

MONOLOGUE

PLAN YOUR SPEECH:

- As you will have to talk for about 3 minutes, it's a good idea to use the 10 minutes you have, to organize what you are going to say.

Obviously, you will have to organize and group ideas according to the topic of the monologue (it is not the same to talk about your daily routine, your plans for the weekend or your last holidays as, for example, providing arguments for and against).

HOW TO START:

- Introduce yourself (name, age, occupation, marital status, etc.): not more than this.
- When you start say: and now, I'm going to talk about...

Typical mistake: and now, I speak about...

STRUCTURE YOUR SENTENCES:

- The logical order of a sentence in English is: SUBJECT + VERB + COMPLEMENTS... (you'll find it easier to construct sentences if you do it this way).

Typical mistake: and to the cinema went my friends and my cousins

- Remember there's always a subject in English so, don't omit it.

Typical mistake: I think __ is important to study English because... : it!!!

TENSES:

- Remember to be careful with the tenses. Most of the mistakes you make involve choosing the wrong tense:

Past events: past simple, past continuous, past perfect, used to...

I **went** to Italy two years ago... (holidays)

She **started** going out with another boy because she **had split up** with her boyfriend (human and social relationships)

Plans: be going to

Typical mistake: tomorrow, I **go** to the shopping center

Predictions: be going to, will...

Arrangements: present continuous

Instant decisions: will

Recent actions: present perfect

I **have just finished** a Master's at the **University** of Valencia

Duration with for and since: present perfect/ present perfect continuous

Typical mistake: I live in Segorbe for 25 years. (have lived/been living) → remember you can also express duration in the past if the situation is no longer true: I lived in Segorbe for 25 years. Now I live in Altura.

CONNECTORS AND LINKING WORDS:

- Linking words and phrases have numerous functions. We use them to express logical relationships between sentences, clauses and/or paragraphs:

Additional information: and, furthermore, moreover, in addition to, next, then, besides

Reason: because, because of, due to, owing to, as, since, therefore, that's why

Contrast: on the other hand, on the contrary, in contrast, although, yet, but, while, whereas

Concession: (even) though, anyway, however, nevertheless, in any case, in spite of that, despite

Purpose: in order to, so that

Result/Consequence: consequently, as a result, therefore, so, thus

Giving example: for example, for instance, such as

It is a very good idea to organize your speech using connectors so, choose the ones you feel more confident with and make sure you use them correctly.

IF YOUR MIND GOES BLANK:

- Remember you don't need to say the truth. Sometimes, it is better to invent the information.

Example: Imagine your topic is "YOUR FAMILY" and you are an only child. Obviously, you can talk and explain your situation, but, if you invent you have a big family with a lot of brothers and sisters, you will be able to expand your conversation more:

1. Mention all of them.
2. Talk about their age and what they do
3. Describe them: what they are like and what they look like
4. Talk about their hobbies and what you usually do together
5. Etc...

- Another thing you can do, if you don't have much in common with your topic, is refer to other people who do have a lot in common.

Example: Imagine your topic is "SPORTS" and you don't like them. You can explain why you don't like sports and then mention a person you know (a relative, boyfriend, girlfriend, husband, wife, friend, etc.) who are very interested in them.

1. You can always describe the people
2. What sports they like
3. When they do them

4. Why? Who with?

5. Etc...

- What you should never do is stop talking.
- In general, the point is that you have 10 min. to prepare the two tasks and therefore, you must take advantage of this time to organize and structure your speech, your ideas, examples to support your ideas or arguments, etc. There's no excuse not to do a nice monologue!!!

RHYTHM, INTONATION:

- "THE MORE ENGLISH YOU SOUND, THE BETTER",
- At this level, I would be extremely happy if you didn't make grammar mistakes which have to do with the things we have seen in class. However, you must remember that you will always give a very good impression if you take care over the rhythm and intonation, and that will always give you EXTRA POINTS!
- HOW CAN YOU IMPROVE THIS ASPECT? → Take books which bring a CD and read while you listen trying to imitate both, the rhythm and the intonation.

PRONUNCIATION:

- Be careful with the pronunciation of some words. They could fail you if you make lots of mistakes.
- Typical wrongly pronounced words: private, public, interesting, comfortable, since, your, vegetables, responsible, example, nationality, -ed (past ending), etc.

EXTRA TIPS:

- Don't use your native tongue: "Ais, es que estic nervios-a", say: "Sorry, I am a little nervous... may I start again?"
- Don't look at the teacher. You will focus your attention on him/her and the notes she/he is making instead of concentrating on your tasks and your partner.
- While preparing your tasks, select the ideas/information you want to say. Forget about: structures you aren't comfortable with, words and expressions you can't say in English, words you can't pronounce correctly, topics or ideas you haven't seen in class, etc.
- You can smile and laugh but don't give the impression you aren't taking it seriously!
- It is always a nice idea to use some expressions which belong to the conversational language. By doing that, you'll give the impression you have a good level of English. Choose some and force yourself to use them.

Example: It goes without saying, it's a pity, you're kidding... (and the like)

Likewise, force yourself to use the grammar structures and contents from the book which have been taught during the year. YOUR TEACHER WILL FEEL VERY PROUD TO SEE YOU ARE PUTTING INTO PRACTICE YOUR KNOWLEDGE!!!

- Depending on the type of monologue your speech will demand a conclusion. For instance, if you have to provide arguments for or against a particular topic, you should finish your speech saying "to sum up" or "in conclusion", etc.

Remember that, even though your task does not demand a conclusion, it is always nice to “close the circle” by saying: “and this is my opinion”, “and this is what I wanted to say”, etc. Make sure your speech has been long and rich enough before saying this.

DIALOGUE

- Remember that the aim in this task is to REACH AN AGREEMENT: most of the situations here involve buying a present together, choosing a place to live together, starting a course together, having a night out together, choosing a place to go on holiday, etc.

HOW TO START:

- As this is an interaction and you will work with a partner, it is a good idea to say hello and all that.

Example: Hey Víctor! Long time no see! How are you? Have you had your hair cut? You look great! Are you still living in _____? Are you still working at _____? Really? That's nice!!! Etc...

You will gain points if you give a very good impression from the very beginning.

THE DIALOGUE ITSELF:

- You will need a good command of how to make questions so make sure you remember how to form the different questions and the auxiliaries you must use each time.
- As the idea is reaching an agreement most of the questions you use will be aimed at suggesting things, convincing your partner of something etc. Here you are some expressions you might find useful:

I've been thinking about our summer holidays

When was the last time you had a really good summer holiday?

Have you thought about what you'd like to do this summer? (to which you could use a 3rd conditional:

If I had had more time I'd have thought about it, but I've been really busy at work recently/I've been painting my flat...)

What do you think about renting a house in silla? I really like the idea of spending the summer in silla.

I love the idea of finding a house on the seafront.

I have an idea

What are we going to...?

Why don't we...?

Shall we ...?

What/How about going/etc...?

What time shall we meet?

What do you think?

I agree with you **Typical mistake:** I'm agree with you

Do you agree? **Typical mistake:** Are you agree?

I think it is a good idea / I don't think it is a good idea

Personally, I think...

That's great / fantastic

Absolutely!

What a pity! How annoying!

I'm not so sure/ I'm not sure about that

You're right

So do I / Neither do I (Only if you feel confident with these structures)

DEVELOPING....

Ask questions and use question tags: You like travelling, don't you? You speak Italian, don't you?

That's a wonderful idea, but don't you think it'll be expensive/boring?

Also:

React when the other person says something!! Ask something about it. Interaction is important too.

Answer questions that the other person asks you, if you don't the teachers might think you haven't understood the question...

Questions tags: aren't you?; Isn't she?; etc. (Only if you feel confident with these structures)

Showing interest: You're joking; No!; Yeah?; Really?

Making requests: Could I have...?; Could you...?; Can you...?; Would you mind...? Do you think you could...? **Responses:** Yes, of course; I'm sorry but...

Explaining what you want: It's a kind of...; It's made of...; It's a sort of...; It's a thing for...; It's a thing you use to...

Making your point: In my opinion...; Personally I think...; If you ask me...; I completely disagree...; I quite agree...; I agree with you up to a point...

- Remember to support all your ideas with examples, otherwise, you will give the impression the only thing you have done is reading the information in your card.
- These are just some phrases you might find useful but obviously, there are more. Depending on the task you have for the oral, you will be able to use most of them, some of them or only a few. However, try to be ready to do a good job regardless of the task you have in your card.
- **Don't be afraid to ask for clarification:**

So, what you're saying is that you would rather go to cullera than to silla. Is that right?

So, are you saying you would prefer to go....? Do you mean you would rather go somewhere else? **Agreeing with the other person is ok, consensus is good:** Your idea(s) sound(s) much more interesting than mine. Your plan(s) seem(s) far more exciting than mine. That's an absolutely brilliant idea. Why didn't I think of that?

HOW TO FINISH:

- As you are supposed to reach an agreement, try to finish your dialogue accordingly.
- Most tasks will involve setting a time, a place, a day, etc... Here you are some useful phrases:

When shall we meet?/ Where shall we meet?, etc.

Tomorrow at six o'clock at the shopping center

Do you mind picking me up? I am having my car repaired, etc.

Let's buy her a...

Ok, we'll go to Paris

Typical mistake: Ok, we go to Paris (Instant decisions are expressed with will)

- It's also nice to say goodbye:

See you then; Bye bye; etc.

ENDING:

Let's recap.

Let's look at more options and meet up again next week, shall we?

Let's see. What have we decided then? Ok, right, what do we want to do? So, what do we feel like doing then?

So, let's recap. you want to go to cullera and I want to visit silla. So we can spend one week...

Let's see what we agree on / don't agree on....

Remember that these are only some tips you can use to improve your speaking skill. Some of the examples will work and others won't. That depends on the kind of task. However, try to be as creative and imaginative as you can.