

## Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue

### 4.7 A personal picture

**Level** Elementary +

**Time** This activity proceeds over two days and includes homework.

**DAY 1** set task (10 minutes)

**DAY 2** students give informal talks (5 minutes per talk)

**Aims** To prepare and give an informal talk about a personal photograph.

#### Preparation

- 1 Choose a photograph that you took yourself—one which is important to you in some way. Prepare a short written text that explains the background to it and why you chose it.

I took this photograph just outside my flat one summer about 2 years ago. I was sitting having a drink on the terrace of my local bar and there was a little dirty dog that wanted to be my friend. I had my camera and I wanted to take a picture of it but the problem was that it kept coming up too close to me and wanting to lick me so I had no space to take the photo. Eventually, I ran away from it and waited for it to catch up with me. Just before it got to me I took the picture. I had to use the flash since the sun was shining behind it. I chose this photograph because I like dogs and I think this one has a funny face.



- 2 Make photocopies of your photograph and text for your students.

## Procedure

### Day 1

- 1 Show students your photograph and tell them about it. Do not read from your prepared text—just talk naturally. Encourage students to interact by asking questions.
- 2 Tell students that you want them to prepare similar talks at home. Ask them to choose a personal photograph and prepare a talk which includes the following:
  - When and where did you take the photograph?
  - What were you doing when you took the photograph?
  - Who are the people or animals in the picture?
  - Is there any technical photographic information you would like to share?
  - Why do you like it?Write these points on the board.
- 3 Give students copies of your picture and prepared text. Ask them to identify the parts of the text that contain the information that you wrote on the board. Also ask students to identify grammatical features that they are going to use (past tenses, *there was/were*, etc.).
- 4 Ask students to prepare their talks by making extensive notes. Make sure they realize that they will have to bring their photographs into class along with their texts the next day.

### Day 2

- 1 Ask students who have done their homework to present their photographs to the rest of the class. Encourage them not to read from their notes but to talk naturally as if they were showing the photograph to a friend.
- 2 Encourage listeners to interact by asking questions.
- 3 Put copies of students' work on the walls.

### Variation 1

Rather than preparing talks at home, let students bring their photographs into class and talk about them to a partner. The partner can write notes and keywords and both students can then work together to organize these into a coherent text.

### Variation 2

More and more people seem to carry around collections of photographs on their mobile phones. This means that you may actually have the material with you in the classroom and the activity does not have to proceed over two days.

### Variation 3

Use a Dictaphone or similar recording device to record your own talk during step 1 (day 1). Step 3 (day 1) can then become a listening activity.

peaking

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