

My Grandfriend

Important – please read

This lesson has been created for teachers working in **face-to-face classrooms** where Covid-19 restrictions are in place. The guidance at the start of the lesson plan is designed to provide suggested ideas for managing pair work and group work in a physically distanced classroom environment. It is a general guide and your situation may be different. You may need to adapt the lesson to the context you are working in.

There is also an online version of this lesson plan, which you could refer to if you are working in a 'hybrid' learning situation. Hybrid learning is the method of teaching remote and in-person students at the same time via virtual instruction.

Topic

My Grandfriend (or Grandparent) listening and speaking activity

Aims

Students will:

- explore the topic of intergenerational friendships
- listen to a model and be given speaking practice to describe people
- use the third person present simple to describe where people live, their pets, what they like and what they do

Age/level

6-8 year olds / CEFR level A1

Time

50 – 60 minutes

Materials

- The *My Grandfriends* handout
- The *My Grandfriend* template
- The LearnEnglish Kids website (for extension activities)

Introduction

In this lesson students listen as the teacher describes the lives of three Grandfriends, choosing the pictures which correspond to each person. They use the information to invent a Grandfriend, or to describe a Grandparent or an older person they know.

Communicative activities in face-to-face physically-distanced classrooms

Make sure you are familiar with the rules for face-to-face teaching in your school

These lesson plans are designed to include opportunities for students to work in pairs or groups to develop their communication skills. This is likely to present a number of challenges, as there will be different physical distancing rules you may need to follow in your classroom to protect the safety of students and teachers. These procedures and rules may involve some of the following:

- Reduced class sizes so that desks can be placed up to two metres apart.
- Student 'bubbles', in which groups of up to ten pupils are able to work together safely.
- Clear plastic screens placed around students' desks to allow for safer interaction
- Hybrid learning situations, where some students are physically present in the classroom and others join the lesson remotely.
- Policies on handouts and worksheets, where it is not possible to give learners a physical worksheet.

All of the issues above will bring new challenges and influence the way you teach, particularly in activities where you would normally ask students to talk to each other in pairs or groups. The ideas below are intended to help you manage your lessons effectively and ensure that students have sufficient opportunity to communicate as much as possible during the lesson.

Suggestions for communicative activities

The key purpose of using communicative activities, such as pair work and group work is to ensure students have an opportunity to practise their speaking and listening skills at the same time as other students in the class. However, due to restrictions this may not be possible in the normal way. To avoid your classes being too teacher-centred, we have suggested some ideas below that can replace more traditional group and pair work speaking activities:

- Use written dialogue in place of spoken dialogue for simple tasks.
 - Pen and paper. In low-resource environments, ask students who are physically in the classroom to communicate using pen and paper. For example, where students have been asked to give an opinion, they write this in larger than normal writing on a piece of paper and hold it up for their partner to read. Their partner then responds by writing on their own piece of paper.
 - Post-it notes. Ask students to write comments on post-it notes, or on small pieces of paper, and take turns to stick them to a board in the classroom, or on a 'post-it' wall. This gives students the opportunity to write their opinions, ideas or responses to a question, and share them with the rest of the class. The teacher is then able to read comments and focus on any follow-up language work, respond to the students' writing or extend the discussion as a whole class. If working in a hybrid situation, where some of the students are learning simultaneously in a remote environment, they could do the same activity using an online 'wall', such as Padlet. Alternatively, they could write their comments and ideas into a shared online document, which could be displayed on a

computer, via a data projector in the classroom, or read out by the teacher.

- Using messenger applications. In contexts where students have access to an internet connection, the above activity could be done using a messenger tool such as WhatsApp, with students writing messages to each other online. Again, with hybrid learning situations, this pair work activity could be done between a student physically in the classroom and a partner learning remotely.
- Collaborative writing. An online solution, which may be particularly effective in a hybrid learning situation, might be to use an online messaging board such as [Padlet](#), or a shared document in [Google Docs](#). The teacher could ask a simple open-ended question, for example 'What are some of the advantages/disadvantages of learning from home?' Having shared the link with the students, the teacher gives a word limit and a time limit for students add their comments to the messaging board. The teacher then follows up with whole-class feedback, responding to the comments and asking students to clarify orally.
- Use voice recording tools for spoken communication.
 - Recorded voice messages. If resources and connectivity make this possible, using voice recording tools can be an effective way to encourage dialogue between students for pair work activities. Make sure all your students have access to a mobile phone before doing this type of activity to ensure everyone can participate. Ask students to record their turn and send via SMS or a messaging application to their partner to respond and build a recorded dialogue.

Alternatively, an online voice recording tool like [Vocaroo](#) is a simple way to create voice recordings and share via SMS or an online messaging application.

Most basic mobile phones have a built-in voice recorder, so it might be possible to share one or more phones and for the teacher to pass it between pairs or small groups of students, who listen and respond or add their comments.

Both of the above activities could be done effectively in hybrid learning situations.

- If you are working in a low-connectivity context and have access to cassette recorders and blank cassettes in your school, using these to record students speaking might be a possible solution. Ensure there is a quiet space where they can do this. Divide students into two groups and invite them to record themselves individually. Play back the recordings as a whole class to evaluate communicative competence and focus on any common errors.

These ideas are a small selection that can encourage student-led communication in physically-distanced face-to-face classrooms, or in hybrid learning contexts. It is recommended that, if possible, you work with colleagues in your institution to create a list of activities and ideas for your own context. We also recommend that you join the [British Council teacher community](#) on Facebook to share ideas.

Procedure

Stage	Instructions
Warmer (5 - 10 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put a picture of an older person on the board, or show a photo that you have, and say This is my friend. Briefly describe your friend, miming or drawing pictures if you need to, e.g. This is Sue. She lives in a house; she's got a dog; she likes cheese. She likes walking in the mountains). Ask students to tell you about their friends, e.g. What's your friend's name? What does he/she like? Has she/he got a pet?
Part 1 (5 – 10 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you have a digital whiteboard, display the <i>My Grandfriends</i> handout on the board, or give each child a copy of the <i>My Grandfriends</i> handout. Explain that a Grandfriend is a friend who is older, as in the pictures of Jan, Bob and Pam. Ask children for a show of hands: have they got a Grandfriend? It could be a grandparent, a grand aunt or uncle, a neighbour or family friend Students may talk about anyone from another generation, e.g., an aunt or uncle or family friend who may not be that old – the point is we're talking about friends who aren't the same age as we are. Ask <i>Where does she/he live? Does she live in a house or a flat? Has he got a pet? What does she like doing?</i>
Part 2: listening (10 – 15 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point to the <i>My Grandfriends</i> handout on the board. Ask <i>What's her / his name?</i> as you point to each person at the top of the worksheet. Say <i>Listen carefully and decide: Where does Jan live – A, B, C or D?</i> Read the first two sentences below and pause for students to say the answer (Jan lives in C, a big house). Depending on the level of your students and what you've covered in previous lessons, you may need to revise the options in each category as a class before reading the descriptions of the Grandfriends to the class. Read the descriptions while students write their answers on the handout or in their notebooks (the answers are provided under each text): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) This is my Grandfriend, Jan. She lives in a big house in the mountains. She's got a pet horse. Jan's favourite food is fish and chips. She likes cooking. (1. C; 2. D; 3. B; 4. A). b) Here's my friend Bob. He lives in a flat in a big city. He's got a pet cat. His favourite food is salad. He likes fishing. (1. A; 2. B; 3. D; 4. B). c) This is Pam. She lives in a house in a town. She's got a pet dog. She likes eating fruit and vegetables. She likes painting.

	<p>(1. B; 2. C; 3. C; 4. D).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are three Grandfriends and four options in each section (the extra options give students more choices when describing a Grandfriend later).
Part 3: speaking (15 – 20 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play a quick guessing game. After checking the answers, tell students to turn their handouts over or to close their books. Ask them to repeat the Grandfriends' lives from memory, using the pictures on the board to help them (with stronger classes, you could take the pictures away to make it more challenging). Put the <i>My Grandfriend</i> template on the board (or draw it yourself). Make an example Grandfriend with the class: it could be someone's grandmother, great uncle or a neighbour, or use your first example, attempting to draw a likeness in the portrait square. Continue until you have completed the boxes with pictures, with students describing the person as you draw. Now it's their turn to invent a Grandfriend, or to describe a Grandparent or an older person they know. Give each student their own template, or get them to copy the template from the board onto paper or in their notebooks. Display the <i>My Grandfriends</i> worksheet again to help students choose answers to complete their templates. These are only examples and if students are describing a real person they will want to draw their own pictures and may need some help with new vocabulary. Early finishers could colour their pictures. Students present their Grandfriends/Grandparents to the class or in their groups.
Wrap up (5 – 10 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask students if they can remember information about another student's Grandfriend. You may want to collect the work to display.
Extension activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You could ask students to write about their Grandfriends after they have spoken about them. This could be set for homework. Why not get students to write about their Grandfriends or Grandparents on LearnEnglish Kids? Old people: tell us about an older person you know – leave a comment! https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/your-turn/old-people
Further ideas and resources	<p>More on the topic can be found at LearnEnglish Kids:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elderly people: vocabulary about older people

<https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/worksheets/elderly-people>

- Although they don't cover the same grammar areas, your students may enjoy these videos from the *Grammar with Gran* series:

Kitty's science test (comparatives)

<https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/grammar-videos/kittys-science-test>

Gran's fishing trip (past simple)

<https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/grammar-videos/grans-fishing-trip>

Gran's adventures (present perfect for experiences)

<https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/grammar-videos/grans-adventures>

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