

## Connecting with the audience/ Acknowledging the audience in presentations

*What would you say in these situations? Choose one and read out your introduction, including a suitable “connecting with the audience” phrase. Your partner will try to guess the situation and tell you if they think that it is a suitable “connecting with the audience” phrase (e.g. if they would feel connected with) or if they can think of anything better.*

- 1 At least one person has seen you present on this topic before
- 2 Few people came
- 3 It's a busy time of the year/ week (or just after one)
- 4 It's cold
- 5 It's early in the morning/ near the beginning of the day
- 6 It's just before lunch
- 7 It's not a busy time of the year/ week
- 8 Many people came
- 9 Most people have already given their presentations
- 10 People have food or drink/ There has just been a coffee break
- 11 Some people there have seen you present before (on a different topic)
- 12 Something big is happening on the next day
- 13 The previous person's presentation had a similar topic
- 14 The previous person's presentation had a very different topic
- 15 The previous person's presentation was great
- 16 There are people in the audience who you haven't seen for a while/ for a long time
- 17 There have been transport problems
- 18 There was a big news story the previous night or the same morning
- 19 You are first
- 20 You are first, and most of the people in the audience will give presentations later
- 21 You are last and there are only 7 minutes before the end
- 22 You asked questions in other people's presentations
- 23 You chatted to some people who are in the audience before your presentation
- 24 You know most people in the audience

*What are the criteria for a good “connecting with the audience” phrase? Try to think of at least five.*

*Compare your ideas with the list below.*

- Actually need to look around the audience in order to be able to do it
- Based on feelings (of the audience and/ or presenter)
- Based on previous contact with (some of) those people
- Can plan it beforehand but you might have to change it on the day
- Compliments the audience
- Humorous, for example uses irony or teases the audience
- Mentions the recent past or near future
- Mentions the room
- Mentions things happening outside the room, e.g. the weather
- Mentions time
- Not likely to be used by any of the other presenters
- Reaction to something unexpected
- Shows things that people have in common
- Similar to how you would connect with people you meet (again) face to face
- Sympathises or provokes sympathy
- Very specific to that situation
- Would (have to) change if different people/ a different number of people came

*Work together to write “connecting with the audience/ acknowledging the audience” sentences for the situations that you haven’t discussed yet.*

*Match the phrases on the next page with the situations above.*

*Compare with the answer key.*

- A At least all the important people are here!/ There aren't many people here, so it should be easy to answer all the questions you may have./ I appreciate the effort it took to come here today when many others didn't!/ I'm a bit worried there might be an echo!
- B For those of you who have already heard me talk about this, I have put in some interesting statistics that add quite a lot to my arguments./ I've polished up this presentation since last time I gave it, so I hope it will be worthwhile even to those who came last week./ I hope the visuals will make it stimulating even for people who've heard me talk about this.
- C I don't think you'll need sandwiches, because I promise this presentation will be short!/ I'll rush through before all that coffee wears off./ With all that water you'll be needing toilet breaks soon, so I'll get through my presentation as quickly as I can.
- D I hope my presentation will be an escape from all the things you have to do elsewhere./ I know things are hectic around now for most people, so I hope this rather light topic that I have chosen will mean you can just sit back and enjoy.
- E I know you are all thinking about your own presentations but.../ I know there are some great presentations coming up, so I'm quite glad to go first./ If you watch my presentation closely I might be able to give you some hints on what not to do in yours!
- F I see some people packing up their bags already, but I think you'll find my presentation worth five minutes of your time.
- G I think I can hear some stomachs rumbling, so I won't take too long./ I chose the topic of food, which I know is something you are all thinking about now anyway./ I hope the topic of rubbish doesn't ruin your appetites.
- H I think most of you haven't been up for long, so we'll start with a quick quiz to wake up your brains./ I hope the topic of coffee will have the same effect as drinking some would.
- I I'm so glad you all made it. I hope to make it worth your while.
- J I'm sure the people who I asked difficult questions to won't be shy about doing the same to me./ As you have seen, I'm not shy about saying when I don't understand, so I hope you will all do the same.
- K I'm sure you're all still in shock about...
- L It's good to see so many people here today./ It's a bit cramped, but hopefully there's still room to raise your arms if you have questions.
- M It's impossible for me to live up to that last presentation, but.../ I'm glad you are all really warmed up by the last topic, because this one is a bit of a heavy one.
- N It's nice to see some familiar faces./ I recognise some people from last year.
- O It's nice to see that some people have come back for more!/ I promise this will be more interesting than last year's.
- P Most of you look much more relaxed than at the beginning of the class, but you might feel a different way after seeing some of the statistics I have for you.
- Q My topic isn't quite as exciting as... tomorrow, but...
- R One of you told me earlier that.../ I now know that several of you...
- S Please raise your hands to ask questions at any time, it will warm you up!/ I hope my choice of Hawaii as a topic will warm you up rather than make you feel worse about the lack of heating!/ I arranged for the heating to shut down so that you couldn't get sleepy.
- T Thanks to all the people who know me and have come to my presentation anyway!
- U You all look nice and relaxed, as one would expect right now, but not too relaxed I hope.

- V You now know absolutely everything about..., so I'm going to completely change the topic and speak about...
- W You probably haven't switched on your English brains yet, but my topic is quite easy.
- X You probably think you now know everything you need to about..., but...

## Suggested answers

- 1 **At least one person has seen you present on this topic before** – For those of you who have already heard me talk about this, I have put in some interesting statistics that add quite a lot to my arguments./ I've polished up this presentation since last time I gave it, so I hope it will be worthwhile even to those who sat through it last week./ I hope the visuals will make it stimulating even for people who've heard me talk about this at the last conference.
- 2 **Few people came** – At least all the important people are here!/ There aren't many people here, so it should be easy to answer all the questions you may have./ I appreciate the effort it took to come here today when many others didn't!/ I'm a bit worried there might be an echo!
- 3 **It's a busy time of the year/ week (or just after one)** – I hope my presentation will be an escape from all the things you have to do elsewhere./ I know things are hectic around now for most people, so I hope this rather light topic that I have chosen will mean you can just sit back and enjoy.
- 4 **It's cold** – Please raise your hands to ask questions at any time, it will help keep you warm!/ I hope my choice of Hawaii as a topic will warm you up rather than make you feel worse about the lack of heating!/ I arranged for the heating to shut down so that you couldn't get sleepy.
- 5 **It's early in the morning/ near the beginning of the day** – I think most of you haven't been up for long, so we'll start with a quick quiz to wake up your brains./ I hope the topic of coffee will have the same effect as drinking some would.
- 6 **It's just before lunch** – I think I can hear some stomachs rumbling, so I won't take too long./ I chose the topic of food, which I know is something you are all thinking about now anyway./ I hope the topic of rubbish doesn't ruin your appetites.
- 7 **It's not a busy time of the year/ week** – You all look nice and relaxed, as one would expect right now, but not too relaxed I hope.
- 8 **Many people came** – It's good to see so many people here today./ It's a bit cramped, but hopefully there's still room to raise your arms if you have questions.
- 9 **Most people have already given their presentations** – Most of you look much more relaxed than at the beginning of the class, but you might feel a different way after seeing some of the statistics I have for you.
- 10 **People have food or drink/ There has just been a coffee break** – I don't think you'll need sandwiches, because I promise this presentation will be short!/ I'll rush through my presentation before all that coffee wears off./ With all that water you'll be needing toilet breaks soon, so I'll get through my presentation as quickly as I can.
- 11 **Some people there have seen you present before (on a different topic)** – It's nice to see that some people have come back for more!/ I promise this will be more interesting than last year's.
- 12 **Something big is happening on the next day** – My topic isn't quite as exciting as... tomorrow, but...
- 13 **The previous person's presentation had a similar topic** – You probably think you now know everything you need to about..., but...
- 14 **The previous person's presentation had a very different topic** – You now know absolutely everything about..., so I'm going to completely change the topic and speak about...

- 15 **The previous person's presentation was great** – It's impossible for me to live up to that last presentation, but.../ I'm glad you are all really warmed up by the last topic, because this one is a bit of a heavy one.
- 16 **There are people in the audience who you haven't seen for a while/ for a long time** – It's nice to see some familiar faces./ I recognise some people from last year.
- 17 **There have been transport problems** – I'm so glad you all made it. I hope to make it worth your while.
- 18 **There was a big news story the previous night or the same morning** – I'm sure you're all still in shock about...
- 19 **You are first** – You probably haven't switched on your English brains yet, but my topic is quite easy to understand.
- 20 **You are first, and most of the people in the audience will give presentations later** – I know you are all thinking about your own presentations but.../ I know there are some great presentations coming up, so I'm quite glad to go first./ If you watch my presentation closely I might be able to give you some hints on what not to do in yours!
- 21 **You are last and there are only 7 minutes before the end** – I see some people packing up their bags already, but I think you'll find my presentation worth five minutes of your time.
- 22 **You asked questions in other people's presentations** – I'm sure the people who I asked difficult questions to won't be shy about doing the same to me./ As you have seen, I'm not shy about saying when I don't understand, so I hope you will all do the same.
- 23 **You chatted to some people who are in the audience before your presentation** – One of you told me earlier that.../ I now know that several of you...
- 24 **You know most people in the audience** – Thanks to all the people who know me and have come to my presentation anyway!

*For each one above, choose the one you like best (from the options there and ones you made up earlier) or try to make up something better.*

*Do the ones you liked have anything in common?*

*Read out one of the ones above and see if your partner can remember or guess the situation.*

*Read out a situation and see if your partner can make up a suitable connecting with the audience phrase.*

*What other situations will/ might there be in your presentation? Work together to write connecting with the audience phrases for those situations.*