

Tips for speaking exam – a dialogue

It will help both yourself and your partner if you work together collaboratively on this task.

1. Be prepared to ask your partner for his or her opinion rather than simply stating your own.

For example:

'What do you think?'

'How about you?'

'Do you think ...?'

2. Listen carefully to what your partner says and respond to comments he or she makes to help the discussion flow. For example:

'Do/Have/Are you?'

'Don't/Haven't/Aren't you?'

'Do you think so?'

'Really?'

3. If you disagree try expressing this politely. For example:

'I see what you mean but ...'

'I can see your point but ...'

'But don't you think ...'

4. Use expressions to allow yourself time to think. For example:

'That's a good question.'

'Well, let me think ...'

'It's difficult to say ...'

5. You'll possibly find you don't understand something your partner has said. If this happens, take control with simple questions like those below to help you deal positively with the situation. This will also give you the chance to impress the examiner with your communication skills.

A) If you didn't quite understand a word or phrase just say something like:

"Sorry but could you explain what you mean by" or

"I haven't come across that word/expression before. Could you explain what you mean?"

B) If you didn't hear or didn't understand something your partner has said, ask them to repeat it:

"Sorry, I didn't catch that. Could you say that again?"

"Excuse me. Could you repeat that?"

C) Alternatively, you might want to confirm what you think your partner said so you could say something like:

"Do you mean"

"When you say, are you asking/do you mean?"