

Useful expressions for speaking

PART 1 - INTRODUCING YOURSELF

- I'm speaking English for my own satisfaction / my job / in order to improve my employment prospects.
- If you want to go ahead these days, you need to have a good command of English.
- I've always loved (the sea).
- I'd love to visit places untouched by man.
- However, there's no place like home.
- That's a big question!
- I'm keen on ...
- I'm an avid (traveler, swimmer) ...
- I haven't given it much thought until now.

PART 2 - DESCRIBING PHOTOS

Describing the photographs

- The first photograph shows a woman reading a book
- In the background we can see a family sitting around a table outside a café
- What strikes me about the first picture is the fact that...
- This picture reminds me of...
- Judging from the photograph, the children...
- The man appears to be...
- From what we can see here, he must...
- When you give it a closer look it reveals...

Comparing the photographs

- Both pictures are about being a parent
- I think the common theme here is communication
- There are many similarities...
- Both pictures depict...
- Both pictures are quite similar in that they show...

Contrasting

- In contrast, the people in the second image look worried
- On the other hand, the scene looks much more modern
- Unlike the first photo, this looks like a happy occasion
- The first picture ... whereas the other picture ...
- Another important difference is...
- Picture ... doesn't show ... as clearly as ...
- Picture ... attempts to ... but I think picture ... does this more effectively...
- All pictures are interesting, but ... gives a stronger idea of...

Speculating

- Perhaps they are celebrating something
- Maybe the reason they look so serious is because ...

- She might be a busy working mother
- They must be working very hard
- It's difficult to tell from a photograph but this picture could have been taken in ...
- I might be wrong, but I'd say that this picture ...
- I would imagine/guess that this picture comes from ...

Personal feelings

- I wouldn't like to be in their shoes
- The first photo reminds me of my own childhood
- Personally, I'd love to visit a place like that
- The following phrases are for helping you while you speak.
- I'm surprised there is no picture showing...
- A picture of ... would get the message across more effectively.
- The cover would be so much better if we had a picture of ...
- So let's look at the alternatives ...
- Picture ... is by far the best to show because ...
- To me, the picture here ... is essential for this kind of publication.

Rephrasing

- What I really mean is that ...
- I take that back
- What I am trying to say is that ...

Hesitators (gaining time)

- Well, ...
- Hmm... let me see
- What else (can I say?)...
- Is there anything I can add to that?
- I'm not quite sure, but I think...
- I haven't thought about it before, but perhaps...
- I don't really know, but I imagine...

If you've forgotten the word for something

- The name for this escapes me at present, but it's for/it's like ...
- The name for it is on the tip of my tongue ...

PART 3 - COMMUNICATION TASK

- Up to the problem in question ...
- The main problem centres around ...
- It's my belief ...
- For my part ...
- As I see it ...
- As I was saying ...
- I forgot to mention ...
- I'm of the opinion that ...
- To my mind ...
- To my way of thinking ...
- I am convinced that ...
- I am inclined to believe that ...
- Don't get me wrong but shouldn't we ... ?

- Judging by ... they must be ...
- ... is a separate issue.
- Moving on to ...
- Taking everything into account ...
- I couldn't agree more.
- I agree up to a point.
- I think I see what you mean, but ...
- I'm in two minds about it. / I'm ambivalent about ...
- I don't see eye to eye with you here ...
- That's true in a way, I suppose, but ...
- I don't feel convinced ...
- That's one way of looking at it. On the other hand ...
- Can you take a clear stand on that matter?
- It brings to the question / idea / problem of ...
- Perhaps we should put ... first? What do you think?
- A strong point in favour of ... is that ...
- What do you think should go next?
- Are you happy with this order then?
- Do you go along with that?

PART 4 - DISCUSSION

- Just following from what X was saying, I also feel ...
- While generally agreeing with X, I must say that ...
- Adding to what X has just said, I think ...
- I can sympathise with what X said but ...
- One thing X didn't mention is ...
- Surprising, as it may seem, I don't support X's view on ...
- Perhaps it should be also emphasized that ... / it should be pointed out that ...