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# Unconventional

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## Frameworks for Effective Speaking Clubs



Wednesdays English at America House, Kyiv, Ukraine

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June 2016



**УКРАЇНА  
SPEAKING**

**A E AMERICAN ENGLISH**



**Regional English Language Office,  
US Embassy, Ukraine**



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# Introduction



Knowledge and use of English facilitates access to the world's economic, social, educational, and cultural opportunities, and is key for Ukraine's integration into the European political, economic, scientific and educational space. In an effort to catalyze English proficiency among Ukrainian citizens, President Petro Poroshenko has declared 2016 the Year of English language in Ukraine.

While there are an endless number of traditional English learning resources available, creative methods for engagement in English language practice are lacking. Without inventive approaches, learners are unmotivated to improve their language proficiency. There is a need to invigorate the study of English through the creation of innovative informal and supportive community learning platforms in Ukraine.

## The Goal

The Wednesdays English at America House (WE@AH) Club, a collaboration between America House Kyiv and the U.S. Embassy's Regional English Language Office, is the most popular weekly program at America House Kyiv. The club has met every Wednesday, 7-8:30 pm since America House opened its doors to visitors in May 2015, and an average of 100 participants join the meetings each week.

The goal of this training is to maximize the impact of our success with WE@AH by sharing our experiences with like-minded professionals in Ukraine who are planning to run or are already running English speaking clubs. This is not only a chance for us to share, but also to learn. By gathering established and emerging leaders from all over Ukraine, we can all take an opportunity to share ideas and collaborate in our professional growth.

## Methods

During this training, we will recreate the most effective sessions we've held at America House Kyiv. We want to show that learning English should not be confined to classrooms or traditional formats. Anyone can lead innovative and effective English speaking events, not only native speakers or professional instructors. Rather than targeting subject matter, we focus on frameworks or models of engagement that are effective no matter the subject. Each framework:

- emphasizes speaking participation, without the traditional classroom foci of grammar or correction.
- is unusual (e.g. fun, innovative, *unconventional*)
- is active: involving movement or group work
- is recyclable: that is, the core model can be repeated at later dates by plugging in new subject matter.
- incorporates different English proficiency levels

Thank you for joining us and we look forward to collaborating with you!

Sincerely,

*The WE@AH Team*

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## 1

# Meet the Guests



“Meet the Guests” involves visitors, or guests, to the Speaking Club. Every speaking club can benefit from inviting guests, whether these are native speakers of English, teachers of English, successful business owners from the community or from local government, or people who have traveled to foreign countries and used their English.

## Materials

None.

## Formation

Ideally, you will have five or more visitors to the Speaking Club. Participants are then divided into groups; there should be at least one guest for each group.

## Procedure

Participants get 15 minutes to ask the guest questions. These might be about the speakers’ background, interests, job, home life, etc. It might be worthwhile to brainstorm good questions as a whole group ahead of time. These can be written on the board or flip chart.

After fifteen minutes, the guests will rotate from one group to the next. This ensures that all groups have a chance to talk to all the guests.

The general tendency is to invite one guest to a class or speaking club. While this is fine, it shifts the Speaking Club towards a lecture or Q&A session format, with one person sitting in front of the entire group. Fewer people get speaking practice, and confidence can wane. We strongly urge facilitators to seek out several guests for a Speaking Club session.

## Future Variations

This format will work again and again. It is only a matter of finding guests to invite. Again, anyone with some knowledge of English can make an interesting guest.

## 2

# Describe it!



Through the games “Hot Seat” and “Draw This” participants practice describing pictures to group members so their teammates can guess or draw the image.

## Materials

Pens, scratch paper and a series of pictures printed on paper or projected on PowerPoint slides. For “Hot Seat”, the pictures could relate to a theme, such as American Culture and could be show images of Disneyland, Abraham Lincoln, Michael Jackson, etc. For “Draw This”, pictures that are silly or unusual may work best.

## Formation

Small groups of 3 -4 people work best for this activity to give participants maximum speaking time.

## Procedure

### Hot Seat

- In groups, arrange participants so that one person is in the “hot seat” and cannot see the first picture but other group members can. For example, if using PowerPoint slides, one participant in each group turns their back to the screen while the others face it.
- The group members then describe the image so that their teammate can guess the picture. When they guess correctly, the team puts their hands up and the round is finished.

- The group changes positions so a new person is in the “hot seat” and a new round begins.

Note: It’s helpful to have the name of the person, object or place written on the picture as well so that it’s clear what word(s) should be elicited.

### Draw This

- Similar to “Hot Seat”, groups are positioned so that one person cannot see the picture. This person is “the artist” and has a pen and paper. The other group members can see the picture, however should not be able to see what the artist is drawing so as not to guide them through gesturing.
- The timer is set for 2 minutes and the artist must draw the image based on their teammates description.
- When the time is up, the artist can look at the original image and share their rendition with the larger group. Repeat until everyone has had an opportunity to be in both roles.

Note: It is important to emphasize that the artist need not be skilled at drawing. The idea is to get as many details in the correct position based on their groups descriptions.

### Future Variations

These activities can be repeated regularly and are easily adapted to fit various themes depending on the pictures used, e.g. business, the environment, American Culture, etc.

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# Activate 'Guess What' Games

- 
- Things that  
are round
- .....
1. the moon
  2. clocks
  3. the Earth
  4. oranges
  5. balls
  6. heads

It's easy to make a whole speaking club session from guessing games. Every person gets a chance to talk often and a lot with Activate "Guess What?" cards.

## Materials

Guess What? cards. These can be downloaded and printed from American English ([americanenglish.state.gov](http://americanenglish.state.gov)). You might also laminate the cards.

\* No pens or notebooks are needed. Nothing but the "Guess What?" cards.

## Formation

Groups of 3-5 person work well for "Guess What?" cards. You can play without desks. In fact, you don't even need chairs; you can play standing up.

## Procedure

The facilitator should demonstrate how to play, using one of the cards.



- First tell the group the topic. This is written in large letters at the top of the card. Tell the group you will describe the words on the card and its their job to guess it. (If they don't know the word in English, they can say it in Ukrainian).
- Now ask someone from the group to do one more demonstration. Give that person a new card. First the new describer will read the topic. Then she or he will describe all the words.
- Next move everyone into groups. Give one player per group one card. When hat group is finished, they should raise their hand or call you for a new card.
- In this manner, your groups can play for a whole hour with only 40 or so cards. When a group is finished with one card, simply rotate that card to the next group.
- Group members should take turns. Push them to see how many cards their group can do. Ten? Twenty? Fifty?

## Future Variations

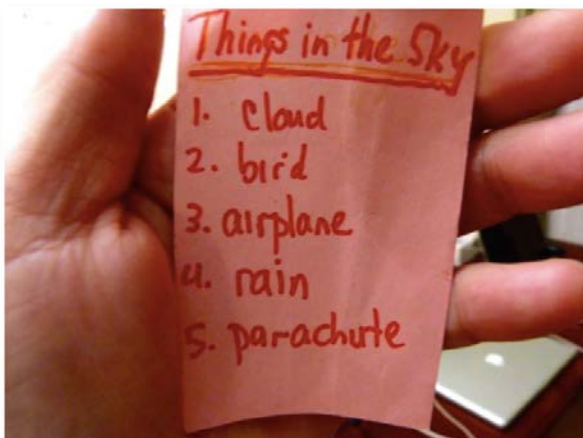
You can bring back these same cards and use them again.

### No Topic

It's much easier for guessers when they know the topic written on the top of the card. If you want more of a challenge, describe the words without revealing the topic. Then after the words have been described and guessed, the group will guess the topic.

### Mime

Try acting out the words on the card. One player will mime the words, and the rest of the members of the group must guess. The speaking practice here comes from the guessers. To make it easier, the player who mimes can show the group, the topic on the top of the card.



### My life

The describer should make all of their descriptions personal, related to their own life. For example, using "Things in the Sky" card to the left, I would describe the first word as "These are things that my mother never got tired of. She could look at the car window and see these things in the sky and say, 'Look how beautiful,' and then she would ask my father to stop and take a picture."

### Most Interesting

Re-visit the cards later and play, "Most interesting and Why?" Each group will examine a card and choose which item on it is the most interesting and why? Or you might choose the most boring item on the card.

### I have / I have never

Each group looks at a card together. Each person in the group takes turns telling about an experience they have had related to one of the words, or something they have never done. For example, in the about card "Things that are cold," one member might say, "I have never been to Antarctica." Another might say, "I have never seen green snow." Another might say, "I've had ice cream twice today already."



### Create Your Own

For a future speaking clubs, begin by having participants create their own cards. If you have 20 participants and they each create 3 cards, that's 60 cards total. That will offer a lot of speaking practice. The Facilitator should keep these cards and use them for future speaking clubs.

## 4

# Quest (Scavenger Hunt)



Be active and interact with your surroundings!

## Materials

A list of 30 tasks and a camera for each team.

## Formation

Group participants into teams of no more than 6. The setting can be city-wide, building-wide, or other.

## Procedure

Each team is given a copy of the list of tasks and one camera. They are then given a specific amount of time (usually 1.5-2 hours) and the parameters of their quest (city-wide, neighborhood, building). The teams must find and photograph as many items from the list as they can in the allotted time. A sample of items is as follows:

1. A mural
2. Two people holding hands
3. A slice of pizza
4. Someone in a t-shirt about the US
5. A sleeping cat
6. Someone wearing a uniform
7. A child wearing glasses
8. Someone drinking hot tea
9. A balloon
10. A moon

When the time finishes, the teams reconvene and present their findings to each other. Judges count how many of the tasks were completed and award prizes.

## Future Variations

You can also add tasks of things the teams should videotape instead of photograph. This model also works well with themes, such as finding information about food environments.

## 5

# Speed English



Participants speak to each other in pairs for two minutes, and then rotate. This activity works well for large groups: more than 30 people. Speed English can last 45 minutes to 1 hour. Facilitator and volunteers help ensure organized rotation at the designated time.

## Materials

List of fun questions. These can be (a) projected on the wall or screen via PowerPoint; (b) printed on paper; (c) called out orally by the facilitator after each rotation.

## Formation

Chairs should be set into rows so that participants can face one another. Where chairs are lacking, participants can form two lines, with pairs facing each other.

Because Speed English depends on an rotation of speakers, it may appear chaotic the first time you try. However, once participants learn the format, things will go much smoother.

## Procedure

- With participants facing each other in pairs, the facilitator reads the question: (e.g. “What are you grateful for?” or “Do you like penguins or lions better?” or “What language would you most like to speak and why?”)
- Participants have two minutes to discuss the question. It’s not important who starts.
- After two minutes, the moderator signals a stop. It’s every useful to have a whistle or bell for this.
- Of the two rows of participants, one row is *movable*, and the other *static*.

movable row: moves one place to the left	X X X X X X X X X X
static row: do not move	O O O O O O O O O O

- At the signal those in the movable row step left and are facing a new partner.
- The facilitator reads the next question. This continues as long as the discussions remain lively.
- At the end participants reconvene as one large group and share impressions. The facilitator may elicit
  - ▶ The funniest response
  - ▶ The craziest response
  - ▶ The most heartfelt response
  - ▶ The most creative response
  - ▶ The most surprising response
  - ▶ The most interesting word you learned today

## Future Variations

Speed English can be used often, perhaps once a month. Because of constantly shifting partners, the activity remains fresh.

The success of Speed English depends largely on the questions the facilitator gathers or prepares. Many lists of questions can be found online with searches for “discussion questions”, “fun questions,” etc. Light questions such as “What is the first thing you do in the morning?” or “What’s the most disgusting thing you’ve ever eaten?” usually work as well or better than heavy political questions.

However, Speed English is a good format for introducing themes, some of which can be serious. For instance, on December 9, 2015, at America House English Language Fellow Seneca Ryan used the Speed English format to engage participants in a discussion on

corruption. Now, that's a topic that doesn't sound very fun, but in the Speed English format it become tolerable and even interesting.

Some of the questions that were discussed are as follows:

- If the bank made a mistake and put a little extra money in your bank account, would you tell them? What if it were a lot of extra money?
- If someone offered to pay you a much higher price for a necklace you bought on sale, would you accept their offer?
- Can corruption ever be a good thing?
- You are a police officer and you find your friend driving too fast in the city. Do you warn him or give him a fine?



## 6

# Stand Up English

“Stand Up English” attempts to break the classroom mold by having no desks and no chairs, and no pens or notebooks. When we sit for extended periods, our metabolism tends to slow; movement is very likely good for our brains and good for learning. It is certainly true that people are far too sedentary today, spending up to 18 hours sitting or lying down. This has led in part to worldwide increases in obesity, diabetes, and even cancer. So let’s take a break from sitting.

When the weather is good, try “Stand up English” outdoors.

“Classroom teachers can incorporate movement activities and physical activity breaks into the classroom setting that may improve student performance and the classroom environment. Most interventions reviewed here used short breaks (5–20 minutes) that required little or no teacher preparation, special equipment or resources.”

US Centers for Disease Control, 2010

## Materials

Stand Up English has been designed so that you don’t have many materials. However, you will need to prepare questions for “Standing Partner Lines,” one of the activities.

## Formation

All the activities involve groups, and all participants stand (barring any disabilities). The more room you have, the better. Chairs and desks just get in the way. If indoors, move have your participants work together to move them quietly to to the side of the room. This will create a kind of dance floor.

## Procedure

There are several separate activities one can use for Stand Up English, and the facilitator may mix and match them.

### Four Corners/Compass

Designate the corners of the room as 1, 2, 3, and 4. You can also use a compass arrangement, designated points as North, South, East, West. Next the facilitator will present the participants with four choices. For example: “What would you like to drink now? 1. juice 2. coffee 3. tea 4. Coca-Cola.” All the “juice” people move to corner 1 where they have one or two minutes to discuss why they chose juice, what kind of juice, etc. All the coffee, tea, and Coca-Cola people go to their respective corners and discuss too. After a moment, offer a new choice: “Would you most like to visit (1) India, (2) France, (3) Brazil, or (4) South Africa?” Again, participants go to their corner and discuss why they made their choice.

You may also offer a meeting place in the center for those who are undecided, or don’t like any other the choices.



Other questions might be:

- What would you like to eat now?
- What language would you most like to learn?
- Which of these four jobs would be best for you?
- Which of these four jobs would be worst?
- Which of these school subjects is most interesting to you?
- Which of these animals would you like to be?
- Which of these school subjects is most boring?

### Standing Partner Lines

Standing Partner lines works like Speed English, only standing. Ask all participants to form two parallel lines. They should be facing one partner. The facilitator should have a stopwatch or timer. Give each pair 45 seconds. The facilitator will call out an interesting question. *What's the best things about your home town? What's the worst things about your home town? What's your favorite season? Describe a time when you spent the night somewhere you didn't want to. Describe the last time you went swimming? Describe the last bad meal you had?* You can improvise the questions, but it's useful to have a list prepared.

After 45 seconds, the facilitator rings a bell, or blows a whistle. If you *train* people to stop talking when they hear the signal, your activity will go more smoothly.

Just as in Speed English, one line is mobile and the other stationary. Each person in the designated mobile line will move one person to the left. The person at the end of the line must come around to the other end. In this way, each person will have a new partner for every mini-discussion.

The activity will be loud. Keep going as long as participants remain interested. Afterwards you might respond as a whole group and ask what the most fascinating answers were.

### “Guess What?” Cards

You can easily incorporate “Guess What?” cards into Stand Up English. See the description of “Guess What?” cards for details. There are several games you can use the cards for, and they are perfect for standing.

### Human Arrangements

In these tasks the whole group will have to exercise their abilities at problem solving, *and* they will have to speak to each other in English. In each case, the group will have to physically organize their bodies—usually in a line—to show a solution to the proposed arrangement. Here are some of the arrangements you can ask for:

1. By calendar birthdate: month and day, not year.
2. From youngest to oldest.
3. By height
5. By how many coins each person has in his/her pockets or bags

6. Chronologically from father's date of birth
7. By mother's birthday (day and month, no year).
8. Into groups of a certain number: for example, start with 9. Let's say you have 20 people. Two groups of 9 will form and two will be extra. Those two who don't fit will receive a yellow card. Just show them, the yellow card. It's symbolic, but they can still continue to play. Next try groups of 5. Once a group of 5 is complete no one else can join. Again, show the yellow card to those who couldn't fit.

### Dividing Line

Make a line down the middle of the room, with string or tape, or pieces of paper. The facilitator should straddle the line. He/She will ask a question and gesture to one side of the line and then the other. Participants will then make their choice and commit to one side. Here's an example:

Facilitator: Which is superior: dogs (*the facilitator gestures to one side of the line*) or cats (*facilitator gestures to the other side*)?

Now the participants choose one side or the other. They then have 2 minutes to face off. All the dog people face the cat people and each tries to convince the other that their animal is superior. Or they try to understand why the other people think differently.

It's fun. And loud. What about other kinds of questions, such as:

Who make better cooks? Men or Women?

Are people inherently selfish? Yes or No?

Are you a morning or night person?

Do you trust policemen in your town? Yes or No?

Is it possible to be in love with more than one person at the same time? Yes or no?

We have the right to fish until there are no more fish on earth? Yes or No?



## Future Variations

You can see that Stand Up English is based on engaging formations. New content can be used each time these activities are used in a speaking club. Thus, future variations are infinite. Speaking Club facilitators must learn to feel confident creating or finding content.

## 7

# Group Performance



This model is great for ensuring that everyone is involved when there are large numbers of participants. The activity fosters acting and public speaking skills. It also a great activity for collaboration and group work. A variety of topics can be used in this model, but the best format are when there are clear objectives/instructions as well as plenty of room for creativity.

## Materials

Depending on the presentation assignment, groups may receive a story prompt, a topic, or a list of words that need to be incorporated in the performance.

## Formation

Ideally, you will have 5 or more visitors to the Speaking Club. Participants are divided into groups of 6-10. Also it would be best if there were a native speaker or volunteer facilitator for each group, but this is not necessary.

## Procedure

The basic procedure is that groups are given instructions for a presentation and a set amount of time to prepare (usually 30 minutes). Once groups are formed and instructions delivered, the groups spread out in the space and prepare. During the preparation session, the main facilitator comes around to each group to check in. Though presentation topics can vary, it is important to establish the ground rule that all group members must be part of the presentation/performance.

After the 30 minutes have passed, the groups gather back together and take turns presenting to each other. Setting at 2-3 minute limit to presentations is helpful to maintain focus and engagement.

## Future Variations

The performance/presentation assignment can vary from meeting to meeting. Here are some variations that have worked for us:

### Storytelling

Each receives a card with a basic fairy tale plot (3-5 sentences). Each team has a different fairy tale. Fairy tales should be well-known, but teams can change the plots as they wish.

Examples may include:

- Snow White
- Rapunzel
- The Little Mermaid
- Hansel and Gretel
- Sleeping Beauty
- Little Red Riding Hood
- Ugly Duckling

### Playwriting

Open the activity with a discussion:

- What makes a good story?
- What are essential components of a good story?
- How can you capture the audience's attention when creating a story?

After discussion, participants are divided into several groups and each member of the group receives 2 cards from the stack of word cards. The theme of the story is selected by the moderator (e.g. "How I spent the holidays", "My best vacations", "My biggest New Year adventure").

One member of the group is the writer who records the story that is told. Everyone else is a storyteller. Going around in a circle twice the group creates a story. Each person can only say one sentence using the word on the card they received. The first person starts the story with an opening sentence (e.g. Once upon a time...). In turn, each person adds one sentence to continue the story. The last person finishes the story in one sentence as well, and concludes "The End."

After creating the story, the groups have 30 minutes to prepare their story as a performance before acting it out for the general audience. Limit performances to 3 minutes each.

## Songwriting

Each group receives a card with the list of words (the same list for each team). Words can be related to the specific theme and/or totally random. We created a list of 30 words and instructed groups to use at least 10 words in the song they wrote. Groups are also instructed what the theme of the song should be (for example, “today you are writing the America House theme song”).

Each team writes lyrics to a song within the assigned theme and using the words from the list. Participants may create new lyrics to an existing tune, or may create an altogether original piece. After preparing, each group performs the song in front of the audience.

## Choreography

The facilitator chooses a song in English (preferably a rhythmic one, with thoughtful lyrics). Participants listen to the song and go through the lyrics together (moderator should explain new words and phrases). Then, participants are split into groups. The groups have 15 minutes to prepare choreography for the selected song. When the choreography is ready, the facilitator informs each team to create written instructions of their choreography because their dance will be performed by another group. No explanations can be done orally, only written instructions can be used.

Then, choreography instructions are redistributed, so each group receives a new set of instructions. For the remaining 20 minutes, teams prepare dances using the written choreography instructions they received.

At the end each team performs the choreography they received in front of the audience. The original dance may also be performed so that the audience can compare the two dances. This is a great exercise for practicing giving directions for actions with the use of words only.



## Story Prompts

In this format, the opening of the story is presented, and each group needs to create a performance that completes the story. We used this for a Halloween club meeting with the following prompt:

“One Halloween my friends and I decided to go trick-or-treating in our neighborhood. Down the street from us was an old deserted cultural center that everyone thought was haunted. My mother warned us, “Don't you dare go near that America House!” Naturally, her warning made us even more curious. We went to the house and rang the bell. There was no answer. We tried the door. It was unlocked, so we entered the house. The door slammed behind us and...”

## Group Presentations

Groups are assigned a topic and are given 30 minutes to prepare a presentation on that topic. Groups are encouraged to be creative in their approaches to sharing information. Examples of topics include:

- *Presentations about Ukraine for American guests*: Each group presents an introduction to Ukraine. Topics can include food, history, cities, folklore, sports, etc.
- *“The Best U.S. City”*: Each group is assigned a U.S. city. Their task is to make a case for why their assigned city should be considered the best.

## 8

# Activate Board Games

In groups, participants will play board games that prompt speaking. Each group can have a different game. The facilitator will rotate the board games after 10 minutes. In this way, each group will begin playing a new game every 10 minutes, and an entire Speaking Club session can be dedicated to board games.

## Materials

- One board game for each group.  
Board games can be printed from the American English website ([americanenglish.state.gov](http://americanenglish.state.gov)).
- One die for each group. There are many alternatives to dice: make them out of paper; use coins, six-sided pencils, etc.
- Tokens or game pieces (фишки).



## Formation

Groups are essential. Three to four people is ideal for a group. If the size of the speaking club is 40 people, you can use ten different games, four people per group. However, if you had over 100 participants, you could make groups of 10 people.

Tables are useful for board games, but not required. In a room without tables, one player can put the game on his/her lap, perhaps on a binder. You can also play on the floor.

## Procedure

## How to Play **Activate:** Board Games

Games for Learning American English  
AmericanEnglish.state.gov

- ✓ Download & print board game
- ✓ Gather players
- ✓ Get a die
- ✓ Find game pieces
- ✓ Put game pieces on
- ✓ Take turns. Roll the die and move
- ✓ Talk a lot

My favorite fruit is mango, because it's juicy and messy, and it reminds me of our trip to Egypt, and...



You can demonstrate a simple board game, like "Name Your Favorite." It's useful for the facilitator to demonstrate how to play board games. It's important for each person to put their game token on "START," and then to take turns.

Each game is a prompt for speaking and discussion.

It is not necessary to explain the rules of all the games. Participants will figure out themselves how to play each game. Often they will make their own rules. This is fine. Speaking practice is our goal.

The facilitator's task is to move around to see if any groups are stuck.

## Future Variations

Activate board games will work for your first discussion club as they are. However, you can bring back the games a month later and alter them.

### Alter the Games

For instance, bring back Name Your Favorite, but this time players must name their *five* favorites. A month or so later try, Name Your *Least* Favorite.

### Create Your Own

The next stage can be for speaking club members to create their own games. Templates are available from American English. The key thing to remember in creating games for Speaking Clubs is that each prompt or question should be open-ended. That is, every time a player lands on a space, he or she should have the possibility to give a *new* answer. It's useful to compare:

*open-ended:* Which is most important in your life: love, health, work, family?

*closed-ended:* When is Independence Day in America?

You can see that the open-ended prompt will elicit different responses from players every time they answer the question. And English speakers can answer according to their level of English, simply or in a complicated way.

A closed-ended prompt has only one answer, and each time a player lands on that space the answer remains the same.



## 9

# Truth or Dare



“Truth or Dare” is a fun way for participants to get to know each other and break down barriers.

## Materials

- Cards with “truths” and “dares”, small prizes for the winners
- Moderator, scorekeepers and facilitators for each team

## Formation

Break the Club into groups of 6-10. Each group sits in a circle.

## Procedure

Going in a circle, the first person asks the person to their right (“the player”) if they want a truth or dare card. The player selects a “truth” or a “dare” card. Each truth is worth 1 point and each dare is worth 5 points.

Truths are honest answers to various questions. Dares are creative tasks, participants should complete to gain the scores.

Sample “truths” can be:

- Would you rather live short and happy life or long but unhappy one?
- What would you do with a million dollars?

Sample “dares” can be:

- Sing a song
- Recite a poem
- Act like an elephant

At the end the scorekeeper announces the results. Winners receive prizes. As a large group, each team chooses a player to present the best truth and dare from their team.

10

# Think Fast



In part one, participants practice the public speaking skill “thinking on their feet” or speaking without preparation in front of others. In part two, they use this skill they have practiced to “sell” an everyday object to their group members.

## Materials

One set of “table topics” cards for each group with various speaking topics written on them. One common object per group for part two. Scratch paper and pencil.

Some example of table topics are:

“What is the most important invention humans have created?”

“If you had to teach something, what would you teach?”

“How would the world be different if you were never born?”

## Formation

Small groups of 4 -5 people work best for this activity to give participants maximum speaking time.

## Procedure

In groups, assign a role to each person. The roles are:

- *Taskmaster* – makes sure the group stays on track and finishes the tasks in a timely manner.
- *Grammarian* – selects any “word of the day”, any interesting new vocabulary word, shares it with the group and records every time someone in the group uses the word.
- *Timer* – keeps track of each speaker’s time, stops him or her when their time is up
- *“Ah” Counter* – records the number of times a speaker says “um”, “ah”, “well”, “you know”, “so”, “like”, tells the speaker the number when they’re finished speaking

### Part I:

In turns, each person stands up in front of their group, and speaks for 2 minutes on a topic. They should try to speak naturally with as few “ums” and “ahs” as possible.

When it's a person's turn, they stand, choose a topic from the Table Topics cards, and read it out loud. The Timer says “start”, and the speaker begins. When 2 minutes is finished, the Timer calls out, “stop”. The Grammarian states the number of times the speaker said the “Word of the Day”. The Ah Counter calls out the number of times the speaker says “um, ah, etc”.

Repeat until everyone has been a speaker at least once. Finish with a group discussion of what was most difficult about the task.

Note: Emphasize that participants should not pick a “table topic” card until it is their turn, so they will not have time to prepare an answer.

### Part II:

Each group receives one everyday object, e.g. a paper cup, a hair clip, etc. As before, each person will *stand in front of the group* and speak for 2 minutes this time, attempting to “sell” a product to the group.

They will try to improve on their “ums” and “ahs” and while still speaking naturally and also try to use the “word of the day” in context. Each of the jobholders continues their assigned job as before.

Individually each participant must think about a *unique* use for the “product” (e.g. a pencil may not be used as a tool to write) and also different from their group members.



*Wednesdays English at America House*