

Thinking Outside the Box

Language Learning

Interview a classmate. Does s/he think that the statements below are true (T) or false (F)? Or is your classmate not sure (NS)? Why? Remember to get as much information as possible.

What do you think?	T	F	NS
English is extremely difficult to learn.			
Spanish is far easier to learn for foreigners than English is for us.			
If you can speak Spanish, it is a piece of cake to speak Galician.			
It is impossible to pronounce everything correctly in English.			
A teacher is necessary to learn a language well.			
Native speakers of English (or other languages) always make better language teachers.			
You can learn a language by yourself.			
Language classes focus too much on grammar and vocabulary and not enough on listening and speaking.			
You can only reach a C1 or a C2 level if you have lived, studied, and/or worked in a country where the language studied is spoken.			
Online classes are the future of language learning.			
If films were not dubbed into Spanish, we would understand English more than we do.			
If some school subjects are taught in English here, our students will be more prepared for future studies and/or work.			

Inspired by Lindsay Clandfield's "Learning a Language: A Speaking Class" from One Stop English, Macmillan Publishers, 2003.

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Lost in Space

Imagine that you have just crashed on the moon. Both your pilot and your co-pilot have died. You are 300 kilometers away from the place you were supposed to land. You and a colleague have survived the crash and have decided to do your best to reach your destination. You have to select the most important material for the 300-kilometer walk.

The area where your spacecraft landed is completely flat and the temperature normally reaches 45°. You are wearing light clothes, like short-sleeved shirts, socks and sneakers. You both have a handkerchief and between the two of you have 23 euros in coins, 6,800 euros in bills, a pack of cigarettes and a pen.

The material that has not been affected by the crash consists of 15 items. You have to classify these items according to their importance. For the most important item, write "1" and continue classifying the items until you reach the least important item, "15".

Now, look at this list of objects below and put them in order ALONE. Do not consult with anybody else.

Number	Objects	Answers	
		Individual	Pair / Group
1	A box of matches		
2	10 boxes of canned goods		
3	20 metres of nylon cord		
4	A silk parachute		
5	A portable heater		
6	2 pistols		
7	A box of powdered milk		
8	2 tanks of oxygen- 50 kilos		
9	A map of the moon		
10	An inflatable life raft		
11	A magnetic compass		
12	25 litres of water		
13	3 flares		
14	A first-aid kit		
15	An FM radio / transmitter with a solar battery		

Once you have your list, work with a classmate and discuss your choices. Work together to put the items in order again and reach an agreement.

Based on "Landing" (Simon and Albert, 1975).

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Survivor: Candidate List

1. Patrick McDavitt (male, 30 years old) is an electrician. He likes spending time outdoors. He is a very active and fit man. He is married to Laura Groner.
2. Laura Groner (female, 28 years old) is a lawyer. She usually does lots of sport but since she became pregnant, she has not been able to do much.
3. Kathleen Callaghan (female, 32 years old) is a linguist. She is fluent in English, Spanish, Galician, Portuguese, Italian, French, and Wolof. She is an alcoholic.
4. Sir Nigel Baker (male, 50 years old) is a diplomat. He has worked for the United Nations in Africa and Asia. He is very good at resolving conflicts.
5. María Castro (female, 60 years old) is an ER nurse manager in Chicago. She is used to working in very stressful situations and working under pressure.
6. Dominick Burk (male, 20 years old) is studying. He participated in American "Survivor" and won. He knows how to live in difficult conditions.
7. Abdel-lah Omar (male, 35 years old) is a police officer. He is a practicing Muslim. He has a gun and handcuffs.
8. Tammy Folca (female, 36 years old) is a Spanish socialite. She is famous for being on TV and in gossip magazines.
9. Father Mike O'Doherty (male, 32 years old) is an Irish Catholic priest. He has a master's degree in agricultural engineering and has worked in Senegal to train young farmers.
10. Manu Samoa (male, 55 years old) is a Samoan chief. He is from a nearby island and knows everything about the plants and animals found there.
11. Darren Obirn (male, 38 years old) is a marine biologist. He does research on the plants growing in the Pacific Ocean. He suffers from depression.
12. Tomas Zabkowski (male, 47 years old) is an officer in the US Marines. He served in the Persian Gulf and Afghanistan.
13. Isabel Porcello (female, 22 years old) is a doctoral candidate in anthropology. She is studying the relationship of the peoples of Samoa.
14. Clare Baxter (female, 40 years old) is a pediatrician. She survived the 7/7 bombings in London.
15. Tania Garza (female, 36 years old) is a high school teacher. She teaches geography and history.
16. John Rogers (male, 32 years old) works for a NGO in India where he helps to collect water and improve water management. He was in the Peace Corps.