

Unit 2: Talking about yourself

SUMMARY

You can use this summary to guide the learning objectives and target setting for your class.

Can-do statements:

By the end of this unit, students will be able to say:

- I can talk about my strengths, weaknesses, experience and interests.
- I can respond in short chunks of language.
- I can use pauses for emphasis and stress to sound confident.

Vocabulary

Strengths: *I take a lot of pride in ..., I'm particularly good at ..., I work well in ..., I'm particularly good at ...*

Weaknesses: *I'm a bit of a ..., ... isn't really my strong point. I'm not the kind of person who ..., I'm hopeless at ...*

Experience: *When I've been in that situation in the past, I..., I've got a background in ...*

Interests: *I can't get enough of it. I'm really into ...*

Appropriateness

Expressing confidence through word stress and pauses

Function

Talking about yourself in interviews

Talking about yourself to friends

Responding to people's comments about themselves

CLASSROOM EXTENSION IDEAS

You can use some or all of these ideas to check and enhance your students' understanding as they work their way through *Unit 2 of Speaking B2+* in class.

Using Getting started

1. Put students into pairs and ask them to make a list of times when they talk about themselves. Set a time limit of two minutes and then ask the pair with the longest list to come and write their ideas on the board. Make sure there are at least three ideas, e.g. a job interview, networking, meeting people for the first time.
2. Put students into groups of four and ask them to discuss:
 - what sort of things they would reveal about themselves at these times
 - what they would not reveal
 - whether they would always tell the truth or not.

Feed back as a class.

Using Conversations

1. Play *Recording 07* and ask students to follow the dialogues in their books. After listening, ask students to discuss these questions in pairs or small groups:
 - a. What are the speakers doing?
 - b. What is the likely relationship between the speakers?
 - c. How well do they know each other?
 - d. Is the occasion formal or informal?

(Answers will vary. Suggested answers:

Conversation 1: Job interview; employer and candidate; first meeting; formal

Conversation 2: Filling in an online profile; friends; well; informal

Conversation 3: One speaker is going out; flatmates; fairly well; informal)

Using Language note

Read the Language note aloud. Ask students to highlight how the short chunks are used in the dialogues. Ask students to add more short chunks to the dialogues. Do *Conversation 1* as a whole class. Then tell students to try *Conversation 2* and *Conversation 3* alone or in pairs. Ask three pairs to perform one of the dialogues to the class.

(Answers will vary. Suggested answers:

Conversation 1 Interviewer: *Great. That's interesting. That's good to hear. Thanks. Okay. Lucy: Let me see. Let me think.*

Conversation 2 Sally: *What else? Nonsense! Rubbish!* Jameela: *Really! Honest!*

Conversation 3 Roman: *This? Not long. Will: Karate? Wow! Cool! That's impressive.)*

Using Understanding

1. Ask students to answer *Exercise 1*. They should write up the phrases in their vocabulary books under the correct headings. Remind students to pay attention to what comes after the phrase (where appropriate), e.g. a noun, clause or verb. If a verb comes after the phrase, tell students to pay attention to its form.
2. Put students into pairs and tell them to think of one more way of completing each phrase in the *Conversations*. Do the first one as a class (*I've got a background in music / engineering / politics*). After discussing possibilities together, ask students to write up one example for each phrase in their vocabulary books so that they have a record of the correct usage.

Optional extension work: *Speaking / Writing*: Tell students to recreate one or more of the conversations by keeping the same basic structure and the phrases in bold, but changing some of the details (e.g. Lucy's background and experience, or Roman's hobby). They can do this alone or in pairs. Students can act out their new dialogues to the class. This task could be set as homework.

Using *Saying it accurately*

1. Tell students to complete *Exercise 1* and compare their answers with a partner.
2. Ask students to discuss in pairs the extent to which these sentences are true for them. If they are not true, ask them to change the sentences so that they are.
3. Students complete *Exercise 2*. Then they can take turns interviewing each other, using these questions. Encourage students to use the phrases from *Exercise 1*. Ask for a pair to volunteer to perform their interview to the class.
4. Students complete *Exercise 3*. Check answers.

Using *Saying it appropriately*

1. Play *Recording 8* and ask students whether the interviewees sound confident or not. Discuss what aspects of their speaking helped them to decide, and elicit *pauses* and *word stress*.
2. Play the recording again and tell students to mark where the interviewees pause. Play the recording again for them to mark the stress.

(Answers (/ indicates a pause, underline indicates stress):

Mick: Well / , / I / think / I'd say that most people find me to be a good leader (unconfident).

Stefan: Well, / I / think I'd say that most people find me to be a good leader (confident).

Laura: My most recent job / in sales / was very / similar to the position your company is offering (unconfident).

Mika: My most recent job in sales was very similar to the position your company is offering. (confident))

3. Play the confident responses (2. Stefan and 4. Mika) again. Tell students to repeat the responses, copying the stress and pauses.

4. Ask students to return to the interview questions in *Saying it accurately Exercise 2* on page 14. Tell students to take turns asking each other the questions. They can use the answers they gave before. This time, they should focus on using pauses and word stress to sound confident.

Using *Get speaking*

This exercise can be adapted to a classroom situation in the following way:

1. Hand out the photocopiable sheet *A Job Interview*. To encourage interaction between students, give out one copy to each pair of students. As a whole class, decide on a job that everyone in the class will be applying for. Brainstorm the personal qualities, skills and experience that someone applying for this job will need.
2. Put students into pairs. Each pair should prepare five to ten questions to ask candidates applying for this job.
3. Put pairs together to make groups of four. You could allow pairs to exchange their questions, so that they have a few minutes to prepare their answers.
4. Students take turns interviewing each other.

Using *Everyday language*

1. Students can complete *Exercise 1* by referring to the conversations and the *Everyday language* appendix on page 88.
2. Ask students to write a dialogue or two mini-dialogues using these phrases. If possible, these dialogues should contain information which is true for the student.

Using *Next steps*

Record or video the students doing their interviews. In pairs, students can analyse their own and their partner's interviews and look for ways to improve their responses. Encourage students to be constructive in their criticisms. Only show the interview videos to the whole class if students give you permission.

PHOTOCOPIABLES

A Job Interview

Job:		
Personal Qualities:	Skills:	Experience:
Interview Questions:		
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
Make notes about your responses:		
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		