

1 Planning holiday activities

SPEAKING OUTPUT | A group discussion

GOAL | Make a group decision

MEDIATION SKILL | Collaborating in groups

WARM-UP

1 Work in pairs and discuss the questions.

- 1 What do you like doing during your holidays?
- 2 How do you and your friends choose a holiday activity?

PREPARE

2 Read the posts on the website and answer the questions.

- 1 Which activity would be your first choice for a holiday activity? Why?
- 2 Which activities would your friends prefer? Why?

3 Read the Scenario. What do you have to do?

SCENARIO

Your group of friends is meeting to discuss your plans to do cultural activities during the summer holidays. Two of your friends, Sophie and Alex, can't meet with you. They've asked the rest of the group to discuss these four cultural activities and decide the best one for all of you. Sophie likes art, books and films, but she doesn't like very loud music. Alex wants to spend time outside and learn about new things. Think about their preferences as well as yours and try to agree on the best activity for the group.

4 Read the Mediation Skill box. What is important for collaborating in groups? Can you think of other useful expressions for working in groups?

MEDIATION SKILL



Collaborating in groups

When we discuss a problem in a group, it is important to: ask others for their opinions, listen to their opinions and express your own opinions clearly, but respectfully.

Asking for opinions

- What do you think of (the Comic Book Day)?
- How do you feel about (the Beach Festival)?
- What's wrong with (Outdoor Movies)?
- What's the problem with (the Street Art Walking Tour)?

Giving opinions

- In my opinion, ...
- If you ask me, ...
- I think it's great/all right/boring.
- I agree/don't agree (with ...).

MEDIATE

5 Work in groups of three. Decide on the best activity for the group. Remember to listen to everyone's opinions. Remember to choose an activity that is good for Sophie and Alex, too.

6 Think about the task and discuss the questions.

- 1 What activity did you decide to do? Why?
- 2 Did you work well in your group? Why?/Why not?



Beach Festival

This year, we've got great live music with fantastic artists from all over the world. Join us and enjoy two days of music, food and dancing by the sea.

Where: City Beach

When: July



Outdoor Movies

Enjoy free movie shows under the stars! Bring your friends, snacks, a chair and some warm clothes!

Where: Fresh Air Cinemas

When: July–August



Comic Book Day

Come to one of the city's comic bookshops to meet famous comic creators and get a FREE copy of a comic book. It's a family fun day out for all!

Where: Comic shops across the city

When: 16th July



Street Art Walking Tour

Join us for a walking tour of street art through the city. Admire the amazing wall paintings and learn about the artists, too. Are you artistic? Get a chance to paint your own graffiti.

Where: Meet at the main square

When: July–August

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CEFR mediation descriptor: Can collaborate in simple, practical tasks, asking what others think, making suggestions and understanding responses, provided he/she can ask for repetition or reformulation from time to time.

TIMING | 40 minutes

LESSON OVERVIEW

The goal of this lesson is for students to reach a decision in a group. Students will focus on collaborating effectively by asking for, listening to and expressing opinions clearly.

WARM-UP

1

- Put students into pairs to discuss the questions. Monitor as students are talking and help them with any vocabulary they might need.

PREPARE

2

- Allow students time to read the website posts. Put students into pairs to discuss the questions. Monitor and help with vocabulary.

3

- Focus students on the task. Give them time to read the Scenario and then elicit answers from the whole class. Check that they understand what they have to do.

Answer:

Students need to agree on the best summer holiday activity for their group of friends.

4

- Go through the Mediation Skill box as a class. Focus students' attention on the example expressions and phrases and remind them that they learned them in Unit 1 of the Students' Book although in a different context.
- Students discuss the questions in pairs. Elicit answers from the whole class.

Suggested answers:

When collaborating in groups it is important to ask others for their opinions, listen to the opinions and express your opinions clearly and respectfully.

Other useful expressions for working in groups:

What's your opinion about ...?

Why don't you like ...?

The problem with ... is that ...

I see what you mean, but ...

That sounds/looks ...

MEDIATE

5

- Put students into groups of three. Refer them back to the Scenario and give them time to make notes if necessary.
- Students have their discussion. Monitor and check that students are using language from the Mediation Skill box.
- Remind students that they must consider Sophie and Alex's preferences as well as their own and choose an activity that is suitable for the whole group.

6

- Read through the questions with the whole class and elicit answers from each group. Encourage the rest of the class to comment on other groups' decisions.

The key mediation criteria to evaluate this activity are:

- learner expresses an opinion clearly enough for other people to understand.
- learner asks other group members for their opinions and listens to their answers.
- learners are able to reach a joint decision and that takes into account everyone's preferences.

The following examples show the kind of student output that can be expected. Marks awarded are based on the key mediation criteria above.

EXAMPLE OUTPUT A

- A: OK, so we have to decide on the best activity for the group.
- B: What do you think of the Comic Book Day? It sounds fun and Sophie likes books.
- C: Maybe, but Alex doesn't want to be inside all day. And if you ask me, comics are a bit boring. What do you think about the Beach Festival? It looks really cool.
- A: I'm not really into concerts and Sophie doesn't like loud music. How do you feel about the Outdoor Movies event? In my opinion, it would be a good choice because everyone likes films.
- B: I disagree.
- A: Why? What's wrong with it?
- B: I don't want to sit down for hours. I want to be active.
- C: OK, well, do you like street art? There's a walking tour that looks good and you can paint your own graffiti, too.
- B: That sounds interesting.
- A: I agree. And it's also good for Sophie and Alex. Sophie is interested in art and Alex loves learning new things and wants to be outside.
- C: Great, let's do that.

Teacher's comments

Students ask for and express their opinions clearly and respectfully and ask each other questions to find out more about how other people feel. They also take into account Sophie and Alex's preferences in their discussion. At the end, they reach a decision that should satisfy everyone.

Marks: 5/5

EXAMPLE OUTPUT B

- A: OK, everyone. We need to decide what to do. I want to go to the Comic Book Day. It looks like a lot of fun.
- B: Maybe. I'm not sure.
- C: I don't mind going to the Comic Book Day, too. It's much better than going to see an outdoor movie.
- B: I'd like to go to an outdoor movie. It looks fun.
- A: Well ... Let's go to the Comic Book Day, then. I can't see anything else that's interesting.
- C: Sure. Let's do that. I think Sophie and Alex like comics and books.

Teacher's comments

In this discussion, A and C express their opinions clearly. However, they fail to realise that B has a different opinion. No member of the group asks questions to find out what others think. By the end of the discussion, the group has reached an agreement that only seems suitable for A and C. Only C mentions Sophie and Alex's preferences, but at the end and without appearing to realise that the Comic Book Day probably isn't suitable for Alex.

Marks: 2/5