



## CAE Speaking Part 4 Discussion – teacher’s notes

### Description

Students identify the topics in a range of typical Part 4 discussion questions and examine how they expand upon the topic. Practice is given in Part 4 of the Speaking test.

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**Time required:** 30 minutes

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**Additional**           ▪ none

**Materials  
required:**

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**Aims:**               ▪ To familiarise students with the type of questions asked in Part 4 of the Speaking test ...

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### Procedure

1. You may want to read through the Additional information below before you start this activity to see if there are any particular points you’d like to make to the students about Part 4 first.
2. Divide students onto pairs or groups of three. Give a copy of student’s worksheet to each pair/group.
3. Ask students to look at question 1 and sort the questions by topic area, and to think what the original topic might have been.
4. Elicit the topics the students have come up with and put them on the board. If they have not guessed correctly, give them the original topics but do not dismiss other suggestions. Ask them to justify and explain the reasons for their choices.
5. Before students move on to question 2, explain that the questions broaden out and move from being closely related to the original topic to being more distant. Tell the students to order the questions in terms of closeness/distance/abstraction. This is quite difficult, so tell them that if they do not get the right answer, not to worry. The aim is for them to focus on the type of questions set.
6. Check the answers but be flexible about accepting reasonable suggestions from the students if they can justify their opinions.
7. Ask students to think about what is difficult when having to answer this type of question in a test situation. Have a general discussion about this (thinking of a good answer spontaneously, finding appropriate vocabulary, using a range of grammatical structures, developing ideas and opinions).
8. Ask students to work in pairs for question 3. Use topics from your course book and any others that you would like to add. Each pair of students writes four questions for their topic using the examples as models. Each student needs to have a copy of their questions before they go to work with a different partner.



9. Re-group students into different pairs so that each student is not with their original partner. Students take turns to ask their questions and answer their partner's questions. Remind students they should try to expand on/develop their answers to each question asked. Encourage the students to build on what their partners are saying, and to develop the conversation into a more general discussion.

### **Additional information**

#### **Part 4 – Discussion**

*This part tests the candidate's ability to engage in a discussion based on the topics or issues raised in the collaborative task in Part 3.*

In Part 4, the interlocutor directs the interaction by asking questions which encourage the candidates to broaden and discuss further the topics introduced in Part 3. The questions often focus on more abstract issues as the discussion develops.

This part of the test gives candidates an opportunity to show their ability to exchange information, express and justify their opinions, and agree or disagree with one another. It also provides candidates with an opportunity to show that they are capable of discussing topics and certain issues in more depth than in the earlier parts of the test.

#### **■ Part 4 – Preparation**

- After doing a Part 3 task, ask your students to try to predict what kind of questions they think they might be asked in Part 4. They could do this in groups and then compare their ideas with those of another group. This will help them prepare for what they might be asked to talk about in Part 4.
- Tell your students they are not being assessed on their ideas, but they should be aware that examiners can only assess them on the language they produce.
- Divide your students into pairs or groups of three and give them a controversial statement to discuss, e.g. 'Cars should be banned'. This will encourage them to express opinions about topics they may never have thought of.
- Photocopy an article from an English-language newspaper or magazine and get your students to discuss the article in small groups. When they have finished, they can compare their ideas with those of another group.
- Set up a regular debating session in class and give your students one minute to stand up and argue for or against a particular topic, e.g. 'Global warming will mean the end of the world as we know it'. At the end of the debate, take a vote on who has put forward the most convincing arguments.
- Train your students to react immediately to the questions they are asked, or give themselves a little time to think aloud by saying things like, 'Well that's something I've never really thought about, but, on reflection, I'd say that ...'.
- It is important to give your students practice sessions which are the same length as the whole test. Tell your students that the impression they make at the end of the test is just as important as the one they make at the beginning.



## CAE Paper 5 Part 4 Discussion – answer keys

### Key to student's worksheet

1 & 2 Topics and questions in order: from most closely related to the topic to the most general.

#### The computer generation

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of shopping online?
- A lot of personal information is kept on computers nowadays. Do you find this worrying?
- In future, what role do you think there will be for people who are not interested in technology?

#### Raising money

- Do you think it's better to give money to local organisations or international organisations?
- People often help by giving their time, not money. Is this a good idea?
- What kinds of problems can having a lot of money cause?

#### Young people today

- Some people say that our schooldays are the happiest days of our lives. How far do you agree?
- What do you think is the right age for young people to have adult rights and responsibilities?
- What would you like to pass on to your children or grandchildren?

3 Check the questions that the students have written.

4 The difficulties can be: thinking spontaneously of a good answer, using appropriate vocabulary and producing a range of grammatical structures. Candidates are expected to be able to expand on their ideas and develop the discussion.



## CAE Paper 5 Part 4 Discussion – Student’s Worksheet

- 1 Questions on three topics are jumbled up here. What are the three topics?
  - a) Do you think it’s better to give money to local organisations or international organisations?
  - b) What would you like to pass on to your children or grandchildren?
  - c) In future, what role do you think there will be for people who are not interested in technology?
  - d) What are the advantages and disadvantages of shopping online?
  - e) Some people say that our schooldays are the happiest days of our lives. How far do you agree?
  - f) What do you think is the right age for young people to have adult rights and responsibilities?
  - g) A lot of personal information is kept on computers nowadays. Do you find this worrying?
  - h) People often help by giving their time, not money. Is this a good idea?
  - i) What kinds of problems can having a lot of money cause?
  
- 2 Each topic has three questions. Put the questions in order with the first one being the closest to the topic and the last one being the furthest from the topic.
  
- 3 Working in pairs, choose a topic from your course book and write four questions on it. Follow the examples above. Each person in the pair needs to have a copy of the questions.
  
- 4 Working in a different pair, ask and answer each other’s questions.