ASSESSING ORAL SKILLS ONLINE
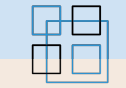
Different ideas and adapting to the online environment
Caroline Joyce & Renata Gomes

TABLE OF CONTENTS

iUFMG
Idiomas para fins
acadêmico-profissionais

2

01 SETTING UP

Students get nervous before speaking tests, but a well set up activity can help calm some those nerves. Here's how:

- Give an overview of the activity.
- Have all parts ready.
- Have an asynchronous alternative for emergencies.
- Have clear criteria.

CRITERIA IDEAS

For students, clear criteria gives a sense of fairness and an understanding of their strengths and weaknesses.

For teachers, it facilitates grading and giving students the feedback they need.

Here are some possible criteria to use and how to explain them to students:

- Grammar/Vocabulary: Ability to use the grammatical and vocabulary content learned to express ideas to others/ Ability to form grammatical sentences to express their ideas.
- Pronunciation: Ability to speak clearly enough to be understandable.
- Comprehension: Ability to understand and respond accordingly.
- Flow of Speech: Ability to keep rhythm and pacing of speech.
- Communication: Ability to use alternative skills (ex.: body language) to communicate.

Criteria	Needs Help	Acceptable	Exceeds Expectations	Outstanding
Grammar / Vocabulary	Student has difficulty to understand and has a hard time communicating their ideas because of grammar mistakes.	Student is able to express their ideas and responses adequately but often displays inconsistencies with their sentence structure and tenses.	Student is able to express their ideas and responses fairly well but makes a few mistakes with their tenses, however they are able to correct themselves.	Student is able to express their ideas and responses with ease in proper sentence structure and tenses.
Pronunciation	Student is difficult to understand, quiet in speaking, unclear in pronunciation.	Student is slightly unclear with pronunciation at times, but overall pronunciation is fair.	Pronunciation is good and does not interfere with communication.	Pronunciation is great; very clear and easy to understand.
Comprehension	Student has difficulty understanding the questions and topics that are being discussed.	Student fairly grasps some of the questions and topics that are being discussed.	Student is able to comprehend and respond to most of the questions and topics that are being discussed.	Student is able to comprehend and respond to all of the questions and the topics that are being discussed with ease.
Flow of Speech	Speech is very slow, stumbling, nervous, and uncertain with response, except for short or memorized expressions. Difficult for a listener to understand.	Speech is slow and often hesitant and irregular. Sentences may be left uncompleted, but the student is able to continue.	Speech is mostly smooth but with some hesitation. Unevenness is caused primarily by rephrasing and groping for words.	Speech is effortless and smooth with a good speed and rhythm for their presentation.
Communication	Student has difficulty communicating and is not able to use alternative skills in order to express themselves.	Student shows decent communication skills, but isn't able to expand beyond when necessary.	Student shows good communication skills and is able to use a few alternative ways to express themselves.	Student shows great overall communication skills, using a great variety of unique ways to get their point across.

Name:			Grade:		Comments:
Criteria	Needs Help	Acceptable	Exceeds Expectations	Outstanding	
Grammar / Vocabulary					
Pronunciation					
Comprehension					
Flow of Speech					
Communication					

Available for download here

You can also create a rubric on Google Classroom with different criteria and levels.

iUFMG
Idiomas para fins
acadêmico-profissionais

02 ALTERNATIVE IDEAS

- Using games
- Murder mystery
- Debates
- Role-Playing

TIC TAC TALK

The idea is simple: create a grid with different topics/questions and students can mark an X or an O if they can talk about that topic/answer the question.
Great for small or large groups, and doubles up as a great review activity.

Preparation:
- Decide your topics/questions.
- Decide your platform (Jamboard)
- Create rules / establish criteria for students to mark X/O.
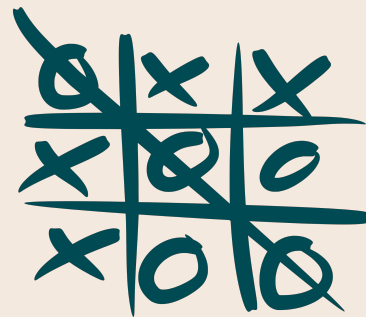
iUFMG
Idiomas para fins
acadêmico-profissionais

GUESS WHO

Preparation:
- Collect names of celebrities from the students, or use stock images and give them names.
- Gather the images in a slide or image that can be shared with the students.

During:
- Each student has a turn where they chose a "secret" celebrity for the other students to guess.
- The other students ask questions about the person's appearance until someone guesses correctly.

Guess the word

Write 5 words or expressions you know in English in the chat

1. Pizza
2. Bedroom
3. Cat
4. Wolf
5. Onion
6. Cold
7. Angry
8. Water
9. Soft drink
10. Summer
11. Red
12. Ball
13. Cake
14. Pig
15. Hungry

Breakout Rooms
With Google Meet

- Students share they words or expressions in the chat
- Collect them and arrange them in your slide and give each word or expression a number.
- Divide them into groups, separate them into different rooms.
- They time each other, they've got 1 minute to guess as many words as they can before they pass the turn
- They keep guessing until all words are eliminated

Raffle the number here: *Sorteador* **Check your word. Describe it to your friends if they get it right you get one point. You've got 1min.**

MURDER MYSTERY - from OneStopEnglish.com

How to play

There's been a murder at a high school reunion and everyone is a suspect! Students are given character cards of the different people present and have to figure out who commited the murder and why.

There are 7 essential characters and 4 extras. If you have a large group (14 or more), you can divide the students into teams. Whichever group figures it out first, wins.

Info

- Level: Pre-intermediate upwards
- Time: 60 - 90 minutes
- Number of students: 7 (min)
- Material: character cards.

MURDER IN THE CLASSROOM

Online Adaptation

Preparation:

- Tell students they will play a mystery game for their assessment and establish the time it will begin. Also let them know that they will receive an e-mail right before the game starts.
- Send each student a character card. You can download the cards here and schedule the time for the e-mail to be sent out.
- Explain how students will be evaluated during the game.
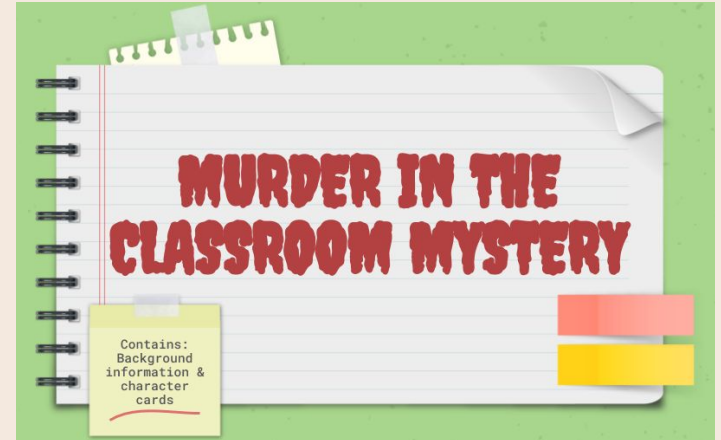
MURDER IN THE CLASSROOM MYSTERY

Contains:
Background
information &
character
cards

MURDER IN THE CLASSROOM
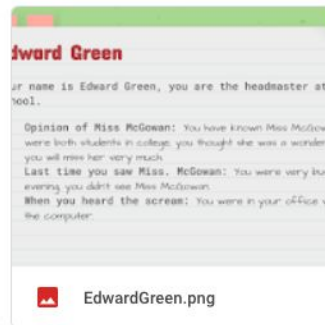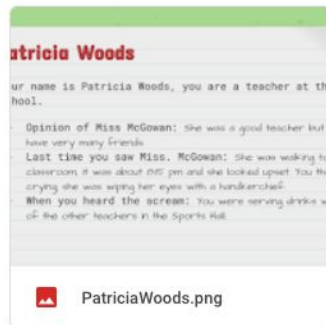
MURDER IN THE CLASSROOM

Online Adaptation

During:
- Go over how students will play the game.
  - If playing in teams: let them know it's a race against the other team.
- Present the background information about what happened.
- Establish how students will let you know that they've figured the mystery out.
  - If playing in teams: divide into breakout rooms.
- Monitor students' progress.

Things to keep in mind

- The objective is for students to act as their character, and not just read out the information on their card.
- Before students begin, give them time to read their cards and ask questions.
- With teams: once a team figures out the mystery, have them present the solution to the other team.
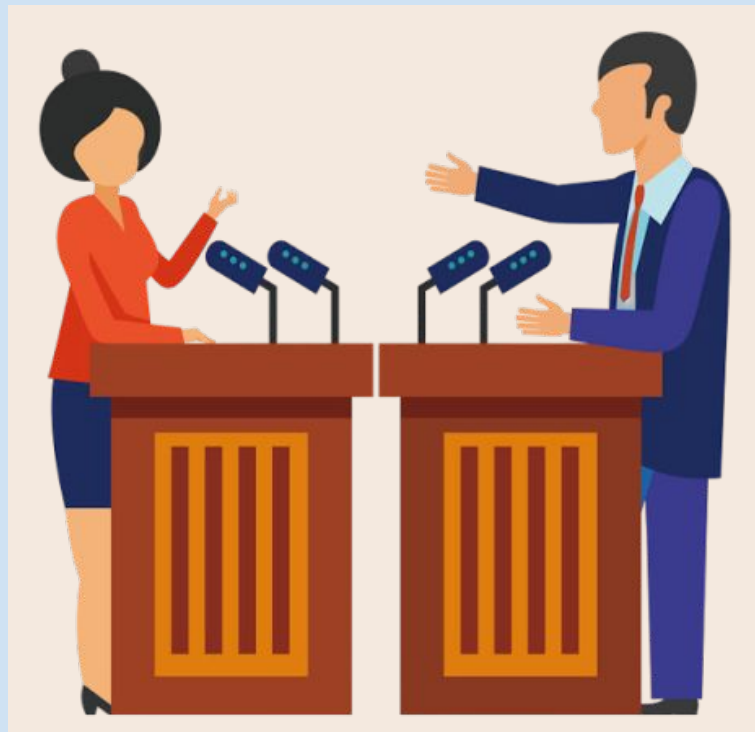
DEBATES

Info

- Level: Pre-intermediate upwards
- Time: 60 - 120 minutes
- Number of students: 3+
- Material: Video.

DEBATES

Preparation:

→ Tell students they'll watch a clip from the movie Clueless and they will have to answer the following questions about it:

→ What is the task assigned by the teacher? Did Cher do well on that task?

→ Discuss what is a Debate and how it is structured.

→ Point out debate dynamics and roles: (speakers; pro and against; moderator; audience).

→ Point out how to phrase debate propositions so that one can position themselves as for or against it.

→ Discuss audience's role in evaluating a debate and come up with a criteria to decide who is a debate winner.

Performing:

→ Divide students into groups.

→ Each group will have to come up with propositions and decide on their roles in a debate over that proposition.

→ Allow them time to prepare.

→ While one group is performing the debate, other groups are watching and judging performance according to criteria discussed.

Accountability

→ Moderator counts audiences votes.

→ Ask volunteers from the audience to point out best argument from winning team.

iUFMG
Idiomas para fins
acadêmico-profissionais

DEBATE

IMPORTANT

Online Adaptation

→ Use Vizia to work on the introduction video in an asynchronous lesson.

→ Insert video into Google Slides to use it in a synchronous lesson to avoid problems sharing audio.

→ Divide groups using breakout rooms (click here for a video on how to use breakout rooms with Google Meet)

Thing to keep in mind

→ The objective is to develop student's strategic skills → to develop fluency.

→ As audience, students shouldn't judge each other's oral skills but how well they defended their position.

→ You can create simple propositions and assign groups as pro and against to save time

DEBATES

LINCOLN-DOUGLAS

- Named after Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas and the debates they had on the issue of slavery.
- Students are given the resolution (aka the topic of the debate) on the day and are divided into the Affirmative and the Negative teams. The teams are then given 20 minutes to research the topic, come up with arguments, and decide the order in which each member will speak.

- **Preparation:**
  - Explain the format to students before.
  - Explain debate specific terms.
- **During:**
  - Set fixed times for each student to speak.
  - Give the list of turns.
- You can download instructions here.

iUFMG
Idiomas para fins
acadêmico-profissionais

DEBATES

SWITCH DEBATE

- The essence is switching your stance. Half way through, the teams switch sides and take up the opposing stance.
- Students are divided into two groups and given a topic for debate. One side takes the pro and the other takes the con. After a set amount of time or rounds (teacher's discretion), the groups switch their stance: the cons are now pros, and vice-versa, and the debate resumes from where it left off.

- **Preparation:**
  - Give the students the topic of the debate to research at home.
  - Explain that they will be taking both sides over the course of the debate.

- **During:**
  - Divide the teams.
  - Set time limits and/or rounds.

ROLE-PLAYING

Directions at Disney

Students take turns to role-play as cast members and visitors at the Magic Kingdom in Disney World. Each student researches and chooses rides they would like to go on from the different areas of the park before their "visit", and the teacher chooses starting points for each cast member to give their directions from. Map and Legend are available for download here.
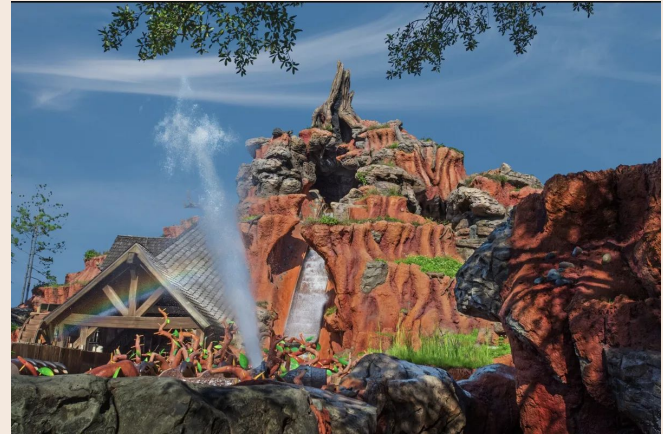
DIRECTIONS AT DISNEY

PREPARATION

- Show a video of The Magic Kingdom and tell students that they will be acting as cast members giving directions to guests.
- Show the map and send the map to students.
- Tell students they will be 4 starting points from which they will give directions from. Suggestion:
  - Adventureland: Pirates of the Caribbean **20**
  - Fantasyland: Cinderella's Castle **58**
  - Frontierland: Splash Mountain **26**
  - Tomorrowland: Space Mountain **70**
- Show students videos/images of the starting points.

- Each student should research and choose two attractions from each area that they would like to "visit".
- Remind students to study the target language for directions.

DIRECTIONS AT DISNEY

EXAMPLE

- Student A at starting point Walt Disney Railroad **1**
- Procedure:
  - Student B asks Student A for directions to Hall of Presidents **34**.
  - Student A responds.
  - Student B checks directions with the map.
  - Change roles and starting point is now **34**
  - Student A asks Student B for directions to Monsters, Inc. Laugh Floor **75**.
 - Student B responds.
  - Student A check directions with the map.

DIRECTIONS AT DISNEY

DURING

- Show students an example of how they will take turns.
- Remind them to use the target language.
- Divide students into breakout rooms.
    - Pairs: students take turns following the example until they run out of rides.
    - Trios: two students act as if they are visiting the park together and want to go to two different attractions. Third student acts as cast member and gives directions (starting → point A → point B).

EMERGENCY OPTION

- Student records a video where they play both visitor and cast member.
- Student should record directions for each starting point.

How can I help?

iUFMG
Idiomas para fins
acadêmico-profissionais
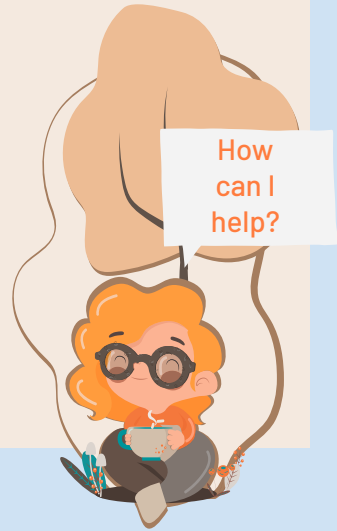
03

SPEAKING AS HOMEWORK?

ORAL ACTIVITIES ASYNCHRONOUSLY

iUFMG
Idiomas para fins
acadêmico-profissionais

USE DISCORD

USE PADLET

Discord specializes in text, image, video and audio communication between users in a chat channel.
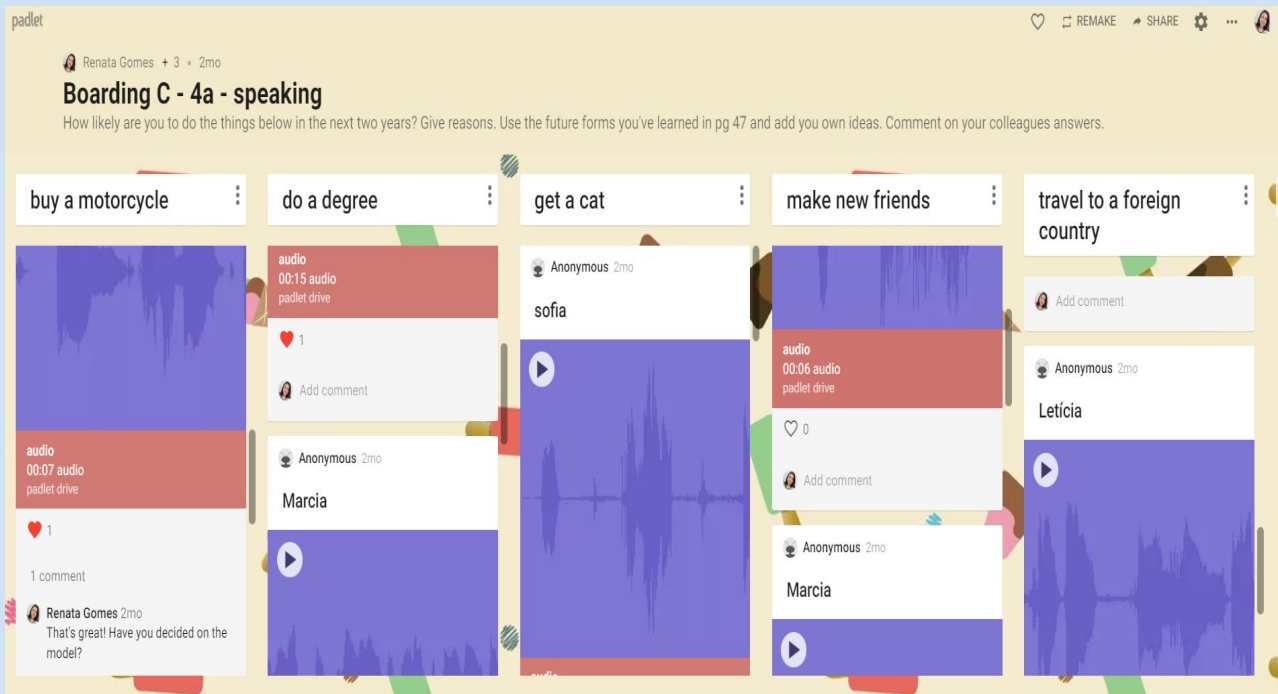
("Whatsapp without phone numbers")

Padlet provides users with a digital canvas. The user can post text, videos and images from a mobile device or a desktop.

Click on the platform's icon to watch a detailed video on how to use them

USING PADLET - one idea

- Create a shelf type of wall.
- Name each column with a topic or question.
- Students post voice messages answering to that topic or question.
- Establish they must listen to each other and interact.