

**Helping Students Find Their Voice in English:  
Speaking Exercises to Improve Fluency and  
Clarity**

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## Inland Empire CATESOL Spring 2015 Questionnaire

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Teaching Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom Student Profile: \_\_\_\_\_

Typical Class Size: \_\_\_\_\_

What's your favorite speaking skills activities/exercise? Why?

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### Teaching English: Then and Now

1815

- 1.
- 2.

1915

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

2015

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

“Finally, in the teaching-based approach, students must prove that they have received the information transferred to them – that they quite literally “get it.” As we will see, however, in the new culture of learning the point is to embrace what we don’t know, come up with better questions about it, and continue asking those questions in order to learn more and more, both incrementally and exponentially. The goal is for each of us to take the world in and make it part of ourselves. In doing so, it turns out, we can re-create it.” Thomas, D., Brown, J.S. *“A New Culture of Learning: Cultivating the Imagination for a World of Constant Change”*2011

My Students can \_\_\_\_\_ in English:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

My Students can't \_\_\_\_\_ in English:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

My Students like to discuss \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

My students should know how to \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

My students need to know \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

“In the digital world, we learn by doing, watching and experiencing. Generally, people don’t take a class or read books or manuals to learn how to use a web browser or e-mail program. They just started doing it, learning by absorption and making tacit connections. And the more they do it, the more they learn. They make connections between and among things that seem familiar. They experiment with what they already know how to do and modify it to meet new challenges or contexts.” Thomas, D., Brown, J.S. *“A New Culture of Learning: Cultivating the Imagination for a World of Constant Change”*2011

## Talking About Your Own Hometown!

Student:

Class:

Hometown:

Country:

Please find an article about your hometown in English that you would like to share with your classmates. Read the article, summarize the article, and be prepared to talk about the article.

Title:

Author:

Publication:

Length:

Publication date:

Why did you choose this article?

What's the main idea?

How many sources were quoted?

What did you learn from this article?

What was the most interesting part for you? Why?

Write down 5 new vocabulary words, idioms, or expressions.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

How would you rate the article 1-10? Why?

## Exploring California!

Student Name:

Class:

Teacher:

Date:

Please find a short video (5-10 minutes) or an informative article (500-1000 words) about California in English. Carefully select some interesting information, summarize it, and be prepared to share with your classmates. Use this worksheet

Title:

Author:

Publication:

Length:

Publication date:

What's the main idea?

What places were mentioned? Were there examples given?

What did you learn about California?

What was the most interesting part for you? Why?

Write down 5 new vocabulary words, idioms, or expressions.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

How would you rate the article/video on a scale of 1-5? Why?

Why did you choose this article/video?

## Watching the News – for Body Language

Student:

Date:

Class:

Teacher:

Please find a 3-6 minute news video on the Internet in your best language. For this exercise, be sure to find a video in which a news announcer is sitting in the studio presenting the news.

You are going to watch the video with the sound “muted” or the volume turned all the way down. As you watch, focus on the speaker’s face (especially on his or her mouth) and on the speaker’s hand and body movements.

Video (non-English):

Source:

Topic:

Captions:

Next, find another 3 - 6 minute news video on the Internet. This time, however, select one that is in English. As before, watch it with the volume as low as possible or on the “mute” setting. While you watch, again pay close attention to the person’s mouth, face, hands, and gestures.

Video (English):

Source

Topic:

Captions

Here are a few places to search for news videos: [CNN.com/video/](http://CNN.com/video/), [BBC.co.uk/news/video\\_and\\_audio/](http://BBC.co.uk/news/video_and_audio/), and [hulu.com](http://hulu.com). Watch both videos again. Compare and contrast the two news announcers (the person speaking your best language and the person speaking English).

1. Which announcer had their mouth open wide more often?
2. What did you notice about the person’s face or hands?
3. Did you notice any other similarities? Any other differences?
4. What conclusions could you make?
5. What did you learn from this exercise?
6. Can you think of three “mistakes” that a television broadcaster could make?

## **YOUR TURN: GIVING A PRODUCT REVIEW**

You have probably bought hundreds of items as a consumer. You have looked at and considered thousands more. You can't buy everything; you have to pick and choose the products that fit you and your lifestyle. Besides, everyone has a budget.

Choose one product and prepare to give a brief product review to your classmates in our next class. You should do some consumer research on the product. You might read the label; you might look online for information.

Your product review should include:

- a description of the product
- the way the product is used
- the cost of the product
- a comparison with other, similar products
- a recommendation to buy or not buy the product
- a reason for your recommendation
- a rating on a scale of 1-5

You can and should use your personal experiences. But you also want to show your classmates that you did some additional research by citing a source. You might use the following phrases in your product review:

In a consumer review on Amazon, .....

According to a survey by Consumer Reports,.....

Wolf Blitzer, the CNN host, described....

A 2015 CNET article praised the computer for .....

Citing other research and sources will also make your product review more convincing. As an old American cereal commercial used to say, "try it – you'll like it."

## MY CONSUMER PRODUCT REVIEW WORKSHEET

1. What is the product?
2. Where did you find information on your product?
3. What is the purpose of the product? :
4. Who is the target audience for this product? Who uses it?
5. How is the product used?
6. What does the product cost?
7. What competitors does the product have?
8. What are some disadvantages of the product?
9. Are there some possible dangers or misuses of the product?
10. What did you learn during your research about this product?
11. What is your recommendation? Do you recommend this product for your classmates? Why?
12. How do you rate the product on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest? Why?

## **Student Presentation - Peer Evaluation and Question**

**SPEAKER:**

**TOPIC:**

**DATE:**

**Please write at least one question for the speaker.**

**1.**

**What was good to see in this presentation?:**

**What were some weaker points? :**

**Can you share some other observations/tips for the speaker?**

**What is one thing that you learned from this presentation?**



## Product Review Self-Evaluation

NAME:

DATE:

PRODUCT:

LENGTH:

Watch your videotaped presentation on the product review. Fill in this self-evaluation form, and bring it to our next student-teacher conference.

1. What worked in the product review?
2. What should have been better in the product review? Be specific.
3. Please answer "yes", "no", or "maybe" for the following questions:  
Did you provide specific information about a particular product?  
Did you explain the product's purpose?  
Did you identify the target audience for the product?  
Did you show us how to use the product?  
Did you identify the costs of purchasing?  
Did you compare the product to competitors? Which?  
Did you give your classmates a clear recommendation?  
Did you provide clear reasons to support your recommendation?
4. How effective was the PowerPoint? Why?
5. Please underline the grammatical errors. Please write the corrections below.
6. What, if any, pronunciation problems did you find?
7. How would you describe the tempo?
8. On a scale of 1-10, how effective the product description assignment? Why?
9. On a scale of 1-10, how effective was the speaker in answering audience questions? Why?
10. What do you want to improve for the next presentation?

## QUOTES AND PROVERBS WORKSHEET -1

Quotes and proverbs are by definition profound and clever sentences that are used to make a point. Quotes and proverbs are harder to understand yet offer great insight into the thinking of leaders, writers, role models and decision-makers. Therefore they are important to understand. Use this worksheet as additional exercises to fully understand the quotes and proverbs in the book.

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Pages:</b>	<b>Chapter:</b>

**List the quotes and proverbs in the chapter that were most confusing for you:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Vocabulary Builder:**

**List below the words you did not understand and search for their meanings. Then go back and try to read the quote to see if you understand it better.**

Word	Meaning

## QUOTES AND PROVERBS WORKSHEET -2

### Pronunciation Points:

List below the words that you found difficult to pronounce. Break the word down into syllables (Example: Poet = Po/et, Compromise = Com/pro/mise, Disagreeable = Dis/agree/able). Then read each syllable slowly, increasing speed once you are more comfortable with each syllable. In the case of the word “Disagreeable” you will also find syllables help understand prefixes, roots and suffixes. For further practice, break down the word even further and try to see if the letter is voiced/voiceless.

Word	Syllables	Voiced/Voiceless

**Punctuation Points to Consider** (Please make notes for each question. This will help you understand the quote/proverb better)

For Each quote/proverb you choose, highlight and list below (if any) the punctuation used. Examples, colon, comma, semi colon, exclamation point, etc. Punctuation is important in understanding the writer’s intent, nuances and main point. Do a quick internet search to find more meaning and tie together the use of punctuation with the quote/proverb you learned.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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5. \_\_\_\_\_

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**Grammar Points to Consider (Please make notes for each question. This will help you understand the quote/proverb better)**

**For Each quote/proverb you choose, highlight and list below (if any) the grammar used. Examples, simple/compound/complex sentences, Clauses, etc. Grammar is also very important in understanding the writer’s intent, nuances and main point. Do a quick internet search to find more meaning and tie together the use of grammar with the quote/proverb you learned.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. \_\_\_\_\_

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3. \_\_\_\_\_

---

4. \_\_\_\_\_

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5. \_\_\_\_\_

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## Exploring Videos on English Stress Patterns!

Student Name:

Class:

Teacher:

Date:

Find a quality YouTube videoclip that provides a tip on stress patterns in English that you would like to share with your classmates. Watch the video, listen carefully, take careful notes, and share the pronunciation tip with your classmates.

Video title:

Web address:

Length:

Creator:

Please describe the video. Who is the presenter? What happens?

What tips did the video provide on stress patterns?

Which words or sounds did the video focus on?

How practical did you find the advice? Why?

What was the strongest part? Why?

What was the weakest part? Why?

Who do think is the target audience for this video?

Why did you choose this video?

How would you rate this video 1-5 stars? Why?

## SAMPLE FEEDBACK ON STUDENT HOMEWORK

TO: Advanced English Students

FROM: Eric H. Roth

RE: Stress Patterns and Pronunciation Tips from Online Sources

DATE: 05/16/15

Here are the four strong student reviews of YouTube clips on stress patterns and pronunciation tips for American English. My comments on each video follow in green.

Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1yTbW3NP4Q><http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bqhQQ4uzAo&feature=related>

Keywords: English, Word Stress

Rating: 10 of 10

Reviewer:

This is an excellent video that discusses the subject of Word Stress in speaking English in a very clear way by stating four easy rules as follows:

Rule # 1: One word, One Stress

Rule # 2: Only stress vowels, Not consonants

Rule # 3: Stress on the first syllable

Rule # 4: Stress on the last syllable

This video also stated the importance of the word stress in understanding English when listening to other speakers and in improving speaking English.

*Teacher's Note: Although a bit slow and targeted for Chinese speakers, the presenter Dan speaks in clear, crisp manner as he introduces some general rules for stress patterns in words and sentences. Describing "strong" stress and "weak" stress to describe speech patterns rather than voiced and unvoiced also makes his explanations clearer. On the other hand, the slow tempo could be seen as a tad boring with limited audience practice. All in all, this video is a solid primer on stress patterns in North American English.*

Title: **Accent Reduction - Word Stress Lesson**

Length: 4.56 keyword: word stress

Presenter: Lynn Bo Rating: 5/5

Source: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9AI3wsuAH10&feature=related>

This video is about word stress lesson. In fact, it mentions about how different to pronounce the same word between noun and verb. For nouns, we stress on the first syllable. On the other hand, we stress on the second syllable for verbs. It provides many examples, such as **record** and **record**, **conflict** and **conflict**, **desert** and **desert**, **insert** and **insert**, **object** and **object**, **permit** and **permit**, **progress** and **progress**, **project** and **project**, **rebel** and **rebel**, and **survey** and **survey**. In addition, this video suggests that we should use a computer to record our voices and listen to them for practice. The speaker compares this practice to driving a car; in fact, it likes a subconscious. We should practice this everyday.

Teacher's Note: Speech therapist Lynn Bo speaks in a slow, steady manner while reviewing some confusing words that can be both verbs and nouns. While the video would have been improved by adding text to the video, the presenter effectively connects with the audience and looks directly into the camera. She also gently nudges viewers toward practicing speaking English on a daily basis.

Title: - **Lesson 6a - WORD STRESS - English Pronunciation (Part 1)**

Link: - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WX1rrFh4OZw>

Length: - 9min: 51 secs.

Creator: - Jennifer.

Rating- 3.5/5

Reviewer:

Content: - The video describes about the importance of word stress in order to spell it correctly. The speaker actually spells the word with correct stress on the syllable and also points out the common mistake made by people. There is also an exercise at the end of the lesson in order for the viewer to practice.

Method: - The vowel sounds are stressed and not the consonant sounds. Therefore in word stress, vowel sound should be longer .louder and at a high pitch. In order to know the number of syllables we need to count the number of vowel sound.

Teacher's Note: Jennifer combines clear pronunciation, visual aids, clear suggestions, and a friendly smiles to create a solid summary of stress patterns. I found her choice of the state capitals across the United States to teach stress pattern very effective – and highly relevant for immigrants preparing for the citizenship exam. The pronunciation study of stress patterns in Topeka, Kansas was exceptional. Finally, please note the presenter's effective PowerPoint slides with a clear headline, a single sentence re-enforcing the headline, and a related visual aid. One misgiving: the video occasionally paused and took longer than ideal to load, interrupting the flow.

Title: Identifying Syllable Stress

Link:[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gSNcI\\_agzpl&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gSNcI_agzpl&feature=related)Length:

Length: 4:09

Creator: XansWorld

Description: This video talked about stressed syllables. It teaches the definition of the stressed syllables and offers tips to identify the stresses pattern. It also provide some practices which are very helpful. Teacher's Note: This video seems the weakest, for me, of these videos. The vocabulary is questionable since the words are seldom used. The presenter also used very simple, text only visuals.

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## Mock Job Interview – Self-Evaluation

Name:                      Position:                      Company:

Date:                      Length:                      Interviewers:

Please fill in this worksheet using with complete sentences. Feel free to expand the worksheet to meet your individual needs. You might, for instance, want to transcribe your strongest and weakest responses to interview questions.

1. What were you glad to see in your mock job interview?
2. What were some areas that should have been stronger?
3. What are some other observations?
4. What were some language (grammar/vocabulary) errors? Please identify and correct those errors.
5. Were there any pronunciation problems? What did you say? What did you want to say? Be specific.

6. What question led to your strongest answer? What did you say? Why do you believe that was your best response?

7. What question did you struggle to adequately answer? What did you say? Why was that response less than perfect? What could/should have you said?

8. On a scale of 1-10, what would you give yourself on this mock job interview? Why?

9. What specific areas do you want to work on for your next job interview?

10. How will you do better on your next ALI 254 assignment next time?

**BONUS:**

Transcribe a one-minute section of your mock job interview. Then go back and correct all the “good mistakes” made.

## Biostatement: Peer-Checklist

Use this short checklist to review your classmates's biostatement.

A. Please circle/highlight information that might be missing.

Does the biostatement include:

- full name at the start of the first sentence?
- is the full name highlighted in some way?
- the last name only after the first sentence?
- an opening sentence that describes their current life?
- a second sentence that uses the correct pronoun and the past tense?
- when the student entered the university? Major?
- academic achievements (scholarships, papers, conferences) as an undergraduate?
- social, leadership, and volunteer experiences as an undergraduate?
- professional memberships and conferences?
- Internships? military experience?
- work experience with dates, locations, and titles?
- crucial dates and events?
- reasons for studying abroad or going to graduate school?
- reason for selecting USC or their graduate field?
- research interests?
- professional goals using the future tense?
- a positive depiction on an interesting life?

B. Write five questions about your classmate based on the biostatement.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_?
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_?
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_?
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_?
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_?

C. Ask your classmate the five questions.

## How do you spend your time?

Student Name:

Date:

Class:

Teacher:

Enter the amount of time you spend on each of the following activities on a typical weekday. Use your best estimate or guess for each category.

	<u>hours</u>	/	<u>minutes</u>	
1. sleeping	_____		_____	:
2. eating and drinking	_____		_____	:
3. housework/cleaning up	_____		_____	:
4. attending classes	_____		_____	:
5. working at a job	_____		_____	:
6. commuting/driving	_____		_____	:
7. playing sports and exercising	_____		_____	:
8. watching TV	_____		_____	:
9. attending religious services/praying	_____		_____	:
10. socializing and relaxing	_____		_____	:

For any of the above activities, would you say that you spend more or less time on it, compared to other students in your class?

To compare your results to those of the average American 20-year old and above, visit the following U.S. government website:

[BLS.gov/news.release/atus.nr0.htm](http://BLS.gov/news.release/atus.nr0.htm) [link is to the American Time Use Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010.]

**“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”**

—Aristotle (384–322 BCE), Greek philosopher

## Informational Interview worksheet #3

### **Partner Interview: Who did you select to interview? Why?**

1. What is the current title of person you chose?
2. How did you contact them?
3. Can you tell me how you prepared for the interview?
4. What else did you know about the individual before you conducted the interview?
5. Can you describe the actual setting for the informational interview?
6. What questions were you most eager to ask? Why?
7. Which questions seemed to evoke the best responses?
8. What did you learn about the subject's background?
9. Did you focus more on biographical questions, organizational questions, or the future of the field? Why?
10. What did you find out about his/her career?
11. What did you learn about his/her current working environment?
12. What did you learn about her/his professional responsibilities?
13. What changes have occurred in the field in the last decade?
14. Which professional trends did you discuss? Why?
15. What advice, if any, did you receive?
16. What else did you discuss in your interview?
17. What was the most significant part? Why?
18. What will leave out of your 5-8 minute presentation next week? Why?
19. Overall, how would you describe the interview?
20. How will you organize your presentation? Why?