All about me

Topic
Personal interests, likes and dislikes

Aims
- To help learners focus on fluency when speaking
- To develop learners' communication skills
- To develop learners' listening skills

Age/level
Young learners aged 12+
CEFR level A2/B1

Time
60–90 minutes

Materials
One copy of the worksheets per learner

Introduction
This lesson provides learners with a live listening on the topic of the teacher's personal interests and opinions. The learners then use this as a model to talk about similar topics with their classmates, using basic tenses and a variety of structures.

Procedure
1. Lead in (10 minutes)
Write three sentences on the board about yourself. Adapt the following:
I've got an older sister. Last week I went ice-skating. I really like going swimming.

- Tell learners that these sentences are about you. Elicit questions they need to ask to find out more about these facts, e.g. How old is your sister? What's her name? Who did you go ice-skating with? Did you fall over? How often do you go swimming? How many lengths do you usually swim? etc.

- Write the questions on the board. Invite learners to ask you these and other questions. Answer their questions and explain that if a question is very personal, you can respond with 'I’d rather not answer that!' You could drill this response, as learners may need to use it later in the lesson.
2. Listening: All about the teacher (10–15 minutes)

- Display a copy of worksheet 1 on the board, or hand out copies, but tell the learners that they shouldn't write anything yet.
  - Explain that they are going to listen to you completing the sentences with your own ideas and they need to listen and ask you questions or give a response after each sentence.
  - Draw their attention to the useful language at the bottom of the worksheet and ask them to use these prompts to ask you questions or give a response.
  - Explain that they can ask you anything they like, but that if a question is very personal you might respond with ‘I'd rather not answer that!''
  - Read out your finished sentences one by one (you might prefer to prepare these beforehand) and invite the learners to put up their hands to ask you questions or respond.
  - Feed in quick corrections and language as necessary.
  - You could also make notes of any common errors for a class correction session later.

3. Pair work: What can you remember about the teacher? (5 minutes)

- Stop displaying the worksheet, or have learners turn over their copies.
  - Ask learners to work in pairs and make notes of anything that you said about yourself. Set a time limit of two minutes to keep this task snappy.
  - Ask two or three pairs to read their notes to the class and ask others if they agree and whether they can add anything.

4. Writing: All about you (5–10 minutes)

- Hand out worksheet 1 if the learners don’t already have it.
  - Ask learners to complete the sentences with their own ideas about themselves.
  - Give learners about five minutes (or longer if necessary). Discourage them from reading what their neighbours have written as they are going to talk about their sentences later.

5. Speaking: All about each other (20–30 minutes)

- Set up the classroom so that the learners are in two rows facing each other. Ideally do this with two lines of face-to-face chairs, but have learners standing if you can't move the furniture. With an uneven number have one learner as a ‘listener' at one end of a row.
• Learners now have one minute to talk to the person directly facing them about the first sentence only. They should take turns to read out their finished sentence to each other and ask follow-up questions or respond as they did previously with the teacher. Remind learners that they can respond with ‘I’d rather not answer that!’ if asked about something too personal. Make sure they don’t go on to the next sentence, and stop them after one minute (or sooner if they are running out of things to say) by raising your arm and shouting, ‘Stop!’

• Have learners all move one place to the left so that they are now facing a different person (and there is a new ‘listener’ with uneven numbers). Repeat as before with new pairs talking about the second sentence. Stop them again after about a minute.

• Continue in the same way with the rest of the sentences or until learners run out of steam. Monitor and encourage learners to keep speaking English if necessary.

• With a very small class you can do this activity as a group. Individuals take turns to read their completed sentences and the others chip in with responses and questions. With a very large class, split learners into two or more groups.

6. Pair and group work: What can you remember about each other? (10–15 minutes)

Hand out worksheet 2.

• Learners work in pairs to make notes on anything they can remember about the various people they spoke to. Don’t worry if they can’t remember much at this stage.

• After you have given learners some time, put pairs together to makes groups of four. Learners continue to pool their information and add to their notes.

• Ask each group to feed back to the class by saying two things about a classmate, e.g. ‘Sara has cornflakes for breakfast. She’s going to her cousin’s party next week.’

• If you want to focus on grammar, you could ask learners to identify various tenses or structures in their sentences before moving on to more explicit grammar work.

7. Extension activity (optional)

As an extension activity, learners could make ‘All about our class’ posters for a wall display. Have learners work in small groups to write up their pooled information. They could bring in photographs of themselves and/or use images from the internet or magazines to illustrate their writing.

Contributed by

Sally Trowbridge