

1.6 Learning to Learn

Thinking about speaking in English

Focus: *to think about the skill of speaking and to develop listening skills.*

1. How often do you have to speak in English during a typical school day? Make a list in the box below. Include speaking in school, and speaking outside of school.

2. Look at the opinions of these two students. Which one is close to your own? Next write in what you think.

I used to hate speaking in English – nobody could understand me. I am getting better now.

I think I am getting an Irish accent, and I say things like ‘grand’ and ‘how’s it going?’!

3. Discuss your answers with other students. What can you do to improve your speaking skills? Think of at least three ways. Write these down.

4. Now compare your list with other students in the class, and come up with the top 3 ways of improving your speaking skills. Put this list somewhere in the class for everyone to read.
5. With a partner, make a list of phrases or actions that can help you in the following situations:

What to say or do if you don't understand what someone is saying to you.	
What to say or do if someone doesn't understand what you are saying to them.	

6. Now practise in pairs, taking turns being student A and student B:

Student A

You must tell your partner all about your favourite book or your favourite film. Tell him/her about the plot (story), the main characters (actors), where it is set, and why you like it so much. As you speak your partner will ask you questions. Pretend that you don't always understand what your partner is saying. Be careful – your partner won't always understand you either!

Student B

Your partner is going to tell you all about his or her favourite book or favourite film. As he or she speaks, ask questions - about the plot (story), the main characters (actors), where it is set and why she or he liked it so much. Pretend that you don't always understand what your partner is saying. Be careful – your partner won't always understand you either!