Teach the speaking practice

Teacher notes | B2 core | Adults and older teens | About 30 minutes

Aim: each learner responds to a partner's actual idea and tries one useful change on a fresh discussion task. These original classroom tasks extend the interaction advice in S01E42. They are not official Cambridge papers or rated samples. Timings are estimates; classroom trial pending.

Prepare and share

Full pack: learner pages 1–3; teacher pages 4–5. Start with page 1 only. Give page 2 after the first attempt and feedback; hold page 3 until the fresh task. Keep both decision questions below private until each two-minute discussion ends. There are no private A/B roles. Use a timer. No recording is supplied or required.

The 30 minute route

0–5: Use the picture warm-up to elicit reasons and clarify the five prompts. Explain that this is learning support, not exam conditions. Choose two things to listen for, such as a response to the partner and a developed reason.
5–9: Run Task A with the stages on page 1. Note each learner's actual words or a specific moment.
9–15: Learners recall a partner idea. Give each one strength and one priority. Use page 2 to compare the extracts after the first attempt.
15–21: Rehearse the short app exchange; swap roles. Each chooses one change.
21–25: Give page 3 and run Task B with the same stages.
25–30: Compare specific evidence, give a focused response and agree one next practice opportunity.

Decision questions to read later

After Task A's discussion: "Which activity would help a newcomer most?"
After Task B's discussion: "Which change would benefit the widest range of people?"
Allow one minute for each decision discussion. There is no fixed winning choice. Listen to their reasons and negotiation; do not force agreement.

Answers to page 2

Conversation 2 connects ideas better. "What do you think?" invites B. A's language-practice question develops B's local-people reason. The final turn compares volunteering with a walking group and asks about a shy newcomer. A's opening offers regular contact as a reason and disliking sport as a limitation. In conversation 1, A ignores the volunteering idea.

Possible new turn: "Working with local people sounds useful. Would a newcomer need much English to join?" Other replies are valid if they develop B's idea. For the app exchange, a possible response is "That could help with small questions, but would you meet people in person?" Accept different relevant responses, not one memorised formula.

Give feedback they can use

Teacher page 5 | Observation and adaptations

Choose from what you hear

Interaction: “You introduced an option clearly. After your partner suggested volunteering, you returned to sport. Respond to one part of their reason before comparing.” Next attempt: refer to the partner’s detail, then add a question or comparison.
Developing ideas: “Your options fit the topic. Explain how one helps instead of listing another good option.” Next attempt: add a consequence, limitation or example.
Language: if you hear “more easier”, use “easier”, then ask for a different comparison.
Clarity: if a listener misses a can/cannot contrast, practise the negative meaning in a fresh sentence. Ask a listener what they understood; do not require one accent.

Keep a short record for each learner

Name and date: _____

First attempt words or moment: _____

One strength: _____

One change and rehearsal: _____

Second attempt words or moment: _____

What changed and what help was used: _____

Next practice and check date: _____

Online and one to one

Share only the current learner page. In groups, use timed pairs and rotate the learners you observe. Record whose speech you actually heard; arrange another opportunity for missing evidence. Record only with learners’ agreement. One to one: take the partner role, leave room for the learner and vary your response; explain that this differs from the paired exam. During learning, allow keyword preparation and phrase support, then reduce it. Longer supported turns are not evidence of independent timed performance.

Exam guidance and limits

Cambridge B2 First Part 3 uses written prompts. The picture warm-up is our addition, not an exam requirement. For pairs, the discussion lasts 2 minutes, followed by a 1-minute decision task. Preparation and groups-of-three arrangements should be checked in the current handbook. Do not use the classroom timer to predict a score.

The assessor uses Grammar and Vocabulary, Discourse Management, Pronunciation and Interactive Communication; the interlocutor gives Global Achievement. Assessment is individual across the whole Speaking test. Written extracts cannot show pronunciation or pace. This short practice is learning evidence, not a full rating. Not reaching a decision alone does not establish failure.

Official format checked 22 October 2026: cambridgeenglish.org/exams-and-tests/qualifications/first/format/ . Handbook reference: cambridgeenglish.org/images/167791-b2-first-handbook.pdf . Recheck current arrangements before an actual exam.