

4C Conversation tennis

Activity type: Speaking – Game – Groups of three

Aim: To practise developing a conversation

Language: Topic vocabulary from earlier units / Polite questions – Use any time after *Explore Speaking*.

Preparation: Make one copy of the worksheet for each group of three learners and cut out the 'ball tokens' – one set of eight per group.

Time: 20–30 minutes

- 1 Remind learners of questions commonly used to continue/encourage conversation (Coursebook p40). Start a conversation and elicit questions to continue the conversation and express interest.
- 2 Explain the point-scoring system for tennis if learners are not familiar with it. Players start off at zero and this is called 'love' in English, so the game begins at 'love all'. Using the tennis scoring system, the potential points to be won by each player are: '15', then '30', then '40' then 'game'. (If there are well-versed tennis players in your class, they may want to involve 'advantage' in the scoring system if players reach 'deuce' or '40 all'. If so, allow them to explain to others how this works.)
- 3 Divide the learners into groups of three: two players (A and B) and an umpire (C) and give each group a copy of the tennis court. A and B each receive four ball tokens.
- 4 A 'serves' by choosing a topic from those in the tennis court and asks B a question on that topic. B then 'returns' by answering, and then asking a new question on the same topic. Players continue the conversation in this way, staying on topic.
- 5 The conversation ends when one player cannot continue the conversation by answering a question and asking a new one. The last player to answer and ask a question successfully wins a point ('15' in the first instance). C, the umpire, is the person who monitors this, awards the point and keeps score for each player.
- 6 The winner of the point puts his/her ball token on the topic discussed. This topic cannot be used again during the same game. The winner of the point then starts a new conversation using a different topic. The conversations continue in this way until one player has reached 'game' (i.e. used up all four of his/her ball tokens).
- 7 The winner of the first game now becomes the umpire for the second game and the umpire from the first game becomes a player (either A or B). For the third game, the loser of the first game acts as the umpire.

Extension

Allow games to continue until there is a clear overall winner in each group (ensuring that all members have had an equal number of chances to be a player). Organise a championship match between the overall winners from each group.

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Family		School/ College
Work		The weekend
Yesterday		Food
Spare time		Music
		Holidays

