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Introduction

This pack contains some example activities that you could use to support your teaching of Entry Level English. Each of the tasks require candidates to use their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. The topics could be adapted to suit the interests of your learners.

PROTEST!!!

Hi everybody!

This is Protest Radio FM.

I'm speaking to a very angry young person who is standing outside this animal farm. What's so unfair?

I'm protesting about the way they treat the rabbits they breed here. Do you know they're all going to be used in experiments to see whether face cream is safe for humans? They can't do that.

And here's another protester. What are you so angry about?

It's the new airport. Do you know they are going to turn the whole of this area into a concrete jungle? And the noise will be impossible. This is one of the few peaceful places left here.

And now our last protester. What's the matter?

I represent young people in this new town. When they built it they forgot us. We've nowhere to go at night, nowhere to play games or just to sit with our friends. We need lots of places and things to do, or we shall all turn into hooligans.



Talk about...

- Things you feel strongly about.
- How you might protest?
- How you can make people listen?
- How you would organise a protest?
- How to protest without annoying others?



Write...

- A letter to a councillor or your M.P. or to a newspaper.
- A letter in reply to YOUR letter.
- A newspaper report of a large protest held in a public place and what happened as a result.
- Just write about something that you feel strongly about and that is wrong. Give your reasons.
- A story about a protest that went wrong.

Terror in the Park

Here is a story called 'Terror in the Park'. It has no ending - that is for you to write.

All stories have a shape. This one starts by explaining the situation.

- 1 It was getting late and I knew I ought to be back home in ten minutes. The only way was through the park. Den said, 'I don't fancy going there. You can't see a thing except the moon and shapes.' Bri said, 'It's all bushes and trees. Anyone could jump us.' 'But it'll take hours to go by road. I've got to get home,' I said.
- 2 Well, we decided to walk across the park. I went first and Den and Bri followed a bit behind, just in case. As we walked on, it got much quieter and very dark. There was a moon, but it was half hidden behind the big tree at the top of the hill. The street was already a long way behind. Every now and then I missed the path and found myself brushing against leaves and thorns.
I began to worry about who might be there. There'd been stories around about some maniac who hit lads on the head and stole their cash. Lucky I had none left.
- 3 I couldn't hear Den and Bri at all. Perhaps they were scared and had left me. Crikey, I thought. It grew darker still, and I still hadn't reached the tree.
- 4 Then suddenly, I just knew there was someone else there, on my left. I wondered should I run, but I was more rooted to the spot. First there was a crackling of twigs, then the awful sound of someone crashing through the undergrowth...



The story shape

1. It starts by explaining the situation and telling you who is there.
2. Then it starts to make it sound a bit frightening - it makes tension and atmosphere.
3. Then it makes it sound MORE frightening.
4. Then the climax happens (that should be the most exciting part).
5. Then there is the ending.



Talk about...

Who or what caused the crashing? (There are 3 or 4 possibilities.)

Which of your ideas might be the most exciting?

How can you make this event sound terrifying?

What could happen afterwards to end the story?



Write...

The end of the story. You need to write up the rest of the frightening event, then you need to end the story.

Interesting Animals



Talk about...

Why we like or do not like birds, animals or even creepy-crawlies.

Which animals we find most interesting, attractive, amazing.

Why does it matter that so many animals are being killed off?

Are animals better in zoos or on film?



Research an animal...

Look in books, magazines, animal encyclopaedias, websites and clipart.

Find out:

- Where they live.
- Are they endangered?
- What strange habits and abilities they have.
- Can animals think?
- Do they communicate well (even with humans)?
- Do males and females live different lives?



Make...

Your own fact file in your own words.



Read...

Poems and stories about the animal you have chosen.



Write...

Your own opinions about the ways humans treat animals.

A poem that describes an animal, bird or creepy crawlie. (Put a new idea on each new line.)

A story about the relationship between a human and an animal.

A Big Event: Eating Out

You've been saving up for a long time for that special meal out. Perhaps it's your Mum's birthday or you want to take your boyfriend or girlfriend out.

And I don't mean MacDonalds either.



Talk about...

Where would you like to go? Chinese, Thai, Indian, Italian, Hotel, Pub?

What sort of food will you eat? How much will it cost?

Talk about menus, starters, main courses, desserts.

Website research: you'll find reviews of eating-places.



Research ...

Research some restaurants on the internet and find some reviews.



Practice on the phone...

Book a table:

- When for?
- How many people?
- What time?
- Your name and telephone number.
- Do you know where the place is?



Role play...

Be shown to your table and order your food and drink.

- Waiters/waitresses says: would you like to order a drink? Are you ready to order your meal?

What happens if the food:

- Is too cold?
- Is not properly cooked?
- Tastes nasty?

What's the best way to complain?

What are your rights?



Write...

The story of the meal, including your conversation.

A letter of congratulation or complaint to the manager.

Up For The Job!



Sean’s friend told him about the job that was going.

‘Might as well,’ said Sean. He was cool. So his friend got him an **application form**. ‘That’ll take me ages,’ said Sean. ‘Can’t be bothered.’ His Dad told him what to put and wouldn’t let him out until it was finished.

They gave Sean an **interview**. ‘Oh that,’ said Sean (who was cool) and he got up late on the day. Then he lost his way. When he got there he was all sweaty and there were smart people in suits. He threw himself into a chair and said, ‘Phew!’ The lady said, ‘Do sit down!’

‘Now’ said the **Personnel Officer**, ‘what do you know about this job?’

‘Eh?’ said Sean. Now he thought that was real cool.



Talk about...

- Does Sean deserve the job?
- What is an interview like?
- Ask your teacher to make up an application form.
- Work in pairs and help each other fill one in.



Research..

- Research two or three jobs you wouldn’t mind doing.
- Choose the best one.
- If you went for an interview, what questions might they ask?
- What would **you** ask?



Role play...

- Role play the interview for your job. Two or three people should ask you questions, and two other people want the job.



Write...

- The rest of the story about Sean’s interview.
- Some advice for Year 9 pupils who want to know about going for interviews and what it is best to do. What should they avoid?
- Write an email to a friend telling her all about an interview you went on.

Square Eyes!



'And come away from that telly, Helen. You've not done your homework and I need some help in the kitchen. Your father'll be back soon.'

'It's not fair!' moaned Helen. 'It's Eastenders.' You'd not have known she was fifteen. Never helping, always groaning away - not like really grownup teenagers, thought Mum.

Mum thought: she never goes out, never gets any exercise. She's a real couch potato. Her favourite meal is popcorn. What shall I do? And then out loud, 'Helen, come here at once!'

But Helen was in her dream world. She stared glassy eyed into the telly. She was thinking what she would say to the people in Eastenders if she were part of the story.

As she watched, the characters grew all 3D and at last she could reach out and touch them. 'No, don't do that,' she heard herself saying. She got up from her chair...



Project...

Your group is working on a new TV show. Decide who does what and what happens. Decide on a title, how long the show should be and, who it will be for. Act out some of the first programme in the series.



Talk about...

Your favourite programme or DVD.
Is TV an excuse for not doing more useful and exciting things?
Who is right, Helen or her Mum?



Write...

Finish Helen's story.
Design a leaflet: Beware, TV can ruin your health!
Write a letter to a newspaper explaining how TV can be good for your education.
Write your own TV diary for a whole week.

Statements of Opinion

What do you think about:

- mobile phones
- smoking cigarettes
- doing work experience
- going on holiday
- binge drinking
- driving cars faster than the speed limit
- wearing uniform at school and a work
- going places on bicycle
- eating lots of food with fat, sugar and salt in it
- yourself in ten years' time
- experimenting with drugs
- being pleasant and polite to to others
- watching hours of TV and playing computer games
- taking regular exercise
- the place of TV celebs in your life
- good and bad ways to spend time out
- going to the moon or Mars

Choose a topic and then:



Research...

The good things about the topic.

The bad things about the topic.

Ask friends, parents and relatives and teachers about the topic.

You might be lucky and find something in a newspaper or see it on the TV.

Go to the library, or look it up on the internet.

Keep your notes.



Aunts

I'm going to write about whether it is a good thing to have a lot of aunts. I have five aunts altogether. The oldest tells me she is thirty-seven and the youngest is my age.

Aunts are useful because they give you lots of presents at Christmas and on your birthday. If you have a lot of aunts, you have a lot of presents. They also tend to be friendly, especially the younger ones. They see things from your point of view and sort things out with your parents if necessary.

On the other hand, they fuss over you and they can be very nosy indeed. They want to know what you have been doing. If you annoy them they gang up with your parents. Then you are in big trouble.

On the whole, I am glad that I have so many aunts. They are full of surprises and take me out to things. I like their company and I like the things they tell me.



Write...

Introduce the topic and say why you chose it.

Write down and explain the good points.

Do the same for the bad points.

Finish by saying which side you are on.

Accident



The van driver (1) says

I couldn't wait any longer, so I just backed out. I couldn't see much because of all the cabbages. Suddenly there was a squeal of brakes and this car hit me. There were cabbages rolling all over the road.

Car driver 1 says

I was in a hurry so I never saw the stop sign. There was this idiot in a van all over the road in front of me. I couldn't miss him. My new car's a write-off.

Car driver 2 says

I came up to the junction. I was only doing 45 miles per hour when the car came out of the road on my left and smashed into a van that suddenly backed out. They were both idiots but the guy in the car was talking on his mobile. I swerved and nearly hit some people who were walking on the other side of the road.

Car driver 3 says

I slowed down when I saw the van. The cabbages came rolling towards my car, but I couldn't see the actual accident. There was a car coming towards me much too fast. It crossed the road out of control, went up on the pavement and smashed down a wall.



Talk...

- Who was doing wrong (keep a list).
- Who was to blame (keep notes).
- Talk about any accidents like this that you have seen.



Write...

- A newspaper report of what happened OR of the trial.
- Think of a good headline. Your report needs comments from people who saw the accident.
- A letter to the newspaper about road safety near the junction.
- A story about the accident by one of the people standing near the van.
- Your opinions about making roads in towns safer.



Haircut Row

HAIRCUT ROW SPARKS MOTHER'S FURY

A city woman lost her temper today when her son was sent home from school. The head teacher said his hair was just not right.

Rock fan Brian Bolt shaved his head and then grew his hair in spikes. He said he wanted to look like his hero, who is lead guitarist of the rock band 'Stream'.

Hair not smart

His head teacher said he did not think the hairstyle was smart.

He called Brian into his room and told him to go home. Then he wrote a letter to Brian's mum, 35-year-old Brenda Bott of Smith Street.

Angry

Mrs Bott claimed her son looked 'lovely'.



Role play...

The head teacher tells Brian why he does not like his hairstyle - Brian argues.

The interview between the head, Mrs Bott and Brian, a week later.



Brian with the head teacher

'His head is nice and smooth. He's a very gentle boy, and look at the head, he's not got much hair.'

But the head teacher was firm. 'Brian must not stand out from the others. We can't have him looking violent like that!'

The matter will be settled next week when Mrs Bott goes to school with Brian.



Telephone...

The head rings Mrs Bott to tell her what has happened and that he is sending Brian home.

Brian rings his mother a minute later.



Write...

Write the letter from the head to Mrs Bott.

Write the follow-up article in the newspaper after Mrs Bott's visit.

Your Holiday of a Lifetime

Myobi offers you miles of golden sands and the calm of one of the country’s most peaceful seaside towns. You can relax here in the glorious sunshine that makes this area famous.

At the Grand hotel you receive five-star treatment. You drift off to sleep on our comfy beds. The only sound is the gentle lapping of the waves. In the morning, you wake to the enchanting view of the bay.

In our spacious dining room you enjoy four-course homecooked meals. Come and stay with us!



Read...

When your parents get there, they find that:

- Only some of the beach is sand. Some is stony and there is oil on the beach.
- There is a bikers’ rally in the town.
- It is sunny until midday. Then the clouds and storms move in. The locals say this is normal.
- The hotel is short of staff.
- The air-conditioning does not work well and is noisy.
- They can see the bay – just – by leaning dangerously out over the balcony.
- The meals are cooked on the premises but are definitely not home-made.
- They have to share a table with some other guests



Talk...

Your parents want a quiet holiday. Pick out the words in the advert that might make them want to stay here. Say why you picked the words.



Write...

A letter of complaint to the hotel about their advert.

I'm Talking to You!

A short play: act it out.

Dentist: [*smiling*] Open wide.

Patient: Er..ar-er..um. What are you going to do?

Dentist: This is just a check-up. Keep your mouth open, please.

Patient: [*shouting*] Ow! That hurt.

Dentist: [*sympathetically*] Did it now? I'm not surprised. There's something rather nasty happening there.

Patient: [*even louder*] Ow! What are you doing to me?

Dentist: It won't take long. Just try to keep your mouth open.



Now read the same thing again, this time as a story

"Open wide," said the dentist quietly, with a slight smile on his face.

The patient made a gurgling noise and then shut his mouth again. "What are you going to do?" he asked.

"This is just a check-up," the dentist explained. "Keep your mouth open, please."

He started to feel inside the patient's mouth. Suddenly the patient shouted out loud. "Ow!" he screamed, "That hurt!"

The dentist was sympathetic. "Did it now?" he asked kindly.

"I'm not surprised. There's something rather nasty happening there," and he started to prod about again.

This time the patient screamed out even more. "Ow!" he yelled. "What are you doing to me?"

The dentist assured him that it would not take long. "Just try to keep your mouth open," he said.



Talk...

Make a list of all the differences you can find between the play and the story. Work out how the punctuation works in the story.



Write...

Finish the play, then finish the story.
Act and read them out.

I remember...

I remember...

Finding a photo of myself as a baby. I did not know who this creature was. He was not dressed like me. His smile was not my smile. He was playing with a toy, a toy I could not remember having. It was very odd. Was this person some sort of alien?




I remember...

The first time I had 'flu. I was in a book-shop and suddenly felt hot and couldn't see straight. I didn't ask for help but walked home, a mile away. My mother sent me to bed and fetched the Doctor. I was there for three days. No-one told me what was wrong!

I remember...

When I was small, I used to walk home with my aunt. There was a big, scary dog that jumped out at cars and barked angrily. I thought he'd attack us. Then one day we saw him again, but this time all his fur had been ripped open on one side, and we knew that a car had hit him.



Talk...

Talk about what you remember.



Write...

Write about three things you remember.

Tourist Guide

Your task is to create a Tourist Guide for Shrewsbury.

You should include areas of interest for **ALL** ages and abilities.

The Guide will include:-

1. Places of historical importance.
2. A map illustrating the "Town of Shrewsbury" showing your places of interest.
3. Key parts of Shrewsbury for the visitor. eg toilets, car parks, Post Offices etc.
4. Shopping areas and the types of shops.
5. Help for disabled visitors.
6. Leisure facilities, (swimming baths, parks etc.)

The map will be coloured and labelled correctly.

You will be given three leaflets to assist you in this task.

Note:

You must work in at least pairs, at the most in threes. You should all do the same amount of work and will be assessed accordingly.

It should take you at least 8 periods to plan and prepare your work. All materials will be provided but you **must** do your own research.

Your second task is to provide an audio tape for blind or visually impaired visitors. Your recording will be about 5 minutes long in total and should include at least 10 places of interest. Extra detail will be required here for the listener. Facts of a historical nature will be useful here.

You may work in pairs or groups of three but all pupils must be recorded. (Make your voice clear and add a bit of feeling to your report.)



Safe Riding

The situation:

A relative has promised to buy you a motorcycle for your birthday provided that you agree to certain conditions. They insist that you find out as much as possible about motorcycle safety. They also say that you must take responsibility for such matters as insurance for yourself.



Task 1:

Read the "information for users" (below) and answer the questions which follow. Write the answers in full.

Task 2:

You are going to a talk given by the Road Traffic Safety Officer. Be prepared to ask questions which will be recorded on tape. Create eight questions and record these on audio tape.

Task 3:

Design a poster promoting motorcycle safety.

Task 4:

Fill in the form to apply for a driving licence.

Task 5:

Research the cost of insurance for yourself. Either use Yellow Pages or use the internet. (Ask your teacher for help in this.)

INFORMATION FOR USERS

MOTORCYCLE LICENCE REQUIREMENTS

If you have a provisional motorcycle licence, you MUST satisfactorily complete a Compulsory Basic Training (CBT) course. You can then ride on the public road, with L plates for up to 2 years. During this time you MUST pass a motorcycle theory and then a practical test to obtain your full motorcycle licence, otherwise you will lose your licence for 1 year.

BUYING YOUR FIRST MOTORCYCLE

There are very few problems when you buy a new motorcycle because you will have the guidance and expertise of the salesperson. You will also have the security provided by warranty. Buying second-hand is a different matter, however, and you should approach this with great caution. It is a good idea to ask a friend who is knowledgeable about motorcycles to have a look at any that you like. It is especially helpful if they can ride the motorcycle and then give you their impressions of it. The best thing of all is to ask a trained mechanic to look at it, and to listen to the engine for you. Noises give a lot away about the condition of the engine.

BORROWING A MOTORCYCLE

It can save you a great deal of money if you are able to borrow a motorcycle while you are learning. This is specially true if you intend to buy a much bigger motorcycle after passing your test. The most important point to remember concerns insurance. You must either insure the motorcycle yourself or have your name added to the owner's insurance policy. Consider the matter carefully because if you are involved in an accident whilst on someone else's policy they could lose their no-claims bonus which would be very expensive.

THE FIRST RIDE:

A lot of accidents occur within the first few miles of a basic beginner collecting his first motorcycle from a shop. You should never use the roads to experiment your motorcycle. You have to master balance, clutch control, braking, manoeuvring, acceleration and much more.

The questions should be answered in full.

1. Which of the following points have a law now to apply to learn a motorcycle?
 - a. They must take the test within 2 years (theory and practical).
 - b. They can only ride bikes of up to 125 c.c.
 - c. Anyone not passing their test within 2 years is not allowed on the road again.
2. There are very few problems when you buy a new motorcycle because...
 - a. You are all protected by guarantee.
 - b. All new motorcycles are perfect.
 - c. You have paid a lot of money for it.
3. When you buy a second-hand motorcycle you should always...
 - a. Buy it the cheapest.
 - b. Ask a trained mechanic to look at it.
 - c. Trust your own judgement.
4. If you borrow someone else's motorcycle you must...
 - a. Always ask first.
 - b. Check that you are covered by insurance.
 - c. Only borrow an old bike.
5. A lot of accidents occur...
 - a. on busy roads.
 - b. shortly after a basic beginner collects their motorcycle from the shop.
 - c. on borrowed motorcycles.



Organising an Event

You have been put in charge of organising the school's visit to a theme park.

Task 1:

Look at a copy of Yellow Pages with the names of coach firms.

Choose ONE firm and write down the name and phone number.

Write a letter to the firm asking if they have a spare coach for your visit. (Include all necessary information, date, number in the party, time of departure and return etc.)



Task 2:

The coach firm has booked (provisionally) a coach for you. Telephone the company confirming the booking.

Task 3:

Write a letter to the theme park enquiring about the cost of a party of 53 people.

Task 4:

Two weeks prior to the trip you write again to the theme park, telling them that at least six of your party are wheelchair users. You request that help is available on entry to the park.

Task 5:

Back at school you must write an account (at least one A4 side/250 words) of your day explaining and describing the thrills and spills of the theme park. You may not like it, so say why you don't.

Task 6:

Design and describe your ultimate ride at a theme park. Try to use plenty of adjectives and adverbs. Similes may be useful.

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