



Needs analysis and brainstorming phrases

Needs analysis

Interview your partner and make brief notes in the gaps provided (for your teacher to read when they take them in later). Please use full sentences to ask the questions. To provide equal practice for each of you, each person should ask two questions (the last question that their partner asked, then one new one) before switching roles.

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|--|--------|------------|
| Name | | |
| Education (past, present and future) | | |
| Work (past, present and future) | | |
| English studies (past, present and future) | | |
| Reasons for taking this course | | |
| Things you are most interested in as content for this class | | |
| Aspects of discussions and presentations | Topics | Activities |
| Things you are least interested in as content for this class | | |
| Aspects of discussions and presentations | Topics | Activities |
| The best ways to improve your English | | |



Brainstorming phrases practice

The last three sections above are all good examples of things that are worth brainstorming for before you come up with an answer. Brainstorm answers to one of them using the structure below. Your teacher will tell you when to switch from one stage to the next.

Stage 1 – Brainstorming

Write down any ideas you can think of as a list or mind map, organising as you go along if you like but not editing your ideas at all.

Useful language

“Any more ideas?”

“I think we need three or four more”

“Let’s just get all our ideas down and discuss them later”

“That’s probably not true/ That probably doesn’t fit, but let’s write it down anyway”

Stage 2 – Organisation

Try to group your ideas from above together, adding any more ideas that come up as you are doing so

Useful language

“I think these two are related.”

“These are both/ all kinds of...”

“Another example of that is...”

Stage 3 – Choose the best ideas/ Edit the ideas down

Useful language

“This one is a bit weak”

“We can cross off this one because...”

Stage 4 - Add support

Useful language

“An example of this is...”

“This is true/ important because...”

“We can support this one by saying...”

“Someone once said...”/ “My mother always says...”

“There’s a proverb which goes...”

“Logically,...”

“In my experience...”/ “I have found that...”/ “I once...”

Stage 5 - Anticipate the other side’s counterarguments

Useful language

“They might say..., but we can argue that...”

Change pairs and try to persuade your new partner(s) that the ways of improving your English that you chose would be more effective than their ideas.

Without looking back at the previous page, brainstorm phrases to do these things:

Asking for ideas (when brainstorming together)

Organising the ideas/ Putting the ideas into order/ Putting the ideas into categories

Editing down the ideas/ Choosing the best ideas/ Getting rid of weak ideas

Adding support for your ideas

Anticipating the other side's counterarguments



Suggested answers

Asking for ideas

“What about...?”

“Can we write anything else here/ in this category?”

“Can you think of anything similar to this one?”

Organising the ideas/ Putting the ideas into order/ Putting the ideas into categories

“I think these two are linked (to each other) by...”

“We can put these together because...”

“These are similar in terms of...”

“There is a connection between these two”

“Maybe we should move this one over here”

“What category can we put these in?”

“What other things fit into this category?”

Editing down the ideas/ Choosing the best ideas/ Getting rid of weak ideas

“This one doesn't seem to link to any of the others”

“This one isn't very convincing”

“This one doesn't fit in with any of the others”

“These two are too similar”

“I think this is true, but I can't explain why”

“Can I cross this one off?”

“I think we can eliminate this one because...”

“This one doesn't make sense”

Adding support for your ideas

“A good example of this is...”

“The best argument for this is...”

“The proof for this is...”

“If they are not convinced, we can say that...”

“I read/ saw something about this which said...”

Anticipating the other side's counterarguments

“If I was them, I'd say...”

“If they say..., we can argue that...”

“If they argue that..., the best counterargument is...”

“If they notice the weakness in this argument, we can say...”