

A CONVERSATION CLASS TO PREPARE AND YOU ARE RUNNING OUT OF IDEAS?

THESE WEBSITES MIGHT “SAVE YOUR LIFE”

In my English academy, I need to prepare many conversation classes, since this kind of course is a favourite among adult learners. This is something I enjoy, though I have to admit it can get a bit time-consuming. I love to work with power point presentations for each topic/class, and since I design them with images and animations, you may rightly assume it takes a few hours to do that. Of course, there are those awful moments when my “creative flow” gets completely blocked and I find myself running out of ideas.

A lifesaver I have is a number of websites I have “bookmarked” on my browser, and to which I resort whenever I need to start putting together a conversation class (or to complement a general English class). I usually prefer to combine different materials from several sources, as I am never fully satisfied with just one. I must admit the results are quite good in general. Students seem to appreciate the variety of subjects and activities and the fact that they can see everything on the screen (so my hours of work do pay off in the end).

Anyway, here is my list of 20 websites (in alphabetical order, with four or five stars next to my favourite ones). In some of them, you get “freebies” to sample the materials, and you need to subscribe to have access to their full collection – something that is worth in many cases. You can find a lot of ideas here, from warm-up questions, vocabulary and listening activities, discussion questions, videos and Ted Talks, reading texts with comprehension questions, games, puzzles, film fragments, and a long etcetera.

1 CONVERSATION QUESTIONS FOR THE ESL/EFL CLASSROOM:

<http://iteslj.org/questions/>

2 DESIGNER LESSONS : <https://designerlessons.org>

3 ENGLISH CLASSROOM GAMES: <http://www.autoenglish.org/classgames.htm>

4 ENGLISH CLUB CONVERSATION WORKSHEETS:

<https://www.englishclub.com/esl-worksheets/conversation/> ****

5 ENGLISH CURRENT : <http://www.englishcurrent.com/esl-conversation-questions-discussion/>

6 ENGLISH GATEWAY: <http://www.englishgateway.com>

7 ENGLISH WITH JO: <http://www.englishwithjo.com/> ****

8 ESL CONVERSATION QUESTIONS: <http://www.eslconversationquestions.com>

9 ESL DISCUSSIONS: <http://www.esldiscussions.com> ****

10 ESL GOLD: <http://www.eslgold.com/speaking.html>

11 ESL LIBRARY: <https://esllibrary.com> *****

12HANDOUTS ON LINE: <http://handoutsonline.com> ****

13HEADS UP ENGLISH: <http://www.headsupenglish.com> *****

14JANIS'S ESL HOMEPAGE : <http://www2.issbc.org/janis-esl/index.html>

15LINGUAHOUSE: <http://www.linguahouse.com> *****

16MOVIE SEGMENTS TO ASSESS GRAMMAR GOALS:
<http://moviesegmentstoassessgrammargoes.blogspot.com.es/>

17PREMIER ESL: <http://www.premieresl.com/>

18SIMPLE ESL ENGLISH 4 TEACHERS: <http://simpleesl.com/english-esl-conversation-questions>

19THE GUARDIAN CLASSROOM MATERIALS:
<https://www.theguardian.com/education/series/classroom-materials> *****

20TIGER TESL: www.tigertesl.blogspot.com.es/

Bonus tips:

- Keiran Donaghy's wonderful webpage on the use of film segments in the ESL classroom: <http://film-english.com/> and a few books I recommend:

- Compelling Conversations in English, Questions & Quotations on Timeless Topics, by Eric H. Roth and Toni Aberson (2008). Charleston: Chimayo Press.

- Conversation Inspirations, by Nancy Ellen Zelman (2011). Vermont: Pro Lingua Associates.

- And some "classics" from the Cambridge Copy Collection: Discussions A-Z (Intermediate and Advanced), by Adrian Wallwork; and Speaking Extra, by Mick Gammidge.

Hope you find all of this useful. Enjoy your classes!!