

Writing communication activities

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1. Exercises for teaching and testing
- 2. Communication activities**
3. Reading comprehension with found texts
4. Reading comprehension with original texts / writing activities
5. Digital and online learning

Why do we want students to do speaking activities regularly in class?

One clue →



- Actually using new language helps you remember it.
- Using the language creatively improves your level of proficiency.
- It makes the lessons livelier and more fun which motivates students to learn.
- It helps both students and their teachers to notice progress and problems.
- Which is better?

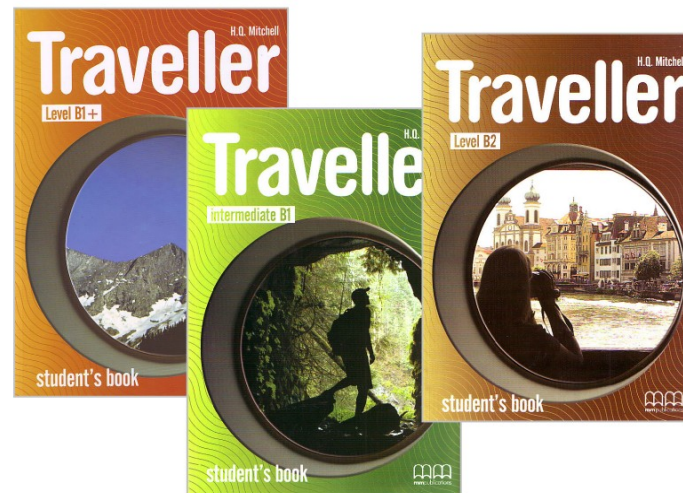
Leave school with an exam pass but you can't really speak

Leave school with an exam pass and you're fluent



Why write your own speaking activities?

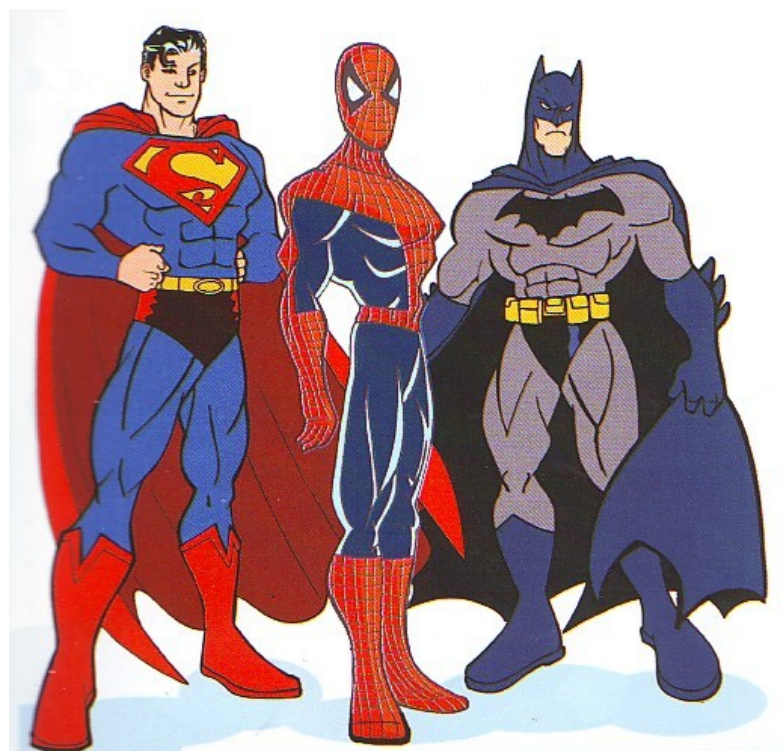
Aren't there enough in the course books?



Traveller B1+, Unit 1 Speaking tasks

- Discussion about relationships with family and friends
- Speaking activity based on two photos of people who seem to be friends
- Talk about nomads
- Compare Superman, Spiderman and Batman
- Discussion about problems faced by young people
- Discussion about weddings

Any problems here?



*I think Superman is more courageous than Batman.
Yes, but, in my opinion, Spiderman is the strongest
of all.*

Potential problems

- Not very authentic conversation topics. How often do we really want to talk about these things?
- Students may not have much to say about the topics.
- Topics too personal?
 - Too depressing?
 - Too boring?
 - Too artificial?



Most course-books have this problem

“One-size-fits-all” means bland conversation tasks.

Courses have to include a lot of reading texts, grammar exercises etc. There's not enough space for a lot of speaking activities.

Reasons to create your own communication activities

There aren't enough speaking activities in the course book.

Some of the speaking activities in the course book won't be a success with your class.

Two main types of speaking activity: **accuracy development** and **fluency development**.

Mainly accuracy, mainly fluency or could be both?

1. Tell your group a story about a really horrible pet somebody you know owns. The rest of the group must guess if it's true or invented.
2. A role-play in a railway ticket office
3. Ask your partner questions about what he/she was doing at at particular times yesterday.



Typical teaching structures

Language input and practice

1. Introduce a new grammar and/or vocabulary point
2. Controlled practice with drills
3. Semi-controlled practice with an accuracy-focused communication task

Skills development

Passive: Reading comprehension
 Listening comprehension

Active: Writing tasks
 Fluency-focused speaking tasks

Accuracy

Information exchanges

Controlled role-plays

Fluency

Freer role-plays

Conversation activities

Communication games

Accuracy tasks: information exchanges

Students ask questions to their partners

Ask your partner what he/she was doing...

1. A hour ago.
2. Yesterday evening at around 9pm.
3. This time the day before yesterday.
4. In the middle of August last year.

Ask your partner questions to complete the chart.

Flights: Larnaca → London

Airline	London airport	Depart	Cost (return)
British Airways	Heathrow	_____	€270
Cyprus Airways	_____	14.55	_____
Easyjet	Gatwick	_____	€182

Complete the question, then ask other students.

How many times have you _____ in the last year?

Do you think _____ will _____?

Do you feel you ought to _____?

Find someone who...?

In groups or as a whole class, ask questions to find names to complete the sentences.

_____ used to live in another town/city.

_____ used to spend more time on the internet than he/she does now.

_____ used to play with dolls most days.

_____ used to watch more TV than he/she does now.

Role play

Ask your partner to do these things. Use *Would you mind...?*

Reply with: *Sure / No problem / OK / If you insist / Yes, I **would** mind.*

leave now

tell me why

do that

tell anybody

split the bill

Swear



Choose a language point and write some accuracy-focused communication activities.

- The present perfect for experiences and achievements (*I've never....*)
- The present continuous for future plans and arrangements. (*I'm not going out this evening.*)
- *How long does it take to...?*
- The second conditional (*Would you... if*)
- Should (*Do you think... should ...?*)
- *Do you mind if...?*



Fluency development: conversation activities

Agree or disagree?

Think of things which people don't necessarily agree about.

1. Friends influence you more than family.
 2. Women are more sociable than men.
 3. Big weddings are a waste of money.
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Truth or lies?

Students take a card and tell a story. They must tell the truth or invent something. The others in the group must guess which.

1. Describe an unusual member of your family.
2. Describe a big wedding you went to.
3. Describe something unusual that happened to you when you were with some friends.

**Write three prompts each for
Agree or disagree? and Truth or lies?**

Education

Technology

The environment

Travel/holidays

Entertainment

