

Classroom activity 5 – Preparing for the Conversation phase

Grade: GESE Grade 12 (CEFR C2)

Focus: The Conversation phase

Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

Aims:

- ▶ To review the functions of GESE 12
- ▶ To review the exam format
- ▶ To practise talking about a range of topics using GESE 12 functions
- ▶ To select true statements about the Conversation phase
- ▶ To brainstorm potential conversation topics
- ▶ To create posters about different topics and talk about them

Materials needed:

- ▶ A copy of Worksheets 1 and 2 for each student
- ▶ Access to online newspapers or several recent English language newspapers
- ▶ Poster paper, coloured pens & something to stick the posters to the wall with

Preparation

1. Bring in as many recent English language newspapers as you can. If you can't access them, either print out articles from online papers, or arrange access to the internet for the class.
2. Bring large poster paper, coloured pens and something to stick the posters to the walls with.

In class

What do you know about the Conversation phase? (5 minutes)

1. Tell the students you are going to focus on the Conversation phase. Give them 2 minutes to discuss in pairs or small groups what they know about this phase. Encourage them to name as many subject areas as they can.
2. When they finish talking, take a few suggestions from the group and put them on the board. Don't confirm if their ideas are right or wrong at this point.

True or false? (10 minutes)

1. Give the students Worksheet 1 and ask them to work on it for about 4 minutes alone. They need to read each statement and tick the ones they believe are true.
2. When they've finished, get them to check their answers in pairs, and then elicit and confirm the answers on the board as a group. Confirm which of their ideas from task 1 were true too if they haven't been covered in the task.
3. Explain that at this level candidates are expected to be able to talk about any subject without preparing for it.

What kind of topics might come up? (10 minutes)

1. Give the students 2 minutes to think of one or two potential topics which the examiner could select in the conversation phase. Encourage them to think about topical subjects, things that have been in the news, and things which stimulate lots of conversation.
2. After 2 minutes, get them to compare their ideas in pairs and then elicit some suggestions and write them on the board. Then give them the newspaper or get them to search online for a few more ideas. After a few minutes, elicit their ideas and add them to the ideas on the board.

What are the functions of GESE Grade 12? (10 minutes)

1. If your students have already worked on the functions of GESE Grade 12, give them a few minutes in pairs to see how many they can remember, then elicit them and write them on the board, adding any they forgot.
2. If they haven't looked at the functions before, get them to think what kinds of functions might be at GESE Grade 12. You could show them some examples from GESE Grade 11 if they might not know what a function is.

3. Elicit some ideas and then confirm the correct answers on the board. You could use the examples in the grid in the answers below if the students need any support understanding what the functions are.

Using the functions of the grade (10 minutes)

1. Give them a few minutes to think alone about what kind of things they might say when using each of the functions, then put them into groups of three or four, and get them to match the cut-up function cards on Worksheet 2. Monitor and offer support where needed.
2. After eliciting the correct answers on the board. Check the students understand all the language in the task, and help them with any difficult words – model their pronunciation and get the students to repeat the expressions. Make sure you focus on stress and intonation. It's important that they are able to convey subtle meaning and engage in a more adversarial conversation at this Grade.
3. You might find it useful to show some clips of native speakers talking on TV shows where people discuss controversial topics to get some inspiration. Possible examples include 'Loose Women', 'The View', 'Question time' (clips available on YouTube).

Create a poster (15 minutes)

1. Tell the students you want them to create a brainstorm poster about the topic. Tell them to write the topic in the middle (eg Globalisation) and then create six categories, one for each function, and write a statement or comment using the function for each one. They can use the articles for inspiration.
2. Tell them to add any interesting vocabulary from the articles to the poster in a different colour. They can also use dictionaries and ask you for any support with language if they need it. When everyone has finished, stick the posters up around the room.

Gallery task (up to 15 minutes)

1. Put the students in pairs and get them to move around the room from poster to poster. Give them about 3 or 4 minutes per poster.
2. Get them to read the statements and chat about them with their partner. As they speak, note down examples of errors in grammar, lexis and pronunciation. Try to notice when students struggle to explain an idea. If you can think of a suitable word or expression they could use, note down the way they say it and your suggestion.
3. When they've finished, spend some time as a group feeding back on their conversations. What did they talk about? Was it interesting? What was the best/worst topic to talk about?

Feedback (10 minutes)

1. Note down any examples of interesting language or errors you'd like to focus on with your students on the board, and give them about 5 minutes to decide if it's a good example or an error, and to correct any errors.
2. After, elicit the answers and correct any errors on the board. Support them with the meaning, form and pronunciation of any challenging language. Try to focus their attention on good use of language of the grade.

Extension activity

More advanced students could add examples of complex grammar to their posters too.

Further support activity

Weaker students could use the example sentences in the grid in the answers and edit them to apply to their topic.

After class

Students could write some conversation questions about the topic they made their poster about.

Answers

Worksheet 1

1. False – The examiner will choose what to talk about
2. True
3. False – the candidate and the examiner share responsibility for the maintenance of the conversation.

4. False – there are no subject areas for GESE 12 - the examiner will decide what to talk about.
5. False – it is important.

Worksheet 2

They are matched on the original worksheet. Make sure you keep one copy of the worksheet which hasn't been cut up so you can confirm the answers.

Worksheet 1 – The Conversation phase

Decide if the following sentences are true or false.

1. You can decide which subject area to talk about in the exam.
2. This phase lasts for up to 6 minutes.
3. You only need to answer questions in this phase.
4. There are 12 possible subject areas.
5. Grammatical accuracy is not important in this phase.

Worksheet 2 – Choose the best answer

Language functions	Example sentence
<p>TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON</p> <p>Grade 12 Function</p> <p>Asserting</p>	<p>TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON</p> <p>Example sentence</p> <p>I really do think that this generation needs to take action to limit the powers of big businesses.</p>
<p>TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON</p> <p>Grade 12 Function</p> <p>Denying</p>	<p>TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON</p> <p>Example sentence</p> <p>No, it's not the case at all that Globalisation benefits everyone.</p>
<p>TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON</p> <p>Grade 12 Function</p> <p>Softening and downplaying propositions</p>	<p>TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON</p> <p>Example sentence</p> <p>Well, maybe 'destructive' is too harsh, but I still feel that Globalisation is a problematic issue.</p>
<p>TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON</p> <p>Grade 12 Function</p> <p>Contradicting</p>	<p>TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON</p> <p>Example sentence</p> <p>Actually, if you look at the data, you'll see that it isn't the case at all.</p>
<p>TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON</p> <p>Grade 12 Function</p> <p>Implying</p>	<p>TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON</p> <p>Example sentence</p> <p>I wonder if it would be more appropriate to look at Globalisation through the eyes of those who directly suffer as a result?</p>
<p>TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON</p> <p>Grade 12 Function</p> <p>Affirming</p>	<p>TRINITY COLLEGE LONDON</p> <p>Example sentence</p> <p>Of course, that's exactly what I mean when I talk about 'Global Justice'.</p>