

Good Topic Bad Topic

Grade: GESE Grade 4 (CEFR A2)

Time: 80 minutes

Aims:

- ▶ To provide students with a model of a good topic form/topic discussion
- ▶ To familiarise students with the language requirements for the GESE Grade 4 Topic phase
- ▶ To practise discussions
- ▶ To practise forming questions and answers using the language of the grade

Objectives:

- ▶ Students are able to recognise strengths and weaknesses in example topic forms/topic of the grade

Procedure

Preparation

1. This lesson plan assumes that students have already chosen their topic.
2. This lesson will work better if students are already familiar with the language requirements for GESE Grade 4.
3. If possible, pre-record the example exam scripts using two different people (yourself as the examiner; another person as the candidate).
4. Make a copy of the topic forms and worksheet for each student.

In class

1. Remind students that the GESE 4 exam starts with a 5-minute topic phase. Explain that they must complete a topic form before the exam. Tell students that in this lesson they will see good and bad examples of topic forms, and work on completing their own topic forms.
2. Write these three topic titles on the board, and check students' understanding:

My guitar

My visit to Istanbul

My life

3. Give out the three topic forms and explain any unknown vocabulary. Ask students to match the titles on the board to the forms in pairs, then check answers in open-class.
4. Ask students which of the three topic forms they think is the best and why. Explain that "My guitar" is the best, because it covers the most language functions of the grade.
5. Give out the student worksheet and ask the students to look at the language requirements for GESE Grade 4 (which appear at the top of the worksheet). Tell the students to match each point on the topic forms to one of the language functions. Do the first one together as an example. After five minutes, go over the answers:

My guitar

When and where I play

Describing routines

Guitar compared to piano

Expressing simple comparisons

My next concert

Describing future plans

How I learnt to play

Giving personal information about past circumstances/activities

My visit to Istanbul

When I went

Giving personal information about past circumstances/activities

What I did

Giving personal information about past circumstances/activities

Who I went with

Giving personal information about past circumstances/activities

My life

My family

Describing people, objects and places

My friends

Describing people, objects and places

My house

Describing people, objects and places

My town

Describing people, objects and places

6. Tell students they are going to hear an example of how the exam might go using each topic form. For each example, students complete the tables on the worksheet. If you have pre-recorded the scripts, play the recordings. If not, read the examiner's part yourself and choose a strong student to read out the candidate's part. Play part of the first script to give an example of how to complete the worksheet.
7. After each script, allow students to compare their answers in pairs, and then go through them as a class. Make the following comments:

My Guitar

This is a very good example of a GESE Grade 4 topic. The topic form covers a range of language functions of the grade.

My visit to Istanbul

This is a weak GESE Grade 4 topic. The topic form only covers the language function of 'Giving personal information about past circumstances/activities' (although it has the potential to cover other areas if adapted). The candidate only gives very brief answers to the examiner's questions that are not directly related to the topic form, meaning they are not actually demonstrating the language of the grade.

My life

This is a very weak GESE Grade 4 topic. The scope of the topic is too wide; candidates should be encouraged to choose something more specific. The topic form mostly only covers the language functions of GESE Grade 3. The candidate is intent on reciting pre-prepared chunks of language; and is unable to handle the examiner's interruptions.

8. Refer students to the blank topic form (on the topic forms handout), and tell them they have ten minutes to complete it for their own topic. Encourage them to cover as many language functions of the grade as possible.
9. Put students into pairs. Tell them to swap topic forms, and to write a list of questions related to their partners topic form. Encourage them to cover as many language functions of the grade as possible.
10. Label each pair A and B. Tell them that student A is the candidate and B is the examiner. The examiner asks their questions and the candidate answers for 5 minutes.
11. Change roles and repeat.
12. Whilst students are working in pairs, write up the errors you hear on the board. Once the students have completed the task, comment on their progress and then address the errors.

Extension activity

Students can change partners and repeat the activity as many times as time allows.

Further support activity

The weaker students can be told to write example answers to the questions their partner asks them. You should then check their example answers.

After class

Ask students to rewrite the topic forms covering as many language functions of the grade as possible.

Extension activity

Ask each group to present their own 'topic' with relevant 'topic points' to the class. The other groups ask them questions, eg Have you included expressing intention and purpose? Have you included describing past events? etc).

Audio script (for the teacher)

If possible, pre-record the example exam scripts using two different people (yourself as the examiner; another person as the candidate).

Audio Script 1: My guitar

E: Can you play the guitar? C: Yes, I can.

E: When did you learn to play?

C: Sorry, did you say when or where? E: When.

C: I learnt to play the guitar 2 years ago. My brother played guitar, and I liked listening to him. He was very good.

E: Did he teach you to play?

C: No, I went to lessons after school. The lessons were every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 6pm.

E: When do you play now?

C: Now, I play in a band with my classmates. They are very friendly and funny. We practise every Wednesday evening, and sometimes we give concerts at school.

E: When are you going to give your next concert?

C: Next weekend. All of my friends are going to watch. E: Can you also play the piano?

C: No, I can't. The piano is more difficult than the guitar. It is also more expensive. I like listening to the piano, but I'm not going to learn to play it. Can you play any instruments?

E: No, I can't.

Audio Script 2: My visit to Istanbul

E: When did you visit to Istanbul?

C: I visited Istanbul in July last year. I stayed there for 3 days, then went to the coast of Turkey for one week. It was very hot and sunny.

E: *What* did you like about Istanbul? C: Yes, I liked it.

E: What did you like? C: Yes.

E: Did you like the food?

C: Erm... yes. In Istanbul we visited the main monuments of the city. On the first day, we went to the Blue Mosque. On the second day, we went to the market...

E: Can you describe the market? C: What?

E: Tell me about the market.

C: It is big. On the third day, we visited a palace.

E: Which was more beautiful: the Blue Mosque or the palace? C: The Blue Mosque and the palace are beautiful.

E: Did you stay in a hotel?

C: Yes. The hotel was called "Hilton". It is in the centre of Istanbul. It has a swimming pool and a restaurant.

E: Lovely! Can you swim? C: Yes, I can.

E: What time did you get up in Istanbul? C: What?

E: Did you get up early? C: Erm... yes.

E: And who did you go to Istanbul with?

C: I went to Istanbul with my mum, dad and sister. Do you often go on holiday with your family?

E: No, I usually go on holiday with my friends. Are you going to visit Istanbul again in the future?

C: Erm... I don't know.

Audio Script 3: My life

E: How many people are there in your family?

C: In my family, there are 4 people. My mum, my dad, my brother and me. My mum is tall with brown hair. She is intelligent and funny. My dad...

E: How old is your brother?

C: 14. My dad is fat and bald. He is quiet and serious. My brother... E: What does your dad like doing?

C: Erm... My brother is very handsome. He...

E: And your dad? What does he like to do in his free time? C: Erm... free time?

E: Does your dad have any hobbies?

C: My hobby is swimming. My brother is short... E: When do you go swimming?

C: Yes.

E: Let's talk about your house now. Where do you live? C: I live in flat with my mum, my dad, and my brother. E: Which is the biggest room in your flat?

C: I don't know.

E: Which room do you like best? C: Erm... my bedroom.

E: Which town do you live in?

C: I live in Trani. It is a small town near Bari. It is by the sea. E: Is Trani bigger than Bari?

C: No.

E: What do you like about Trani? C: I don't know.

E: Who is your best friend?

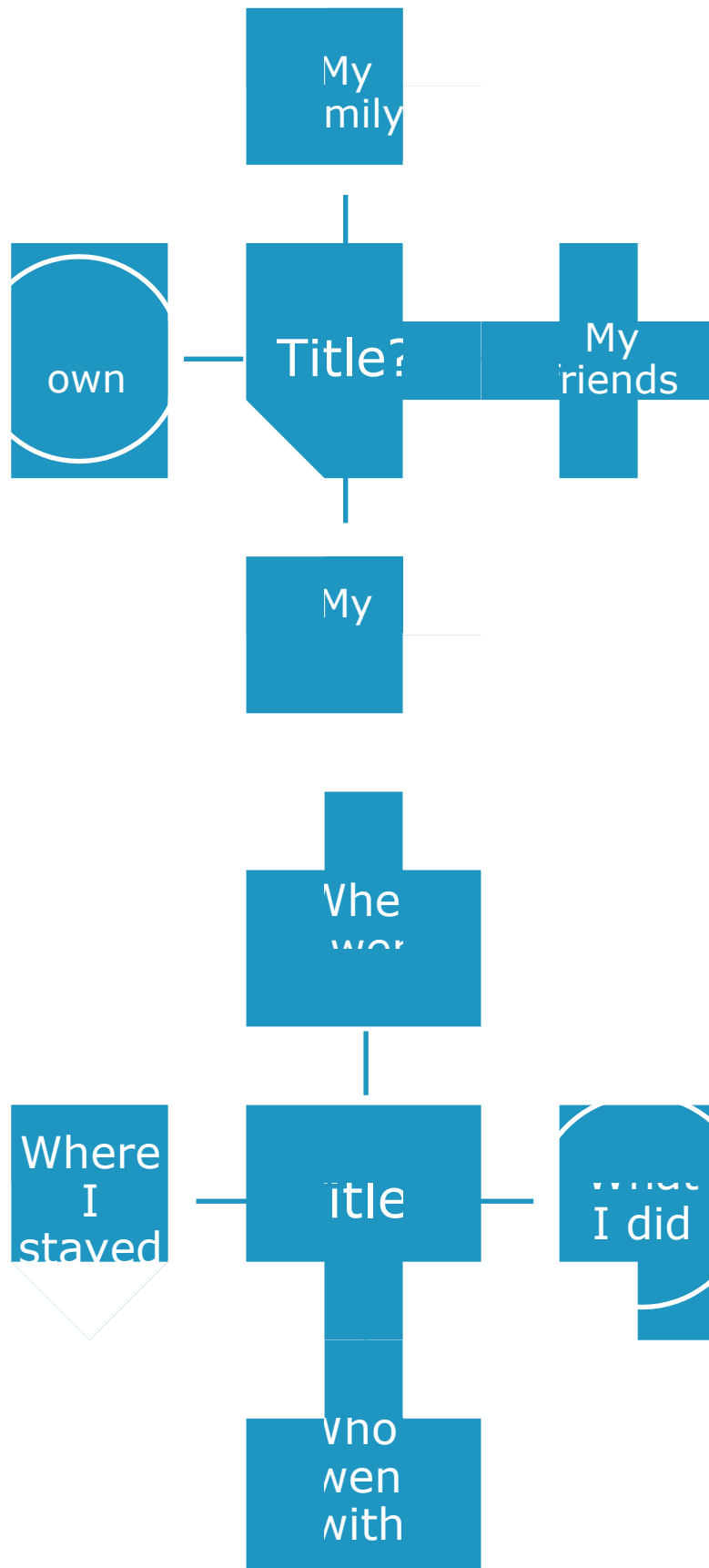
C: I have three best friends: Giulia, Anna, and Massimo. Giulia is 15 years old. She is intelligent and pretty. Anna is...

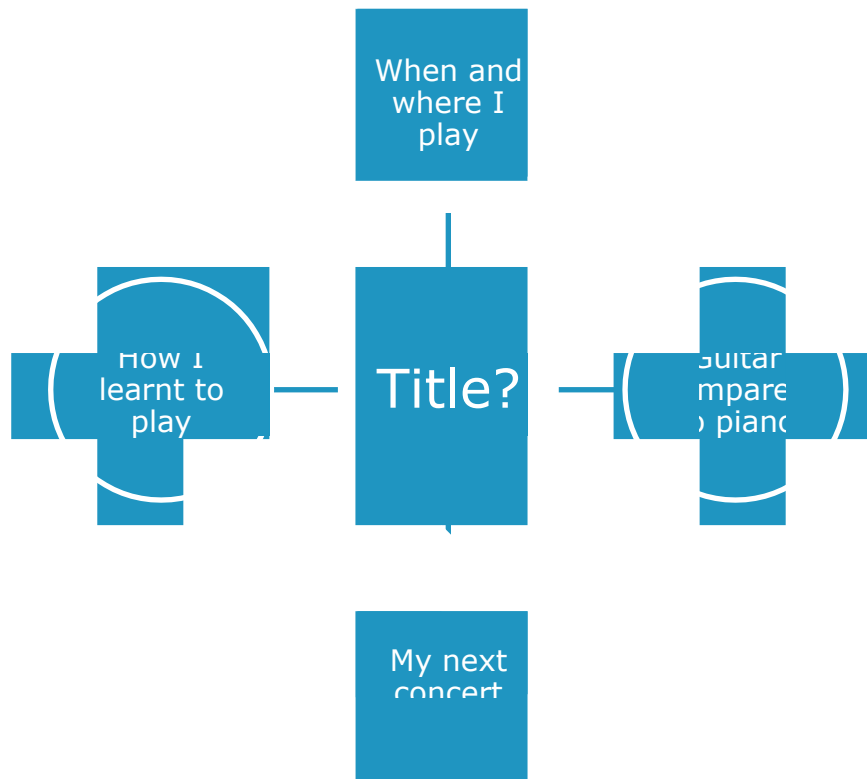
E: Can Giulia play any musical instruments? C: No, I can't.

E: Are you going to see Giulia this weekend? C: Yes.

Topic forms

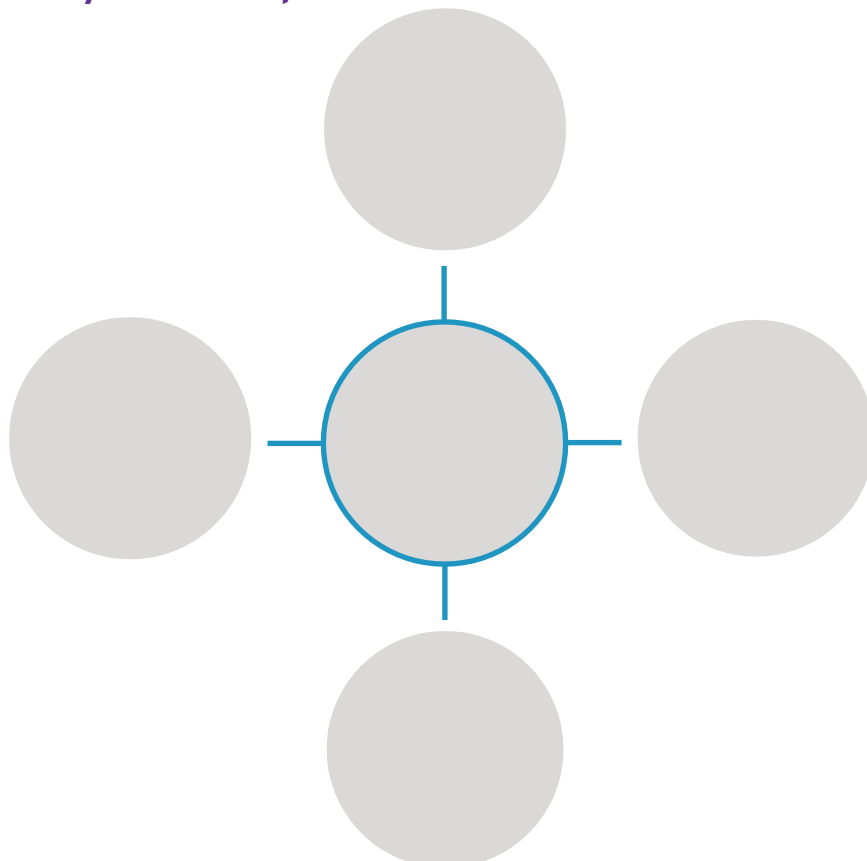
Topic forms





Student topic form

Complete the form for your own topic.
Complete the form for your own topic



Student Worksheet – Completing the topic form

GESE 4 Language Requirements

▶ Talking about past events
▶ Talking about future plans and intentions
▶ Expressing simple comparisons
▶ Expressing likes and dislikes
▶ Describing manner and frequency places
▶ (Asking for information)
▶ (Negotiating meaning)

Task 1: Complete the table for each topic

1) My guitar

Language function	Covered? Y/N	Example
Talking about past events		
Talking about future plans and intentions		
Expressing simple comparisons		
Expressing likes and dislikes		
(Asking for information)		
(Negotiating meaning)		

2) My visit to Istanbul

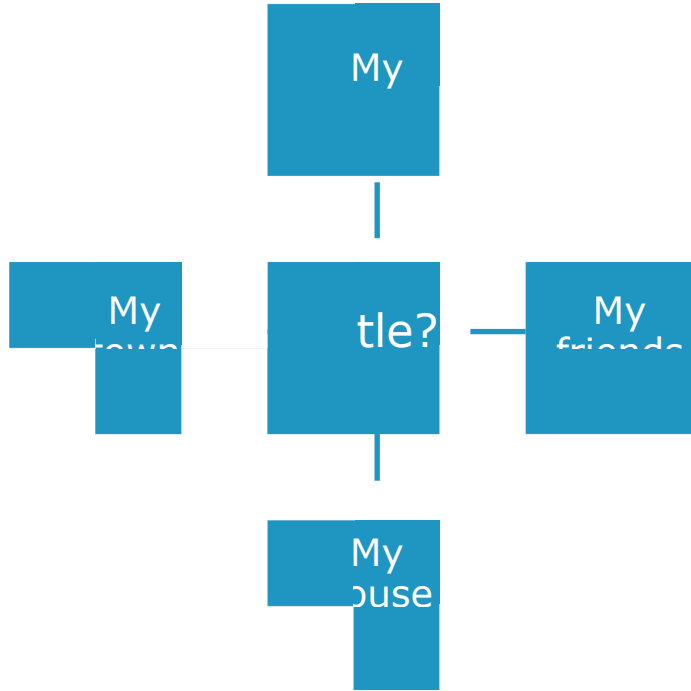
Language function	Covered? Y/N	Example
Talking about past events		
Talking about future plans and intentions		
Expressing simple comparisons		
Expressing likes and dislikes		
(Asking for information)		
(Negotiating meaning)		

3) My life

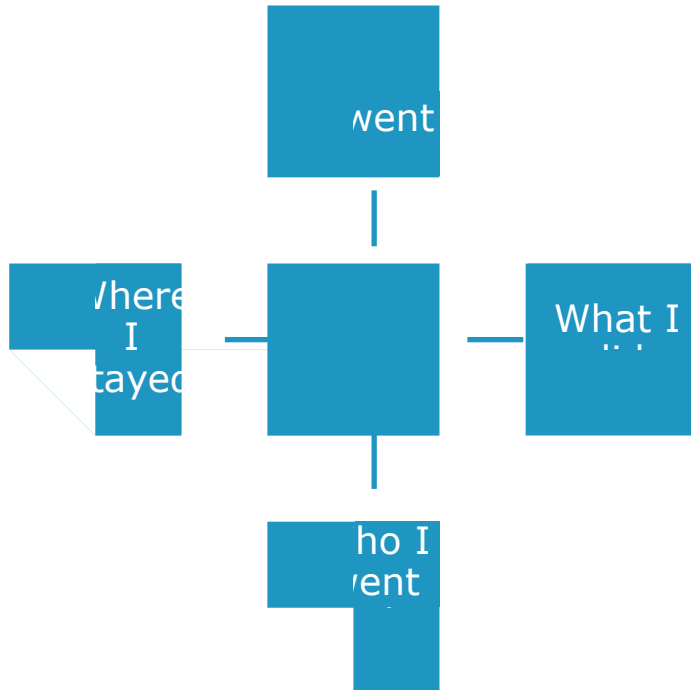
Language function	Covered? Y/N	Example
Talking about past events		
Talking about future plans and intentions		
Expressing simple comparisons		
Expressing likes and dislikes		
(Asking for information)		
(Negotiating meaning)		

Answer Key – Topic Forms

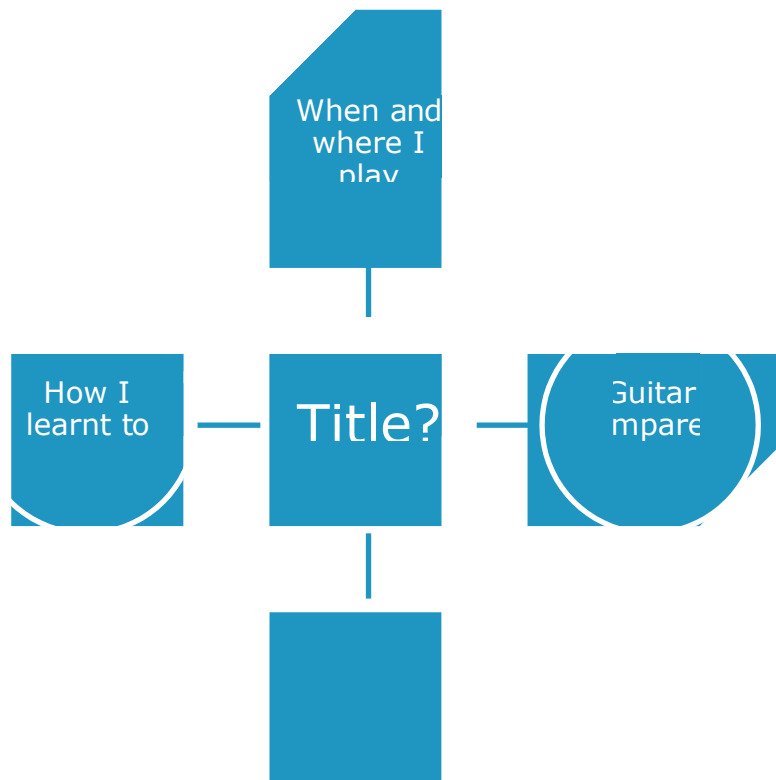
My life



My visit to Istanbul



My guitar



Answer Key – Student Worksheet

Task 1: Complete the table for each topic

1) My guitar

Language function	Covered? Y/N	Example
Talking about past events	Y	I learnt to play the guitar 2 years ago. My brother played guitar, and I liked listening to him. He was very good. I went to lessons after school. The lessons were every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 6pm.
Talking about future plans and intentions	Y	All of my friends are going to watch I'm not going to learn to play it
Expressing simple comparisons	Y	The piano is more difficult than the guitar. It is also more expensive.
Expressing likes and dislikes	Y	I liked listening to him I like listening to the piano
Asking for information	Y	Can you play any instruments?
Negotiating meaning	Y	Sorry, did you say when or where?

2) My visit to Istanbul

Language function	Covered? Y/N	Example
Talking about past events	Y	I visited Istanbul in July last year. I stayed there for 3 days, then went to the coast of Turkey for one week. It was very hot and sunny. In Istanbul we visited the main monuments of the city. On the first day, we went to the Blue Mosque. On the second day, we went to the market. On the third day, we visited a palace. The hotel was called 'Hilton'. I went to Istanbul with my mum, dad and sister.
Talking about future plans and intentions	N	The candidate only gave a brief answer to the question about the future.
Expressing simple comparisons	N	The Blue Mosque and the palace are beautiful. Students may offer this as an answer, but it is not really a comparison.
Expressing likes and dislikes	N	Yes, I liked it. The candidate does not actually answer the question asked, ie 'What did you like?'
(Asking for information)	Y	Do you often go on holiday with your family?
(Negotiating meaning)	Y	What? Point out that this is not a polite way to ask someone to repeat themselves.

3) My life

Language function	Covered? Y/N	Example
Talking about past events	N	
Talking about future plans and intentions	N	The candidate only gave a brief answer to the question about the weekend.
Expressing simple comparisons	N	The candidate only gave a brief answer to the question about Trani/ Bari.
Expressing likes and dislikes	N	The candidate only gave a brief answer to the question about which room he/she likes best.
(Asking for information)	N	The candidate does not ask a question.
(Negotiating meaning)	N	I don't know. The candidate probably means 'I don't understand'.