

UNIT 14 WORLD'S WORST COOK

UNIT OVERVIEW: In this unit students will talk about their abilities.

Conversation Starters: *Cooking Skills*

Friends talk about their cooking abilities.

Building Fluency

Expressing ability; verb phrases — common skills

Conversation Model

I'm hopeless! — Use tone for sarcasm

Let's Talk About It: *Who can do it best?*

Identify your abilities and create a volunteer list for a class party.

Conversation Idioms

is too tricky

solve computer problems

am hopeless at sports

stink at calligraphy

am a whiz at cooking

runs in the family

run a café

is not half bad

burn the toast

practice makes perfect

bake a cake

remember people's names

do my homework

speak in front of people

make some cookies

is very fancy

Additional Links for this unit: Ruth from England discusses how to make cheesecake.

<http://www.ello.org/english/0501/506-Ruth-Dessert.html>

STEP 1 BUILDING THE ATMOSPHERE

Ask your students who is the best and the worst cook they know, and have them share their answers. Tell them that Erik made some cookies and gave one to Amy. Have them quickly guess if Amy thinks Erik's cookies are delicious or disgusting. Play the **Amy and Erik Introduction** and have them check their answers (they were disgusting). Finally, ask them what they would do/say if their best friend made them some cookies that were disgusting.

Script [Track 79]

Amy: Hi. This is Unit 14, World's Worst Cook.

Erik: Speaking of cooking, I made some cookies last night. Here, try one.

Amy: Oh thanks, Erik

Erik: So, how is it?

Amy: Um, I think this unit will be perfect for you, Erik.

Erik: What are you trying to say?

Amy: Oooh. Our friends are talking about cooking. Let's listen.

Erik: What do you mean our friends are talking about cooking...?

STEP 2 CONVERSATION STARTERS: COOKING SKILLS

Students will listen to people talk about their cooking abilities.

Optional Warm Up:

Books closed. Play the audio all the way through. Have students take notes. Once the audio is finished have students

compare what they heard. Go over the notes as a class. Be sure not to confirm anything yet — do not give out the answers before the first listening. The main idea is for the students to just listen to the audio without preparation for once to gauge how well they do.

1. First Listening

Play the audio and have students listen for whether or not the people can cook well. Allow students to compare their answers in pairs before checking as a class.

2. Second Listening

Before playing the audio, have students work in pairs to see if they already know the answer from the First Listening. Then, play the audio and have them check their answers.

Answer Key

First Listening:

1. a, 2. b, 3. a, 4. a, 5. a

Second Listening:

1. a, 2. b, 3. b, 4. a, 5. c

BONUS:

Have students discuss the questions. To facilitate speaking, put a grid up on the board of meals of the day and have students share what they can cook for each meal. See example below:

Breakfast: scrambled eggs

Lunch: sandwich

Dinner: meatloaf

Scripts: [Tracks 80-84]

1. Emma

I'm a whiz at cooking. It runs in my family. My parents run a café, and growing up I spent a lot of time in the kitchen. Lots of people say they can't cook, but that just means they haven't really tried. If you cook long enough, you will get good at it. When I have children someday, I'll be sure to teach them the joys of cooking like my parents did for me.

2. Simon

I love food. And I love eating — especially authentic ethnic foods, you know? I mean, I went all the way to Japan to try authentic sushi! But I can't cook to save myself. I always burn the bottom of pots, and I overcook everything. I'd love to be able to cook. But I don't think I have it in me.

3. Scott

Well, I can't really say that I'm a good cook. But I'm not bad, either. I guess I'm somewhere in the middle. I can make simple dishes like pasta and salads. They don't taste or look like something you would eat at a fancy restaurant, but they're not bad.

4. Sheng-Li

I love cooking seafood — shrimp, scallops, crab — you name it. The secret is to buy fresh seafood. Never frozen. And then you always have to get the right temperature. Like for the stir fry, the pan should be smoking hot before you add the shrimp or whatever. Anyway, all my friends say that I make excellent seafood dishes.

5. Pia

I used to be really bad at cooking. I couldn't even make toast without burning it black. I just didn't know how to cook. And so then I started going to cooking school once a month and learned the basics of cooking. And well, now I'm not half bad, if I do say so myself. It's just like they say, practice makes perfect.

STEP 3 BUILDING FLUENCY: EXPRESSING ABILITY

Students will practice different ways to express ability as well as learn several verb phrases for describing common skills.

1. Expressions

- Have students decide which phrases mean you “can do” something and which mean you “can't do” something. Go over the answers as a class.
- Then write one word on the board to serve as a prompt. In this example, you can use the word “math.” Have students close their books. Use the word on the board with the various expressions. Have the students respond by saying you mean you “can” or “cannot” do something. See sample below:

T: I'm not very good at math.

S: Cannot

T: I am absolutely terrible at math.

S: Cannot

T: I'm a whiz at math.

S: Can

- Once the students get the gist of the activity, have them practice in pairs.

Answer Key

Can: 1, 6

Cannot: 2, 3, 4, 5

2. Vocabulary

Have students match the phrases to the best pictures. Allow students to check in pairs before confirming the answers as a class. Next, reinforce the language by covering the phrases and quizzing each other on the images. See sample dialogue below:

A: What is image "C"?

B: Remembering people's names.

A: Right.

B: What is "A"?

A: Public speaking.

Answer Key

1 - c, 2 - f, 3 - g, 4 - a, 5 - h, 6 - b, 7 - d, 8 - e

HOW THE GRAMMAR WORKS:

- There are two common patterns for talking about abilities. Pattern 1 is represented by expressions introduced in this unit: "He's really good at cooking" (person + be + [adverb] + quality + at + action [action = noun or ing-verb]). Pattern 2 is: "He's a really great cook" (person + be + a/an + [adverb] + quality + noun). Although both patterns cannot always be used to express the same ability (for example, it's difficult to express "She's really good at remembering people's names" with Pattern 2 and we would be more likely to say "She has a great memory"), it's good for students to be able to use both patterns.
- Have students think of 5 example sentences for Pattern 1. Next, have them rewrite these using Pattern 2. Provide assistance and advice as necessary.

3. Let's Practice

Have students make short conversations using the key expressions. Provide a sample dialogue to facilitate speaking. Encourage students to expand on their answers.

A: Are you good at writing stories?

B: No, I'm not a very good writer but I love to read books, especially mysteries.

STEP 4 CONVERSATION MODEL: I'M HOPELESS!

Students will look at the use of tone in sarcasm.

Optional Warm Up:

Write the following questions on the board.

1) What is the man trying to do?

2) Is he good at it?

3) What advice does the woman give him?

Books closed. Direct the students to the questions on the board. Next, have the students listen to the audio and try to answer the questions above. After listening as needed, students compare answers in pairs and then as a class.

1. Situation

- Books open. Have your students check the conversation for unknown words, and explain any difficult phrases.

VOCAB TROUBLESHOOTING:

I give up – I don't want to / I can't do this anymore

HOW THE PRONUNCIATION WORKS: USE TONE FOR SARCASM

Explain the unit pronunciation point to your students. This unit is looking at the importance of tone in expressing sarcasm. Voice tone helps us to express feelings and mood. It plays an important role in expressing politeness – for example, the way we say an imperative can make it sound like an order or an expression of concern. It’s also essential when making sarcastic jokes or remarks, which are extremely common in English language conversations. Sarcasm is when we use a word in a way that actually expresses the opposite meaning of that word. So, if we say “good” sarcastically we actually mean “not good.”

- Have your students look at the **Conversation Model** and ask them if they think the male character really means “thank you,” or not. Explain that this is an example of sarcasm, and that to indicate that we are being sarcastic we must say “thank you” in a low, flat voice. If we really mean “thank you” we must say it in a higher, rising tone.
- Next, play the conversation model [Track 85] and encourage your students to listen out for the tone of voice used to say “thank you.”
- As a class do a choral practice of this conversation, focusing particularly on the pronunciation point. Say each line or chunk, and have your students repeat.

EXTRA PRONUNCIATION POINTS: REDUCE SOUNDS, BLEND SOUNDS

I give up – I givup
But I stink at calligraphy – *bu(d)ai stinkat* calligraphy
Oh come on. Let me see – Oh *comon*. Lemme see
But keep trying – bu(t) kee(p) trying

2. Substitution

Have students work individually to connect the phrases in the columns to make a coherent conversation. Then have students compare answers in pairs.

Answer Key

Make some cookies – baking – let me taste one
Play this song – the guitar – let me hear it
Do my homework – writing essays – let me read it

3. Practice

- Have students use the **substitution** words to practice the conversation. Remind them to take particular care with saying “thank you” in a low/flat tone. Have early finishers create their own conversations.
- Choose a pair to demonstrate the conversation. Comment on their pronunciation of “thank you” and offer pronunciation and intonation advice as necessary.

STEP 5 LET’S TALK ABOUT IT: WHO CAN DO IT BEST?

Students identify their abilities and create a volunteer list for a class party.

1. Get Ready

Go over the task as a class. Be sure to make the point that each student should write down what they *can* do, not necessarily what they *want* to do. If they do not want to do it, then they can just check “no” for the volunteer column. Set a reasonable time limit for filling out the table so that all students finish at about the same time.

2. Let’s Talk

Put the students in small groups and have them discuss who will do which tasks for the party. Be sure to model how to discuss the task as a group and remind students of the importance of turn taking.

3. Follow up

Have students compare their list with another group and get a volunteer from each group to report back to the class.

BONUS: Speaking Activity

If time permits, have students try the bonus speaking questions. This could be done as either a pair/group/class discussion or an extemporaneous speaking exercise. The questions in this unit might be hard for some students, so to help them get started you could give your own answers to the class first.

BONUS ACTIVITY:

Put the students in small groups. Each group is a small catering company that has been asked by you how they would

plan an event (you can choose the event or you can have the students vote: wedding, birthday, graduation, etc.). Their task is to think of a product for each role in the activity table and to pitch their party plan to you. Each group works together to make the best presentation and offer. At the end, each group presents their event plan to the class and you decide which company gets to cater the event. Alternatively, you can have the class vote on the best plan.

STEP 6 LANGUAGE AWARENESS

Assign the language awareness activity on page 94 for homework. If necessary, do the first one or two questions together as a class. Leave 5 or 10 minutes at the beginning of the next class to go through the answers.

Answers

1. It runs in my family.
2. My parents run a café...
3. I can't cook to save myself.
4. overcook
5. a fancy restaurant
6. not bad
7. you name it
8. anyway
9. I used to be really bad at cooking.
10. I'm not half bad...

STEP 7 ERIK'S CONVERSATION TIP

In this unit there are several slang phrases for expressing ability. While it is crucial for students to learn colloquial expressions, it's also necessary for students to be aware of which expressions sound relatively colloquial, relatively formal and relatively neutral. Having this cultural/social/linguistic background knowledge can assist students make "appropriate" choices when using the language.

A nice activity to try here is to have students create two conversations about abilities: one between two university aged friends, and one between a student and a teacher who aren't very close. Have them think about what they think would be appropriate content and language-wise before writing each conversation.

STEP 8 UNIT TEST

Make copies of the Unit Test for each student. Start by playing the audio for the Listening section (download Track 14 from <http://www.elttestcenter.com>). Decide whether you give them one or two listenings. Then, allow the students about 5-10 minutes to complete the rest of the test. Correct the test in class, and record the score.

AUDIO Script

I am the world's worst cook. It's true. Like, last year I invited some friends over to my place for dinner and I made some sort of roast chicken. I don't know what I did wrong, but everybody started to feel sick. Well, it turns out that they all got some kind of food poisoning. So, yeah, I can safely say that I'm a terrible cook.

ANSWER KEY:

Part A.

1. d 2. c

Part B.

3. is not my 4. a whiz at 5. drawing 6. of good at

Part C.

7. computer problems
8. in front of people
9. an essay
10. karaoke