b> much?   | He hurt his <b>neck</b> . |
| We haven't <b>met</b> .    |                           |

### 2.6.3 Bouncing Ball Activity

Here is a fun way to practice rhythm: find a ball (like a basketball) that you can bounce on the ground. Before you begin, practice bouncing the ball on the ground (in English, this action is called “dribbling,” by the way) in a **consistent, even rhythm**.

For this activity, as you say a sentence, you need to continue bouncing the ball without speeding up, slowing down or stopping.

When you have found a steady pattern, try saying these longer sentences while you continue bouncing the ball.

The ball is your guide for stress-timing: you should be saying a stressed part of the sentence every time the ball hits the ground.

Repeat each sentence at least three times for practice.

You will have to say some words very quickly and some words more slowly in order to match your sentence with the steady rhythm of the bouncing ball.

The **weather's been** so **lovely lately**!

If I **finish** all my **work**, I **think** I can **go** to the **movies tonight**.

I'm **going** to the **store** to buy **eggs**, **milk**, bananas and **bread**.

My **English class** is **really fun**. Do **you** go to **English class**, **too**?

I **wanted** to **go** out of **town** for the **weekend**, but the **traffic** on the **highway** was **insane**!

Once you are comfortable with this, you can create your own sentences! Introduce yourself or say a sentence about what you like to do as you continue to bounce the ball.

As already mentioned before, this is the kind of thing that takes a lot of practice. But the more you practice listening to English and working on word and syllable stress, the better your English rhythm and pronunciation will be!

Do you feel the rhythm now? Let's check your progress in the next section.

### **Check Your Progress 1**

- 1) Divide the following words syllable-wise using a hyphen to mark syllable boundaries and mark primary stress. You could consult the dictionary for marking stress. Example: (a) ab-'surd

(a) absurd (b) adjoin (c) agency (d) allopathy (e) alternative (f) aluminum (g) amateur (h) anonymous (i) anxiety (j) behaviour (k) caricature (l) determine (m) excessive (n) helicopter (o) independence (p) catastrophe (q) component (r) extinguish (s) repetitive (t) melancholy (u) thermometer

- 2) Mark the stressed syllables in the following sentences. For this, apply the guidelines we have learnt for stressing (syllables of) words in connected speech. Remember words that receive stress on a particular syllable when they are said in isolation generally receive it on the same syllable when they occur in connected speech.

- a) Collect them tomorrow.
- b) Colour the picture.
- c) Bring it in this evening.
- d) Six of them surrendered.
- e) We've put them on your desk.
- f) He's forgotten to leave his telephone number.
- g) He invited us to dine with them.
- h) Why don't you take some for her?
- i) I think that he wants us to go with him.
- j) Where've all the flowers gone?
- k) I wanted him to listen to my song.
- l) Aren't you going to Delhi tomorrow?
- m) She bought a basketful of fruit from the shop.
- n) This is not the way to do it.
- o) An apple a day keeps the doctor away.
- p) These are certainly not enough.
- q) You mustn't waste even a minute.
- r) It's time we went on a holiday.



- s) I ought to have written her a letter.
- t) What have you done with my pen?

### Check Your Progress 2

A. Mark the stressed syllables in the following sentences. In some cases, you may have to divide the sentence into groups. Check your answers with those given at the end of this unit. After you have checked your answers, articulate the sentences with the correct stress patterns.

- 1) He's a good painter.
- 2) She's a nice girl.
- 3) Jack and Jill went to get some water.
- 4) It's a very beautiful building.
- 5) The Prime Minister of India is quite dynamic.
- 6) Can I see you at ten?
- 7) I'm afraid I'm very late today.
- 8) My father is a retired engineer.
- 9) The plane to London is delayed by two hours.
- 10) Can you get me a cup of tea?
- 11) He's extremely honest.
- 12) Honesty is the best policy.
- 13) He's a Professor of Physics.
- 14) Can a cobra swim?
- 15) My neighbour has an imported car.
- 16) Have you ever travelled by plane?
- 17) I worked in the States for two years.
- 18) Jackals are very cunning animals.
- 19) I have a working knowledge of Arabic.
- 20) It's impossible to please everybody.
- 21) What an enormous man!
- 22) She has a very pleasant personality.
- 23) Uncle Robert visited us yesterday.
- 24) Please bring me a chair.
- 25) Would you like anything to drink?

B) Do as directed and answer the different parts accordingly.

1. Try to say "YES" with different intonation and meaning:

| Word | Symbols | Tone names | Meaning                              |
|------|---------|------------|--------------------------------------|
| Yes  | →       | Level      | Neutral; uninterested: 'Yes'         |
| Yes  | ↘       | Fall       | Positive response 'I agree'          |
| Yes  | ↗       | Low-rise   | Question, eliciting a response       |
| Yes  | ↑       | High-rise  | Disappointment: 'Are you saying Yes' |
| Yes  | ↘↗      | Fall-rise  | 'Carry on, I'm listening'            |
| Yes  | ↗↘      | Rise-fall  | Reserved, indicating doubt           |



2. Now say "HELLO" to:  
- a friend you meet regularly;  
- a friend you haven't seen for a long time;  
- a neighbour you don't like;  
- a 6 month old baby;  
- someone doing what he shouldn't;  
- to know if someone is listening;  
- the same but on the phone.

3. Put the stress on different words in the sentence. Does it change anything?

I did not say you stole my red hat.      I did not say you **stole** my red hat.  
I **did** not say you stole my red hat.      I did not say you stole **my** red hat.  
I did not **say** you stole my red hat.      I did not say you stole my **red** hat.  
I did not say **you** stole my red hat.      I did not say you stole my red **hat**.

4. Watch an episode about voice tonality. Is intonation (tonality/sentence stress/rhythm) important? Why?

Check Your Progress 3

Activity: This is a creative writing prompt to help English as a Second Language students practice rhyming words, with a minor emphasis on poetry rhythm. Familiar words with multiple familiar words as rhymes were used. It's suggested to have a visible alphabet somewhere in the vicinity to assist them in finding rhymes.

POETRY WORKSHEET

Instructions: Write a rhyming line below each beginning line. Try to make it similar in rhythm and related to the first line.

1. Look over there! I see a goat!

\_\_\_\_\_

2. There is a light

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What was that thing I just ate?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. She said she has a new pet

\_\_\_\_\_

5. I hope that someday I can see

\_\_\_\_\_

6. My boat is stalled and needs a tow

\_\_\_\_\_

7. You are very loud when you snore

\_\_\_\_\_

---

## 2.7 LET US SUM UP

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Because phonology is a system, learners cannot achieve a natural rhythm in speech without understanding the stress-timed nature of the language and the interrelated components of stress, connected speech and intonation. Attention to phonology begins at lower levels and builds up as the learners progress towards fluency. There are specific phonology courses available, while most integrated syllabuses include pronunciation activities which run in parallel to structural, functional and skill development. Above all it is important to remember that there is a place for phonology in nearly every lesson.

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## 2.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

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If you would like to learn more about stress and rhythm in English, you may consult:

Elizabeth Couper-Kuhlen, *English Speech Rhythm: Form and Function in Everyday Verbal Interaction* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1993)

Luigi Burzio, *Principles of English Stress* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995)

Richard V. Teschner & M. Stanley Whitley, *Pronouncing English: A Stress-Based Approach* (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2004)

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## 2.9 ANSWERS

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### Check Your Progress 1

- 1) (a) ab-'surd, (b) a(d)' join, (c) 'a - gen-cy, (d) al-'lo-pa-thy, (e) al-'ter-native, (f) a-lu-'mi-nium, (g) 'a-ma-teur, (h) a'-no-ny-mous, (i) an-'xi-e-ty, (j) be-'ha-viour, (k) ca-ri-'ca-ture, (l) de-'ter-mine, (m) ex-'cess-sive, (n) 'he-li-cop-ter, (o) in-de-'pen-dence, (p) ca-'tas-tro-phe, (q) com-'po-nent, (r) ex-'tin-guish, (s) re-'pe-ti-tive, (t) 'me-lan-cho-ly, (u) ther-'mo-me-ter
- 2) a) Col'lect them to'morrow.  
b) 'Colour the 'picture.  
c) 'Bring it in this 'evening.  
d) 'Six of them sur'rendered.  
e) We've 'put them on your 'desk.  
f) He's for'gotten to 'leave his 'telephone 'number.  
g) He in'vited us to 'dine with them.  
h) 'Why don't you 'take some for her?  
i) I 'think that he 'wants us to 'go with him.  
j) 'Where've all the 'flowers 'gone?  
k) I 'wanted him to 'listen to my 'song.  
l) 'Aren't you 'going to 'Delhi to'morrow?  
m) She 'bought a 'basketful of 'fruit from the 'shop.

- n) This is 'not the 'way to 'do it.
- o) An 'apple a 'day keeps the 'doctor a'way.
- p) These are 'certainly 'not e'nough.
- q) You 'mustn't 'waste even a 'minute.
- r) Its 'time we 'went on a 'holiday.
- s) I 'ought to have 'written her a 'letter
- t) 'What have you 'done with my 'pen?

### **Check Your Progress 2**

A) The stressed syllables are as follows:

- 1) He's a 'good 'painter.
- 2) She's a 'nice 'girl.
- 3) 'Jack and 'Jill / 'went to 'get some 'water. (division into groups shown by /)
- 4) It's a 'very 'beautiful 'building.
- 5) The 'prime 'Minister of 'India / is 'quite 'dynamic.
- 6) Can I 'see you at 'ten?
- 7) I'm a'fraid I'm 'very 'late to'day.
- 8) My 'father is a re'tired engi'neer.
- 9) The plane to 'London / is de'layed by 'two hours.
- 10) Can you 'get me a 'cup of 'tea?
- 11) He is extremely 'honest.
- 12) 'Honesty is the 'best 'policy.
- 13) He is a pro'fessor of 'Physics.
- 14) Can a 'cobra 'swim?
- 15) My 'neighbour has an im'ported 'car.
- 16) Have you 'ever 'traveled by 'plane?
- 17) I 'worked in the 'States for 'two 'years.
- 18) 'Jackals are 'very 'cunning 'animals.
- 19) I have a 'working 'knowledge of 'Arabic.
- 20) It's im'possible to 'please 'everybody.
- 21) 'What an e'normous 'man!
- 22) She has a 'very 'pleasant perso'nality.
- 23) 'Uncle 'Robert 'visited us 'yesterday.
- 24) 'Please 'bring me a 'chair.
- 25) Would you 'like 'anything to 'drink?

**B)** Answers will vary. Please consult your tutor at the study centre.

**Check Your Progress 3**

Activity: Responses will vary. Please consult your tutor at the study centre.



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## **UNIT 3    SPEAKING ACTIVITIES – 1: STORIES, DIALOGUES, ROLE PLAYING, DEBATES**

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### **Structure**

- 3.0   Objectives
- 3.1   Introduction
- 3.2   Stories
- 3.3   Dialogues and Role Playing
- 3.4   Debates
- 3.5   Let Us Sum Up
- 3.6   Suggested Readings
- 3.7   Answers

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### **3.0   OBJECTIVES**

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After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

- know about the different speaking activities;
- comprehend and select appropriate words and sentences according to the proper social setting, audience, situation and subject matter;
- organize the thoughts in a meaningful and logical sequence;
- use language as a means of expressing values and judgments; and
- use the language quickly, confidently and fluently.

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### **3.1   INTRODUCTION**

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Speaking is "the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts" (Chaney, 1998, p. 13). Speaking is a crucial part of second language learning and teaching. It is not merely a repetition of drills or memorization of dialogues. Instead it helps to improve one's communicative skills, because, only in that way, people can express themselves and learn how to follow the social and cultural rules appropriate in each communicative circumstance. Hence, in this unit we will learn about some speaking activities that will enhance our communication.

Communicative language teaching and collaborative learning in classes serve best for this aim. Communicative language teaching is based on real-life situations that require communication. In brief, it would help to create a classroom environment where you will have real-life communication, authentic activities, and meaningful tasks that would promote oral language. This can occur when you collaborate in groups to achieve a goal or to complete a task.

There are many speaking activities that can promote effective communication. For example, you can improve your speaking skills through stories, dialogues, discussions, debates, meetings, presentations and role play. In this chapter, we would talk about four of them (i.e., stories, dialogues, debates and role play) and the rest we will discuss in the next chapter.

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## 3.2 STORIES

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A short story is meant to be read and finished in one sitting. It is a short work of fiction. Fiction, as you know, is prose writing about imagined events and characters. Prose writing differs from poetry in that it does not depend on verses, meters or rhymes for its organization and presentation.

Novels are another example of fictional prose and are much longer than short stories. Some short stories, however, can be quite long. If a short story is a long one, say fifty to one hundred pages, we call it a novella.

### Elements of a Story

A story has some key elements: setting, characters, plot, theme and conflict.

**1. Setting** is about the time and the place a story takes place. Authors often use descriptions of landscape, scenery, buildings, seasons or weather to provide a strong sense of setting.

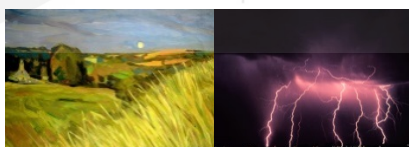
The setting describes where and when the story takes place. It helps to build background and create images in the mind. It also helps to set the tone or mood of the story.



Details can describe:

Time of day, Time of year, Time in History

Scenery, Weather, Location:



A good author includes descriptions of the setting using the five senses. A good setting helps the reader to visualize the places in the story.

**Take a Look...Which is better?**

The castle was beside the water.



OR

The waves crashed loudly against the shoreline. The fog lifted lightly and the medieval castle came into view. It was a beautiful site! The fog brushed my face and I could smell the smoke from the fire in the distance and taste the sea salt on my lips.

**Your Turn...**

- This is a picture of a setting.
- In your own words, write a detailed description of the setting in your picture.
- Include many adjectives and don't forget to include descriptions for each of the five senses: sight, sound, feel, smell, taste.





**Activity: Draw your own setting and then write about it.**

- 2) **Characters** are the people, animals or creatures, who take part in the action of a short story. Every story needs Characters. The protagonist is the “good guy”. The antagonist is the “bad guy” or “force.”

Characterization is the way in which an author shows the personality of a character. It is a technique writers use to make characters “come to life.”

- Direct Characterization *tells* the reader the personality of the character.

Direct Characterization is obvious to the reader and “spells” it right out.

For example: The *patient* boy and the *quiet* girl were both *well behaved* and did not disobey their mother.

- Indirect Characterization *shows* things that reveal the personality of the character.

Speech, Thought, Effect on Others, Actions, Looks

For example: The boy sat next to his sister as she poked him and teased him. He did not react. He carefully picked up her doll from the floor and placed it on her lap saying gently, “Here you go, why don’t you play with your doll?”

Think about:

- ☉ What does the character say? How does the character speak?
- ☉ What is revealed through the character’s private thoughts and feelings?
- ☉ What is the character’s effect on others? How do other characters feel or behave in reaction to the character?
- ☉ What does the character do? How does he/she behave?
- ☉ What does the character look like? Dress like?

Character Traits are descriptive adjectives that tell us specific qualities of a character:

Speaking Activities-1:  
Stories, Dialogues,  
Role Playing, Debates

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Honest<br>Light-hearted<br>Leader<br>Expert<br>Brave<br>Conceited/ Arrogant<br>Mischievous<br>Demanding<br>Thoughtful<br>Keen<br>Happy<br>Disagreeable<br>Simple<br>Fancy<br>Plain<br>Excited<br>Studious<br>Inventive<br>Creative<br>Thrilling<br>Humble<br>Friendly<br>Short<br>Adventurous<br>Hard-working<br>Timid<br>Shy<br>Bold<br>Daring<br>Dainty/ Delicate<br>Pitiful<br>Cooperative | Bright<br>Courageous<br>Serious<br>Funny<br>Humorous<br>Sad<br>Poor<br>Rich<br>Tall<br>Dark<br>Light<br>Handsome<br>Pretty<br>Ugly<br>Selfish<br>Independent<br>Intelligent<br>Compassionate<br>Gentle<br>Proud<br>Wild<br>Messy<br>Neat<br>Joyful<br>Strong<br>Lovable<br>Prim/Moralistic<br>Proper | Ambitious<br>Able<br>Quiet<br>Curious<br>Reserved<br>Pleasing<br>Bossy<br>Witty<br>Fighter<br>Tireless<br>Energetic<br>Cheerful<br>Smart<br>Impulsive<br>Loyal Unselfish<br>Self-confident<br>Respectful<br>Considerate<br>Imaginative<br>Busy<br>Patriotic<br>Fun-loving<br>Popular<br>Successful<br>Responsible<br>Lazy<br>Dreamer<br>Helpful<br>Simple-minded |
|---|--|--|

3) **Plot** is a series of events and character actions that relate to the central conflict. Every story needs a plot! The plot has different parts:

Exposition: the start of the story, before the action starts

Rising Action: the series of events and conflicts in the story that lead to the climax

Climax: the turning point, the most intense moment – either mentally or in action

Falling Action: all of the action which follows the climax

Resolution: the conclusion, the tying together of all of the threads

## Plot Structure Components

**Climax:** The turning point; the most intense moment in the story.

**Rising Action:** Something that creates suspense, usually an obstacle that makes the conflict more complicated.

**Falling Action:** all of the action which follows the Climax.

**Conflict:** Every story needs a conflict or a problem that needs to be resolved

**Exposition:** The way things are before the action starts (who what where when).

**Resolution:** The conclusion of the story, the tying together of all of the threads.

The climax is the most exciting part!!

Special Techniques of Plot:

- Suspense - excitement or tension
- Flashback - interrupts the normal sequence of events to tell about something that happened in the past
- Surprise Ending - conclusion that reader does not expect
- And ... Foreshadowing... (A hint about what will happen next is called foreshadowing).

- 4) **Conflict** is a problem or struggle between two people, things or ideas. The main character is usually on one side of the central conflict. On the other side, the main character may struggle against another important character, against the forces of nature, against society, or even against something inside himself or herself (feelings, emotions, illness).

Conflict isn't always bad... sometimes it helps to create change.

Without conflict, there is no plot. In literature, conflict arises when there's a struggle between two opposing forces. One of the forces may be an idea, community, environment or supporting character. Conflict, whether it's external or internal, is the central action that gives a story a plot. Without it, a work may not be of much interest to an audience.

### Types of Conflict

- i) Character vs. Character: problem with another character
- ii) Character vs. Nature: problem with force of nature
- iii) Character vs. Society: problem with the laws or beliefs of a group (character vs. community, society or culture)

- iv) Character vs. Self: problem with deciding what to do or think (inner conflict)
- v) Character versus Fate: When a character battles fate, one faces an internal conflict with a problem that seems uncontrollable. With this element of conflict, the character may fight one's destiny or follow an unknown destiny. Sometimes the problem presents itself as unusual or unbelievable coincidences.

**5) Theme** is the central idea or belief in a short story. It is usually a fictional piece that may or may not be inspired by real life incidents. It helps to enhance: language skills, imagination and creativity. To develop a theme, follow the following steps:

**Step 1: Find your story a protagonist**

1. What does the protagonist want?
2. What action should/will the protagonist take to accomplish his or her goal?
3. What unexpected hindrances arrive, that creates some emotional upheaval for the protagonist?
4. Focus on details like dialogue, facial expressions, location and background characters.
5. How does your protagonist overcome the conflict?

**Step 2: Write a catchy first paragraph**

1. First line should capture the reader's mind.
2. Focus on an unexpected or unusual action or a conflict right at the beginning.

For example:

I heard my neighbor through the wall.

The neighbor behind us practiced scream therapy in his shower almost every day.

The first time I heard him, I stood in the bathroom listening at our shared wall for ten minutes, debating the wisdom of calling the police. It was very different from living in the duplex over middle-aged Mr. and Mrs. Brown and their two young sons in Duluth.

Now practice all the elements of story with the help of the following three activities:

**Activity 1: Finding Stories in Songs**

Find and learn songs which tell a story. Folk ballads to contemporary songs often suggest a larger tale. Listen to records and then have students retell the story in the song in their own words. Or have a "storysong" concert.

**Activity 2: The Autobiography of Anything**

Everything has a story! Everything comes, in its elemental origin, from the Earth. Imagine the life story of the "things" around you. Describe their history backwards through the personal use, purchase, manufacture, to natural resources from which it or its components were made. Personify the thing and tell its story like an autobiography.

Example:

1. Tell the tale of a piece of newspaper back to the tree in the forest.
2. Tell the tale of a plastic toy's life, tracing its history back to the oil that became plastic and then back to the prehistoric plants that created the oil.

**Activity 3:** Travel through the sections below and choose one or several elements from each. Tell, write or verbally improvise a story that utilizes all the elements chosen. For improvisational fun, put each element on a card and randomly select a character, a setting, a problem and a solution.

Introduce Character(s)

Choose one or more characters.

- girl
- boy
- animal
- man
- woman
- idea
- spirit
- machine
- thing
- plant, etc.

Setting

Environment:

Time:

- farm
- village
- otherworldly
- city
- mountains
- forest
- arctic
- ocean
- desert
- olden
- modern
- future

Problem:

In trouble:

- Caught stealing
- Told a lie
- Saw or heard a secret
- Lost something
- Been captured
- Under a spell or curse
- Goes to forbidden place
- Finds forbidden object
- Has enemy
- Is undervalued
- Is unrecognized
- Causes jealousy
- Forgets something
- Broke something
- Does not like something
- Needs something
- Needs to escape or hide
- Needs to rescue someone
- Needs to rescue something
- Needs to prove worth

#### Inner Traits

##### Inner Traits That Cause Trouble:    Inner Traits That Aid Solution:

- |                              |                  |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| • Is greedy                  | • Is courageous  |
| • Dangerously curious        | • Is resourceful |
| • Doesn't follow advice      | • Is imaginative |
| • Is lazy                    | • Is kind        |
| • Is pessimistic             | • Is generous    |
| • Is blindly in love         | • Is clever      |
| • Is enraged & seeks revenge | • Is loyal       |
| • Is naive & trusting        | • Is strong      |
| • Is clumsy                  | • Is optimistic  |
| • Is untrained               |                  |
| • Lacks confidence           |                  |
| • Is foolish                 |                  |

#### Solution

- Has helper
  - Magical

- Non-magical
- Is rescued
- Is transformed
- Discovers skill
- Finds magic
- Helps self:
  - Exercises cleverness
  - Uses inner traits
- Journey undertaken to obtain solution

#### Conclusion

- Returns to original setting new in some way:
  - Is rewarded
  - Is wiser
  - Is transformed
  - Comes with gift or treasure

#### End

- Lives well
- Passes luck or reward on to others
- Has positive impact on the world
- Offers wisdom

Like storytelling, dialogues and role playing also help in improving speaking skills. We will discuss them in the next section.

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### **3.3 DIALOGUES AND ROLEPLAYING**

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Practicing dialogues is a great way for English students to test their skills and develop a better grasp of the language. Dialogues are useful for a number of reasons:

- Dialogues provide models on which students can base their own conversations.
- Dialogues force students to focus on language production in a way that helps them practice correct usage.
- Student-created dialogues can be used to encourage creativity.
- Dialogues can be used as a basis for listening to comprehension exercises.

Using dialogues would help you to develop conversation skills, which is a common practice in most English classes. There are a number of different ways to go about incorporating dialogues into classroom activities. The suggestions below encourage students to role-play and practice new tenses, structures, and language functions. Once students become familiar with these new language elements, they can then use the dialogues as models to practice

writing and speaking on their own. Let's practice dialogues with the following activities:

### Activity: Conversing

For this activity, any two students will come up to the front of the classroom and the tutor will give them an interesting situation (i.e. the two students just got into a car accident or one student just broke up with her boyfriend).

The two students then converse, but as they carry on their conversation the first word, each student says, has to start with a specific letter of the alphabet (ABC order). For instance, if the situation is that a girl just broke up with her boyfriend, the conversation might go as:

Student 1 has letter A: Are you serious? You guys really broke up?

Student 2 has letter B: Brian was driving me crazy. I couldn't take it anymore.

Student 1 has letter C: Couldn't you just wait one more week? His birthday is Wednesday.

Student 2 has letter D: Don't try to make me feel bad about this.

Note: Don't allow audience participation and require students to keep the conversation on topic.

Continue until the students can't think of something to say or mess up on the letter. Have a couple of groups go and vary the situations. After a few groups, talk to students about what dialogue is and why natural dialogue (unlike what they just witnessed) is important in writing.

Watch the following video for introduction to dialogue concepts: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jvl6yoHuk6Y>

Use the dialogue rules discussed in this video to properly punctuate and format the dialogue.

Now you can read the following conversations and practice the dialogues through role play in pairs:

### A Bank Clerk and a Bank Customer

**Bank Clerk:** Good morning, welcome to the Grammar Bank. How can I help you?

**Customer:** Good morning. I would like to open a bank account.

**Bank Clerk:** Sure thing. What kind of account would you like to open? A savings account or a checking account?

**Customer:** What's the difference?

**Bank Clerk:** A checking account is designed to use for everyday transactions. Yet, the money in a savings account is meant to stay in the account and earn interest over time.



**Customer:** I see, actually I want to apply for a credit card. That's why I need an account.

**Bank Clerk:** Okay then, you probably want a checking account.

**Customer:** Well, thank you. I'd like that.

**Bank Clerk:** Sure, we will have you fill out an application form, please.

**Customer:** No problem.

**Bank Clerk:** How much of a credit limit were you looking for?

**Customer:** I would like a \$10,000 spending limit.

**Bank Clerk:** Alright, we will see what we can do. We might be able to get you one of our gold cards with a \$10,000 spending limit.

**Customer:** Wonderful. Will I also collect points when I use the card?

**Bank Clerk:** Sure, with our gold card you will get 10 reward points for every dollar spent.

**Customer:** Perfect, I have filled out the form. Do you need anything else?

**Bank Clerk:** You just need to deposit a minimum of \$250 into your new checking account.

**Customer:** Very well, here you are.

**Bank Clerk:** Thank you, your account is set up now and your credit card will be mailed to your address within 5 to 10 business days.

**Customer:** Thank you for your help, have a good day.

**Bank Clerk:** Thank you, you too.

#### **A Check-in Agent and a Passenger**

**Agent:** Good afternoon, where are you flying to?

**Passenger:** Good afternoon. I am flying to San Francisco.

**Agent:** Do you have your tickets?

**Passenger:** Here is my ticket.

**Agent:** How many people are travelling?

**Passenger:** It's my son and I; he is under two years old.

**Agent:** Can I have your passports and I will need to see his birth certificate to prove that he is less than two years of age.

**Passenger:** Sure. Here they are.

**Agent:** Would you like a window or an aisle seat?

**Passenger:** I would be very happy if we can get an aisle seat. I may have to walk him around if he gets bored.

**Agent:** Alright, I'll put you near the restrooms too.

**Passenger:** Wonderful, thanks. Is it possible to check in the stroller?

**Agent:** Sure, are you checking in any bags?

**Passenger:** Yes, this suitcase and my backpack.

**Agent:** Let's put them on the scale, one at a time, please.

**Passenger:** Sure. And by the way, I have a layover in London. Do I have to pick up my luggage there?

**Agent:** No, you will pick them up in San Francisco. Here is your boarding pass. You are all set. Be at the gate at least 45 minutes prior to the departure time.

**Passenger:** Thank you for your help, have a good day.

**Agent:** Thank you, have a nice flight.

### **A Receptionist and a Client**

**Receptionist:** Hi, welcome to the Grammar Bank Hotel. How can I help you?

**Client:** Hi, I would like a room for tonight. Do you have any vacancies?

**Receptionist:** Yes sir, would you like a single room, or a double room?

**Client:** A single room, please.

**Receptionist:** How long will you be staying?

**Client:** For three nights.

**Receptionist:** Okay, would you like a king size bed or a queen size?

**Client:** Well, king size bed, please.

**Receptionist:** Smoking, non-smoking?

**Client:** Non-smoking.

**Receptionist:** Sure, and would you rather have a room with a view of the ocean or the forest?

**Client:** It doesn't really matter to me, whichever one is cheaper.

**Receptionist:** Sure, it's going to be \$55 per night. Can I have your ID, please?

**Client:** Here it is.

**Receptionist:** Alright, could you sign here, please?

**Client:** No problem. Do you accept American Express?

**Receptionist:** Sure, any Visa, Master Card or American Express.

**Client:** Perfect, here is my card.

**Receptionist:** Thank you. Is there a phone number where you can be contacted?

**Client:** Yes, it is 333-3333.

**Receptionist:** Okay. Here's your key. Your room number is 276. It's on the 2nd floor; you can take the elevators behind us. If you need anything, just dial 9 for the reception.

**Client:** Thank you for your help.

**Receptionist:** My pleasure. Enjoy your stay!

**Two Students (at University)**

**Nadia:** Hello, my name is Nadia. Welcome to our university.

**Alicia:** Hi, I am Alicia.

**Nadia:** Nice to meet you.

**Alicia:** Nice to meet you too.

**Nadia:** Where are you from Alicia?

**Alicia:** I am from Nicaragua, how about you?

**Nadia:** I'm from France.

**Alicia:** Is this your first time in London?

**Nadia:** No, I have been living in London for about three years now.

**Alicia:** I see, have you been studying here for all that time?

**Nadia:** Yes, this is my third year here; I have got one more year to go.

**Alicia:** What are you studying?

**Nadia:** I'm studying English Literature. I want to be a linguist. How about you?

**Alicia:** Sounds cool. I want to be a school teacher.

**Nadia:** That's great!

**Alicia:** I have always wanted to study abroad, so I came to London.

**Nadia:** Nice! Yeah, I love it here, I am actually planning to live here even after I graduate.

**Alicia:** Perfect, you are already from Europe, so it shouldn't be that difficult for you.

**Nadia:** Yeah, I will just need to convince my parents, what about you?

**Alicia:** I love London, but I am just here for school, I will need to go back once I graduate anyway.

**Nadia:** I see, well, good luck to you, I have to go to class now, and it was nice talking with you.

**Alicia:** Thank you! You too, and have a good class.

**Nadia:** Good-bye!

**A Steakhouse Waitress and Customers**

**Waitress:** Good evening, welcome to GB Steakhouse, I will be your server tonight.

**Customers:** Hello, how are you?

**Waitress:** I am great, thank you for asking, can I get you started with something to drink?

**Customers:** Yes, can we get two red wines and water please?

**Waitress:** Sure, I will be right back with your drinks.

**Customers:** Thank you, and can we get an extra menu as well?

**Waitress:** Certainly! (she leaves...)

**Waitress:** Here is your wine. Are you ready to order?

**Customers:** Yes, we are. What does the New York steak come with?

**Waitress:** It comes with veggies and mashed potatoes.

**Customers:** Okay, I will have the New York steak.

**Waitress:** Of course, and how would you like your steak cooked?

**Customers:** Well done, please.

**Waitress:** Sure, how about you ma'am?

**Customers:** Can I have Caesar salad with chicken, please?

**Waitress:** Absolutely. And what will you have for the little guy?

**Customers:** Could we have macaroni and cheese for him?

**Waitress:** Sure! And would you like anything to drink mister?

**Customers:** Just water.

**Waitress:** Great! I will be back with your orders.

**Customers:** Perfect...

**Waitress:** Here are your orders! Enjoy your meal...

**Waitress:** How is everything so far?

**Customers:** Great thanks, can we get the check, please?

**Waitress:** Certainly...

**Customers:** Here is your bill; you can pay at the cashier whenever you are ready.

**Waitress:** Thank you.

**Waitress:** Thank you; enjoy the rest of your evening.

### **A Pharmacist and a Customer**

**Pharmacist:** Good morning. How can I help you?

**Customer:** Good morning, I have this prescription.

**Pharmacist:** Let me see. Okay, I think we have it. Let me get that for you...

**Pharmacist:** Here you go.

**Customer:** Oh, Thank God. You are the fifth pharmacist that I have asked for it today.

**Pharmacist:** I am glad that we can help you.

**Customer:** Thank you, and can you tell me how I should use it?

**Pharmacist:** Certainly! You need to take these pills once a day before you go to sleep.

**Customer:** Okay, how long do I need to take them for?

**Pharmacist:** Ten days for this one. It's important that you finish all the package, if you forget to take it at night, you need to take two in the morning.

**Customer:** Okay, is it safe to take with aspirin?

**Pharmacist:** No, you cannot take aspirin while you are on this, no painkillers allowed.

**Customer:** I see, are there any side effects?

**Pharmacist:** Rare but possible drowsiness, dizziness, blurred vision, upset stomach, nausea, nervousness, constipation... It is recommended that you avoid physically demanding activities after taking this; also, no driving.

**Customer:** Oh, now I see why I should take it before I go to sleep.

**Pharmacist:** Exactly!

**Customer:** Well, okay then. Can I pay with my card?

**Pharmacist:** Sure! That will be \$14. Is there anything else I can help you with?

**Customer:** No, that would be all, thank you.

**Pharmacist:** You are welcome, here is your receipt.

**Customer:** Thank you for your help, have a good day.

**Pharmacist:** Thank you, you too.

#### **A Police Officer and a Tourist**

**Tourist:** Excuse me officer, I think I am lost. Can you help me find my hotel, please?

**Officer:** Certainly, What's the name of your hotel?

**Tourist:** It's the Grammar Bank Hotel.

**Officer:** Hmm, I think I know where it is.

**Tourist:** Is it far?

**Officer:** No, not really. Do you have a car, are you driving?

**Tourist:** No, I don't have a car.

**Officer:** Okay, actually it's only about 10 minutes' walk. But if you want, I can call you a cab.

**Tourist:** No, thank you. I don't mind walking.

**Officer:** Okay then, let me give you the directions.

**Tourist:** Thank you. I appreciate that.

**Officer:** Now, go along this street until you get to the Bank. Do you see the tall building?

**Tourist:** Yeah.

**Officer:** So, at the traffic lights there, turn left to Great Sheva Avenue.

**Tourist:** Okay, I will turn left.

**Officer:** Correct. Then go straight on, take the second right and that should take you to the Grammar Bank Hotel.

**Tourist:** Okay, I will take the second left.

**Officer:** No, it's the second right.

**Tourist:** Ah, right. The second right!

**Officer:** Yes sir, left at the traffic lights near the bank and then the second right.

**Tourist:** Got it, thank you very much for your help.

**Officer:** No problem, have a nice day.

### **A Cashier and a Customer**

**Cashier:** Hello, may I take your order?

**Customer:** Hi, I'll have a double cheeseburger.

**Cashier:** With everything on it?

**Customer:** No onions, please.

**Cashier:** Sure, would you like the combo deal or just the sandwich?

**Customer:** How much is the combo?

**Cashier:** The combo is \$4.99; it comes with medium fries and drink.

**Customer:** Okay, let's change it to a combo then.

**Cashier:** Certainly, what would you like to drink?

**Customer:** Coke, please.

**Cashier:** Diet Coke or regular?

**Customer:** Regular.

**Cashier:** Of course, would you like anything else?

**Customer:** No, that'll be all. Thanks.

**Cashier:** For here or to go?

**Customer:** For here.

**Cashier:** That will be \$5.45 please.

**Customer:** Thank you. Here you go.

### **An Interviewer and an Interviewee**

**Interviewer:** Welcome to ABC Controls, David. I am Tom.

**Interviewee:** Hello, it's nice to meet you.

**Interviewer:** Nice to meet you too, how are you doing today?

**Interviewee:** I am doing well, and yourself?

**Interviewer:** Great, thanks. I hope we didn't keep you waiting for long?

**Interviewee:** No, I had the chance to talk to one of your engineers while waiting.

**Interviewer:** That's good. David, shall we start?

**Interviewee:** Yeah, sure.

**Interviewer:** First of all, let me introduce myself. I am the manager of our engineering department here and we have an open position, so we have been interviewing applicants to fill the position as quickly as possible.

**Interviewee:** Yes sir, I read about the position on your website, and I think I am a good fit.

**Interviewer:** We currently have several ongoing projects and the team is working hard. We are hoping to keep busy for a long time.

**Interviewee:** What are the essential qualifications required for the position?

**Interviewer:** This is an entry-level engineering position; we do provide a lot of training here. But we do require that you have at least a bachelor's degree in computer engineering. Previous experience in the field is a plus.

**Interviewee:** What kind of experience would you count as a work in the field?

**Interviewer:** Even though we provide training, it would be great if you had some hands-on programming experience, knowledge of database systems or skills on developing applications.

**Interviewee:** My final school project was actually developing a mobile application, so I am fairly competent in developing mobile and web applications.

**Interviewer:** That's good to hear, which school did you graduate from?

**Interviewee:** I was a student at DEF University, and I graduated with a bachelor degree in computer science. I worked as a computer lab tutor in school for about 2 years. Guiding students through their projects helped me get experience in several programming languages.

**Interviewer:** What are you looking for in a job?

**Interviewee:** The job should definitely help me grow in my career. I will be happy to learn and grow as I work in a passionate company like yours.

**Interviewer:** You are right. There is plenty of room for advancement in our company. What are your strengths? Why should I hire you?

**Interviewee:** I am a diligent person and a fast learner. I am very eager to learn. My friends also find me very easy to work with.

**Interviewer:** Very well. Now, do you mind working overtime?

**Interviewee:** No, I do not.

**Interviewer:** Because, sometimes we get overwhelmed with heavy workload.

**Interviewee:** I understand that's the nature of the job. When I was going to school, I took quite a few courses each semester while working at least twenty hours every week. And, I handled that situation very well.

**Interviewer:** Do you have any questions for me?

**Interviewee:** No, I think I have a pretty good understanding of the requirements. I believe that I can handle it with ease, and the fact that you provide all the training sounds excellent. I hope to have the opportunity to work for you.

**Interviewer:** David, it is nice to meet you. I can tell that you are a good candidate. Expect to hear from us within a week or so about the job.

**Interviewee:** Nice meeting you too. Thank you for your time.

**Interviewer:** Thank you for coming.

Hope these dialogues and role playing will help you to speak clearly, effectively and fluently. Now, in the next section we will discuss how debates can also be used as a speaking activity.

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### 3.4 DEBATES

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A debate is a competition in which two opposing teams make speeches on a particular topic and motion to support their arguments and contradict the members of the other team.

A debate in class can be based on a specific topic and not only strengthens language skills and vocabulary but also critical thinking on the part of the students.

There should also be a judges' table made up of 3-4 students who will be evaluating the whole process and assessing each team based on certain criteria. The judges—not the teacher—are the ones who will grade both teams and finally decide on the winner. In other words, the teacher should play the role of the coordinator, thus allowing students to feel independent, comfortable with the process and responsible for following the rules and guidelines.

Well, obviously, **speaking skills** are strengthened throughout a debate. Students learn how to improve oral skills not only by using appropriate phrases and structures but also by trying to use **argumentative language**.

Team members will soon find that they cannot persuade the judges by using simple phrases or repeating the same expressions ("I think," "I believe") all the time. They have to use more elaborate language and therefore learn it.

**Listening skills** also benefit from this process since team members and judges learn to listen to one another carefully and understand their points of view, no matter the accent or intonation. They should be paying close attention in order to gather information for their own opposing statements and arguments.

**Writing skills** are strengthened when team members and judges are asked to take notes and write their arguments in the given worksheets (should you



choose to give them). Furthermore, you can be asked to write an essay as a follow-up assignment based on the topic you have finished debating for or against. Do not forget that both the note-taking and essay-writing techniques can boost your skills and confidence.

**Reading skills** can be enhanced while students are preparing their arguments by reading articles and websites and are learning how to evaluate these sources.

**Critical thinking** in the foreign language is enhanced more than anything else. Every step of the process encourages students to be critical thinkers, pull points together logically and express their ideas in a clear manner. They even need to pay close attention to identify the gaps in other people's thinking. This will aid them in every area of language and life, from test-taking to securing a new job.

Okay now. Let's see how a debate is performed step by step.

First, you need to find a **topic** or **motion** that you will not only enjoy but will also be able to build arguments upon. For instance, a topic could be as easy as "paper books vs. e-books" or as demanding as "should animals be used for medical experiments?"

Afterwards, you will **form teams**. You might be given the chance to choose, or you might get divided up based on your personal feelings about the issue at hand. You may also ask your tutor to randomly assign teams. Be sure to choose the judges' panel as well.

**Study the topic and find relevant sources** at home or in the school library before the debate takes place in class. Studying the topic at home and evaluating sources is an absolutely valuable assignment for students.

On the day of the debate students sit in their teams: The team "for" and the team "against" the topic. A common phrase to use before starting the debate is the following: "This house believes that...". For example, "This house believes that animals should not be used for medical experiments."

While sitting in their places, team members can choose their **key speaker**, who will give them a main introduction and conclusion, even though they can decide whether they all take their turns to speak.

All team members have their own materials (handouts, sets of rules, objection cards). Likewise, the judges sit at their table where they have their own materials (a clock, a bell or a buzzer, their name tags, a set of rules and handouts for their evaluation/grades).

At this point, I have to underline that **class size** matters; obviously, when you have a class of 30 students, things are much different than they would be with a class of 10, but this should not scare you away. In a large class, things need to be **organized** more carefully. There could be 4 smaller teams instead of two, with the talking time of each team decreased.

Now let me give you some nice topics that can be used in class for practicing debates.

- **Teachers can be replaced by computers.**

**Pro:** Teachers can be subjective and unfair to students whereas computers are not. Teachers can make mistakes whereas computers will never give you a wrong answer.

**Con:** Teachers can understand the student's emotions and help them with these, whereas a computer only expects the right answer.

- **School uniforms should be compulsory.**

**Pro:** No need to buy new modern clothes all the time.

**Con:** It is better to retain your own style at school.

- **It is more fun to be an adult than a child.**

**Pro:** Adulthood comes with independence, a job, your own money, romance.

**Con:** Adulthood comes with lots of responsibilities, stress and old age. Childhood is more carefree.

- **E-books are better than paper books.**

**Pro:** E-books are huge space savers, more convenient, cheaper and more environmentally friendly.

**Con:** E-books can break, get stolen, have their batteries die while you are reading and they can cause eye strain.

- **Social media decreases human communication.**

**Pro:** Online communication cannot be compared to face-to-face interaction. It can be fake, dangerous and does not rely on genuine emotions.

**Con:** It is easier, more convenient, faster to talk to friends and learn to communicate with people abroad using social media, so it improves and increases human communication.

The list can go on and on...The topics are just countless!

### **Debate Structure:**

Both teams (for and against the motion) take about 10 minutes to work silently amongst themselves so as to prepare their **initial statements** and **their arguments**. The judges (or the teacher) let the students know of the **stages** below and the duration of each stage. In particular, the stages are the following:

- 1) **Constructive stage** (10-12 minutes): The key speaker of each team presents their introductory statements and then they reinforce their affirmative or negative arguments respectively. This phase could last from 10'-12' on the whole. While listening to their opponents, team members have to take notes about the arguments they heard so as to contradict them in the next phase.

- 2) **Rebuttal stage** (15-20 minutes): The “pro” team refutes the opposing team’s arguments and vice versa. This is the phase when team members can use their red objection cards to ask an extra question or refute the argument the opponents have just expressed.
- 3) **Closing statements** (2-3 minutes): This phase can be described as the conclusion to the whole procedure. After the exchange of ideas and arguments, students summarize their final statements and try to show the judges why they should be the winning team.
- 4) **Judges’ questions** (5 minutes): This is an interesting phase when each judge addresses one final question to each team. Those questions are based on what teams have presented so far and can be tricky and difficult so that judges can decide on the strongest team.

Throughout each debate, there is a clear set of rules that all students have to follow. The most important rule in any class debate is to **show respect**. Each participant must show respect to the opposite team and the judges. Other rules could be the following:

- Respect time limits and talk only when it is your turn to do so.
- Plagiarism is not accepted.
- If you have a source, mention it.
- You can use your objection cards only once.
- Speak clearly and loudly.
- Don’t look at your note cards while speaking.

#### **Assessment of Debates**

Some of the criteria which are easy and effective for judges to use are the following:

- Clear voice
- Clear way to express their arguments
- Organized thoughts
- Strong opening and/or closing statements
- Effective use of argumentative language
- Effective use of key language structures
- Equal participation of all team members
- Strong arguments, well thought-out statements
- Effective rebuttal
- Respect shown to the judges and the opponents
- Teamwork amongst members of the same team
- No breaking of the rules

If you want to offer your students a more surprising and more demanding debate, don’t tell them what the topic is beforehand but ask one of them to choose one slip of paper from a box where you have written random topics.

This way, the whole process gets a mysterious and unexpected touch that students love.

What is more, finding arguments and using more complex structures to express their viewpoints on an unexpected topic could make it more difficult but also more challenging.

All in all, debates in classes are valuable tools to not only involve your students in a beneficial learning process but also to enliven your lesson.

Once you and your students get hooked, feel free to jump a few steps further with this. You can organize competitions between two classes in your school or even between debate teams of your school and a neighboring school. In this case, you can ask students who do not take part in the competition to play the role of the audience who can also critically ask a couple of questions to the team speakers.

The whole debate might look like this:

- 1) Teacher introduces the debate and reads the motion: "This house believes..."
- 2) 'For' team - turn 1
- 3) 'Against' team - turn 1
- 4) 'For' team - turn 2
- 5) 'Against' team - turn 2
- 6) 'For' team - turn 3
- 7) 'Against' team - turn 3
- 8) 'For' team - final remarks, closing arguments
- 9) 'Against' team - final remarks, closing arguments
- 10) Voting by the audience (if you have one), or a decision by the teacher.

### Voting

**If you are the sole 'voter', then your decision may well be a difficult one.** Try to remain dispassionate, and to base your choice on a combination of factors:

- The level of vocabulary used
- Accurate use of advanced structures
- Confidence, eye contact and posture
- How well prepared was the team? Did they use the preparation time well? Was there evidence of a variety of sources being used? Did they pre-empt their opposition's points?
- Was the team respectful and did they follow the format correctly?
- Most importantly, did they make *genuinely persuasive* arguments, with evidence of some originality of thought?

**Consider recording the debate for later playback and analysis; this would be a great source for error correction and pronunciation work.**

Organizing debates is popular and can be a positive and rigorous work-out for some essential skills; equally importantly, they're genuinely educational and great fun. Now, let's check your progress in the next section.

**A.** Complete the intermediate level conversations correctly by choosing the best options.

1) Allen: Bad news! The new manager is an anti-smoker. Nora: ——

- a) That sounds good.
- b) I believe he will get used to it.
- c) Could you tell me how you found the new boss?
- d) Oh really, then you mean he won't allow us to smoke.
- e) Are you satisfied with that choice?

2) Alicia: ——

Paul: I know but there is nothing better to buy.

- a) I don't think this shirt is worth buying.
- b) Have you found a gift for your dad?
- c) Do you know that I love reading?
- d) I have already posted the letters.
- e) Are you going to buy it?

3) Derek: Was Melissa with you yesterday?

Pete: ——

- a) Yes, he was so excited.
- b) No, but I just wonder if he is OK.
- c) No, but apart from her, everybody was there.
- d) She will join us soon.
- e) She may come, but I am not sure.

4) Ruth: Hi Maria, how are you?

Maria: Hi Ruth, I am doing good?

Ruth: ——

Maria: Yes, I'd love to. What time?

- a) What are you doing tomorrow?
- b) Are you busy?
- c) Would you like to have a dinner with me tonight?
- d) Do you have any plans for this afternoon?
- e) What would you like to do?

5) Henry: I love your cake; it's so delicious. Is it hard to make it?

Sandra: No, not at all. It's very easy actually and it always works.

Henry: ——

Sandra: Of course, I can.

- a) Can I have the recipe please?
- b) Can you teach me how to make it?
- c) Would you like some more?
- d) Why don't you eat it?
- e) I have already finished it.

### Check Your Progress 2

A. Read the dialogues and choose the most appropriate options to complete the dialogues.

- 1) Doctor: Take this medicine for a week and you'll start to feel better.

Patient: ——

Doctor: Are you sure? It's the best on the market.

Patient: Yes, I am. Can you please prescribe another one?

- a) What shall I do if unexpected side effects arise?
  - b) What is the ideal dosage for my weight?
  - c) No, it's too early to prescribe another medicine.
  - d) But I've used it before and it did not help at all.
  - e) It looks as if the illness has already been cured.
- 2) Jake: How did you like the movie you saw last night?

Karen: I can't say it was the best I've ever seen.

Jake: ——

Karen: Certainly not. Do not waste your time.

- a) Did you go alone or with a friend from work?
  - b) Hadn't you read the reviews before you went to see it?
  - c) What do you mean by saying it depends?
  - d) I knew I could always count on you.
  - e) Then you wouldn't recommend it, would you?
- 3) Father: What? You crashed the car again?

Son: ——

Father: I'm sure it wasn't. This is the third accident you have had this year.

Son: You're very angry now, dad. We had better talk about this later on.

- a) I do apologize. I promise it won't happen again.
- b) Was the car in good condition?
- c) But it wasn't my fault. You've got to believe me.

- d) Was it worth the money and time you had wasted?
- e) Why do you ask? Don't you know it's too late now?

4) Chuck: \_\_\_\_\_

Sue: Why do you think so?

Chuck: Whenever we meet, she pretends not to see me.

Sue: I don't think it's because she hasn't got over her anger. She's having a bad time at work nowadays.

- a) It seems that Martha is still angry with me.
- b) Martha will never make a good manager.
- c) I have never seen a smarter woman than Martha.
- d) One thing that I especially like about Martha is her sincerity.
- e) Martha has finally managed to get over her resentment.

5) Tom: \_\_\_\_\_

Mary: Are you kidding? We are in June.

Tom: So, what? What's wrong with June?

Mary: The right time to trim your roses is the beginning of winter, when they lose their flowers.

- a) Are you going to plant those roses in your garden in June or July?
- b) Can you help me prune the roses in the garden at the weekend?
- c) I didn't know your brother knew so much about gardening.
- d) Have you got any idea what the right time is to shorten rose plants?
- e) Are we supposed to do anything special to keep the roses fresh?

### Check Your Progress 3

A) Complete the dialogues with appropriate sentences.

1) Nina: \_\_\_\_\_

Mark: That's because they never stop criticizing me.

Nina: Why don't you try telling them how you feel about it?

Mark: Do you think I haven't? They just don't care about how I feel.

- a) Why are you always complaining about your parents?
- b) What's the reason for her aggressive behavior?
- c) Why are the policemen running around?
- d) What makes you think that the exam questions will be difficult?
- e) Are your parents aware of the problems you are going through?

2) Peter: \_\_\_\_\_

Andrew: No, I'm okay. I can wait until the end of the meeting.

Peter: I don't think so. You can't keep your eyes open.

Andrew: I guess you're right. I'll see you tomorrow.

- a) Are you feeling better today than yesterday?
- b) Can you tell me why you're smiling all the time?
- c) Is it possible for you to wait for the end of the meeting?
- d) You had better go home and take a rest.
- e) Do you mind if I ask you a personal question?

3) Penny: \_\_\_\_\_

Dana: But it's not enough if you want to lose weight.

Penny: I know, but it's only a beginning.

Dana: Sure, it's better than doing nothing.

- a) The dietician said I need to lose ten pounds.
- b) I've decided not to go to the gym anymore.
- c) I've stopped eating bread.
- d) The new chef is really good at making snacks.
- e) I've sold my tennis rackets.

4) Sandra: \_\_\_\_\_

George: Then you should start wearing glasses.

Sandra: I already have contact lenses, but still I can't see clearly.

George: It's time you changed them, then.

- a) When did you last go to an eye doctor?
- b) Should I tell my grandmother to see an optician?
- c) I can't see the sentences on the board.
- d) Are you able to see better now?
- e) This pain in my back is killing me.

5) Chris: Shall we leave the car here and walk?

Nick: I don't think we should, because the bank is almost five hundred meters from here.

Chris: \_\_\_\_\_

Nick: I don't care. I can't walk up to the bank in this weather.

- a) It may take more than an hour to walk to the bank.
- b) They've decided to open a new branch near here?
- c) Normally, I walked to school from home.
- d) But it's very difficult to find a parking place near the bank
- e) I agree. The bank will have been closed by then.



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### 3.5 LET US SUM UP

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Speaking is a very important part of second language learning. The ability to communicate in a second language clearly and efficiently contributes to the success of the learner in school and success later in every phase of life. Therefore, it is essential that language learners shall pay great attention to practice speaking. Rather than simply memorizing, one should attempt to have a rich environment where meaningful communication can take place. With this aim, various speaking activities such as those listed above can contribute a great deal to develop basic interactive skills that are necessary for life. These activities will make you more active in the learning process and at the same time make your learning more meaningful and fun for you.

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### 3.6 SUGGESTED READINGS

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If you would like to explore more speaking activities in English, you may consult:

Grant Taylor, *English Conversation Practice* (New York: McGraw Hill Education, 1967)

Jean Yates, *Practice Makes Perfect Series: English Conversation Second Edition* (New York: McGraw Hill Education, 2016)

Jill Hadfield & Charles Hadfield, *Oxford basics: Simple Speaking Activities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000)

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### 3.7 ANSWERS

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#### Check Your Progress 1

A. 1. d, 2. a, 3. c, 4. c, 5. b

#### Check Your Progress 2

A. 1. d, 2. e, 3. c, 4. a, 5. b

#### Check Your Progress 3

A. 1. a, 2. d, 3. c, 4. c, 5. d

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## **UNIT 4 SPEAKING ACTIVITIES – 2: PARTICIPATING IN DISCUSSIONS, MEETINGS, PRESENTATIONS**

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### **Structure**

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Group Discussions
- 4.3 Meetings
- 4.4 Presentations
- 4.5 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.6 Suggested Readings
- 4.7 Answers

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### **4.0 OBJECTIVES**

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After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

- know about how to actively participate in discussions, meetings and presentations;
- understand the importance of verbal and non-verbal communication;
- learn how to present your ideas in front of an audience;
- recognize important pointers to keep in mind for public speaking; and
- comprehend the importance of public speaking.

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### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

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In order to effectively communicate, the participation of students in speaking activities like group discussions, meetings and presentation is very essential. We all know that the fear of Public Speaking is the biggest fear, even bigger than the fear of Death. The main cause of this fear is stage fright. It happens because of several reasons: being in spotlight, unprepared and lack of experience are the most common ones. In this unit, we will try to analyze how for Effective Communication one needs: Preparation, Practice and Presence.

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### **4.2 GROUP DISCUSSIONS**

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The term Group discussion suggests a discussion within a group of people. The group ideally will have 8 to 12 members who express their views freely, frankly in a friendly manner, on a topic of current issue. So, within a time limit of 20 to 30 minutes, the abilities of the members of the group are measured.



### **Why should one learn group discussion skills?**

Developing group discussion skills is useful for everyday life as we regularly find ourselves having discussions amongst friends, family and colleagues. These may vary from very informal chats about day-to-day things, to more serious topics, for example a discussion about a recent news story or a problem that needs to be solved. In both cases, there are a number of specific skills that help to become better and be able to contribute effectively to group discussions.

Additionally, group discussions are increasingly being used in the job market during interviews and selection procedures. Group Discussion is a modern method of assessing students' personality. It is both a technique and an art and a comprehensive tool to judge the worthiness of the student and one's appropriateness for the job. These can take a variety of formats, but the key skills remain very similar.

Last but not the least, group discussions offer an opportunity for extended speaking (and listening!) practice by all of the contributors. Group discussion practice and skill development is therefore useful for all students.

There are some prerequisites of a Group Discussion. The topics are given by panelists; some time for planning and preparation; Knowledge with self-confidence; Communication skills/power of speech; presentation skills; controlled body Language and personal appearance; being calm and cool; extensive knowledge base related to different areas like politics, sports, science, commerce, Industry and Technology, MNC, etc.; analyze the social, economic issues logistically; listening skills and co-operation.

The students have several benefits from Group discussion. They get the stimulation of thinking in a new way; it helps to expand their knowledge; understanding of one's strength and weakness; one's true personality is revealed and qualities of leadership crystallize; provides chance to expose: Language skills, Academic knowledge, Leadership skills, People handling/Managerial skills, Team work and General knowledge.

### **The salient features of Group Discussion are as follows:**

- Topic may be given to judge your public speaking talent.
- Discussion revolves around a specific subject.
- The examiner does not interfere once he/she announces the topic.
- Maintain cordiality and free expression of thought and opinion.

### **Do's in group discussion**

- Speak appropriate to the issue.
- Make original points and support them by substantial reasoning.
- Whatever you say must be with a logical flow and validate it with an example as far as possible.
- Make only accurate statements.
- Modulate the volume, pitch and tone.
- Be considerate to the feelings of the others.
- Try to get your turn to speak.
- Talk with confidence and self-assurance.
- Listen to the other participants actively and carefully.
- Be an active and dynamic participant by listening.

### **Don'ts during group discussion**

- Being shy/nervous/staying isolated from the Group Discussion.
- Interrupting another participant before his arguments are over.
- Speak in favour, for example: establish your position and stand by it stubbornly.
- Frequent change of opinions.
- Don't make fun of any participant even if one's arguments are funny.
- Don't engage yourself in sub-group conversation.
- Don't repeat and use irrelevant materials.
- Addressing yourself to the examiner.
- Worrying about making some grammatical mistakes; for your interest the matter you put across is important.

### **Important points in group discussion:**

- Be assertive: An assertive person is direct, honest and careful about not hurting others 'self-respect'.
- A patient listener: listening to another person is one way of showing appreciation.
- Right language: Words can make friends and right words at the right time make the best results.
- Be analytical and fact-oriented: It is necessary to make relevant points which can be supported with facts and analysed logically.

### **Accept criticism:**

- If any member of the group criticizes or disapproves a point, it is unwise to get upset or react sharply.
- In case the criticism is flimsy, the same can be pointed out politely.
- Maximize participation; one must try to contribute fully, vigorously and steadily throughout the discussion.

- Show leadership ability: A group discussion also evaluates your leadership qualities.
- Accept someone's point of view: Praise the argument.
- Accept the contradictory view: Express your argument with few facts, cases, statistics, newspaper reports, publications, etc.
- Express without hurting others' feelings.

**Some Suggestions:**

- Never try to bluff.
- Practice group discussion with friends on different subjects.
- Remember! Speech is a powerful weapon.

**Types of discussion:**

There are different types of discussions that occur naturally and which we can recreate in the classroom. These include discussions where the participants have to:

- ***Make decisions*** (e.g. decide who to invite to a party and where to seat them)
- ***Give and/or share their opinions on a given topic*** (e.g. discussing beliefs about the effectiveness of capital punishment)
- ***Create something*** (e.g. plan and make a poster as a medium for feedback on a language course)
- ***Solve a problem*** (e.g. discussing the situations behind a series of logic problems)

Some discussion topics may fall into more than one of these categories, but it is useful to consider a variety of formats to which the students can apply the skills they are learning.

**Activity for classroom**

**Useful sub-skills for students**

There are a number of different sub-skills which students will need to be able to use to successfully and effectively participate in a group discussion. Students need to develop the ability to analyze, persuade, control emotion, support, and use functional language.

**Analyze**

This skill can be developed by giving students the topic individually and asking them to brainstorm or mind-map all of the possible sub-topics they could speak about. The students can then swap their notes and assess or analyze the relevance of each of the sub-topics their partners have included. Together, the students then draw up a fresh list or mind-map and discuss how the sub-topics might be linked together, along with examples or reasons for any arguments they might have.

## **Persuade**

This skill comes in useful when students need to make decisions on how to do something (e.g. which candidate should get a job). A fun activity to develop this skill is to give groups of students this topic and ask them to decide on the profile of the perfect candidate, creating a list of 7 adjectives.

The students are then re-grouped and asked to persuade the other members of the group that their selection is the best while compiling a second, negotiated list. The group members who retain the most from their original lists are the winners. Note down useful phrases that you hear the students using while doing this task and discuss these at the end for future reference.

## **Control emotions**

This can be practiced by giving the students a fairly controversial topic, such as 'Friends are more important than family' and asking the students to decide whether they agree, disagree or have no opinion, making notes on their main arguments to support their viewpoint. Divide the students into groups ensuring that there is a mix of views within each group. Explain that for this discussion, the aim is to keep their voices low and try to control their emotions as far as possible. Monitor and give feedback on these areas.

## **Support**

One of the most important things for this skill is for students to learn when it is and isn't appropriate to interrupt and how to do it. Very often students will talk over each other in an effort to get their point across and forget to listen.

To practice this, you can get your students to make a list in small groups of when it is and isn't appropriate to interrupt other speakers. They should include things like 'not appropriate during the middle of a point, if the speaker has not said very much previously, or when you are feeling angry and liable to say something you'll regret'. It is appropriate when the speaker has been dominating the discussion for too long, what the speaker is saying is completely irrelevant to the topic, or you don't understand the point he / she has made'.

You can then give them or elicit a list of phrases which they might use to interrupt politely (e.g. 'Can I just add something here?', 'Sorry I'd just like to clarify something,' etc.) The students then write five of these on slips of paper (one per slip) and have a group discussion on a given topic. The aim is to use all of the language on their slips. When they have used a phrase, they put the slip in the middle of the table. The other students in the group judge whether the interruption was appropriate / polite. If not, they take the slip back and try again.

### Use functional language

Depending on the types of group discussions that you plan to do it is useful to draw up a list of useful functional language expressions to refer to. This could include phrases for functions such as ‘Giving reasons’, ‘Giving your opinion’, ‘Agreeing and disagreeing’, etc.

You can either make up the list yourself and distribute it or get your fellow learners together to do this. For each group discussion, you can then refer them to the appropriate section of the list and use a few moments to consider the language before beginning the discussion.

### Some tips for setting up group discussions (for teachers):

There are several key things to consider when setting up group discussions in the classroom to ensure that they run successfully:

- Give the students some **planning time** either individually or in small groups. Don’t just give them the topic and say ‘go’! It is often useful to discuss some associated vocabulary or functional language that they might find useful.
- **Choose topics** which you are confident your students will find interesting.
- Get them to brainstorm some ideas for discussions they would like to do and use this as a starting point.
- **Ensure a balance** between input and practice.
- Use a **variety of styles/types**.
- **Vary group size** and procedure.

Some companies do selection on the basis of group discussions with very large groups of people – over ten in some cases. If your students will be facing these types of group discussions in the future make sure they get some practice doing them. It can also be useful to mix classes of students so they have practice doing discussions with people they don’t already know.

- Encourage **group discussions outside** class time.

Give students some extra feedback forms to use to give each other input on how they perform in group discussions outside of class.

### Giving and encouraging feedback

Feedback can take several forms and it is a good idea to vary the way it is given. Students can observe each other doing group discussions and give each other feedback on the specific areas of input that has been covered (ideally using a feedback form).

Additionally, students can do a 'Reflective group feedback exercise' where at the end of the group discussion they discuss how effective each of the participants was during the discussion. Again, giving them some focused questions to guide this stage will help them.

- We can try video-taping the group discussions and playing sections of these back to the class to analyze. Some students find this extremely useful.

## **Conclusion**

As we have seen, group discussions can take a variety of formats and are useful for all types of students. They can be done in preparation for job interviews or as extended speaking practice simply to increase fluency.

It is important to consider the different sub-skills that are involved in participating in a group discussion and ensure that you do activities that address each of these. Additionally, structuring and varying the way that feedback is given will help the students to identify areas for improvement.

## **4.3 MEETINGS**

A meeting is a gathering of two or more people who come together for the purpose of achieving a common goal through verbal interaction (use of sounds and words to express yourself).



The principal functions/ purposes of meetings are to:

- Inform
- Seek ideas
- Seek clarification
- Resolve problems
- Discuss proposals/ways of working
- Take decisions
- Settle disputes (a disagreement or argument)



### Types of meetings

- Report and information oriented (to align or position in a particular direction or in a particular relation)
- Decision making and problem solving
- Creative and brainstorming (process for generating creative ideas and solutions)
- Training and skill-building

### Meeting Etiquettes

- Be on time

Make sure you come on time and prepare for the meeting ahead of time. You don't want to waste anyone else's time by not being punctual.

- Make introductions

If everyone doesn't know one another in the meeting room, you need to make introductions. You should do this by starting with the person of the highest rank first.

- Have a strong agenda

This is part of being prepared, but you should have a good, strong agenda so that you can stay on track. If you do get off track, you should have a strong facilitator to get you back on track.

The chairperson of the meeting should circulate a meeting agenda to each participant at least one week in advance. Participants should call the chairperson to express any concerns about the agenda at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. The chairperson and concerned participants will then have time to determine if changes need to be made. The agenda should mention the meeting's start and ending times as well.

- Sit appropriately

If it's a sit-down meeting, you need to adjust your chair so that you're at equal height with everyone else at the table.

- Speak up

When people speak in meetings, they need to speak loudly enough so that everyone hears what they're saying.

- Understand the unwritten speaking rules

It's not polite to interrupt others, but in some meetings, you have to interrupt at some point or you won't be heard. Understand the rules so that you can have a productive meeting.

- Do not have your phone out

A lot of people keep their phones on the table during meetings. Don't do this. Even if you aren't looking at your phone, it can get distracting if it starts lighting up or making noises.

- You can drink coffee, but you need permission for anything else

If you're going to eat, it needs to be OK with the entire group. You can make noise or give off smells that are disruptive, so it needs to be OK with everyone.

- Clean up after yourself

This is especially true if you were drinking or eating during the meeting. You need to clean up after yourself and leave things the way you found them. Otherwise, it's not professional.

- Don't save all your questions for the end

Ask your questions at the appropriate time. Do not be the person who starts "asking questions and adding stuff that doesn't need to be added" when everyone's getting ready to go.

- Be Prepared

Each participant should come to the meeting with all of the materials and data he or she will need and an understanding of the meeting topic.

- Breaks

Meetings should have a break every two hours. Breaks should be 20 minutes long, and meal breaks should be 30 minutes long.

- Attire

The chairperson should indicate what kind of attire is required for the meeting, either business casual or business formal and participants should follow that rule. A representative listing of the attire would be helpful as participants may have differing views on what business casual and business formal is. For example, when listing the meeting as business formal, you can indicate that a button-down shirt and khaki pants are sufficient.



- Speaking

Keep the meeting organized by only speaking when you have the floor. Ask questions during the designated question period, and raise your hand

to be recognized by the chairperson as having the floor. Do not interrupt someone while they are speaking or asking a question.

- Listen

You may find that many of the questions you have about a topic are answered by the content of the meeting. Listen attentively to the meeting and take notes.

**Things to do before the meeting:**

- Arrange the date and time
- Reserve a meeting room
- Send notices to the people who would attend the meeting
- Prepare agenda of the meeting
- Plan food and refreshments
- Create an action list
- Choose a meeting format
- Assemble materials
- Plan for supplies, equipment, software
- Handle last-minute details
- Determine how meeting will be announced
- Determine audiovisual or equipment needs
- Order or lease audiovisual equipment
- Confirm attendance at least twenty-four hours prior to meeting to confirm food order
- You can use computer or telephone to schedule meeting
- Using a schedule form to schedule a meeting
- Reserving a meeting room: Group size determines type of room and equipment
- ❖ Video teleconference or regular room
- ❖ Off-site
  - Hotel close to airport (for out-of-town guests)
  - Check facility—do they provide equipment rental, room setup, business center for fax, photocopies, computer workstations, etc.
  - Is lunch or dinner involved?
  - Make reservation well in advance of meeting date
  - Several days prior to meeting, check room reservation and setup
  - Be alert of any changes and follow through
- ❖ Arrangement and atmosphere of room contributes to effective meeting
  - Do the room and furnishings contribute to an effective meeting?

- Will the participants remain in the same room for meal?
- Will the participants need to break into smaller rooms?
- Does the arrangement meet the purpose of the meeting?
- Is the room large enough for participants and audiovisual aids?
- Will there be a guest speaker?
- What type of media equipment is in the room?
- Is the room free from obstructions such as posts or distractions and interruptions?
- Is there adequate lighting, heating, ventilation?
- Sending notices
  - ❖ Specify the following when sending notices
    - Purpose of meeting
    - Date, time, and location
  - Who, what, when, where, how long, and why
    - Deadline for agenda items
    - What action to take if member will attend?
    - What action to take if member cannot attend?
- Be explicit and include everything essential
- Agenda
- Materials needed
- Materials provided
- Determine best time to send notices
  - ❖ Don't send too far in advance
  - ❖ Last minute informal office meetings—use e-mail or telephone
  - ❖ Formal meetings and conference— consider several months' notice
  - ❖ Registration form, formal letterhead invitations or printed forms
- Assembling materials
  - ❖ Extra copies of agenda
  - ❖ Up-to-date participant list
  - ❖ Minutes of previous meeting
  - ❖ List of standing and special committees
  - ❖ List of actions not yet completed
  - ❖ Letters, etc. related to agenda items
  - ❖ Copies of materials to be distributed
  - ❖ Other materials related to topics or issues
- Preparing the agenda
  - ❖ Always have an agenda
 

An agenda is a list of topics to be covered during the meeting or conference

**Practicing  
Speaking Skills**

- ❖ Send to all members
- ❖ Include names of participants, date, time and place of meeting, along with topics
- ❖ Include timeframe and level of action to be taken for each topic
- Discuss issues listed on agenda
- Review follow-up actions
- Closure
- Determine date and time of next meeting
- Ordering Refreshments, Meals, and Beverages
- Know number of participants
- Planning for supplies, equipment, software
  - ❖ Notebook computer—for presentation hookup and notes
  - ❖ Presentation on hard drive and removable backup
  - ❖ Ceiling-mounted multimedia projector
  - ❖ Laser pointer for presentation
  - ❖ Projection screen
  - ❖ DVD player w/remote control
  - ❖ Overhead projector
  - ❖ Transparency sheets for overhead projector
  - ❖ Spare bulb for overhead projector
  - ❖ Colored markers for overhead transparencies
  - ❖ Flip chart tripod
  - ❖ Flip chart paper
  - ❖ Adhesive tape or putty to suspend flip chart paper around room
  - ❖ Strip covers or tape to secure electrical cords
  - ❖ Colored markers for flip chart paper
  - ❖ Name tents or tags; marker to write names
  - ❖ Scissors
  - ❖ Whiteboard markers and erasers
  - ❖ Writing block for each participant
  - ❖ Writing pen or pencil for each participant
  - ❖ Telephone message pad and pen next to room telephone
  - ❖ Promotion items such as lapel pins or key tags
  - ❖ Enough chairs for all participants
- Handling last-minute details
  - ❖ Conduct last-minute check of all details
    - Room facilities
    - Audiovisual equipment
    - Refreshments

- Meeting materials
- Miscellaneous
- ❖ Remain flexible

### During the Meeting

- Taking notes
  - ❖ Check notes with participants for accuracy
  - ❖ Notes may later be used to prepare recommendation, etc.
  - ❖ Prepare draft of notes for manager
- Recording Minutes
  - ❖ Using a notebook computer
    - Key notes during the meeting
    - Follow the agenda items in your notes
  - ❖ Using a notebook
    - You are not expected to take notes verbatim
    - Motions and a few other items require verbatim notes
    - Make certain you have notes on who said what
    - Record the time, date, and place of the meeting; attendance, reference to corrections or additions to the minutes, who introduces reports, make motions, who volunteers for follow-up work, time of adjournment, anything else helpful to prepare minutes
  - ❖ Using computer software
    - Viewing and participating via office computer called virtual meetings
    - Wimba software
  - ❖ Using a tape recorder
    - Used as a backup to obtain verbatim minutes
    - Assists office professional in preparing minutes
    - Secures a record of discussions on controversial topics
- Meeting Following-Up:
  - ❖ Check room for orderliness
  - ❖ Make necessary follow-up entries in calendars
  - ❖ Send materials to those absent
  - ❖ Prepare a list to remind manager of his or her obligations resulting from the meeting
  - ❖ Put a copy of everything—agenda, reports, etc., in a folder for preparing minutes
  - ❖ Handle requests that resulted from the meeting
  - ❖ Return all audiovisual equipment
  - ❖ Enter date and time of next meeting in calendars

- ❖ Complete minutes
- ❖ Reserve room/equipment for next meeting
- ❖ Remind manager to send follow-up memo to members involved in actions taken
- ❖ Send letters of congratulations to newly elected officers
- ❖ Preparing minutes
  - If taped
    - Listen to tape and take brief notes
  - Write minutes immediately following meeting
  - Create draft and submit for manager's approval
  - Include essential information
  - Summarize actions
  - Informal meeting minutes
  - Formal meeting minutes
  - Correcting minutes
    - Record changes
    - ✓ As an insertion in minutes being corrected
    - ✓ In paragraph form in new minutes of the meeting during which changes were made
    - To show corrections and additions in file copy
    - ✓ Add words in longhand and delete by drawing lines through words
    - ✓ Team Meetings
- Preparing for a team meeting
- ❖ Choose appropriate meeting time
  - ❖ People on team may be from all levels of organization
  - ❖ All members carry equal status
  - ❖ Agenda may be very general, since team decides actual topics discussed
- Selecting participants
  - ❖ Team leader
    - Directs the meeting
  - ❖ Guidance team
    - Two or more people from management with authority to make changes
  - ❖ Project team members
    - Those taking part in decisions and vote on issues
  - ❖ Facilitator
    - Makes the meeting process flow with ease
  - ❖ Recorder

- Prepare minutes; role is often rotated
  - Starting the meeting
    - ❖ Team leader starts early
    - ❖ Meeting begins/ends on time
    - ❖ Warm-up
    - ❖ Check-in
    - ❖ Agree on the goals
    - ❖ Review team roles
    - ❖ Establish house rules
  - Ending the meeting and follow-up
    - ❖ Evaluate the meeting to improve future meetings by answering these questions
      - Was the purpose clear?
      - Did the group work toward a consensus?
    - ❖ Was conflict used positively to distinguish between ideas?
    - ❖ Did group insist on what action was to be done, by when, and by whom?
    - ❖ Virtual Meetings
- Holding a meeting between two distant locations: Teleconferences, Videoconferences or Web conferences:
- Teleconferences
    - ❖ Conference calls by telephone
    - ❖ Saves travel time and costs
    - ❖ Most widely conference tool used today
    - ❖ Maintains effective communication
    - ❖ For small groups, speakerphones are convenient
  - Videoconferences
    - ❖ Combines telephone and video
    - ❖ Business is verbally and visually conducted, as if people were in same room
    - ❖ Consists of camera, monitors, microphones, speakers, and PCs
      - Transmissions sent and received may be delayed by a second
  - Web Conferencing using networked computers
    - ❖ Used across the room or around the world
    - ❖ Messages are keyed back and forth
    - ❖ If all parties have the right equipment, computer conferencing can include audio and video
      - Need software, cameras, microphones adapted to their computers



## Ethical Behavior in Meetings

Ethics involves the process of deciding on what is right, or more right, in a given situation.

- Make choices that will build positive qualities—trust and credibility
- Many aspects involved
- Become familiar with
  - ❖ Country
  - ❖ Religious beliefs
  - ❖ Social customs
  - ❖ Business philosophy
  - ❖ Family structure
  - ❖ Major landmarks and their history
  - ❖ Customary formats of business documents used
  - ❖ Use Internet for information
  - ❖ Learn names of major political leaders, sports figures, and other celebrities

Some of the things you might be required to handle

- Liaison and protocol
- Conduct tours for attendees and spouses
- On-site typing and administrative services
- Arrange lodging
- Arrange exhibit and display space
- Others?

### Role-play 1

Your company wants to organize a Work–Life Balance day. The aim of the event is to get employees to see colleagues as people with real lives outside the workplace, and therefore to be more supportive, understanding and friendly towards each other. There is a very limited budget, and the event will take place on a normal working day, without dramatically reducing employees' productivity during that day. You and some other junior members of staff have been asked to plan the events for the day. Hold a brainstorming meeting to plan the event.

### Role-play 2

Your company wants to hold a Staff Integration event, to enable employees from different teams and work locations to get to know each other and build relationships. You and other senior managers meet to plan a budget for this event (in terms of cost per employee) and to brainstorm ideas for the event.

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## 4.4 PRESENTATIONS

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A presentation is the process of presenting a topic to an audience. It is typically a demonstration, introduction, lecture, or speech meant to inform, persuade, inspire, motivate, or to build good will or to present a new idea or product.

The formal presentation of information is divided into two broad categories: **Presentation Skills** and **Personal Presentation**. These two aspects are interwoven and can be described as the preparation, presentation and practice of verbal and non-verbal communication. This unit describes what a presentation is and defines some of the key terms associated with presentation skills.

Many people feel terrified when asked to make their first public talk. Some of these initial fears can be reduced by good preparation that also lays the groundwork for making an effective presentation.

### A Presentation Is...

A presentation is a means of communication that can be adapted to various speaking situations, such as talking to a group, addressing a meeting or briefing a team.

A presentation can also be used as a broad term that encompasses other 'speaking engagements' such as making a speech at a wedding, or getting a point across in a video conference.

To be effective, step-by-step preparation and the method and means of presenting the information should be carefully considered.

A presentation requires you to get a message across to the listeners and will often contain a 'persuasive' element. It may, for example, be a talk about the positive work of your organization, what you could offer an employer, or why you should receive additional funding for a project.

A presentation program is often used to generate the presentation content, some of which also allow presentations to be developed collaboratively, e.g. using the Internet by geographically disparate collaborators. Presentation viewers can be used to combine content from different sources into one presentation. Some of the popular presentation products used across the globe are offered by Apple, Google and Microsoft.

Microsoft PowerPoint and Google Slides are effective tool to develop slides, though Google Slides allows groups to work together using Google Drive to update each account as it is edited. Content such as text, images, links, and effects are added into each of the presentation programs to deliver useful, consolidated information to a group.

### The Key Elements of a Presentation

Making a presentation is a way of communicating your thoughts and ideas to an audience.

Consider the following key components of a presentation:

### **Context**

Ask yourself the following questions to develop a full understanding of the context of the presentation.

#### **When and where will you deliver your presentation?**

There is a world of difference between a small room with natural light and an informal setting, and a huge lecture room, lit with stage lights. The two require quite different presentations, and different techniques.

#### **Will it be in a setting you are familiar with, or somewhere new?**

If somewhere new, it would be worth trying to visit it in advance, or at least arriving early, to familiarize yourself with the room.

#### **Will the presentation be within a formal or less formal setting?**

A work setting will, more or less by definition, be more formal, but there are also various degrees of formality within that.

#### **Will the presentation be to a small group or a large crowd?**

#### **Are you already familiar with the audience?**

With a new audience, you will have to build rapport quickly and effectively, to get them on your side.

#### **What equipment and technology will be available to you and what will you be expected to use?**

In particular, you will need to ask about microphones and whether you will be expected to stand in one place, or move around.

#### **What is the audience expecting to learn from you and your presentation?**

Check how you will be 'billed' to give you clues as to what information needs to be included in your presentation.

All these aspects will change the presentation.

### **Presenter**

The role of the presenter is to communicate with the audience and control the presentation. Remember, though, that this may also include handing over the control to your audience, especially if you want some kind of interaction.

### **Audience**

The audience receives the presenter's message(s). However, this reception will be filtered through and affected by such things as the listener's own experience, knowledge and personal sense of values.

### **Message**

The message or messages are delivered by the presenter to the audience. The message is delivered not just by the spoken word (verbal communication) but

can be augmented by techniques such as voice projection, body language, gestures, eye contact (non-verbal communication), and visual aids.

The message will also be affected by the audience's expectations. For example, if you have been billed as speaking on one particular topic, and you choose to speak on another, the audience is unlikely to take your message on board even if you present very well. They will judge your presentation a failure, because you have not met their expectations.

### **Reaction**

The audience's reaction and therefore the success of the presentation will largely depend upon whether you, as presenter, effectively communicated your message, and whether it met their expectations.

As a presenter, you don't control the audience's expectations. What you can do is find out what they have been told about you by the conference organizers, and what they are expecting to hear. Only if you know that can you be confident of delivering something that will meet expectations.

### **Method**

#### **How will the presentation be delivered?**

Presentations are usually delivered direct to an audience. However, there may be occasions where they are delivered from a distance over the Internet using video conferencing systems, such as Skype.

It is also important to remember that if your talk is recorded and posted on the internet, then people may be able to access it for several years. This will mean that your contemporaneous references should be kept to a minimum.

### **Impediments**

Many factors can influence the effectiveness of how your message is communicated to the audience. For example, background noise or other distractions, an overly warm or cool room, or the time of day and state of audience alertness can all influence your audience's level of concentration.

As presenter, you have to be prepared to cope with any such problems and try to keep your audience focused on your message.

The most successful and memorable presentations have one thing in common: They all have a story to tell. No matter how many facts or charts need to be presented, incorporating stories into a presentation will keep your audience focused and intrigued. Using stories to support data is a well-known technique in all aspects of public speaking, from motivational talks to in-company sales pitches.

In this unit, we will look at 7 ways to structure your presentations using storytelling techniques to keep your audience engaged until the very end. Look closely at each one to see which fits your presentation's purpose best.

Is it easier to separate the correct pieces before you start building? Or is it better to search in a big bucket with mixed parts for every new piece you

need? We're pretty sure you will pick the first option. In the beginning, it might seem like this option would take longer, but the opposite is true.

The first step to a successful presentation structure is to brainstorm your ideas and combine them into a rough draft. But first, consider the message you want to relay to your audience.

### The Message

- What is the message you want to convey with your presentation?
- A good starting point is to decide if it will be informative, entertaining, inspiring or persuasive.
- In a business setting, you might want your presentation to do two of these things: inform and persuade. If you are a mind-set coach for companies, then you might want to entertain and inspire.
- The main message should be easy to grasp from the title on your first slide. Think of an appropriate way to word what you want to give your audience in one or two sentences. This can of course be changed later, but having a preliminary title will help get your ideas in order for what comes next.

Once you know which direction your presentation will take, it's time to jot all your ideas down on paper to create an outline and rough draft of all the points you will cover.



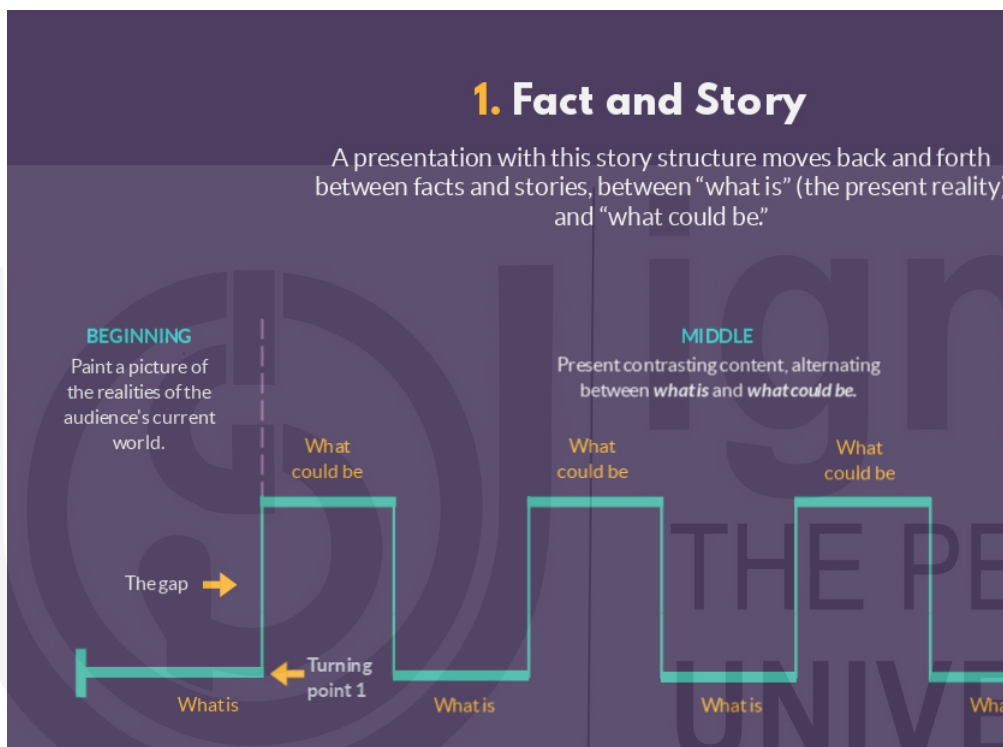
### 7 Ways to Structure Your Presentation

Now that the brainstorming and rough draft are out of the way, it's time to start structuring your presentation. This is the moment when we introduce the storytelling aspect into the equation. All the information you have gathered and organized in your rough draft now needs some attitude to really get your message across.

We are going to look at 7 different styles of storytelling structures that work great for presentations. They all have a different style of delivery and cadence. Choosing which one works for your presentation will depend on your message and on who your audience is.

## Fact and Story

The first presentation structure we will look at is **Fact and Story**. The premise is that the presentation moves back and forth between facts and stories. Presentation guru Nancy Duarte wrote about this presentation structure in her book "Resonate." She suggests that mixing storytelling with the relay of facts can help your audience stay interested until the end of your presentation.



According to Duarte, this type of structure should start off with an initial setting of the present reality: the "what is." From there, an invitation to adventure is presented and the first instance of "what could be" is told as a story to illustrate how the initial facts can be improved.

This comparison of presenting the facts as what they are at the present moment with stories that show how things could be improved is what keeps your audience interested and waiting for more.

The conclusion should end at a high point, considerably higher than where it began. The audience should feel like they learned something and, at the same time, inspired to change.

This structure maintains a level of suspense and excitement, perfect for presentations that need to inspire AND inform.

## The Explanation

The presentation structure labeled as **the Explanation** is meant to teach new insights and abilities. Its main purpose is to inform about a process or plan to

either fix a problem or learn something new. A good way to incorporate storytelling into the structure is to show the progression of the facts along with the progression of a story.



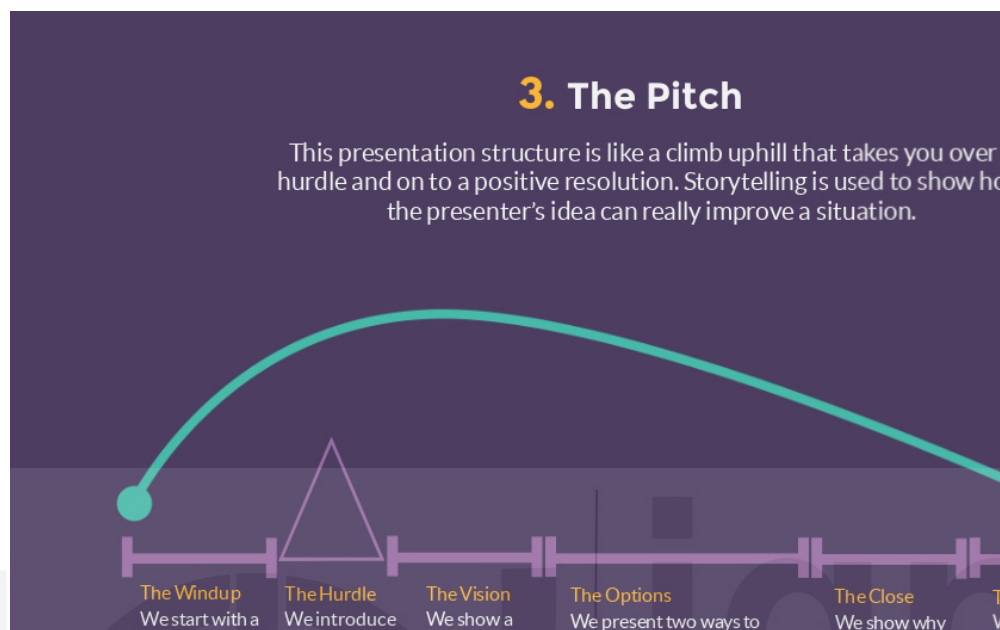
The presentation progresses in an upward motion following these steps:

1. **The Lay of the Land** shows how things stand right now, what the destination is and how you plan to get there. The point is to get the audience excited and on board as quickly as possible by showing them the entire process straight up. Tell a story that relates directly to the introduction. Better yet, start with a story.
2. **The Roadmap** is a visual map of how you will get to the final destination and reach the resolution. Set the audience on the right track.
3. **The First Step** begins the adventure to get where you want to go.
4. **The Next Step** is the middle section of the presentation, where all the steps are laid out one by one.
5. **Almost there** is the catharsis where you look back at how much has changed and progressed since the first step.
6. **The Arrival** is the celebration of the end of the journey. The audience should feel like they have learned something new and gained new knowledge.

The Explanation structure can be used for presentations by consultants that want to teach new ways of doing things inside a company or department. It could also perfectly fit in a sales meeting where a presenter can explain their process of a masterful sales plan.

## The Pitch

As you know, a pitch in the business sense is when a presenter uses the power of a presentation or speech to convince the audience of something, he/she believes will improve a system or solve a problem.



**The Pitch** presentation structure is like a climb uphill that takes you over a hurdle and on to a positive resolution. The storytelling technique in **the Pitch** is used to show how the presenter's idea can really improve a situation.

By using a real and relatable story, the pitch makes more sense and feels more important.

1. **The Wind Up** is a quick summary of what's going on right now to presents the facts in a way that is easy to grasp and relatable to the audience.
2. **The Hurdle** presents the problem that needs to be solved. Relay the problem with a story so that the emphasis is doubled.
3. **The Vision** presents a glimpse into the main idea on how the problem can be solved.
4. **The Options** is the moment when two different options are laid out as possibilities to solve the initial problem. The idea is to give an average option first, followed by a great option second. If there have already been tests and experiments to prove these facts, then these comprise the story.
5. **The Close** is the point where the ideal option is presented as the best and only option.
6. **The Fine Print** tells the audience exactly how the problem will be solved, the steps that need to be taken and the tasks to be resolved.
7. **The Hook** is the uplifting conclusion to the presentation which relays an added bonus to the solution of the problem.



Use the **Pitch** presentation structure when you want to convince someone that your idea is the best for their problem.

This structure also works when a new startup is looking for new funding or sponsorship opportunities.

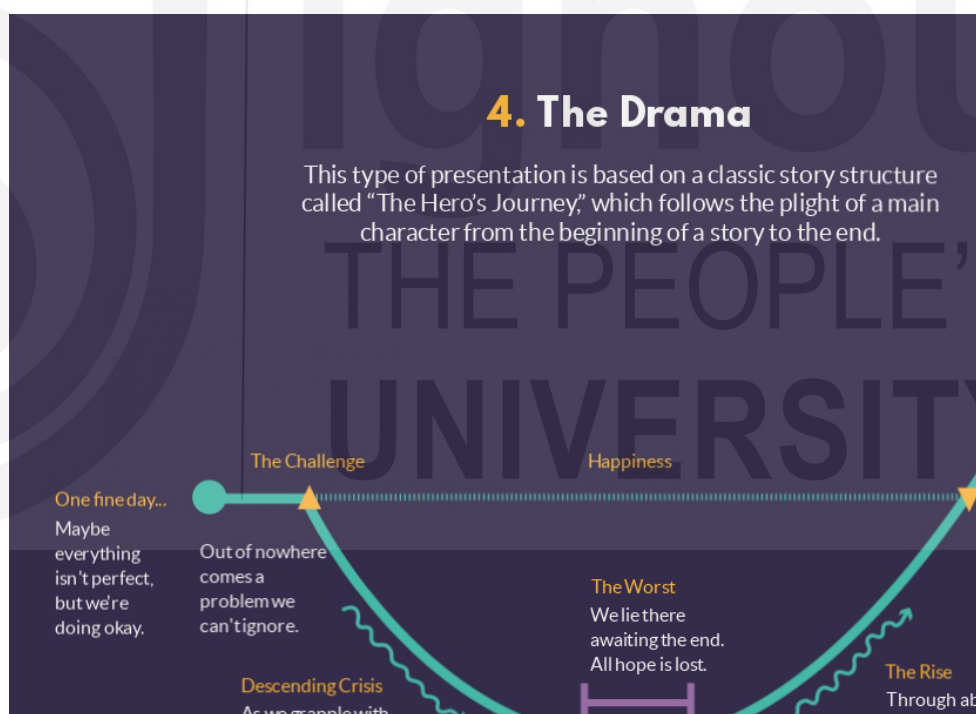
### The Drama

There is a well-known structure in literature called “The Hero’s Journey” which follows the plight of a main character from the beginning of a story to the end and leaves the reader feeling like they've learned a lesson they will never forget.

This type of presentation structure, **the Drama**, has a strong storytelling aspect.

This is often used to tell the story of an influential company from founding days, through trials and tribulations, and then finishes with an inspiring show of success.

Another perfect presentation for **the Drama** structure is an inspiring personal story.



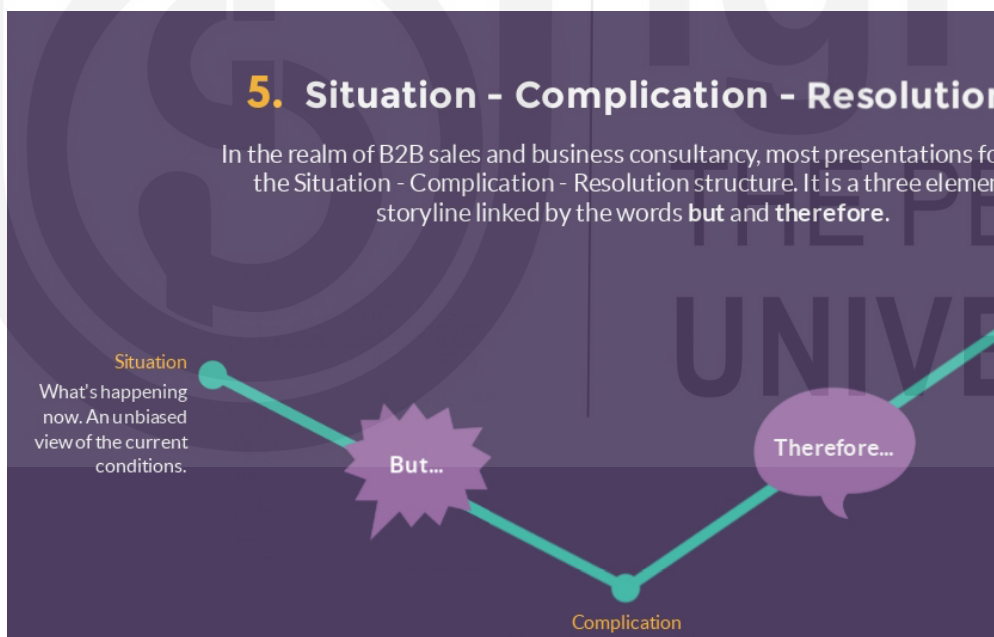
These are the steps of a **Drama** style presentation structure:

1. **One Fine Day.** The introduction sets the stage with a situation where things are not perfect but just average. Imagine as if it were the first page of a book, where the setting is laid out and the audience gets an idea of a time and place.
2. **The Challenge.** Suddenly a problem appears that can't be ignored. The things that need to be solved are presented as a challenge.
3. **Descending Crisis.** At this point, the problem is attacked head on but things get worse until it hits rock bottom.

4. **Rock Bottom.** When all seems lost and everything is at its worst, the story arrives at a standstill. As an added bonus, the presenter can pause for effect.
5. **The Discovery.** This is the moment when a glimmer of light shows up and there is a discovery, a new way of resolving the problem.
6. **The Rise.** By discovering new abilities, the problem can be tackled in a positive way.
7. **The Return.** Not only are the problem and challenge resolved, the character and the audience break through and reach an unexpected happiness threshold, opening the world to a whole new range of possibilities.
8. **The Lesson.** The conclusion is reached with an unforgettable lesson and resolution. The audience will feel inspired, informed and entertained.

### Situation - Complication - Resolution

Most presentations in the realm of Business to Business (B2B) sales, the business consultancy follow the **Situation - Complication - Resolution** structure. It is a three-element storyline linked by the words **but** and **therefore**.



The starting point is **the Situation**, where current conditions are shown in an unbiased and transparent way. The situation connects to the next step through the word **but**.

A simple example: ***Our home decor company is selling pretty well this month, but...***

This is when **the Complication** is presented.

In the above example, it could look something like this:

***Our home decor company is selling pretty well this month, but ... we have been spending too much on international shipping.***

When presenting the Complication, use facts to prove it. Present it as the challenge that needs to be overcome. The Complication is a low point, but from a low point we can only go up.

The final destination is **the Resolution**, which is connected to the Complication with the word, **therefore**.

*Our home decor company is selling pretty well this month, but we have been spending too much on international shipping. Therefore, we need to start using a new company that has a better price range and great service.*

Back up all of your information with real facts and proof.

### **Situation - Opportunity - Resolution**

A similar structure to the one above, the **Situation-Opportunity-Resolution** replaces Complication with Opportunity.

This three-part structure is also joined by the words **but** and **therefore**.

The difference is that instead of the movement going down and then up, it goes slightly up and then levels out.



This structure is perfect when you need to show that something is not that hard to fix; that the problem might not be so big after all and that the solution is easy to grasp.

A presentation that follows this structure could turn out to be quite short, if only the facts are presented, but that would leave the audience feeling like “is that it?”

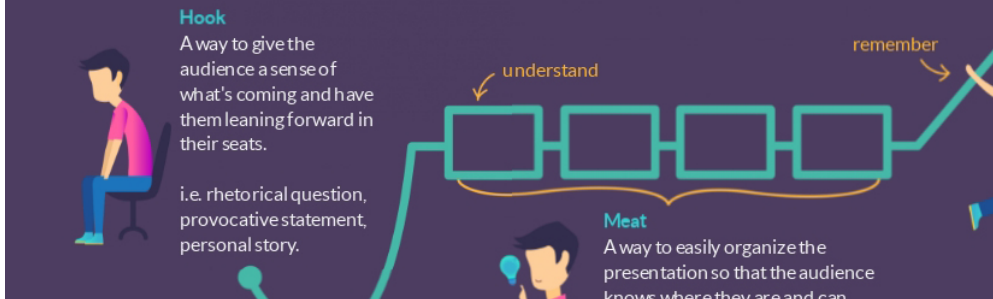
Adding an interesting story to help the audience relate makes the overall presentation more effective.

### **Hook, Meat and Payoff**

This presentation structure, like the Drama, is deeply founded in the art of storytelling. While the Hero's Journey is more of a literary technique, **Hook, Meat and Payoff** is more like a spoken-word progression.

## 7. Hook, Meat and Payoff

This presentation structure, like **The Drama** is deeply founded in the art of storytelling. While the Hero's Journey is more of a literary technique; **Hook, Meat and Payoff** is more like a spoken word progression.



The idea is that with the **Hook**, the presenter gives the audience a sense of place and time, plus a situation that will put them at the edge of their seats, wanting more.

The **Meat** is the middle section and usually the longest part of the presentation where the story progresses and all the information is relayed in an interesting and inviting way. The **Payoff** is the inspiring conclusion that circles back to the beginning and leaves the audience feeling inspired.

It's like when you come out of the movie theater: You feel better about yourself and the world around you; as if you've learned something important that will make your life a little better.

### Preparation

- Research your topic
- Format the slides
- speak on what you know
- Notes- outline main points
- note cards vs. full sized paper

### Practice

- Practice makes perfect
- Revision
- Get the timing right
- Practice in front of people
- In the venue
- Fix things that don't work
- Gets you used to being in front of an audience.

### **Presence (Giving the Presentation)**

Only a small proportion comes from what you say

- Posture.
- Tone of voice.
- Don't rush!
- Nervousness – fright is common
- Body language
  - voice tone
  - gestures
  - eye contact
  - positive attitude
- Clothing: comfortable, appropriate
- Maintain eye contact
- Use notes if you need them
- Think about when to use handouts

### **Advantages of using a PowerPoint**

- ☐ Portable
- ☐ Professional
- ☐ Can add graphics
- ☐ Clear
- ☐ Can use for hand-outs

### **Disadvantages of using a PowerPoint**

- ☐ Depends on technology
- ☐ Lack of audience contact
- ☐ Can't add to it
- ☐ Overcrowded

### **Don't-s**

- Read directly from notes
- Read directly from screen
- Turn back on audience
- Slouch, hands in pockets
- No um, ah, you know-s
- No nervous gestures
- Talk too fast
- Talk too quietly

### **Do-s**

- Eye contact
- Can glance at notes

- Appropriate gestures
- Rhetorical questions to involve audience

### **Ten Successful Tips to Control the “Butterflies”**

- Know the room: Become familiar with the place of presentation.
- Know the audience: Greet or chat with the audience beforehand. It's easier to speak to friends than to strangers.
- Know your material: Increased nervousness is due to un-preparedness.
- Relaxation: Relax entire body by stretching and breathing so as to ease the tension.
- Visualize giving your speech: Visualize yourself giving your speech from start to finish. By visualizing yourself successful, you will be successful.
- People want you to succeed: the audience is there to see you succeed not to fail.
- Don't apologize: By mentioning your nervousness or apologizing, you'll only be calling the audience's attention to mistakes.
- Concentrate on your message and not the medium. Focus on the message you are trying to convey and not on your anxieties.
- Turn nervousness into positive energy; transform it into vitality and enthusiasm.
- Gain experience: experience builds confidence, which is key to effective public speaking.

### **Possible fears and how to deal with them:**

- Forgetting what to say: prepare and use notes or cue cards. If you do forget, take a deep breath, and don't panic, as you'll forget even more!
- Disruptions, people shouting out or being rude during your presentation: You control the presentation. If people are being noisy, disruptive, or rude, you have the right to ask them to leave. If you're unwilling to do this yourself, contact venue security if they are present.
- Getting lost: Allow plenty of time to get to the venue, take a contact number to call if you get lost, plan out the route beforehand, take a taxi if needed.
- Questions: not knowing the answer to questions, people asking questions to trip you up: Prepare for common questions beforehand, if you can't answer straight away, take their details and get back to them.
- Speaking in front of people: practice in front of a small audience first. Look at just above the heads of the audience. Sometimes you will be nervous: accept it and carry on.
- Breathe deeply
- Take your time
- Test the microphone
- Smile!

### PowerPoint tips

- Look at the audience, not the slides
- Don't overcrowd
- Pay attention to colour and layout
- Print out slides
- Test beforehand

### Dealing with Questions

- ☐ Questions show people are listening!
- ☐ Allow time to deal with them
- ☐ Decide when to answer them
- ☐ Try and anticipate
- ☐ Don't be afraid to stop and think

### What if I don't know the answer?

- ☐ Open it to the floor
- ☐ Take details and answer later
- ☐ Repeat the question back if you don't understand it

### To sum up

- ☐ Preparation is key!
- ☐ Practice!
- ☐ Watch out for tone and body language
- ☐ Your flipchart/PowerPoint is a complement only, don't let it take over!
- ☐ Questions are good, but prepare for them.
- ☐ Fears can be tempered with good preparation

**Practice takes you from this...**



To this...



### Check Your Progress 1

Choose the right option:

- 1) What is an agenda for a business meeting?
  - A clear list of items to be discussed
  - A list of supplies needed for the meeting
  - An invitation that contains only the date and time
  - A list of tasks to be performed after the meeting
  - A place to park irrelevant comments or questions during a meeting
- 2) What can happen when employees are NOT involved in decision-making during a meeting?
  - The employee is less likely to follow-up on tasks.
  - The employee is more likely to follow-up on tasks.
  - The employee will perform as expected regardless of whether he/she was involved in the process.
  - Most employees have little interest in being part of a decision in meetings.
  - Only certain employees will perform without being part of the decision.
- 3) Why is the amount of agenda items important?
  - It helps to regulate the duration of the meeting.
  - People know when they will be given a break.
  - Employees tend to like longer agendas.
  - It helps to determine what is important.



- It defines roles.
- 4) We ran out of time and were forced to \_\_\_\_\_ the meeting.
  - allocate
  - address
  - adjourn
- 5) If you have a \_\_\_\_\_ please wait until Marie has finished speaking.
  - commence
  - comment
  - formality
- 6) The board members couldn't come to a \_\_\_\_\_ so they had to hold a vote.
  - grievance
  - designate
  - consensus
- 7) Markus was away on business, so \_\_\_\_\_ was assigned.
  - a show of hands
  - an apology
  - a proxy vote
- 8) Before we \_\_\_\_\_ I want to remind everyone to sign the attendance form on the way out.
  - wrap up
  - strategize
  - recommend
- 9) In his \_\_\_\_\_ the chairman thanked everyone for doing such a good job.
  - final agenda
  - last ballot
  - closing remarks
- 10) I'll \_\_\_\_\_ as soon as all of the board members take a seat.
  - verify
  - commence
  - brainstorm
- 11) Since everyone was so \_\_\_\_\_ we were able to finish the meeting early.
  - participant
  - punctual
  - confidential

- 12) We'll be discussing this year's profits at the \_\_\_\_\_ next month.
- AOB
  - AGM
  - GAM
- 13) At the meeting, the MD put forward \_\_\_\_\_ to eliminate all part-time positions.
- an action
  - a caution
  - a motion

### Check Your Progress 2

- 1) When giving a presentation in front of an audience you should do all of the following except for:
- a) Speak loud and clear
  - b) Provide handouts if needed
  - c) Dress professionally
  - d) Look at your screen and not the audience
- 2) To whom should a presentation be aimed?
- a) The highest authority in the room, regardless of where they are
  - b) The entire audience
  - c) The people in the closest rows
  - d) Your best friend in the room
- 3) Where should you look while presenting?
- a) At the board — that's where the audience is looking
  - b) At your notes so you get the info correct
  - c) In the eyes of random people in your audience
  - d) At the chins of individuals in your audience
- 4) Why should you keep text to a minimum on slides?
- a) So the focus is on you as the speaker
  - b) To help make your presentation longer
  - c) So the pictures are easier to see
  - d) To make sure the audience can read everything you have to tell them
- 5) Information in your presentation should be organized.
- a) True
  - b) False
6. Your presentation should consist of title slide, \_\_\_\_\_, body, and \_\_\_\_\_.
- a) objects and summary

- b) opinions and paragraphs
  - c) objectives and summary
  - d) options and pages
- 7) It is a good idea to read to your audience when presenting.
- a) False
  - b) True
- 8) You should use animations and sound in your presentation to keep your audience engaged.
- a) True
  - b) False
- 9) You should always add pictures to your presentation even if it doesn't have anything to do with your presentation.
- a) False
  - b) True
- 10) When presenting, you should show enthusiasm for your topic or creation
- a) True
  - b) False
- 11) When presenting, your poise should be:
- a) nervous and angry
  - b) confident and relaxed
  - c) annoyed
  - d) shy
- 12) When presenting, it is important to articulate and use a loud, clear voice.
- a) True
  - b) False
- 13) You can be loud without shouting.
- a) True
  - b) False
- 14) It is Okay to mumble... this encourages your audience to really listen and pay attention
- a) True
  - b) False

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## 4.5 LET US SUM UP

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If you want to effectively communicate, you must actively participate in speaking activities like group discussions, meetings and presentation.

You must practice for Public Speaking that would help you to overcome stage fright. To do so you need preparation, practice and finally presence of mind.

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## 4.6 SUGGESTED READINGS

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If you would like to learn more about the finer aspects of discussions, meetings and presentations, you may consult:

Brian Tracy, *Speak to Win: How to present with power in any situation* (New York: American Management Association, 2008)

Dick Massimilian, *How to Lead an Effective Meeting (and get the results you want)* (Dallas: Richard D Massimilian, 2016)

Priyadarshi Patnaik, *Group Discussion and Interview Skills Second Edition* (Cambridge University Press India, 2011)

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## 4.7 ANSWERS

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### Check Your Progress 1

- 1) A clear list of items to be discussed
- 2) The employee is less likely to follow-up on tasks.
- 3) It helps to regulate the duration of the meeting.
- 4) adjourn
- 5) comment
- 6) consensus
- 7) a proxy vote
- 8) wrap up
- 9) closing remarks
- 10) commence
- 11) punctual
- 12) AGM
- 13) a motion

### Check Your Progress 2

1.d, 2.b, 3.c, 4.a, 5.a, 6.c, 7.a, 8.a, 9.a, 10.a, 11.b, 12.a, 13.a, 14.b