

**SPEAKING**

**A D V A N C E D**

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A D V A N C E D

OXFORD SUPPLEMENTARY SKILLS

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## FOREWORD

This series covers the four skill areas of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing at four levels—elementary, intermediate, upper-intermediate and advanced. Although we have decided to retain the traditional division of language use into the 'four skills', the skills are not treated in total isolation. In any given book the skill being dealt with serves as the *focus* of attention and is always interwoven with, and supported by other skills. This enables teachers to concentrate on skills development without losing touch with the more complex reality of language use.

Our authors have had in common the following principles, that material should be:

- creative—both through author-creativity leading to interesting materials, and through their capacity to provoke creative responses from students;
- interesting—both for their cognitive and affective content, and for the activities required of the learners;
- fluency-focused—bring in accuracy work only in so far as it is necessary to the completion of an activity;
- task-based—rather than engaging in closed exercise activities, to use tasks with pay-offs for the learners;
- problem-solving focused—so as to engage students in cognitive effort and thus provoke meaningful interaction;
- humanistic—in the sense that the materials speak to and interrelate with the learners as real people and engage them in interaction ground in their own experience;
- learning-centred—by ensuring that the materials promote learning and help students to develop their own strategies for learning. This is in opposition to the view that a pre-determined content is taught and identically internalized by all students. In our materials we do not expect input to equal intake.

By ensuring continuing consultation between and among authors at different levels, and by piloting the materials, the levels have been established on a pragmatic basis. The fact that the authors, between them, share a wide and varied body of experience has made this possible without losing sight of the need to pitch materials and tasks at an attainable level while still allowing for the spice of challenge.

There are three main ways in which these materials can be used:

- as a supplement to a core course book;
- as self-learning material. Most of the books can be used on an individual basis with a minimum of teacher guidance, though the interactive element is thereby lost.
- as modular course material. A teacher might, for instance, combine intermediate *Listening* and *Speaking* books with upper-intermediate *Reading* and elementary *Writing* with a class which had a good passive knowledge of English but which needed a basic grounding in writing skills.

(Alan Maley, Madras 1986)

This book is aimed at very advanced students who have attained a high level of communicative fluency and who now wish to improve the *effectiveness* of their speaking, not only on a personal level but also when speaking in more formal situations (for example professional exams, presentations in front of an audience) or as interviewers, facilitators or trainers.

Each unit is divided into sections which may be used independently or as part of a coherent theme.

# INTRODUCTION TO THE TEACHER

## 1 Voice work

This section contains warm-up activities aimed at improving clarity and effectiveness in using the voice as a tool. It also aims to increase awareness of using the mouth and lungs with a focus on different aspects of speaking. The activities can all be used in class or may be introduced there, with students being encouraged to work at home on those activities which are of most personal benefit to them.

## 2 Speaking and listening

In this section, listening is used as an aid to improving speaking. It includes models to discuss, and follow-up activities to work on with a focus on awareness of particular styles of speech.

## 3 Focus on speaking

This section contains further practice activities related to section 2, allowing the student freedom to explore speech in a more active way. The activities encourage discussion and focus on different themes to motivate speaking, and extend and stretch the student's ability.

## 4 Feedback task

The feedback task brings together the work of the other sections. It offers the opportunity to assess and evaluate speechwork encountered in sections 2 and 3 with the awareness gained from work in section 1. There is an opportunity to develop a critical awareness of the speech act and this section may also prove a supportive diagnostic tool.

We hope the materials are flexible enough to be used in a variety of ways to take into account the needs and interests of the students.

We encourage advanced students to take risks with their speaking, and in the process, to honestly evaluate their own needs and personal direction for improvement. However, while the activities are also intended to be fun, providing a stimulus for conversation and discussion, we have endeavoured to review all aspects involved in speaking well with an eye to increased self-confidence and self-awareness.

# INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDENT

We hope these materials encourage you not only to speak but also to examine how you speak and how you might speak more effectively in many professional and personal situations.

The activities touch on a variety of important aspects of speaking, including basic re-examination of sound production and ways of increasing the dramatic effect of your words (Section 1).

*Listening critically to good speakers can aid this process and Section 2 focuses on increasing your ability to learn from listening to others, examining features of speech as well as reviewing the language we use while speaking in different situations. Activities are explored with these models in mind.*

In order to improve speaking skills you obviously need to speak as much as possible. Section 3, in particular, provides speaking activities for discussion and practice which give you an opportunity to stretch yourself in front of an audience in the support and comfort of the classroom. We hope you find the themes and topics intrinsically interesting and stimulating.

We rarely get true feedback on how effective our speaking is and tend to learn this, rather incidentally, from the response and reaction of our audience. Section 4 therefore consists of an activity which is aimed at providing feedback so that you may consider how you have improved and can further improve spoken production. Some of the activities use an observer who can listen objectively, and some activities encourage you to listen to yourself in a critical and analytical way, with emphasis on particular aspects of speaking.

Many of the activities, especially in Sections 1 and 2, can be done in privacy at home, but we hope you feel able to share the work with other colleagues to the benefit of all.

If you wish to continue with this type of work, there are courses available in effective speaking both at colleges and in the workplace. Outside this, the Toastmasters organization provides an excellent forum for steady evaluation and improvement for people who wish to speak in public.

We wish you well and hope that you not only enjoy these activities but feel stretched by them.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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# 1

## Listening to others


### 1 Voice work

To be an effective speaker it is a good idea to listen to 'good' speakers. When we listen we are not only judging the content of what the speaker is saying but also making judgments about the speaker in various ways, related to his/her appearance, behaviour, etc.

One important judgement concerns the speaker's voice—for instance whether it is clear and distinct and whether it is lively or monotonous.

How you speak is often as important as what you say and this section will give you the opportunity to analyse what makes a person easy to listen to, and to evaluate your own voice to find out if there is room for improvement.


#### Task 1

-  Listen to the five speakers on the tape. Which ones do you think are the easiest to listen to? Why?

<i>Speaker</i>	<i>Features</i>
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

What do you think are the characteristics of a good speaking voice? There is a list, given by Toastmasters International, on page 80. You may like to compare it with your own ideas.

Look at the Toastmasters International evaluation sheet below.

-  Listen to the speakers on the tape again. How would you now judge each speaker using the criteria given?

## Speech Profile

### NEGATIVE

1    2    3    4    5    6    7

### POSITIVE

#### Loudness or Volume:

Too quiet            •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Inaudible           •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Flat                    •    •    •    •    •    •    •

#### Pitch:

High                    •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Shrill                  •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Monotonous         •    •    •    •    •    •    •

#### Voice Quality:

Nasal                  •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Breathy                •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Harsh, raspy         •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Lifeless                •    •    •    •    •    •    •

#### Articulation (Word Usage):

Slushy                  •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Lazy lips              •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Tangled tongue       •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Tight jaw              •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Mumbling              •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Mispronunciation   •    •    •    •    •    •    •

#### Timing or Rate:

Jerky                    •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Slow, plodding       •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Unvaried               •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Hesitant                •    •    •    •    •    •    •

#### Vocal Variety:

Emotionless          •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Unfriendly            •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Strained                •    •    •    •    •    •    •  
 Dull                      •    •    •    •    •    •    •

#### Loudness or Volume:

Good projection  
 Easily heard  
 Vibrant and dynamic

#### Pitch:

Low  
 Full  
 Varied

#### Voice Quality:

Open  
 Clear  
 Mellow  
 Enthusiastic

#### Articulation (Word Usage):

Clear  
 Crisp  
 Controlled  
 Open mouth  
 Projection  
 Pronunciation

#### Timing or Rate:

Smooth  
 Fluent  
 Varied, exciting  
 Deliberate

#### Vocal Variety:

Conveys emotion  
 Genial  
 Natural  
 Vital

**Task 2**

Your voice is a tool and you can make it work for you. Use a tape recorder. Describe an interesting day in your life, for example your first day at school or a day's holiday. Play the recording back and evaluate yourself according to the speaking profile. Which areas do you want to work on?

## 2 Speaking and listening

This section contains a number of short activities which can be used to explore and discuss effective communication in the areas of 'good' speaking and listening. Speaking and listening are closely related.

Good speakers are usually good listeners too. By listening well they learn ways to express themselves better and, also, to understand the messages they hear more fully.

**Task 1**

How much can you remember from a conversation? Work with a partner that you don't know very well. You have three minutes to find out as much as possible about each other. Tell the rest of your class what you have found out. Did you forget anything?

**Task 2**

Think back to people you consider to be good speakers and good listeners. Then complete these sentences:

*A good speaker is someone who . . .*

*A good listener is someone who . . .*

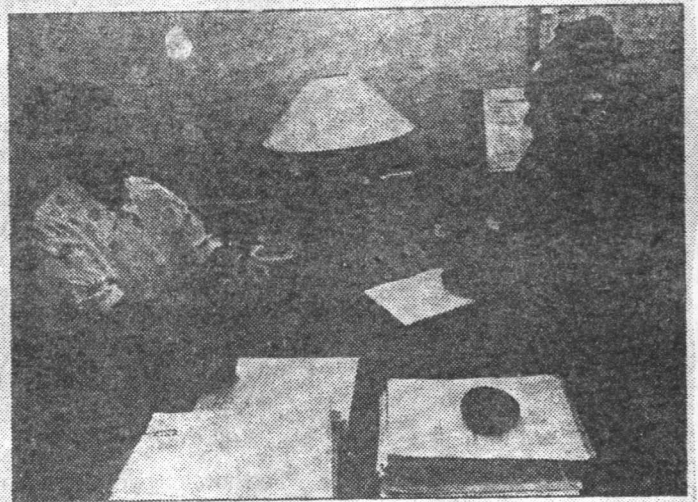
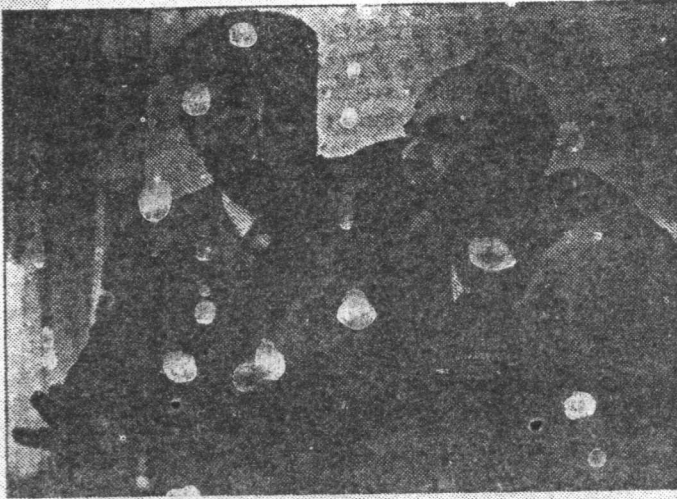
Compare your answers with a partner's. Do you agree?

**Task 3**

How important is eye-contact when we communicate? Walk around the room avoiding eye-contact with the other people in the class. Now walk around the room making eye-contact with everyone. Do not speak. How did you feel in each situation? What did you want to say? How close did you walk to each other?

**Task 4**

When we talk to someone we are often quite still, yet how close we stand or sit may have something to do with how friendly we feel towards them or may show cultural differences. Look at these pictures. What do you know about the relationship between the people?




How close is *too* close for you? Would people in your country find any of the above situations unacceptable?

### 3 Focus on speaking

Here you will examine in more depth, by using extended activities, what actually happens when you chat together and some of the things you need to be aware of.

### Task 1 Keeping the conversation going

-  Listen to the conversation. How do the speakers show interest and/or lack of interest?

Work in groups of three. One person is the speaker and the other two are listeners.

The 'speaker' talks about his/her average day.

Listener 1 shows lack of interest using the cues discussed above.

Listener 2 shows interest.

Try to pinpoint what came out of doing this activity—how did you all feel while doing it?

### Task 2 Definitions

When you explain a word or expression, or when you can't remember/don't know a word you need, you may have to be very explicit in your explanation so that the other person really understands.

To demonstrate this, try the activity below. Treat it as a game. (In real life you probably wouldn't need to push your partner so hard to explain.)

In pairs, take turns to start a conversation with one of the openers below. Pretend that there is always a word which you don't understand. Challenge your partner to define or paraphrase it for you, as in the following conversation:

A *I came to school early this morning.*

B *What do you mean by 'school'?*

A *You know, it's a place where students learn.*

B *What do you mean by 'students'?*

A *Well, they're the people who spend all their time learning.*

B *All their time? Anyway what's 'time'?*

A *Ooh, that's difficult. Well, you can measure it with watches and clocks, it's . . . er . . . sort of, the space between the beginning and the end of things . . .*

See how long you can keep one conversation going.

Openers: *I must do some work.*  
*I left the paper on the table.*  
*It's pouring again.*  
*I think bananas are my favourite fruit.*  
*We really need some new furniture.*  
*Has anyone got a corkscrew?*  
*I wish I had more time.*

**Task 3 Did I really say that?**

Work in pairs.

**Step one** Student A chooses one of the topics below and talks for one minute.

Student B listens carefully to the meaning of what student A says. He/She does not give an opinion or make comments, but encourages student A to keep talking.

**Step two** In 30 seconds, student B reports back to A, summarizing what was said. Repeat the exercise with student B talking for one minute and student A listening and summarizing.

**Topics:** What makes me happiest  
 What I enjoy about learning English  
 What I'm really looking forward to  
 What I hope to do next year  
 My favourite place, people and things

When you have finished, discuss these questions.

- Was it easier to talk or listen?
- How did you encourage your partner to keep talking?
- Did you manage *not* to give your opinion?

**4 Feedback task**

The feedback tasks will give you the opportunity to 'put together' what you have learnt in the units and to discuss and evaluate how successful you have been.

Work with two pairs. Repeat the activity from Task 3 above.

**Pair one:** A chooses a new topic, student B listens and reports back.

**Pair two:** Use the observer checklist on page 80 to help you focus on active listening.

Repeat the activity so that each person has a chance to speak and to listen.

When you have finished, discuss these questions.

- What did you notice about the listeners' verbal and non-verbal behaviour?
- Did the listeners give an accurate summary?
- Was there anything missing from the summary?
- How did it feel to be an observer of the conversation?
- How did it feel to be observed?

## 2

## Getting the message across

## 1 Voice work


## Task 1

Correct and natural breathing is important in developing a good voice. If you have a poor speaking volume, it could be caused by shallow breathing. Read the following passage aloud. Breathe in before you start and concentrate on controlling your breath while reading.

Audrey Skelton lay in bed and looked at the ceiling. If she could have as many pounds as days like this, she would be rich. Quite rich, anyway. Rich enough. To get out of this dump. Audrey was a Russian princess, who had been forced to flee during the Revolution. She was a poetess who did not want her work to be discovered in her lifetime. She was a mystery to those who knew, and loved, her best.

Audrey often dreamed like this during the day, in the sense that she play-acted. She would become someone other than herself—a millionairess, an actress, an opera singer—and she would imagine the life of that person in such attentive detail that she lapsed into a kind of trance. When she came home after her shift at the telephone exchange, she would turn on the stereo and dance frantically to the music, so that the windows rattled. As she danced she would unpin her hair—red, luxuriant, which no hairdresser or perm had been able to tame—and it would trail around her like a circle of flame. She became, as it were, possessed.

*Great Fire of London* Peter Ackroyd

-  Now try a few breathing exercises. Listen to the tape and follow the instructions. Read the passage aloud again. Has your voice control improved?

## Task 2

Are you tongue-tied?

Try to say these tongue-twisters quickly and clearly using one breath.

*Red lorry yellow lorry red lorry yellow lorry red lorry yellow lorry.*

*She sells sea shells on the sea shore. The shells she sells are sea shells*

*I'm sure.*

*The thrush has three thousand three hundred and thirty-three feathers.*

*The bloke's back brake block broke.*

## 2 Speaking and listening



English is a very rhythmic language and communication can be difficult if people use unexpected rhythms when they speak. There is stress within each word and there are stress patterns in each sentence. The latter may shift according to the importance given to the words within a particular context.


### Task 1 Word stress

Look at these words and decide which words go together according to their stress patterns.

vegetable	exciting	imagination	suggest
comfortable	edible	banana	collect
invite	invitation	lemonade	nervous
Germany	England	souvenir	examination
mountain	imagine	instead	variety
decide	important	ingredients	

Write the stress patterns like this:

surprise   
spaghetti 

 Check your answers by listening to the words on the tape.

Work in pairs. Student **A** chooses a word from List A on page 80. Quietly practise saying it to yourself. Student **B** chooses a stress pattern from List B on page 87. Quietly practise the stress patterns you have chosen using *Da da da*. Student **A** should say their word and student **B** must identify the stress pattern. Then **B** should say their chosen stress pattern and **A** try to guess the word.

Look at the words above again and choose a particular stress pattern. Add words to the list and then write a sentence using the words in your list.

e. g. *London's a city with thousands of people.*

Read your sentences to the rest of the class.



Task 2 Set. *ice stress*

a) The two conversations below have a strong rhythm. Decide what the rhythm is, then choose the best sentences to complete each conversation.

A *Where are my clean shirts?*

B *They're in the machine.*

A *Haven't you washed them?*

B *No, I haven't had time.*

A *But what are you doing?*

B *I'm washing my hair.*

A *And when are we eating?*

B *We're eating at seven.*

A *Why's dinner so late?*

B *I'm packing my case.*

A *Where are you going?*

B *I'm going to mum's.*

A *But why are you leaving?*

B .....

*Because I've had enough.*

*I don't want to stay.*

*You're always asking questions.*

*Can't you guess?*

A *What's the time now?*

B *It isn't time to go.*

A *What's on TV?*

B *I don't know.*

A *Well, turn it on then.*

B *It's a quiz show.*

A *Oh, how boring.*

B *Yes, that's true.*

A *Turn it off again.*

B .....

*It's time for us to*


*Oh no.*

*Yes, let's turn over.*

*Right, let's go.*

*Don't boss me around.*


Practise the conversations in pairs. Focus on rhythm.

 Listen to the tape and see how your interpretation compares with it.

b) Limericks have a strong sense of rhyme as well as rhythm. Work with a partner. Read through these limericks and decide what the final lines might be.

*There was a young man from Calcutta  
Who had an unfortunate stutter  
'I would like', he once said,  
'Some b-b-b-bread*

*There was an old man of Blackheath,  
Who sat on his set of false teeth;  
Said he, with a start,  
'Oh Lord, bless my heart!*

 Listen to the completed limericks on the tape and then try to write your own limerick based on a town which you know.