

ZOOM English Circles

Goals:

Activity Title: ZOOM English Circles							
Estimated Time: 15-20 minutes (outside of class)							
Intended for sections:							
1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4-6	<input type="checkbox"/>	7-9	<input type="checkbox"/>	10-12	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13-15	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	16-18	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	19-21	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	22-24+	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1. Students will be able to sustain a discussion on a topic(s) for 15-20 minutes with their peers.
2. Students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of various expressions of functional language.
3. Students will be able to practice their time management skills by scheduling and communicating with their peers for a ZOOM session.
4. Students will be able to apply their technology literacy by using different ZOOM functions.

Summary:

1. Students will complete a 15-20 minute ZOOM English circle with their peers about a topic of interest.
2. Although I did this assignment in my Academic Advanced Listening and Speaking class, it could easily be adapted to different levels.
3. This activity was inspired by another colleague's suggestion of giving students credit for getting together on ZOOM. I decided to adapt it into an assignment.

Materials/Programs/LMS:

1. ZOOM or other video chatting platform that allows recording.
2. Videos can be uploaded to any LMS or a Google Drive folder.

Set up:

1. In class, I discussed with the students about the important phrases and expressions to use in a conversation. We also went over functional languages Handout (see Attachment).
2. Students practiced using turn taking strategies and expressions in class by writing short dialogues that included different expressions from the Handouts. Next, I had students “act out” these dialogues in class.
3. Then I uploaded a model recording of a ZOOM circle that I did with 2 colleagues. Students were asked to review this outside of class and to take notes on turn-taking strategies that were used. In class the following day, we discussed what students noticed and how they can apply it to their ZOOM Circle.
4. Next, I put students into their ZOOM group to share their contact information and what they were interested in talking about. I also uploaded all of the students’ emails on Schoology. I only put them into their groups for the first ZOOM Circle, and for the rest, students were required to contact their classmates outside of class.

Activity:

1. In small groups of 4-5 people, students will complete a ZOOM English Circle with their peers.
2. I created the groups and they changed for each ZOOM session so that students had the opportunity to interact with other students and perspectives.
3. I provided students with a list of topics to choose from, but they were free to talk about anything appropriate that they wanted to. Additionally, I encouraged students to explore their interests with other topics.
4. The sessions were 15-20 minutes on ZOOM and students had to submit a recording of the session for a grade.
5. 1 recording/group was sufficient.

Conclusion/Homework/Assignment/Assessment:

1. See attached Rubric
2. I also had students submit reflection recordings after the ZOOM sessions. (See attachment)

Notes:

1. From the reflection recordings and “Exit Ticket” responses, students expressed that they enjoyed this activity. Mainly they felt more comfortable with their classmates and developed a better understanding of each other. This activity really helps to improve classroom rapport outside of class.
2. A potential pitfall is that students may have issues with setting up a time with their classmates. However, this is part of the learning experience. Therefore, they need to practice time management and communicating with their peers. I introduced the activity 2 weeks before it was due.

Links:

1. NA

Resources:

1. Birochi, R. & Pozzebon, M. (2011). Theorizing in Distance Education: The critical quest for conceptual foundations. *Journal of Online Learning and Teaching*, 7(4). Retrieved from http://jolt.merlot.org/vol7no4/birochi_1211.htm
2. Holmberg, B. (1983). Guided didactic conversation in distance education. In Sewart, D. Keegan, D., & Holmberg, B. (Eds.). *Distance education: International perspectives*, 114-122. London: Croom Helm.
3. Holmberg, B. (1995). *Theory and practice of distance education*. New York, NY: Routledge.
4. Murphy, Elizabeth & Rodríguez Manzanares, María. (2012). Rapport in Distance Education. *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*. 13. 10.19173/irrodl.v13i1.1057.
5. Simonson, M. , Smaldino, S., Albright, M., & Zvacek, S. (2012). *Teaching and Learning at a Distance: Foundations of distance education (5th ed.)*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

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Page break for materials – Attach any pictures, worksheets, or other materials that should be distributed to students or otherwise used.
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Handout

Functional language phrase bank

The phrases below give common ways of expressing useful functions. Use them to help you as you're completing the *Discussion points*, *Critical thinking* activities, and *Speaking* tasks.

Asking for clarification

Sorry, can you explain that some more?
Could you say that another way?
When you say ... do you mean ...?
Sorry, I don't follow that.
What do you mean?

Asking for repetition

Could you repeat that, please?
I'm sorry, I didn't catch that.
Could you say that again?

When you don't know the word for something

What does ... mean?
Sorry, I'm not sure what ... means.

Working with a partner

Would you like to start?
Shall I go first?
Shall we do this one first?
Where do you want to begin?

Giving opinions

I think that ...
It seems to me that ...
In my opinion ...
As I see it ...

Agreeing and disagreeing

I know what you mean.
That's true.
You have a point there.
Yes. I see what you're saying, but ...
I understand your point, but ...
I don't think that's true.

Asking for opinions

Do you think ...?
Do you feel ...?

What do you think about ...?
How about you, Jennifer?
What do you think?
What about you?
Does anyone have any other ideas?
Do you have any thoughts on this?

Asking for more information

In what way?
Why do you think that?
Can you give an example?

Not giving a strong preference

It doesn't matter to me.
I don't really have a strong preference.
I've never really thought about that.
Either is fine.

Expressing interest

I'd like to hear more about that.
That sounds interesting.
How interesting!
Tell me more about that.

Giving reasons

This is ... because ...
This has to be ... because ...
I think ... because ...

Checking understanding

Do you know what I mean?
Do you see what I'm saying?
Are you following me?

Putting things in order

This needs to come first because ...
I think this is the most/least important because ...
For me, this is the most/least relevant because ...

FUNCTIONAL LANGUAGE

Rubric:

Criteria	Grading Scale			
Time Did the group discuss for 15-20 minutes?	4 Excellent	3 Good	2 Satisfactory	1 Needs Improvement
Participation Did everyone participate equally in the discussion? Did everyone contribute positively to the group?	4 Excellent	3 Good	2 Satisfactory	1 Needs Improvement
Appropriate/Respectful Were the comments/conversations appropriate and respectful? Did students gain meaningful knowledge from each other?	4 Excellent	3 Good	2 Satisfactory	1 Needs Improvement
Turn taking strategies Did students employ phrases for expressing useful functions: asking for clarification, asking for repetition, giving opinions, agreeing/disagreeing, etc.	4 Excellent	3 Good	2 Satisfactory	1 Needs Improvement

Total pts: 16

Reflection:

Instructions: Now that your ZOOM English Circle is over, please submit a video recording of your reflections.

Questions to consider:

1. How did your first ZOOM Circle go?
 - a. What went well?
 - b. What did not go as planned?
2. What did you learn from this task?
3. What would you do differently next time?
4. How do you think you and your group worked together?
 - a. Did everyone contribute positively?
5. Other thoughts?