

# TEACHING CONVERSATION BY LA MANSIÓN DEL INGLÉS

1st Term

Información Curso Completo: [www.mansioningles.com/otrosproductos/matdescar/ejemplos1.htm](http://www.mansioningles.com/otrosproductos/matdescar/ejemplos1.htm)



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## Introduction

Thank you for downloading Teaching Conversation by *La Mansión del Inglés*.

Teaching Conversation is aimed at teachers of conversational English at intermediate level, or band B2 in The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

Conversation classes often have students of varying ability. This course material has been used successfully for B1 (pre-intermediate) and C1 (pre-advanced) level students with only minor modification and adaptation of the material.

Emphasis in this course is on fluency, listening, confidence building and on developing the necessary functions students need in order to communicate successfully in English. Teaching Conversation uses a wide range of interesting, fun and engaging activities to stimulate lively student interaction with their classmates and with the teacher. There are mp3 audio files for listening practice, full instructions for less experienced teachers and photocopiable class handouts.

## About the author



Craig Wealand is a qualified TESL teacher (DELTA, ITTC, Bournemouth, UK - 1996), who has been teaching ESL since 1985. He currently lives in Valencia, Spain where he has been teaching at the British Council since 1997. Craig is the materials developer and partner at *La Mansión del Inglés CB*

If at any point while you're reading this e-book you have questions or comments, please don't hesitate to contact us. You can reach us on the Mansión Inglés Facebook Page, or send us an email at [mansionteachers@yahoo.es](mailto:mansionteachers@yahoo.es).

You can also follow us on Twitter @mansiontwit

## How to use this e-book

### A complete 60-hour course

The full course contains material for 60 academic hours of class teaching, divided into 3 terms of 20 hours each (term 1, term 2 and term 3). 1 academic hour = 50 minutes. 1 lesson = 2 X 50-minute periods, with a 10 minute break in the middle.

Detailed instructions for each activity help teachers with little or no experience to provide their students with a successful, enjoyable and productive conversation course.

### The fast track

Experienced teachers can jump around the e-book using the hyperlinks in the course map.

Teachers looking for a job interview role play, or a vocabulary exercise on the cinema, for example, can simply browse the course map, click on an [activity heading](#) and go directly to the section they need.

Click on a [Handout](#) link in the course map to go directly to any printable handout.

Return to the course map from the end of any lesson by clicking [back to course map](#)

### Additional materials

As an annex, we have included an **additional materials bank** for teachers who need more material or who wish to substitute activities included in the first 3 terms. Each activity in the annex (and in the main body of the course) has an approximate time length, giving the teacher the opportunity to change and substitute activities as and when he or she sees fit.



## 1<sup>st</sup> Term Course Map

	Activity 1 warmer	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	Activity 5	Optional Homework
<b>Lesson 1</b>  <b>Breaking the ice</b>	<b>True or False?</b>  <b>Use:</b> Relax Ss Give T idea of S level  <b>Topic:</b> Exchanging personal information  <b>Time:</b> 15 minutes	<b>Breaking the Ice</b>  <b>Use:</b> Question formation Intonation in questions 3 <sup>rd</sup> person  <b>Topic:</b> Getting to know you  <b>Time:</b> 35 minutes Handout 1	<b>Name Chain</b>  <b>Use:</b> Learn Ss names Practice "He's.../she's Her/His name's....."  <b>Topic:</b> Ss names  <b>Time:</b> 5 minutes	<b>Student's Needs</b>  <b>Use:</b> Discover Ss' needs. Speaking and listening practice. Notetaking  <b>Topic:</b> Ss' needs and expectations  <b>Time:</b> 40 minutes Handout 2		1. Present a website to the class.  2. <b>Optional writing:</b>  My background in English and course expectations.  <b>Time:</b> 5 minutes
<b>Lesson 2</b>  <b>Starting and continuing conversations</b>	<b>Did You Have a Good Weekend?</b>  <b>Use:</b> Past simple questions, Intonation 'Wh' questions  <b>Topic:</b> Speaking about the weekend  <b>Time:</b> 10 minutes	<b>Starting Conversations</b>  <b>Use:</b> Initiating conversations and responding  <b>Topic:</b> Introductions and small talk  <b>Time:</b> 20 minutes Handout 3	<b>She Was the Girl For Me</b>  <b>Use:</b> Listening and speaking practice, Past tenses, Sequencing  <b>Topic:</b> Relationships  <b>Time:</b> 20 minutes Handout 4	<b>Presenting a Website</b>  <b>Use:</b> Fluency, vocabulary expansion Self-study, Sharing resources,  <b>Topic:</b> Web sites for learning English  <b>Time:</b> 20 minutes	<b>Meeting at a Party</b>  <b>Use:</b> Listening practice, Breaking the Ice and making small talk  <b>Topic:</b> Meeting in a social situation  <b>Time:</b> 25 minutes Handout 5	1. Giving a student presentation for the class – set up  2. <b>Optional writing:</b> An interesting conversation with a stranger  <b>Time:</b> 5 minutes

<p><b>Lesson 3</b></p> <p><b>Discussion and debate</b></p>	<p><b>Don't Say 'Yes' or 'No'</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Question forms. Alternative ways of saying 'yes' and 'no'</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Any</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 5 minutes</p>	<p><b>Discussion Expressions</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Functions used in discussions</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Giving opinion Asking for opinion Agreeing and disagreeing</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes Handout 6</p>	<p><b>What's Your Opinion?</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Discussion functions, fluency</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Controversial statements</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 35 minutes Handout 7</p>	<p><b>Student Presentation</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Vocabulary expansion, fluency, public speaking, asking and answering questions</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Any (Ss choose)</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes</p>	<p><b>Class Debate</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Fluency, Discussion functions</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Any from Handout 6</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 40 minutes</p>	<p><b>Optional writing:</b></p> <p>Give your opinion on a controversial statement</p>
<p><b>Lesson 4</b></p> <p><b>Technology</b></p>	<p><b>Get Your Line In</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Discussion functions, fluency</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Various</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10-15 minutes</p>	<p><b>SMS Text Messages</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Understanding SMS texts and abbreviations used on the Internet</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Mobile phone text messaging</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes Handout 8</p>	<p><b>Listening</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Listening comprehension</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Family discussion on buying a new laptop</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 30 minutes Handout 9</p>	<p><b>Role play</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Fluency, confidence building</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> A child asking his/her parents for a mobile phone</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 15 minutes Handout 10</p>	<p><b>Student Presentation</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Vocabulary expansion, fluency, public speaking, asking and answering questions</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Any (Ss choose)</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes</p>	<p><b>Optional writing:</b></p> <p>"Technology is the new religion." Discuss</p>

<p><b>Lesson 5</b> <b>The cinema</b></p>	<p><b>How Are You Feeling?</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Pronunciation – attitudinal intonation</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Feelings</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 20 minutes</p>	<p><b>Acting Out a Dialogue</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Pronunciation – using intonation to show feelings</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> A short piece of movie dialogue</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes</p>	<p><b>Dialogue Gap Fill</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Listening practice leading to discussion</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> What are you prepared to do for money?</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 20 minutes Handout 11</p>	<p><b>Student Presentation</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Vocabulary expansion, fluency, public speaking, asking and answering questions</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Any (Ss choose)</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes</p>	<p><b>Cinema Vocabulary and Discussion</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Presentation, practice and review of cinema vocabulary, discussion for fluency</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> The cinema</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 40 minutes Handout 12 Handout 13</p>	<p><b>Optional writing:</b></p> <p>Write a film review</p>
<p><b>Lesson 6</b> <b>Shopping</b></p>	<p><b>Things in Common</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Speaking and asking about the past</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Finding things in common</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes</p>	<p><b>Shopping Vocabulary Race</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Practising and reviewing shopping vocabulary</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Shopping</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 20 minutes</p>	<p><b>Shopping discussion</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Question formation, fluency</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Shopping</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 20 minutes Handout 14</p>	<p><b>Student Presentation</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Vocabulary expansion, fluency, public speaking, asking and answering questions</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Any (Ss choose)</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes</p>	<p><b>Shopping for Clothes and Circular Discussion</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Listening practice, vocabulary for buying clothes, fluency</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Trying on and buying clothes</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 40 minutes Handout 15 Handout 16</p>	<p><b>Optional writing:</b></p> <p>In what ways are our buying habits affected by advertising?</p>

<p><b>Lesson 7</b></p> <p><b>Geography and National Stereotypes</b></p>	<p><b>The Room is the World</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Fluency, listening in a noisy room</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Travel</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes</p>	<p><b>Geography Quiz</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Fluency, negotiation</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Geography</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 15 minutes Handout 17</p>	<p><b>National Stereotypes</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Descriptive adjectives</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Nationalities</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 25 minutes Handout 18</p>	<p><b>Student Presentation</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Vocabulary expansion, fluency, public speaking, asking and answering questions</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Any (Ss choose)</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes</p>	<p><b>A Holiday in Cambodia</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Fluency, giving and asking for opinions, agreeing and disagreeing, making suggestions, discussion</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Travel, holidays and national stereotypes</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 40 minutes Handout 19</p>	<p><b>Optional writing:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Write about a memorable holiday you've had (good or bad).</li> <li>2. Would you like to live and work in a foreign country for at least a year? Which country and why?</li> </ol>
<p><b>Lesson 8</b></p> <p><b>Jobs</b></p>	<p><b>An email to Steve Jobs</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Sentence construction and word order</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Writing emails</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes</p>	<p><b>Vocabulary Brainstorming</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Practising and reviewing work vocabulary, fluency</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Work and jobs</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 20 minutes</p>	<p><b>A Job Interview</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Listening practice and role play interview, job interview language</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> A job interview</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 40 minutes Handout 20</p>	<p><b>Student Presentation</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Vocabulary expansion, fluency, public speaking, asking and answering questions</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Any (Ss choose)</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes</p>	<p><b>Work and Jobs Discussion</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Dictation, fluency, giving, and justifying opinions</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Jobs and work in general</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 15 minutes</p> <p><b>Extra activity – What's My Job?</b> (question formation)</p>	<p><b>Optional writing:</b></p> <p>Write an application letter for the post of your countries political leader. Explain way you are the right person for the job.</p>



<p><b>Lesson 9</b></p> <p><b>Asking Questions</b></p>	<p><b>Question Forms</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Question formation</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Any (Ss decide)</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 15 minutes</p> <p>Handout 21</p>	<p><b>The Right to Ask</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Fluency. Asking for, giving and justifying opinions. Agreeing and disagreeing</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Deciding who has the right to ask certain questions in certain situations</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 35 minutes</p> <p>Handout 22</p>	<p><b>Mind your Own Business!</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Asking and deflecting personal questions</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Exchanging personal information</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes</p>	<p><b>Student Presentation</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Vocabulary expansion, fluency, public speaking, asking and answering questions</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Any (Ss choose)</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes</p>	<p><b>Role play – A Surrogate Mother</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Question formation, fluency, role play interview</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> An interview between a surrogate mother and parents</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 30 minutes</p> <p><b>Extra activity – What would you ask?</b> (question formation, fluency)</p>	<p><b>Optional writing:</b></p> <p>Ss prepare 5 questions they would like to ask the T.</p>
<p><b>Lesson 10</b></p> <p><b>Mixed Bag</b></p>	<p><b>Ask the Teacher</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Question formation, listening practice</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Any (Ss decide)</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes</p>	<p><b>Kenneth Bought Carrots</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Pronunciation – phoneme recognition and production</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> English names, food and drink</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 20 minutes</p>	<p><b>Taboo</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> fluency, vocabulary, listening</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> various</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 30 minutes Handout 23</p>	<p><b>Student Presentation</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> Vocabulary, fluency, asking and answering questions</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Any (Ss choose)</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 minutes</p>	<p><b>The Expert Game</b></p> <p><b>Use:</b> fluency, listening</p> <p><b>Topic:</b> Any (Ss decide)</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 30 minutes Handout 24</p>	<p><b>Optional writing:</b></p> <p>Explain your favourite hobby/interest to an alien and say how you became interested in it.</p>

## Lesson 1

# Breaking the ice

### Abbreviations:

S = student

Ss = students

T = teacher

### Activity 1 – warmer: True or False? (Time: 15 minutes)

Introduce yourself and present Ss to each other while waiting for latecomers.

Example language:

***Hi/Hello, I'm.....***

***Nice to meet you.***

***This is....***

***Ana, this is David. David, this is Ana***

*TIP: Put your hand in your pocket during this activity to hide your wedding ring (or lack of one).*

When all the Ss are in the class, explain that you are going to tell them 10 things, 10 facts, about yourself. 6 things will be true and 4 things will be false. Get Ss to write the numbers 1 – 10 on paper and they should write **T** if they think the fact is true and **F** if they think it is false.

Board:

**10 facts:**

**6 true**

**4 false**

You then read 10 previously prepared facts about yourself. 6 true facts and 4 lies. Here are my 10, but you should use your own:

1. I'm 49 years old **F**
2. I'm married and I have children **F**
3. I speak Spanish **T**
4. My family live in Spain (Mum, Dad, sister) **T**
5. I've lived and worked in New York City **T**
6. I play the saxophone **F**
7. I've parachuted from a plane **T**
8. I like football **T**
9. I like cooking **F**
10. I've done a bungee jump. **T**

Get Ss to check in pairs and compare their guesses for about 1 minute

Get feedback open class and tell them some extra information about yourself:

- My family live about an hour and a half from here in a small Spanish village.
- I can't play the saxophone, but I love jazz and the sax is my favourite instrument.
- I hate cooking actually, but I love eating!

Now tell the students they are going to do the same thing, but with one small difference. They must think of 4 things about themselves. 3 true things and 1 lie. They must write them on a piece of paper.

Check that Ss understand what they have to do by asking, "What are you going to do now?"

<p>Board</p> <p><b>4 things</b></p> <p><b>3 true</b></p> <p><b>1 false</b></p>
--

T corrects grammar and spelling as Ss write.

Put Ss in small groups of 3 or 4.

1 S reads all 4 facts to the group and the group decides which fact is false. It's important that S reads all four facts before the others guess the false one.

*Tip: This is a good chance for T to check out the level of the students in the class, notice the shy and the talkative Ss, and the weak and strong ones. T should occasionally join in with Ss and guess which fact is false and ask individual Ss follow-up questions.*

As the activity is finishing, write any errors on the board and ask the Ss to correct them

Board - possible errors

~~X I'm nurse X~~  
~~X I like swim X~~  
~~X I'm 23 years X~~   ~~X I have 23 years X~~  
~~X I born in Madrid X~~

I'm a nurse  
I like swimming  
I'm 23 (years old)  
I was born in Madrid

### Activity 2 Breaking the Ice (time: 35 minutes)

Explain that the first half of the lesson will be spent getting to know each other and the second half will be about the course and what the Ss expect and need from it.

Tell the students they are going to 'break the ice' and find out some information about the person next to them.

Give Ss Handout 1.





Handout 1

## Breaking the Ice

Ask your partner about the following topics and write down anything you find interesting. Ask 'follow-up' questions.

• Name \_\_\_\_\_

• Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

• Present address \_\_\_\_\_

• Home and family \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

• Job/Studies \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

• Hobbies and pastimes \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

• Foreign travel \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

• Ambitions and plans for the future \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*.....now you will introduce your partner to the class.*

Start eliciting and drilling questions from Ss. Drill rising / falling intonation on 'Wh' questions:

Explain that intonation is important in English as it conveys the speaker's interest and attitude to the listener.

*Tip: get students to hum the intonation first then drill the words. If they hum it after you model it, they can concentrate on the pitch and don't have to worry about the words.*

Board – intonation:



**What's your name?**



**Where do you live?**



**What do you do?**

Continue eliciting questions for each category on the handout and drill them.

Tell the Ss they should ask follow-up questions and write down information in note form (no full sentences). At the end of the activity Ss will introduce their partners to the class:

e.g.

"This is Juan. He's a computer software consultant. He's single and he lives in the city centre."

Make sure Ss are sitting next to someone they don't know and give them about 20 minutes to interview each other. Student A asks all the questions to student B and makes notes. Then they change and student B asks student A.

Example questions and follow-up questions:

**Present address** – Where do you live? How long have you been living there? Do you like it?

**Home and family** – Are you married? Do you have kids? How many? How old are they? Boys or girls? Do you live in a house or a flat? Is there anything you'd like to change about your home?

**Job/Studies** – Do you work or study? Why did you decide to study that? Would you like to work for a big or a small company? What do you like/dislike about your job? How long have you been working for your company? What's a typical day like for you?

**Hobbies and pastimes** – Do you have any hobbies? What do you like doing in your free/spare time? How long have you been doing that? How often do you play/go/do that? Is it expensive? What equipment do you need? Is there a hobby or pastime you would like to do if you had more time?

**Foreign travel** – Do you like travelling? Have you been anywhere interesting lately? Are you planning a holiday at the moment? How often do you go abroad? Which countries have you been to? What was your best/worst holiday?

**Ambitions and plans for the future** – What are your future plans? What ambitions do you have for the future? What do you think you'll be doing 5 years from now?

Ss introduce their partners to the class and say 2 or 3 interesting things about them. T asks any extra questions as necessary (of either interviewer ("Do you know how long Pedro has been playing golf?") or interviewee ("Why did you decide to study law?"))

*Tip: T can use this time to make a note of Ss names (Write notes to help remember the Ss, eg. "X" wears glasses, "Y" has long brown hair, "Z" is an estate agent etc.). Don't correct the Ss heavily at this point. It's their first time speaking open class and some may be shy and self-conscious.*

When Ss have finished introducing their partners, draw their attention to errors and vocabulary and grammar improvements that you noted down while they were interviewing each other.

Board - possible errors

**X I like play tennis X**  
**X I will work in Barcelona in 5 years X**  
**X I'm 23 years X X I have 23 years X**  
**X I practise sport two days a week X**  
**X I have a difficult work X**  
  
**X I have 2 childs X**

**I like playing tennis**  
**I will be working in Barcelona in 5 years**  
**I'm 23 (years old)**  
**I do sport two days a week.**  
**I have a lot of work. I have two jobs**  
*(countable/uncountable)*  
**I have 2 children**

Board - possible vocabulary / grammar

To run / to set up a business

Kids

I'm single / divorced

To take up a sport / hobby

What will you be doing in 5 years?

I hope/plan/intent/want/would like to be living in New York.

To go abroad

Holiday (UK) / vacation (US)

### **BREAK – 10 minutes**

#### **Activity 3 Name chain** (Time: 5 minutes)

Ask the Ss if they remember each other's names. Probably not! Do they remember the T's name?

Starting with the T and going around the class clockwise, get the Ss to repeat the names of everyone in the class in a chain drill and practise personal pronouns 'he' and 'she'. This is the drill:

1. T says "I'm ..... (T name) and he's / she's ....." (T indicates S on his / her immediate left and says his / her name.
2. T asks the same S to repeat "He's.....(T name), I'm.....(S name) and he / she's....." (name of the next S going clockwise).
3. T tells next S to repeat "He /she's....(T name), he /she's.....(1<sup>st</sup> S's name), I'm .....(second S's name) and he / she's (third S's name) etc. etc. around the class.

With a big class it's more fun as the name list gets longer. Insist on correct personal pronoun (he's / she's). Don't let Ss just say a list of names.

T should help Ss if they can't remember names. This will help T to memorise the names also.

*Tip: Take away or cover up the papers of Ss who write a name list. This often happens with the last 2 or 3 Ss in the group who have the most to remember.*



*If necessary go around a second time. Especially with the first S on your left who only had one name to remember!*

#### **Activity 4 Student's Needs Analysis** (Time: 40 minutes)

*Note: Why spend half of the first lesson talking to the Ss about their needs and expectations?*

This will help fine-tune the course material (more telephone English, more listening, less business vocabulary, more travel role plays etc.). More material can be found in the **additional materials bank**.

The 12-15 minute discussion activity gives the Ss a chance to talk about their strengths and weaknesses. They can 'loosen up' linguistically and ease into the course by talking about a neutral subject, and also think about what they need to do, both inside and outside the class, to improve their English.

Explain to Ss that you want to hear from them about their past experiences learning English, their expectations from this course and what they need from it.

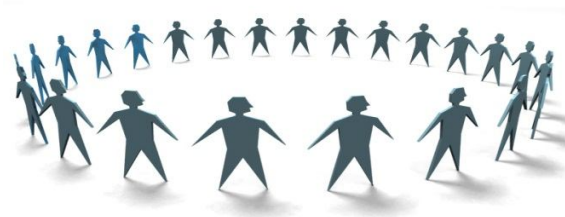
Divide Ss into groups of 3 or 4 and give 1 copy of Handout 2 to a strong S in each group who you name as group secretary. The job of the group secretary is to ask the questions on the handout one by one and note down comments and ideas from the other group members.

*Note: You should have a pretty good idea from the first half of the lesson about which Ss have the level of English and the personality to act as a group secretary.*

Give Ss 15 - 20 minutes to do this.

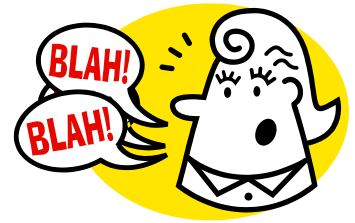
*Tip: While Ss are discussing, T makes notes for course planning/student needs and specific notes on errors for correction when the discussion has finished.*

*T goes from group to group, occasionally joining in the discussion asking questions and giving personal experience from learning a second language.*



**Handout 2**

**Needs and Expectations – Group discussion**



1. Why did you decide to do this conversation course and what do you expect from it? In what ways do you expect your English to improve?
2. What were your previous English classes like? What things did/didn't you enjoy doing?
3. How do you learn new vocabulary? Do you have a system?  
How can you improve your pronunciation?  
How important is it to have good pronunciation in English?  
Should you sound like a native English speaker?
4. How confident are you about speaking English generally?  
Do you worry a lot about making mistakes when you speak?
5. This course has no course book. How do you feel about including the following in this course?
  - Grammar practice? How much?
  - Homework?
  - Telephone English? (Is talking English on the phone more difficult than talking face to face? (Why? / Why not?)
  - Discussing news and current affairs? (Do you think this is boring and depressing)
  - Songs (Which ones?)
  - Class debates, discussions and role plays (What about?)
  - A student presentation for the class. (How can this improve your English?)
  - Are there any topics that you are especially interested in talking about?

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Do you have other ideas or comments for this course?

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6. What can you do **outside** the classroom to improve your English?  
Write a list on the back of this piece of paper.

Stop the activity after 15 minutes, even if some groups haven't finished and get feedback from the group secretaries. Invite other Ss to comment and direct questions at individual Ss as appropriate.

**Notes:**

- How many of your Ss need telephone English for their job? (It's usually more difficult to speak on the phone because you cannot use hand gestures, body language nor see facial expressions).
- Do any Ss ask for job interview role plays?
- Is there a high demand for song activities? Can the Ss bring in music they like for T to prepare an activity?
- How many Ss need English for travel and tourism? How will this affect your choice of role plays?
- How many Ss ask for pronunciation practice? Will you teach them the phonemic symbols?
- Do the Ss have a personal notebook for writing down and revising new vocabulary?

**Homework:**

You may decide to make homework compulsory. You could also give an optional writing task at the end of each lesson based on the things discussed in class. Ss hand it in the following lesson for correction and you return it with comments on both language and content. This gives Ss a personal dialogue with the T and a chance to express views that they may not have wanted to, or had the chance to, during the class. They also re-cycle vocabulary from the lesson and improve their writing skills.

**What is a student presentation?**

A student speaks in front of the class for a maximum of 5 minutes on a subject of their choice. The class then asks questions if they want to.

### **How can a presentation improve the students' English?**

- Ss prepare notes at home and study vocabulary specific to their presentation.
- They speak about a subject they like and have an interest in, which motivates them to present it to the class.
- They rehearse their presentation at home. They have an opportunity to do some public speaking in English. They can boost their confidence in the relatively 'safe' environment of the classroom.
- They answer spontaneous questions on their chosen subject at the end.

(Details on how Ss can prepare for the class presentation are included in lesson 2)

### **What can Ss do outside the classroom to improve their English?**

- Find English speakers in your area. Is there a language exchange group where you live? If not, could you start one?
- Are there any bars or pubs running pub quizzes in English?
- Are there any Irish bars or Ex-pat bars where English speakers meet to chat or watch sports? If so, go there and start a conversation.
- Are there any cinemas in your area showing English films in original version? What about DVD's in English (with English subtitles) and English TV?
- Listen to songs in English and read the lyrics. Use YouTube and similar video sites to find songs with subtitled lyrics.
- Read a book in English that you have already read in your language (or a graded reader). Note down interesting vocabulary in your vocabulary notebook.
- Read English magazines, e-zines and blogs about the subjects you are interested in (football, cookery, fashion, travel etc.)
- Join English speaking communities on social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter. La Mansion del Ingles (Facebook) and MansionTwit (Twitter) are good places to start.

**Homework** (Time: 5 minutes)

**1. Present a website**

Ask Ss if they have Internet access at home or at work.

Tell them you want them to find a website that could be useful for improving their English. Ss will show the website to the class and explain why they like it and how it can be used for practising English.

Note: if you have internet in the classroom, Ss can navigate through the website and explain the good and bad aspects of the site.

Board - possible websites

[www.mansioningles.com](http://www.mansioningles.com)

[www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)

[www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com)

**2. Optional writing**

Write about your background in English and your expectations from this course.

Board – optional writing ideas

**When did you start studying English? What courses have you done? Have you studied abroad?**

**Why do you need/want to improve your English?**

**Why did you decide to do this particular course?**

**What difficulties do you have with English?**

**What do you see as your strong and weak points?**

**What do you expect from this course?**

End of lesson 1