

Conversation task: A conversation about shopping

Grade: GESE Grade 4 (CEFR A2)

Focus: Conversation task

Time: 1 hour

Aims:

- ▶ Students practise asking and answering questions about shopping

Objectives:

- ▶ Students engage in a natural conversation where they exchange information
- ▶ Students reflect on what makes a good natural conversation

Language functions: Expressing likes and dislikes, asking and answering simple questions, expressing simple comparisons

Lexis: Vocabulary specific to shopping

Preparation

Prepare some example questions for each conversation topic you are going to cover using the present, past and future. These can be given to students if they can't think of their own questions.

Examples

Present

- ▶ How often do you go shopping?
- ▶ When do you go?
- ▶ Where do you go?
- ▶ Who do you go with?
- ▶ Do you like shopping for clothes?

Past

- ▶ Did you go shopping last weekend?
- ▶ Where did you go?
- ▶ Who did you go with?
- ▶ What did you buy?
- ▶ How much did you spend?

Future

- ▶ When are you next going to go shopping?
- ▶ Where are you going to go?
- ▶ Which shops are you going to look at?
- ▶ Who are you going to go with?
- ▶ What do you want to buy?

In class

1. Tell the students that there are two parts to this lesson. Firstly, to practise having a conversation on a subject area of the exam, and secondly to reflect on what makes a natural conversation. The second point is very important because the Trinity exams are all about authentic communication. If students can have a genuine conversation whilst also displaying the language of the grade, they are likely to do well.

2. Tell the students that the GESE Grade 4 exam includes the Conversation phase where the students are expected to hold a conversation on two different subjects for about two minutes each. Tell the students that one of the possible conversation subject areas is 'shopping'.
3. Put students in pairs. Tell them to talk for two minutes about shopping.
4. Monitor and give feedback on students' performance. Common problems may be that students didn't ask each other questions, they couldn't think of questions to ask, or each student spoke for one minute about shopping, with little or no interaction.
5. Remind students that at GESE Grade 4, they are expected to talk about the present, past and future. Elicit which forms they can use for each:

Present – remind students of the forms of the present simple tense including the third person 's'. Elicit how to form questions and how to give the negative form.

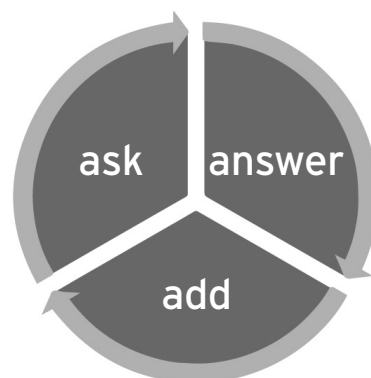
Past – remind students how to form the past simple tense of regular verbs and some common irregulars. Elicit how to form questions and how to give the negative form.

Future – remind students of how to form the 'going to' future. Elicit how to form questions and how to give the negative form.

6. Elicit one question about shopping for each tense and write on the board.

Examples:

- ▶ Do you like going shopping?
 - ▶ When did you last go shopping?
 - ▶ Are you going to buy anything this weekend?
7. Put students in pairs (or with larger classes, groups of four or six) and ask them to write six more questions (two using the present, two using the past and two using *going to* future). Monitor and check the questions are grammatically correct.
 8. Ask each pair/group for two questions and add them to the board.



9. Put the 'ask-answer-add' model on the board.
10. Choose a student to do an example with. Tell them to ask you a question about shopping. Answer the question, then add some more information. Finally ask the student a related question and encourage him/her to follow the same process.

Example

Student: (Ask) *Do you like shopping?*

Teacher: (Answer) *Yes, I love shopping!* (Add) *I go shopping every weekend.* (Ask) *How often do you go shopping?*

Student: (Answer) *About once a month.* (Add) *I usually go shopping in the city centre.* (Ask) *Where do you go shopping?*

11. Tell students to have another two-minute conversation about shopping using 'ask-answer-add'.
12. When they have finished, ask them to feedback on their experience of the conversation:
 - ▶ Did it feel like a natural conversation or did it feel like an exam?
 - ▶ If it felt natural... great.
 - ▶ If it felt like an exam, what were the differences between it and a natural conversation?

At this point, ask students what they believe they need to do in order to get a good score in the exam. Then stress that they are likely to do well if they are participating in genuine conversation; not in formulaic structures. Encourage students to be active speakers and listeners but not be robotic. You may wish to demonstrate the above model again but exaggerate a robotic style to highlight how a conversation can be unnatural.

13. Regroup students and ask them to have another conversation, trying to be active in the conversations.
14. Give feedback on students' performance. Comment on things they did well, as well as what they could improve on.

Extension activity

1. If there is time, repeat steps 6–7 and 10–11 with other conversation subject areas.
2. Ask students to write a set of nine questions using present, past and future with going to for a different conversation subject area.