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Navigate

Coursebook

with video and Oxford Online Skills

Upper-intermediate → B2


OXFORD

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Communication

1.1 The rules of conversation

GOALS ■ Talk about conversation in different cultures ■ Use different question types

Vocabulary & Speaking conversation

- 1a Look at situations a–c, which show conversations between people from different cultures. In each there has been a cross-cultural misunderstanding. With a partner, discuss what has caused the misunderstanding.



- b Check the answers on page 126.

- 2 Look at the list of things that can happen in a conversation. Check you understand the words in bold in the phrases. Put a tick next to the things you would aim to do and a cross next to the ones you would try to avoid.

- have a **row**
- put someone **at ease**
- listen **enthusiastically**
- **establish** shared interests
- ask **appropriate** questions
- have a **misunderstanding**
- have some awkward silences
- **put your foot in it**
- make **small talk**
- make a good **impression**
- tell an **entertaining** story
- **offend** someone
- **dominate** the conversation
- **hit it off** with someone



- 1 Think about the distance at which two people who are not close friends stand when they are having a casual conversation. This distance varies between cultures. In North America the distance is 45 cm. **Do you think this distance is greater or smaller in the following places?** Write G (greater) or S (smaller).
 - a Western Europe ____ c the Middle East ____
 - b Japan ____
- 2 **Which of these nationalities finds silences awkward in conversation?**
 - a East Asian ____ b Spanish ____ c American ____

- 3 Work in groups and do the following. Tell the others in the group about ...

- 1 a person you know who is good at putting people at ease and how they do it.
- 2 a person you know who tends to dominate the conversation.
- 3 a time when you or someone you know put his/her foot in it.
- 4 a person you hit it off with as soon as you met them.
- 5 how easy or difficult you find it to make small talk.

Grammar & Speaking using different question types

- 4 How much do you know about cross-cultural communication? With a partner, read and discuss the answers to the quiz.
- 5 1.1))) Listen to a talk by a trainer in cross-cultural communication. Check your answers to the questions in the quiz.
- 6 1.1))) Listen again and answer the questions.
- 1 In the Middle East, how far apart do two people, who are not friends, stand during a conversation?
 - 2 Why are silences in conversation a positive thing in some parts of East Asia?
 - 3 In which country is it acceptable to ask somebody about their salary?
 - 4 In the Philippines, what can you be arrested for?

- 3 Who speaks the loudest? Put the nationalities in order from 1-3 (1 = quiet → 3 = loud).

- a Northern European c East Asian
b South American

- 4 In the UK, which of these questions might you ask when making small talk?

- a Who do you think will win the World Cup?
b How much do you earn?
c Whereabouts are you from?
d Who will you vote for in the election?

- 5 Where do these gestures cause offence? Match each illustration to two countries or regions.

1



- a Slovakia
b Greece

2



- c the Middle East
d South East Asia

- 7 Discuss in small groups. What advice would you give a visitor to your country about the following?

- personal space
- common gestures
- interrupting
- making eye contact
- conversation topics to avoid

- 8 Read the Grammar focus box and choose the correct options to complete the rules.

GRAMMAR FOCUS different question types

Subject questions

When *who*, *which*, *what* or *whose* is the subject/part of the subject, we ¹ **use** / **don't use** auxiliaries *do* or *did* in a question.

Who said that? (NOT ~~Who did say that?~~)

Which of these nationalities speaks the loudest?

Indirect questions

If we begin a question with an expression like *Do you think* or *Do you know*, what follows keeps normal word order – the subject goes ² **before** / **after** the verb.

Do you think you'll come to the party?

Questions with prepositions

When a *Wh-* word is the object of a preposition, the preposition usually comes at the ³ **beginning** / **end** of the question.

What are you talking about?

→ Grammar Reference page 136

- 9 Look again at the highlighted questions in the quiz in exercise 4. Find examples of ...

- 1 subject questions where there is no auxiliary verb.
- 2 indirect questions.
- 3 questions with a preposition at the end.

- 10a Put the words in the right order to make questions.

- 1 laugh / what / makes / you ?
- 2 favourite / about / what's / your / book ?
- 3 awake / what / night / keeps / you / at ?
- 4 out / do / you / think / go / will / you / tonight ?
- 5 most / who / in / your / family / similar / to / are / you ?
- 6 your / do / you / why / parents / know / name / chose / your ?

- b Now discuss the questions with your partner.

- 11 Work with a partner. You are going to write some questions about languages for your partner. Student A, turn to page 126. Student B, turn to page 132.

- 12a **TASK** Work with a partner. Choose three topics from the list. For each topic write two questions.

- family • a holiday • last weekend • job • home

- b Work with a different partner and ask the questions.

- ▶ **VOX POPS VIDEO 1**

1.2 The letter is dead, long live the letter

GOALS ■ Talk about written communication ■ Use present perfect tenses

Vocabulary & Speaking written communication

- 1 With a partner, divide the words in the box into groups 1-3.

confidential copy somebody in/cc somebody into
cross out delete emoticon handwriting handwritten
inbox instant in tray texting postage stamp
punctuation stationery

- 1 electronic communication 3 both
2 paper communication

- 2a Complete each question with a word or phrase from exercise 1.

- When did you last send or receive a _____ letter?
- Have you ever accidentally sent a _____ email or text to the wrong person?
- Do you know the cost of a _____?
- Which _____ (e.g. ☺) do you use most often?
- How neat is your _____?
- Which do you do more, _____ messaging or email? Why?

- b Ask and answer the questions with a partner.

Grammar & Reading present perfect simple and continuous

- 3 Read the article and readers' comments and put phrases 1-5 in gaps a-e.

- send something by post every day
- with the speed and efficiency of digital media
- there is pressure to respond instantly
- life's too short
- written by older generations

- 4 Read the article again and answer the questions.

- What are the writer's three main arguments in defence of the handwritten letter?
- What evidence is given of a renewed interest in letter-writing?
- What advantages of electronic communication are mentioned in the readers' comments?

- 5 What are your views about letter-writing? Discuss with a partner.

The death of the handwritten letter?

¹ People have been communicating by letter for at least 2,000 years. Now, however, ^a _____, the handwritten letter is in serious decline. But have we given enough consideration to what we will lose if we abandon the letter completely?

When we handwrite a letter, we write more thoughtfully. When we receive an email, ^b _____ and we don't always think carefully about how to express our feelings, often choosing to use emoticons instead.


Writing letters may be hard work, but receiving one can be one of life's greatest pleasures. There is so much to appreciate: the feel of the paper, the style of the handwriting and simply knowing someone has taken the trouble to write to you.


Texts and emails allow instant communication but are quickly deleted, while letters stay around for longer, allowing us to keep a record of our past. Many of us keep special letters ^c _____. But what correspondence will we leave behind for future generations? Nothing. That for me would be the greatest loss to our culture if letters died out completely.


However, ² there are signs that people have been writing more letters recently. ³ Newspapers have reported a rise in stationery sales and ⁴ several internet campaigns have sprung up in an attempt to save the art of letter-writing, such as the annual *Month of Letters*, in which thousands of participants ^d _____ for a month.

So letter-writing may not be ready to die ... quite yet.

Your comments

 Cristine Oliveira:
With digital media we write more than ever before. Surely ⁵ this has had a positive impact on our writing skills?

 James Brook:
I'm sure ⁶ I've only written two or three letters in my life. I'd love to write more, but ^e _____!

 Luke Francis:
⁷ I've always had terrible handwriting. Without email, I'd never write to anybody.

Published: Tuesday, 10.15 a.m.



- 6 Read the Grammar focus box and match rules a-d to the phrases in blue in the article and *Your comments* column. Some phrases relate to more than one rule.

GRAMMAR FOCUS present perfect simple and continuous

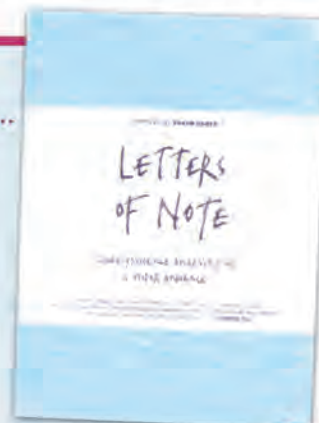
- We use the present perfect to talk about something that started in the past and is continuing now, or is repeated up to now, when how long is mentioned in the sentence, or when how long is clear from the situation.
- a We can often use **either the present perfect simple or the present perfect continuous** when we use *since* or *for* to talk about actions that are still going on.
He has worked/has been working at the post office since 1987.
- b We usually use **the present perfect continuous** for actions continuing or repeated for a short time up to the present, e.g. with phrases like *all day* and *recently*.
You've been working on that letter all morning – isn't it good enough now?
- c We usually use **the present perfect simple** to talk about states rather than actions, with verbs like *be*, *have* and *know*.
Writing has been much easier since spellcheckers were invented.
- d We use **the present perfect simple** to talk about something that happened once, or more than once, at an unspecified time in the past, when there is a link to the present.
Researchers have found that texting can improve children's spelling.

→ Grammar Reference: page 137

- 7a Complete the article with the present perfect continuous form of the verbs in brackets. Some forms may be possible.

Letters of Note

Shaun Usher is a blogger who, since 2009, 1 _____ (collect) letters written by famous people, from the 14th century to the present day. He 2 _____ (post) them on his website, which 3 _____ (become) extremely popular around the world. He 4 _____ (get) together a total of 900 letters, including letters by Leonardo da Vinci, Frida Kahlo and Alfred Nobel. He 5 _____ just _____ (release) the letters in a book, called *Letters of Note*. Usher 6 _____ recently _____ (start) a new project: he 7 _____ (gather) lists written by famous people and so far he 8 _____ (obtain) 125 lists, including lists by Marilyn Monroe and Mahatma Gandhi. These will soon be published as a book, *Lists of Note*.



- b With a partner, match answers 1-8 in exercise 7a to rules a-d in the Grammar focus box.

PRONUNCIATION auxiliary verbs *have* and *been*

- 8a 1.2))) Listen to the sentences and questions. How do we pronounce *have* and *been*?
I've been working very hard lately.
Have you been waiting long?
How long have you been here?
- b 1.3))) Listen and write the questions you hear.
- c Work with a partner. Ask and answer the questions in exercise 8b.
- 9 TASK You are a famous person and you are going to write a letter. Turn to page 126 for more information.

American Airlines

In Flight ...

Altitude: 0

Location: _____

Dear Mr. President
First I would like to introduce myself.
I am Elvis Presley and advise you
and have great respect for you
and his. I talked to Vice President
in Palm Springs I met him
and my concern for our country.
Rock Culture, The Hippie Movement,
The LPS, Black & white, etc do not
consider me as their enemy or as they

Letter from
Elvis Presley to
the president

1.3 Vocabulary and skills development

GOALS ■ Guess the meaning of new words ■ Verbs + prepositions

Reading guessing the meaning of new words

- 1 Work with a partner and discuss the questions.
 - 1 In which situations do people whistle?
 - 2 Is whistling acceptable in your culture, for both men and women?
- 2 1.4 » Listen to an extract from a podcast about an ancient whistling language and answer the questions.
 - 1 Where was the language used? Is it still used?
 - 2 In the listening, you hear an example conversation between two whistlers. What is it about?
 - a a concert b a party c a lost sheep
- 3 Read about Silbo Gomero and put the topics in the order they appear in the article.
 - ___ how the language is formed
 - ___ its origins
 - ___ what it sounds like
 - ___ reasons for its disappearance
 - ___ attempts to revive it
- 4a Read the information in the Unlock the code box and use the strategies to help you guess the meaning of the underlined words and phrases in the article.



UNLOCK THE CODE

strategies for understanding new words

When you see a new word in a text, there are several strategies you can use to try to guess its meaning.

- Look at the context (words before and after the new word). This can help you work out the part of speech (adjective, noun, etc.) and give you clues to guess the meaning.
ravine (line 8) 'deep ravines' → it's a noun;
 it's something which is deep, 'steep hills and deep ravines' → it's probably a kind of valley.
- Look at the different parts of the word. You might already know part of the word.
disapprove (line 31) *dis-* + *approve*
- Use your own language. Sometimes the English word is similar to the word in your language.
unique (line 3) is similar to Italian = *unico*,
 Slovak = *unikátny*, Indonesian = *unik*.

- b Compare your ideas with a partner.

- 5 Read the article again and answer the questions with a partner.
 - 1 Why is Silbo Gomero ideal for communicating on La Gomera?
 - 2 What is known about the origins of the language?
 - 3 Why is the language in decline?
 - 4 What efforts have been made to keep the language alive?
 - 5 What do La Gomera inhabitants think should happen to the language?

Silbo Gomero: The revival of an ancient whistling language

If you go walking in the hills of La Gomera, you might be lucky enough to hear local people **communicating in** Silbo Gomero. Silbo is unique in that it is whistled, not spoken. Anybody who hasn't **heard of** the language could easily

- 5 **confuse it with** birdsong.

La Gomera is a tiny Spanish island, just the tip of a volcano **sticking out** of the sea, off the coast of north-west Africa. Its steep hills and deep ravines make it difficult to cross. Whistling is perfect for communicating here, as

- 10 whistles can be heard from up to seven kilometres away.

Silbo comes from the Spanish *silbar* meaning 'to whistle', and *Gomero* means 'from La Gomera'. When the first European **settlers** arrived at La Gomera in the 15th century, the islanders – of North African origin – were already

- 15 communicating with whistles. When the Spanish arrived, the locals **adapted** the whistling language **to** Spanish.



Vocabulary & Speaking verbs + prepositions

- 6 Read the information about verbs and prepositions in the Vocabulary focus box.

VOCABULARY FOCUS verbs + prepositions

Some verbs are usually followed by a particular preposition. These are followed by a noun, pronoun or verb + -ing.

Verb + preposition + object: Have you **heard of** Silbo Gomero?

Verb + object + preposition + object: It's easy to **confuse** Silbo **with** birdsong.

... an attempt to **prevent** the language **from** becoming extinct

- 7 Look at the highlighted verbs and preposition article and complete the table.

| Preposition | Verb |
|-------------|---------|
| of | hear |
| on | |
| to | |
| with | confuse |
| from | |
| in | |

- 8a Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in the box.

ban bring disapprove lead result

Whistling trivia ...

- 1 Henry Ford, founder of the Ford Motor Company, _____ his workers from whistling.
- 2 In Russia, it is believed that whistling indoors can _____ in bad luck.
- 3 In the USA and Canada, spectators at sports events whistle to express approval. However, in Europe and Brazil they whistle when they _____ of a referee's decision.
- 4 There is an old tradition amongst sailors that whistling can _____ on a storm.
- 5 In Sullivan's Island, South Carolina, whistling in public can _____ to a fine of \$500.

- b Add the verbs in the box in exercise 8a to the table in exercise 7.

- 9a Complete the questions with suitable verbs from exercises 7 and 8.

- 1 What factors do you think _____ to a person's happiness?
- 2 What does a healthy diet _____ of?
- 3 Do you think we _____ too much on computers?
- 4 Do you _____ of e-cigarettes? Why/Why not?
- 5 Do you think drivers should be _____ from using mobile phones?

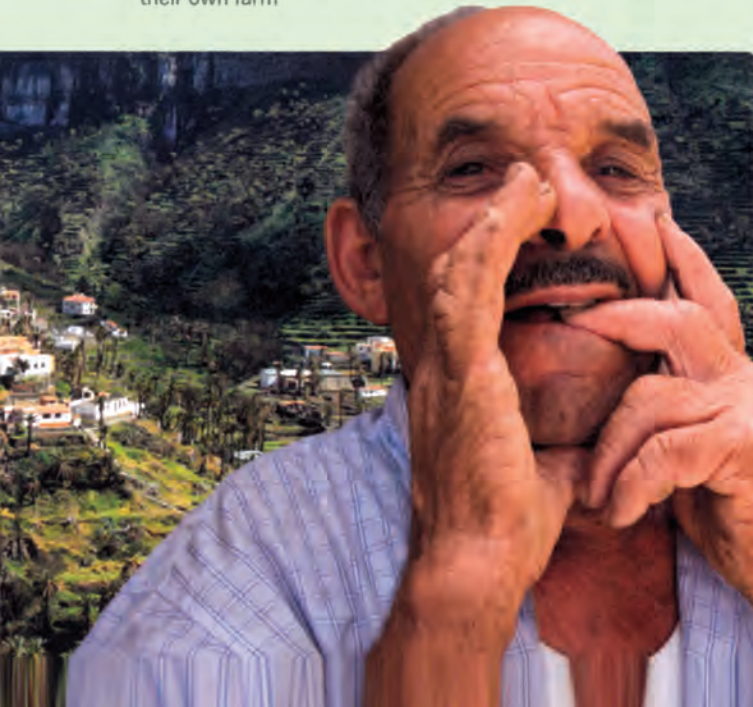
- b Ask and answer the questions with a partner.

Silbo **consists of** four vowels and four consonants which can be whistled in different ways to make over 4,000 words. A finger is placed in the mouth to create a stronger whistle and the other hand is **cupped** next to the mouth to control its direction.

In the 1950s, economic difficulties forced many whistlers to emigrate from La Gomera. This, the growing road network and, later, the development of mobile phones all **contributed to** the **decline** of Silbo.

In 1999, in an attempt to **prevent** the language **from** becoming completely **extinct**, Silbo was made a **compulsory** subject in La Gomera's primary schools. In 2009, the language was awarded the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity designation. Some locals **disapprove of** this, saying it is a peasant language that should be left to die out. Others believe it should be preserved as it is part of the islanders' cultural identity. They also argue that in much of the island you cannot **depend on** telephone **coverage**, so it is an essential form of communication.

■ **a peasant** a poor person who works on another person's or their own farm



1.4 Speaking and writing

GOALS ■ Deal with problems on the phone ■ Write an informal email

Vocabulary & Listening dealing with problems on the phone

1 Work with a partner. Discuss the questions.

- 1 On average, how many phone calls do you make in a day?
- 2 Do you generally prefer phoning, Skyping or another form of communication? Why?
- 3 What things can go wrong when you speak on the phone?



2 1.5 » Listen to four phone conversations in which a problem occurred. Match conversations 1–4 to problems a–d.

- a an unclear telephone line
- b one of the speakers is distracted
- c an unwanted sales call
- d a friend wants to talk for too long

3 1.6 » Listen and complete the sentences in the Language for speaking box.

LANGUAGE FOR SPEAKING dealing with problems on the phone

Getting rid of unwanted callers

- 1 I don't ^a _____ sales calls.
- 2 Would you remove my ^b _____ from your database?

Ending a conversation politely

- 3 It's been great ^c _____ to you.
- 4 I'd ^d _____ get off the phone.
- 5 I'll let you get on.
- 6 I've got a ^e _____ of work to do.
- 7 I won't take up any more of your time.

Dealing with distractions

- 8 Just ^f _____ with me a moment.
- 9 I'm afraid you've ^g _____ me at a bad time.
- 10 Could you just hold the line?

Dealing with a bad phone line

- 11 The ^h _____ isn't too good here.
- 12 You're breaking up ...
- 13 I'm ⁱ _____ you again.
- 14 Could you call me back on my ^j _____?

Note: We often use the word *Anyway*, ... to signal that we want to end a conversation.

4 1.6 » Listen again and repeat the sentences.

5 **TASK** Work with a partner. You are going to role-play a phone conversation using the phrases in exercise 3. If possible, sit back to back to imitate the conditions of a real phone call.

Student A

- 1 It's 8 p.m. You are a salesperson (decide what you are selling, e.g. a mobile phone). Call Student B and try to sell your product. Try to keep them on the phone for at least two minutes by explaining the benefits of the product. Remember your boss said you need to increase your sales and you're feeling under pressure.

Student B

- 1 It's 8 p.m. and you are at home watching a film. The phone rings. You are expecting a call from your aunt in Canada. You need to speak to her to give her some important family news. Answer the phone.

You are going to do two more role-plays. Student A, turn to page 126. Student B, turn to page 132.

Writing an informal email giving news**6** Read the email and answer the questions.

- 1 Are Noemi and Sofia old friends, recent friends or work colleagues?
- 2 The email is written in an informal style. What features of the email show this?

Sent: TUESDAY 12:29

Hi Noemi,

Seems like **ages** since we've been **in touch**! Hope all's well with you. All's well here but life's **pretty** busy, as ever. I've changed jobs. Still teaching art and design, but at a different college. I've been working there for six months now. I love it, but it's hard work. **We're off** on a study trip to Amsterdam at the end of the month. Should be fun. I've never been to Amsterdam before.

The other thing that's been keeping me busy is the ukulele. The band that I play in has suddenly become really popular locally and we've been playing **loads of** gigs. Mainly just small ones, but last weekend we played in front of 300 people at a festival. Fame at last! :) Is the ukulele as popular in Spain as it is here?



Anyway, the really big news is that my sister is pregnant and she's just found out that she's having twins! She and Tom are **over the moon**, but quite nervous, too, as you can imagine. And I'm going to be an aunt for the first time. Can't wait!

So, enough about me. How are things with you? **What have you been up to?** Still living in the same flat? I'd love to come over to Madrid to visit you some time. Maybe during the summer holidays – I'll have **plenty of time on my hands** then.

It would be really great to **catch up** properly before that. Shall we try and speak next week? Are you on Skype?

Speak soon, hopefully.

Lots of love,

Sofia

- 7** Read the information about ellipsis in the L writing box. Find examples of ellipsis in the exercise 6. Decide if they are examples of type 1 or type 2.

LANGUAGE FOR WRITING ellipsis (leaving out words) for informal writing

In informal writing (and speaking) we often leave out words at the beginning of a sentence. This is known as ellipsis.

Common types of ellipsis include:

- 1 leaving out the pronoun:
It sounds amazing. → *Sounds amazing.*
- 2 leaving out the pronoun and auxiliary verb:
It's great to hear from you. → *Great to hear from you.*

- 8** Make these sentences more informal by leaving out words at the beginning.

- 1 I'm just writing to say hello.
- 2 It was great to see you last week.
- 3 I hope to hear from you soon.
- 4 Are you going anywhere this summer?
- 5 I'll see you in a week's time.
- 6 I miss you!

- 9** As well as ellipsis, informal writing contains a lot of colloquial vocabulary. Match the highlighted words or phrases in the email to their more formal equivalents, 1–9.

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 a lot of/many | 6 exchange news |
| 2 in contact | 7 very |
| 3 extremely happy | 8 lots of free time |
| 4 a long time | 9 What have you been doing? |
| 5 We're going away | |

- 10 TASK** Write an email to a friend or family member that you haven't seen for a year. Use phrases from the email in exercise 6. Include information about the following.

- things you have done during the year
- things you have been doing recently
- things you are planning to do
- news about other members of the family

- 11a** Exchange emails with a partner. Has your partner used ...?

- fixed informal phrases for opening and closing the email
- a chatty informal style
- correct grammar, vocabulary and spelling

- b** Find out more about the news in the email and discuss with your partner.

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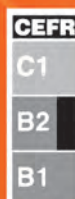
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