

UNIT 1 SOMETHING COOL

UNIT OVERVIEW: In this unit students will introduce themselves.

Conversation Starters: Introductions

Friends introduce themselves by sharing an interesting personal detail.

Building Fluency

Asking personal questions; responses to personal questions

Conversation Model

Why are you taking this class? — Don't stress short words

Let's Talk About It: Tell me about yourself.

Ask and answer questions to get to know each other.

Conversation Idioms:

be on TV

am originally from Vancouver

am not really sure

take a class

hang out with my relatives

how about you?

be full of junk

have a tattoo

a whole lifetime

am really into music

go on exchange

tell us apart

have a huge record collection

be in shock

get a tattoo

have a twin sister

Additional Links for this unit: Six people talk about themselves and their country.

<http://www.elllo.org/english/Mixer/17-Introductions.html>

STEP 1 BUILDING THE ATMOSPHERE

Tell your students to look at the picture of Erik and Amy at the top of the page. Ask them if they think Erik looks like an interesting person or not, and why. Then have them listen to the **Erik and Amy introduction** and decide whether Erik thinks of himself as interesting. Finally, tell your students to think of one "cool true thing" about themselves and one "cool untrue thing." Put them in small groups and have them share both with their group members. Their group members should then decide which "cool thing" is true and which is untrue.

Script [Track 2]

Amy: Hi everyone. My name's Amy...

Erik: And I'm Erik...

Amy: And welcome to Unit 1, "Something Cool." In this unit we're going to introduce ourselves...

Erik: Hi, I'm Erik!

Amy: You said that already, Erik!

Erik: Oh, sorry...

Amy: And each person will tell us something interesting about themselves.

Erik: That might be a bit difficult for me...

Amy: Well... then, let's just listen...

STEP 2 CONVERSATION STARTERS INTRODUCTIONS

Students will listen to people introduce themselves by sharing an interesting personal detail.

Optional Warm-up

Familiarize students with the listening section by calling out sentences from the answer grid. Read them quickly to make it challenging. Have students identify which speaker corresponds with the answer. See sample below:

T: *I was attacked by a crocodile.*

S: *Emma.*

T: *I was on TV.*

S: *Carlos.*

1. First Listening

Play the audio. Have students mark whether the statements are true or false. (Note: Tell students that not all the people have one true and one false statement.) Play the audio again as needed. Have students compare answers in pairs and then go over the answers as a class.

2. Second Listening

Play the audio again and have students correct the false statements. Use Pia's example to demonstrate.

Answer Key

First Listening:

1. a) F, b) T 2. a) F, b) F 3. a) F, b) T 4. a) F, b) T 5. a) F, b) F 6. a) F, b) T

Second Listening:

1. I have a **dragon** tattoo.
2. My uncle is a famous **actor**.
3. I won \$10,000 on *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* TV show.
4. **My house is like** a zoo.
5. I **held** a crocodile.
6. **My friends think** I have the biggest music collection in the world.

BONUS

Have students read and answer the bonus questions in pairs. You could give them a few minutes to read the script on page 81 before discussing. Ask them to highlight any information they can use for the discussion.

Script [Tracks 3-8]

1. Pia

Hi. My name's Pia. Nice to meet you. OK, one really cool thing about me is that I've got a twin sister, her name's Mia — kind of cute — and we're really alike. We both like the same music and we like the same food. And we look exactly alike. Recently, I got a tattoo, a little dragon on my shoulder, and now it's a little easier for people to tell us apart.

2. Malik

What's something interesting about me? Hmm. Well, one thing that people are surprised about is that my uncle is Denzel Washington — you know, the actor. Pretty cool, huh? People don't believe me when I tell them. I usually have to show them some family photos and then they're just in shock. Yep. Uncle Denzel. You know, the best part about it is he's a really cool uncle, too.

3. Carlos

Hi, I'm Carlos. The coolest thing that has ever happened to me was when I was on that show *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*? Do you know that show? I won \$10,000. I would have won more, but I missed the question, "What is the most populated city in the world?" Can you believe I missed that? I felt so stupid! But I did win \$10,000 and I was on TV. So that was cool.

4. Blaire

Hi there. I'm Blaire. I'm from the States, and I live in a zoo. Just joking. But it's kind of close. My parents love animals, so we've always had lots of pets around. When I was in elementary school I had 8 pet guinea pigs, 2 cats, a dog, and 5 bunnies. My friends in school used to call me Bunny Blaire. When I was in junior high we had a pet snake and a cute little iguana that walked around the house. Crazy, huh?

5. Emma

Hi, I'm Emma from London. What can I say about myself? I had enough interesting experiences for a whole lifetime during my gap year before college. I've got some relatives living in Australia, so I went and hung out with them and we did heaps of cool things together. I even held a crocodile. It was only a baby, mind you, but it was so scary!

6. TJ

Hey there! I'm TJ, from Vancouver, Canada, the best city in North America. I live in a small apartment, and I have absolutely no free space at all. Guess why? No, my place is not full of junk. I've just got a huge record collection. I'm a musician, and I do a bit of DJ-ing, so I buy lots of records and CDs. My friends say that I must have the biggest music collection in the world.

STEP 3 BUILDING FLUENCY ASKING PERSONAL QUESTIONS

Students will practice asking and responding to personal questions.

1. Expressions

- Books closed. Have students number a sheet of paper from 1 to 8. Explain to students that you are going to dictate eight personal questions. Before you begin, write the following “emergency” language on the board:
Please say that again.
Please say that slower.
Please say that louder.
- Then say the questions in the expression box naturally. The students will likely struggle. Do not offer any assistance but motion to the “emergency” language on the board to get the students to request clarification. (Note: This is a good way to set the tone of the class and to encourage students to be active learners.) Dictate all the questions to the students as needed. Next, have students compare what they heard and then check in their books for the correct wording.
- Finally, have students decide which questions are asking about personal details and which are asking about someone’s interests. Allow students to check answers in pairs before confirming as a class.

Answer Key

Asking about personal details: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

Asking about someone’s interests: 1, 3

2. Vocabulary

Ask students to match the questions in step (1) to the images in step (2). Have students compare answers in pairs and then check as a class.

Before moving on to the next step, have students do a peer drilling exercise. One student calls out a number and has their partner say it. Then, they give their partner prompts to say it faster, without looking, and in a different way. See sample prompts below:

A: *Number 4*

B: *Where do you live?*

A: *Faster*

B: *Where do ya live?*

A: *Without looking*

B: *Where do ya live?*

A: *Switch*

B: *Where do you go to school?*

HOW THE GRAMMAR WORKS

Take this chance to review these two typical question forms and have students come up with two different examples for each.

3. Let’s Practice

Have students practice asking each other questions and giving their own answers. Encourage them to ask follow up questions and to give more details.

STEP 4 CONVERSATION MODEL: WHY ARE YOU TAKING THIS CLASS?

Students will learn about not stressing short words.

Optional Warm-up:

Write the following questions on the board.

1) *What are the students studying?*

2) *Why is the man taking the class?*

3) *Why is the woman taking the class?*

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'm kind of nervous: I'm a bit nervous

HOW THE PRONUNCIATION WORKS: DON'T STRESS SHORT WORDS

Explain the unit pronunciation point to your students. Most students will be aware of the use of stress in English, and this is a pronunciation point covered several times in *Impact Conversation*. However, there are many cases where it's also important not to stress words. One of these cases is short words, such as the "be" verb, prepositions, articles and conjunctions, which don't hold much meaning. These kinds of words are often unstressed in fast-paced conversations. In many cases these unstressed words not only sound completely different but also join with other words, and this creates difficulties for students when they listen to English spoken by native speakers. This is demonstrated by "kind of" which sounds like "kinda" when said quickly. While students do not have to pronounce words in this way, it is very important for them to be aware of this, especially for listening comprehension purposes.

- Next, play the conversation model [Track 9] and encourage your students to listen out for the unstressed words.
- 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: CUT AND BLEND SOUNDS, CHANGE SOUNDS

But I think it'll be a good class – *butai* thinkit'll be a goo(d) class

How about you? – how *wabouchu?* / how *wabou(t)* you?

I just like English – I jus(t) like English

2. Substitution

Have students work individually to fill in the missing words in the columns to make coherent conversations. Then have students compare answers in pairs.

Answer Key

Why do you need this class? – For university – I need it for my job

What are you taking this class for? – I'm going on exchange next year – I really like the teacher

What's your reason for studying English? – I love American music and movies – It's a requirement

3. Practice

Have students use the **substitution** words to practice the conversation. Remind them to take particular care with the unstressed words. Have early finishers create their own conversations.

STEP 5 LET'S TALK ABOUT IT: TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF

Students will ask and answer questions to get to know each other.

1. Get Ready

Model how to make questions with the jumbled words. Give students ample time to complete the questions and to write their own questions (#8). Quickly check the answers as a class before students write their own answers.

Answer Key

1. What do you do?

2. Do you use English every day?

3. Why are you studying English?

4. Do you know anyone who speaks good English?

5. What are you into these days?

6. What do you hope to do in the future?

7. Where do you live?

2. Let's Talk

- Have students mingle around the class. They must ask two different classmates all eight questions. Since students tend to think they have to write down full sentences when completing information gaps, tell them that they only need to write one or two key words. Explain that in real life, such as when giving a Powerpoint presentation or speech, most talented speakers only use bullet points to organize their ideas.
- Then, model how to have a real conversation so that the students do not read the answers mechanically. Introduce simple words like “so” and “anyway” to indicate a break in the topic and that a new question is coming.

See sample below:

A: *Hey, Yumi, how are you?*

B: *Good, thanks.*

A: *So, what do you do?*

B: *I am a college student.*

A: *Oh, yeah, what do you study?*

B: *Math.*

A: *Cool. I was never good at math.*

B: *Oh, really?*

A: *Yeah, it's sad. Anyway, next question: Do you use English every day?*

B: *Well,...*

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.

STEP 6 LANGUAGE AWARENESS

Assign the language awareness activity on page 81 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.

Answer Key

1. Hi. My name's Pia. Nice to meet you.
2. exactly alike
3. people don't believe me when I tell them
4. in shock
5. Do you know that show?
6. I felt so stupid!
7. just joking
8. Crazy, huh?
9. gap year
10. hung out with them
11. Hey there!
12. Guess why I don't have any free space?

STEP 7 AMY'S LEARNING TIP

There's nothing easy about learning a language, and learning vocabulary is no exception. However, having a large vocabulary is crucial for both language comprehension and production and as language teachers we should encourage our students to try different ways of learning vocabulary. One way is by making a vocabulary notebook compiling vocabulary from the class textbook, class lessons and self-study. There are many different ways of organizing a vocabulary notebook, and students should choose the style they find most effective. You could make the vocabulary notebook a class project and give bonus points to the notebook that has the most entries, is the most comprehensive or is the most effectively organized. Some teachers even encourage students to swap vocabulary notebooks.

STEP 8 UNIT TEST

Make copies of the Unit Test for each student. Start by playing the audio for the Listening section (download Track 1 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

Hi there. My name's Carolyn and I'm from San Francisco. Something interesting about me? OK. Well, that would have to be my occupation, or at least that's what all of my friends think. I used to work as an office worker in the city, just like all of my friends. But, it was so boring... I wanted a change. So... I joined the circus. Yep... no joke... the circus. Actually, I'm a clown. I like making people laugh... and I love traveling... so it's the perfect job for me. Now, if only my parents would agree with me.

Answer Key**Part A.**

1. c
2. b

Part B.

3. kind of things
4. are you into
5. are you studying
6. do you hope

Part C.

7. doing
8. sharing
9. someday
10. sure