

Classroom activity 1 – Choosing a topic

Grade: GESE Grade 4 (CEFR A2)

Focus: The Topic phase

Time: 3x 45 minutes

Aims:

- ▶ To understand what a suitable topic for GESE Grade 4 is
- ▶ To choose individual topics
- ▶ To develop topics through mind maps
- ▶ To write individual topic forms

Materials needed:

- ▶ Pictures of famous people/place/object/sport/activity – to be used to stimulate ideas at the beginning of the class
- ▶ Worksheet 1: a simple mind map (to be projected using screen share)
- ▶ Worksheet 2: functions and language of GESE Grade 4 (to be projected using screen share)

Preparation

1. Prepare a selection of pictures of people, places, objects, sports and activities. These can be projected through screen share.
2. Download Worksheets 1 & 2 to be projected using screen share.

In class

Session 1 – Generating topic ideas

Warm-up activity (10 minutes)

1. Show on screen or hold up some large pictures of a favourite person/place/object/activity. Tell the class that they are going to think individually for 2 minutes of questions they would like to ask you about the pictures. They should write their questions down. The questions can be either factual (eg When was she born?) or personal (eg When did you last see her in a film or on television?).
2. After 2 minutes, use a strong student first to demonstrate a couple of questions by giving them microphone/video rights. Then use the chat box to discuss grammatical accuracy. Give them another 2 minutes to discuss their questions.
3. Then invite the class to ask you questions about the pictures for 4 minutes by getting students to use 'hands up' and giving microphone/video rights..

Brainstorming (15 minutes)

1. Use Q+A to ask the class how doing an interview can be more comfortable for us. Try to lead the students to the answer which is to choose something to talk about that you're interested in.
2. Ask students to work individually to write down at least 5 topics that they are interested in and they would like to be interviewed about for 5 minutes. The subjects should be personal, not factual, and they must not be too difficult for the students' level of English.
3. To start the brainstorming, write a few ideas and share using screen share. Please note, the ideas below are only examples and they are not suggestions from Trinity. For example:

- ▶ my football team
- ▶ my favourite sport
- ▶ my favourite player
- ▶ my favourite actor
- ▶ my favourite film
- ▶ different film genres
- ▶ my favourite book/writer
- ▶ my school
- ▶ my favourite musician
- ▶ my dance club
- ▶ the instrument I play
- ▶ my favourite city
- ▶ my judo club
- ▶ my favourite country

4. The students continue brainstorming individually.

Choosing the best three possible topics (20 minutes)

1. Give students mic/video rights to share their ideas and write them down (while sharing your screen). When they have finished writing, look at the suggestions and congratulate the students on suggesting so many ideas.
2. Use Q+A to ask students which ideas are not appropriate or useful, giving a reason (eg the topic is too complex; or the students have to learn too much new vocabulary; or the topic is exactly the same as the Grade's Subjects for Conversation). Trinity recommends topics that generate conversation and can naturally lead to the language of the grade. If a candidate chooses a general topic such as 'my family', 'my best friend' or 'my pet', care should be taken to prepare using a variety of the language of the grade, and to avoid using only basic descriptive language.
3. Next, tell the students that they must choose three possible topics which they think are interesting and which they could do in the exam. They can be suggestions on the list of class ideas on the board, or they can think of other ideas. Give the students 3 minutes to think about what they are interested in. After 3 minutes, tell them to write down their three possible topics in the chat box.

Session 2 – working with mind maps to choose topics

Demonstrating a mind map and brainstorming (25 minutes)

1. Show a very simple mind map using screen share (see Worksheet 1 for an example shape). Ask the class to suggest one topic to use on the mind map using hands up and mic/video rights. Then do a class brainstorm – in English – of possible ideas to add to the mind map using the chat box.
2. Collect 10-12 suggestions from the students and write them on the mind map. After about 2 minutes, stop the activity.
3. Tell the students that it is now their turn to complete a mind map for their own three possible topics. Tell them that they have 5 minutes to brainstorm – in English – a mind map for each Topic. 15 minutes in total.
4. Tell students to draw the mind map in their own exercise books. Tell the students to think about Topic 1. They have 5 minutes to think of lots of ideas – in English! After 5 minutes, tell the class that they must change to a new piece of paper and a new mind map. Now they must brainstorm Topic 2. After 5 more minutes, repeat the same instructions and start Topic 3. After 15 minutes, stop the activity.

From three possible topics to two possible topics (20 minutes)

1. This activity is important because it teaches students that the first idea (eg football) is not always the best idea. Put the students in breakout rooms. Tell the students they have 5 minutes each to tell their partner about their three ideas – in English. Allow one student in each pair to start, and after 5 minutes, tell them it's the other student's turn to describe their three possible topics in English.
2. After 10 minutes, stop the class and ask them to think about these questions:
 - ▶ Which of their three possible topics is the most difficult to talk about in English because they don't know the vocabulary or grammar?
 - ▶ Which of the topics do they find least interesting to talk about?

It is important in the exam not to have to learn and memorise lots of new words, because when we feel nervous, we forget and we don't want to forget the vocabulary and grammar in the exam. Also, it's very difficult to talk about something boring in an exam and answer questions from the examiner. If you're not interested, you won't know what to say!
3. Tell the class to reject one of their topics – the most technical one with lots of new vocabulary, or the least interesting one. They now only have two possible topics.

Session 3 – choosing the best topic: which topic generates the language of Grade 4?

Looking at the language of Grade 4 (10 minutes)

1. Explain to the class what Worksheet 2 is: it is an example list of language that the students will have to understand and use in the exam. This is the language that the examiner will use in his/her questions, and it is the language the students must use when they are discussing their topics. Explain that this language must be demonstrated in their topic. Project Worksheet 2 on screen using screen share showing some of the functions and language of Grade 4.
2. Use a group Q+A to ask students if there is anything they don't understand. Explain to the class any examples that they are not sure about.

Grade 4 language and the example mind map (10 minutes)

1. Now return to the example mind map on the board from Session 2. Use hands up and mic rights to ask the students to think of things that they can say about the example topic, using the language on Worksheet 2. Try to get from the students multiple examples of the language of Grade 4 for each point. Very quickly, it will become clear that some points are better than others, and some points don't attract many examples of the language and are not easy to use in Grade 4.
2. After you have example Grade 4 language for most points, stop the demonstration activity. Tell students that it's normal for some topic ideas to be better than others.

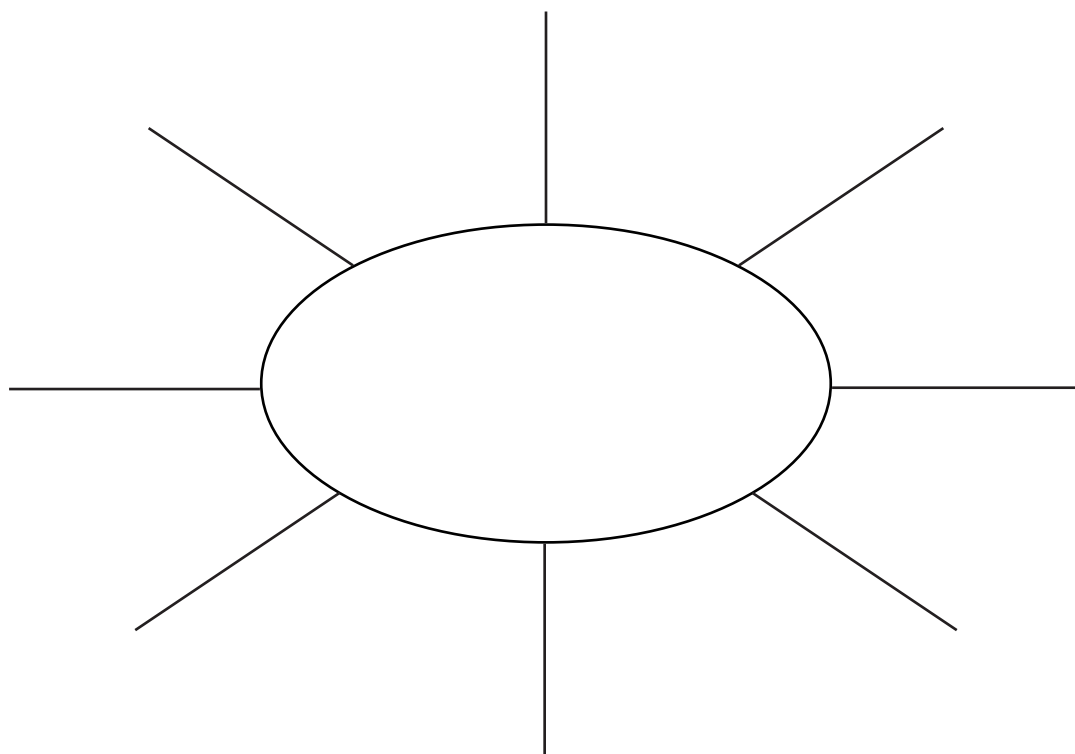
Students use Grade 4 language on their own mind maps (20 minutes)

1. Tell the students that now it's their turn. Tell the students to take their two remaining mind maps from the exercises above. Tell them they have 5 minutes for each mind map to think of as many ways as possible to use the language of Grade 4. (Remind them every 5 minutes to change mind map.)
2. Tell the students to use as much different Grade 4 language as they can.

Choosing the best topic (5 minutes)

1. Tell the students that now they must choose only one of the mind maps to use as their exam topic and reject the other. Tell them that they have to choose the mind map which generates most of the language of Grade 4.
2. Let the students tell each other which mind map they have chosen to be their exam topic and why using hands up and microphone rights.

Worksheet 1 – a mind map



Worksheet 2 – Grade 4 language

Example language:

- The past using the past simple: *Did you go there? Yes, I went there.*
Did he see it? Yes, he saw it.
- The future using 'going to': *Are you going to have a holiday?*
Where are you going to go?
- Comparatives and superlatives: *Who is the best swimmer?*
What is the most difficult subject?
You are taller than me.
But I am more intelligent than you!
What's the difference between...X & Y?
- Likes and dislike: *I like pop music, but I don't like rock.*
Do you like...rock music?
What kind of music do you like?
I like singing, but I don't like dancing.
What do you like doing?
- Adverbs of frequency: *How often do you.... go swimming?*
I go every week, twice a week, sometimes, never