

Language Expansion

Four photocopiable
conversation
worksheets with
teacher's notes and
methodology



Crime and punishment
Honesty
Time Machine
Technology



Crime and Punishment

Method

1 (5 minutes) As a warmer exercise, put the students in pairs and ask them to discuss whether they believe in capital punishment or not. You may need to define capital punishment, but do not go into too much detail as this will come later.

2 (20 minutes) In groups of three to five, ask the students to come up with a punishment for each of the 'murders'. They must be in consensus, and they should not rush through the activity.

They are likely to need definitions for the following terms:

hold up/held up in a fit of rage stab/stabbed smash into
lethal

After the students have discussed it in groups, ask each group to present their 'judgements'. They may challenge you that numbers three and four are not really murders. This would be a good time to introduce some of these terms:

crime of passion manslaughter euthanasia mercy killing sentence

3 (20 minutes) The previous activity leads into the next discussion naturally. This discussion could be done together as a class if the group is small or lively. Otherwise, it would form the basis of a further group discussion.

What is another name for capital punishment?

The death penalty/ the death sentence

What methods are used for capital punishment?

Hanging, electric chair, beheading, lethal injection, firing squad

Some countries do not have the death penalty...Which countries are these?

All 'Western' countries apart from America, various other countries in each continent.

Teacher's Notes

This task is obviously designed to give students a gentle nudge in the direction of opposing the death penalty. Muslim students may argue that their religion sanctions the death penalty. On the other hand, Buddhists would be strictly opposed to it. Students in China may want to impose the death penalty across the board. (Capital punishment is very common in China.)

Some students may sympathise with the 'murderer' in numbers three and four. This is a good way to stir up some effective conversation practice. By asking the students to reach a consensus, you are getting them to practise discussion and persuasion skills.

The vocabulary that is introduced would be useful for reading the newspaper (crimes) and may also help students working towards certain examinations where capital punishment may come up as an essay or reading topic.

Crime and Punishment

The Perfect Murder

Read about these four 'murders'. You be the judge. Decide what the sentence will be.

Jack held up two tourists on a street corner. After robbing them of \$50, he shot them both to death and calmly walked away.

Bill returned home to find his wife in the arms of another man. In a fit of rage, he stabbed his wife's lover to death. Later he commented, "I just totally lost control of myself. I didn't know what I was doing."

Joe got into his car after one drink too many. Losing control of his car, he smashed into a young girl, killing her instantly.

Steve had a grandmother who was ill and in constant pain. He helped to end her suffering with a lethal injection.



Capital Punishment



What is capital punishment?
What is another name for capital punishment?
What methods are used for capital punishment?

Some countries do not have the death penalty.
Why do you think this is? Which countries are these?

Honesty

Method

1 (5 minutes) As a warmer exercise, and as a 'teaser', ask the students how honest they think that they are. This is a light-hearted activity and it is good to set the tone early on. Some students will have done similar activities on morals where they were expected to produce the 'right' answer. Stress that this activity is to get the 'truth'. Some of the situations are realistic and some are quite outlandish.

Read through the situations to make sure that the students understand. You may have some anecdotes from your own experiences to share with them.

The following vocabulary may need to be explained:

ethical bluff 'stuffed with cash' run into ecstasy pick-pocketing fellow

2 (20 minutes) The students discuss the various situations in groups. Small groups are best for this activity – three or four students in each one. Challenge the students to be honest – would they really turn an old friend in to the cops in situation four?

3 (10 minutes) Follow up with a class discussion on moral codes using the questions at the end. Some people get their moral codes from their parents, religion, the law, their friends...

Teacher's Notes

This is a relatively straightforward discussion task. It is good to use with a class that you know well since they will be more 'honest'.

You can use this task to reinforce the use of 'would' to talk about hypothetical situations. The language used is quite informal, so it would add scope to students who are used to more formal language, on a business English course, for instance.

More advanced students can spend a lot longer on the discussion questions at the end. These can also be used as an essay topic; some of the situations on the worksheet could be used as examples in the essay.

Honesty

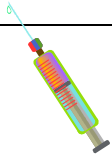
Are you an ethical person? Come on, now, don't try to bluff!! Discuss what you would do if you found yourself in the following situations:

You find a wallet on the road. It's totally stuffed with cash! The owner's address is inside.



Your friend asks you to tell his wife that he'll be with you on a fishing trip this weekend. Actually, he's going on a trip to Bangkok with his girlfriend.

You buy a hi-fi at a local electronics shop. The sales assistant mistakenly charges you only \$400 when the real price is \$700.



You run into an old friend. He's selling ecstasy outside a primary school.

You know that you need three years of experience to get the position you're after. On your CV, will you lie about the fact that you only have one-and-a-half years of experience?

On a crowded train, you notice a big-looking fellow pick-pocketing from an old lady's bag. He sees you looking at him and just laughs.

You are in a record store with your best friend when he starts shoplifting CDs and encourages you to do the same.



How can we be more ethical in our lives?
What do you consider to be good morals?
Do you have a moral code? Where is it from?

The Time Machine

Method

1 (5 min.s) Go over the two introductory questions and elicit responses from the class. These two questions are designed to generate interest in the task.

2 (15 min.s) If you think your students need a kick-start, give them some ideas. Would they like to travel to the pyramids? Would they go back to the time of the dinosaurs? Then let them discuss the task in groups of four or five.

3 (5 min.s) A spokesperson from each group will present the group's ideas to the class. With an advanced-level group, the idea of changing something in the past and its consequences could also make for an interesting discussion.

Teacher's Notes

This discussion is suitable for groups of all ages. Younger students may have some very creative ideas and can be encouraged to draw posters of their ideas.

Most students will need to depend on their peers or the teacher to come up with the vocabulary to express their ideas. This activity can throw up a lot of 'wildcard' vocabulary.

Since the groups have to come to agreement on how to use the time machine – and this probably won't be easy – it is a good opportunity to introduce ways of taking a vote in English.

Some wise guys are likely to come up with ideas such as travelling into the future to get lottery numbers. Hence this activity could introduce a discussion on ethics and technology, for instance.

Finally, this activity may take a shorter time than you think, so be ready to have some extra materials ready.

The Time Machine

Introduction:

Can you think of any movies where the characters travelled back or forwards in time?
Do you think time travel will one day be possible?

Task

Imagine that your group has been given a time machine that can travel backwards or forwards in time to any location around the globe. Discuss what you will do with it using the following prompts:

Will you travel to the past or to the future?
Which date and location will you travel to?
What will you do there?
What will you take with you?
What will you bring back?
If you travel to the past, will you change anything?

Your group will only be allowed to make **one** trip, so all decisions must be agreed upon by everyone in the group.



Technology

Method and Teacher's Notes

This is a very straightforward discussion task that should keep a class talking for one entire lesson of forty-five minutes or so. As an intro, you could show the class a favourite gadget of yours and ask them to talk about their favourite gadgets (mobile phones, Playstation consoles, digital cameras...).

Each of the questions could be discussed in depth or in brief, according to the ability or level of the class, and the material is suitable for intermediate level and upwards. This activity works best with groups of four or five students.

The students can expect to expand their vocabulary and their knowledge by sharing ideas with their group members. You could ask the different groups to share their new vocabulary with the entire class. You should also listen and make sure they are using the future structures properly.

As a follow-up activity, you could ask your students to do research and present on one of the five topics.

Technology

Cloning

- What do you think of human cloning?
- Would you like to be cloned?

Genetic Engineering

- Would you like to choose your child's sex or characteristics?
- Do you think GE is immoral?

Artificial Intelligence

- Will computers ever be smarter than humans?
- What will robots be able to do in the future?

Space Exploration

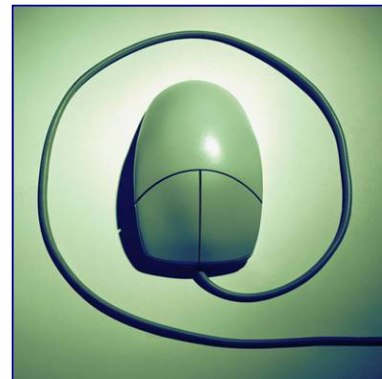
- Is the large amount of money spent on exploring space justified?
- Would you like to live on Mars one day?

Inventions

- What is the best invention?
- Tell your group about an invention that you'd like to see

The Future

- Are you an optimist or a pessimist about the future?
- What do you think the world will be like in 100 years time?
1000 years time?



General tips for teaching conversation:

Set objectives

A lot of teachers find something for their students to discuss with no objectives in mind. While this is okay occasionally, it is better to have a set focus to the discussion. That means grammar or language points, communication skills and vocabulary.

Vocabulary

A lot of students get stuck in a rut with the language that they have. A good discussion task will consolidate the students' existing language, but also stretch their vocabulary a little bit further.

Set time limits

Classes just run so much more smoothly when the students know how long they are expected to spend on a task. Let them know if the discussion is to take five minutes or twenty.

Choose groups carefully

If the students always work with the same partners, they will lose out. Students learn a lot from their peers, so they learn the most with rotation of partners.

Give positive feedback

Never carry out a discussion without giving feedback and letting the students know they have done a great job. Take notes of their language issues which may arise and go over them in a constructive manner.

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