

Warm up

Explain that in this unit, students are going to work on their discussion skills. In order to practise, the topic they will be thinking about and discussing is the kind of advice new students at their educational institution might need. To warm up, tell students about something that you found challenging when you were a new student, and give them a minute to think of one similar thing about themselves. Put students in small groups and ask them to share their ideas with each other for a few minutes. Circulate and observe, helping if necessary.

Round off the Warm up by eliciting some ideas from the class. You could also ask students about – or offer a few observations on – the dynamics of the group discussions (e.g. whether or not people asked each other for clarification) or vocabulary (e.g. phrases people used for agreeing or disagreeing).

Using the Factsheet

There are three possible ways to use the Factsheet:

- 1 Give students the Factsheet before the lesson, so they can read it at home and come to the lesson prepared to do the Worksheet. If you use this approach, start the lesson by checking that all students have read and understood the Factsheet, and answer any questions.
- 2 Give students the Factsheet at the beginning of the lesson and start by working through it with the students.
- 3 Focus on the Worksheet in the lesson, then give students the Factsheet at the end of the lesson so they can take it home and keep it as a reference or revision tool.

Theory to practice

- Write the functions 1–8 on the board. Ask students what they would say if they wanted to do these things. Elicit some examples, putting them on the board alongside the corresponding functions. You can make slight corrections, but the focus should be on activating students' current knowledge in order to build on it.
- Ask students to look at the Factsheet. Elicit a couple of answers to make sure all students know what to do. Students match the phrases to the functions. Then elicit the answers. Some of the phrases match more than one function; suggested answers are below.

Suggested answers

- 1 l, p
- 2 b, g
- 3 c, k
- 4 h, n
- 5 e, o, q
- 6 f, j
- 7 a, d, i
- 8 m, r

Using the Worksheet

Practice

- 1 **You are going to take part in a discussion with a group of other students. Read the task below and make notes about what you would like to suggest to your group.**

- Ask students to read the task and make notes individually with their ideas and opinions on the topic. (This builds on the Warm up activity.) Tell them to not worry too much about the quality of the ideas at this stage, or how they are going to express them. There is no need to check students' work, but you could elicit a few ideas.

Possible answers

- a Ideas could revolve around the number of classes, the amount of autonomy students need to have, or the type of assignments they will receive, etc.
- b Students could discuss practical issues, such as facilities and events, as well as more subjective ones, such as tips for studying more effectively.

2 Complete the phrases with one word in each gap.

- Elicit possible words to complete the gaps. Clarify that there may be more than one possible answer in each case.
- Students fill the gaps with one word each. Elicit answers, correcting if needed. Students may suggest words that are grammatically correct, but not entirely natural or relevant to the context (e.g. *Can I just add **this** here?*).

Possible answers

- 1 did
- 2 mean
- 3 sure
- 4 like
- 5 something
- 6 saying
- 7 clarify
- 8 trying
- 9 see
- 10 point
- 11 like
- 12 agree

3 Work in groups of five and discuss, agree and note down your ideas for the project in Exercise 1.

- Put the students in groups of five and ask them to discuss the two topics. Monitor the groups and provide assistance if needed, but it's better to interfere as little as possible at this stage. You can make notes and bring up any points you want to share afterwards.
- Elicit a few ideas from different groups, but just as a round-up step, as they will present their ideas in more detail later.

4 Appoint one person from your group to be the writer. Work with the writer to put your key points on a poster or large piece of paper. Check they are complete and easy to read.

- Check that groups have nominated a writer and that they have all the materials they need.
- Monitor the groups and assist if needed.

5 Attach your posters to the classroom wall or display them on the table.

- Students display their posters so that others can read them easily.

6 All students should now stand up. Two of you should stay with your poster while the others move around the room to look at all the other posters and ask questions about them. The two of you who stay with your poster should be ready to discuss your ideas with other students.

- Ask students to decide who's going to stay to explain their poster to others first. It might be a good idea to set a time limit (e.g. five minutes), then ask all groups to swap their roles at the same time (i.e. the students standing by their posters get to walk around and ask about other groups' work).
- Circulate and ask questions about the posters.

Reflect

7 What did you learn in this unit?

- Students reflect on their learning, and how they will prepare for their next discussion.
- Elicit some ideas from students.

8 What discussions have you already been involved in at your institution?

- Elicit topics of previous discussions, asking them how they think they went and what they would do differently now.

9 What are the challenges of listening to conversations?

- Discuss difficulties with students, as well as strategies to overcome them.

Ending the lesson

- End the lesson by asking students what they found most challenging in their first weeks at your institution and what steps they took to adapt to the new lifestyle.