

Interacting in a conversation

Elicit one or two unambiguous examples of the following, in the context of planning to take out a young nephew and niece:

- ▶ asking for information (eg 'How old are they?')
- ▶ making a comment (eg 'That sounds fun')
- ▶ making a suggestion (eg 'Why not take them to the park?')

There's no need to write these on the board, as the students will work with them in Activity 1.

Students should do the activities below in groups of 2-4 people.

This worksheet will help you with:

- ▶ conversation in all situations
- ▶ GESE Grades 7 and 8 – interactive and conversation phases
- ▶ ISE II – conversation task

Activity 1

Read the sentence spoken by Jeremy, and ten possible responses. For each response, 1-10, decide what its function (A-E) is – that is, what the speaker is trying to do by saying it.

Jeremy: I've offered to take my young nephew and niece out at the weekend, and I'm trying to think of where to take them.

Functions (what the speaker is doing)

- A asking for information
- B making a comment
- C making a suggestion
- D checking that you've fully understood the situation
- E unclear, so not a good response

Check students' answers, and stress

- ▶ the need to ask for information clearly – which usually means in an interrogative (question) sentence
- ▶ the need to check you've understood, if you aren't sure
- ▶ the need, usually, to ask for further information before making a suggestion

Elicit ways of making a suggestion, such as

- ▶ Why don't you ...?
- ▶ Why not ...?
- ▶ What about (doing) ...?
- ▶ How about (doing) ...?
- ▶ Have you considered (doing) ...?

Number	Response	Function (choose from A-E)
1	How about taking them somewhere special, that they wouldn't normally go to?	C
2	That could be quite a tiring day for you!	B
3	How old are they?	A
4	What about doing something nobody else could organise for them, like taking them to your workplace?	C
5	When you say 'at the weekend', how long exactly do you mean?	D
6	I sometimes take my young cousin out.	E
7	So would you like me to suggest a few places you could go?	D
8	Do you know if they both enjoy the same sort of thing?	A
9	I'm sure they'll enjoy that.	B
10	Do you know what sort of thing they'd enjoy?	A

Activity 2

Complete this conversation by writing one of the sentences A-G in each gap.

Rosie: My doctor's told me I need to get fit, but I don't like doing exercise. Have you got any suggestions?

You:E.....

Rosie: Well, yes, I suppose that's what it comes down to.

You:G.....

Rosie: My doctor didn't say exactly. I suppose I need to be able to walk further without getting out of breath.

You:D.....

Rosie: No, but at the moment I don't often walk more than a kilometre or two a day, so maybe I could try and increase that.

You:A.....

Rosie: I've never enjoyed it. It just seems like a way of spending time that's better spent doing other things. And some people get so obsessive about exercise!

You:B.....

Rosie: I'd hate it. So many people go because they take exercise really seriously, and I'm sure I'd feel out of place.

You:F.....

Rosie: Mm, that sounds a much more sensible idea.

You:C.....


Rosie: That would be perfect!

- A Can you identify what it is about doing exercise that you dislike?
Asking for further information
- B I know you won't really fancy this, but you could always join a gym
Making a suggestion
- C You might find you really enjoy it, and you get fitter without noticing it!
Making a comment
- D Has your doctor set you a target, or a way of measuring your fitness?
Asking for further information
- E Am I right in thinking you want to get fit but without doing any exercise?
Clarifying the situation
- F Thinking outside the box for a minute, how about taking up an activity that would provide you with exercise without you being aware of it, like dancing?
Making a suggestion that might seem strange
- G When you say 'get fit', what do you mean?
Checking you've understood a word


On the dotted line under each sentence A-G above, write its function in the conversation, from this list:

- Clarifying the situation
- Checking you've understood a word
- Making a comment
- Asking for further information
- Making a suggestion
- Making a suggestion that might seem strange

If there's time, ask students in pairs or small groups to write a conversation for Activity 1 ('I've offered to take my young nephew and niece out at the weekend, and I'm trying to think of where to take them'), but not using any of the 10 sentences given.



Star test-taker activity



Decide which five of the following a star test-taker is most likely to do in the collaborative or interactive phase of a test. Draw a star for 'Yes' or draw a line through the sentence for 'No'.

- ~~Make more suggestions than questions~~
- ~~Talk about a similar situation you've been in~~
- Make sure you understand what you need to do *
- ~~Ask about the meaning of every word you don't understand~~
- Ask about the meaning of any word you don't understand that's important in the situation *
- ~~Avoid suggestions that might seem strange~~
- Show you understand how the other person might feel *
- ~~Wait for the other person to ask you to make a suggestion~~
- Take a very active role in the conversation *
- Take time to form a detailed picture of the situation before making a suggestion *