6 Activities – Trainer Notes

OVERVIEW	**DVD content** In the DVD we see teachers carrying out speaking activities with their classes while John Kay gives advice about techniques for making speaking activities successful **Material content** The material looks at some different speaking activities and ways of setting them up. It then looks at different types of information gap and how teachers can exploit these gaps to make successful speaking activities.
KEY CONCEPTS	**Information gap** and **personalisation** An **information gap** is where one person knows something or has some information that the other person doesn't – there is a gap between what they know. Real communication often contains an information gap – people ask questions to find out what they want to know. **Personalisation** happens when activities allow students to use language to express their own ideas, feelings, preferences and opinions. Personalisation is an important part of the communicative approach, since it involves true communication, as learners communicate real information about themselves. The information gap is a very useful tool for teachers and speaking activities should generally have a gap. There are different types of gap that can be used. If these activities can be personalised – by making the topic something real and relevant to the students then you are helping the students communicate in a very realistic way.
PLAN SUMMARY	Note: All sessions in the Teaching Speaking series will be more effective if participants are able to discuss things in pairs or groups. You should arrange your training room to facilitate this as far as possible.

Warmer	*hot seat*
1 Before you watch	*different speaking activities*
2 Watch	*matching/gist comprehension.*
3 Watch again	*matching/checking predictions*
4 Analysis & Reflection	*information gap*
5 Additional activities	*personalisation*
6 Suggested classroom activity	*picture dictation – 'my ideal room'*

Procedure

Warmer	

(optional)

- As a fun lead-in and as demonstration of an information gap activity, play 'hot seat' (also known as Backs to the Board)

- Divide the participants into groups of 4 or 5. Each group is a team. One person in each team should sit with his/her back to the board and have a pen and paper ready. You then write words or phrases on the board – you could use words from earlier in the Teaching Speaking series – and the other members of the team have to explain them – without using any of the words on the board – to the person in the 'hot seat'. When the person in the 'hot seat' has understood what the word or phrase is, they should write it on their paper and hold the paper in the air for you, the trainer, to see. The first team to write down the word(s) correctly wins a point. Team members should change places so that everyone has a turn in the 'hot seat'. Don't let the activity go on too long.

1 Before you watch	

- Before the session begins, cue the DVD to the menu screen. You could then turn off or cover the TV set until you're ready to watch.

- Elicit from the group different activities they use to get students speaking. If the group find this difficult, give them one or two examples. When they have run out of ideas (this may not take long) direct them to the activities listed in the 'before you watch' section. Are any of the things they talked about listed here? Ask students to talk about the list in pairs. Do they do these things? Ask them then to talk about how they would prepare students to do the activities. Give questions for guidance – 'what instructions do you give?' 'Do you pre-teach any language?' etc. Feedback as a whole group.

2 Watch	

- Look at the next activity and when the group are ready play Programme 6 straight through. When participants have checked their answers in pairs, check as a group. Look then at the extra questions – 'What age were the students who did each activity?' and 'Can you use the activities for any age?' This may generate some discussion about what activities work best for different ages

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3	**Watch again**	

- Make sure that participants have plenty of time to read the descriptions before playing the programme again. They should try to match the instructions to the activities. Watch the programme to check their predictions.

4	**Analysis & Reflection**	

- The concept of an information gap might be unfamiliar to some of the participants and they may find parts of this section difficult. If they can't think of any example activities you can make some suggestions yourself.

- Start by looking at the quotation from John Kay. Before looking at the example activities you could ask for any examples the group can think of of information gap activities they have used.

- Ask participants to work alone at first and read the information about 4 different types of gap. When they have finished reading, ask them to work in pairs to try to think of activities they could use for each of the different types of gap. Feedback as a whole group.

- The planning activity in the next section could also be done in pairs. Monitor and give encouragement and suggestions.

5	**Additional activities**	

- **Same topic for different ages**
- Begin by asking the group what kind of things their students are interested in. Make a list on the board. Ask if there are some topics that work better for older students and some for younger. Look at the first exercise in Section 5. Explain that the topic they're going to look at is 'clothes' and different lesson ideas around that topic. Ask participants to work in pairs and decide which topics they think would work best with which age groups. There are no right answers here so after they have talked in pairs you could open the discussion up to the whole group and see if there is general agreement.

- In pairs again, ask participants to choose another topic from the list and think of different aspects of it. If they find this difficult you could give an example.
  E.g. computers: class survey – favourite websites / the history of computers / debate – how much time should young people spend on computers? / etc.

- Monitor and give help where necessary. the aim of the activity is to make participants think about how they can personalise topics to make them more interesting and relevant for their students so encourage to think about what students like and are interested in.

- **Student generated questionnaires**
- Ask participants to look at the two sets of questionnaire questions. Elicit that the second questions

are more interesting because they're more personalised – and they should generate more discussion.

- Participants can either do the second section – writing questions about hobbies (in pairs) – or they can make mini-questionnaires about a topic of their own choosing. It might be fun if they then ask each other the questions they have prepared. This could be done as a mingle so that everyone gets to hear other people's ideas.

6 Suggested classroom activity	

If time allows, let the participants do the suggested activity.