

IELTS Speaking Part 2 Activity – teacher's notes

Description

A 'speak-for-a-minute' activity to practise speaking at length for Part 2 of the Speaking test. The activity is designed to raise students' awareness of the benefits of thinking about and planning their answers.

Time required: 45 minutes

Additional materials required:

- a set of cards for each pair of students
- a stopwatch or access to a clock with a second hand for each pair of students.

Aims:

- to allow students to practise speaking at length on a given topic
- to raise their awareness of the benefits of thinking about and planning their answers.

Procedure

1. Divide your class into pairs.
2. Give each pair a set of about 20 cards. See sample cards for ideas. Tell them to put the cards face down between them.
3. Tell students how to play this game: in pairs, each student in turn picks up a card and tells the other the topic written on it. S/He then talks about the topic for 30 seconds, timed by their partner. The listening student should then ask the speaker a question about what has been said. Both partners have a turn.
4. Explain that in the Speaking test, candidates have 1 minute to think about their answer and make any notes they want. Time students one minute to do this now, using the same topic card.
5. Re-divide the class into new pairs. Each student repeats the same topic card, but this time they have to speak for a minute, timed by their new partner. Their partner should then ask the speaker a question about what has been said.
6. Ask these follow up questions and have a brief class discussion about them:
 - How was your performance different between the first (30 second) and second (60 second) time you spoke about each topic? Which was more difficult? (There may be a lot of variation in student answers here, with some finding it easier the second time even though it was longer, as they were able to use some of their original ideas and expand on them, but some finding it easier the first time as it wasn't too long)

- What can you do in the minute preparation time before you start speaking?
(Concentrate on finding a real personal experience to talk about, write down key ideas or vocabulary)
- 7. Staying in the same pairs, each student picks a second card. Students take turns to talk about their topic for one minute, with one minute preparation time. Listening students time them and ask them a question at the end.
- 8. Re-divide the class into new pairs. Repeat the activity with 1 minute preparation time before.
- 9. Repeat steps 7 and 8 as time allows extending the speaking time to 2 minutes when the students are ready.
- 10. Hold a final class discussion using the follow-up questions in step 6 to see what the students have learned from their experience of doing the task, plus the follow-up questions below:
 - With a partner, brainstorm some interesting vocabulary you could have used in your answers. Could you have used different tenses and structures too?
 - How can you improve your performance in this part of the exam? (Practise using these cards to speak for a minute with a partner in spare moments, practise preparing and brainstorming ideas on a topic for a minute, record yourself speaking and play back the recording, reflecting on what you could improve)

Additional information

- The cards take time to make, so make sure the students don't write on them – then you can re-use them.
- Add to the cards over time so that there is a wide range of topics.
- You can expand the speaking time to 2 minutes when your students are familiar with the activity.

IELTS Speaking Part 2 Activity – Sample Cards

my favourite place	my best holiday	a big decision	car or public transport?
life in the future	the best invention	free time	brothers & sisters
reading or TV?	keeping fit & healthy	my favourite possession	mobile phones
my childhood	the best room in my house	city or countryside?	one of my teachers
cooking or convenience food?	someone I admire	my ideal job	recent changes in my country
my favourite film or book	how to relax	my best and worst experiences of shopping	advertising
my ambition	TV in my country	the internet	a recent journey
my favourite animal	traditional weddings in my country	social problems in my country	my favourite music