

Selling a winning idea by Gabrielle Jones

Age: Adults
Level: Intermediate
Time: 90 minutes
Objectives: To discuss new products; to practise describing a process; to ask and answer questions about a product; to practise being persuasive
Key skills: Speaking
Materials: One copy of the worksheet per student; one large piece of paper and set of pens per group

Procedure

- Put students in groups. Hand out the worksheet and refer students to task 1. Students discuss the introductory questions in their groups.
- Students now attempt task 2, where they must draw a diagram of the product described in the introductory task. This should ideally be done on large pieces of paper, which the students can then display. Their diagram should be annotated in order to describe the main steps in the process later.
- In task 3, students work together to identify which language is used to describe various steps in a process.

Key:

a.

<i>beginning</i>	<i>middle</i>	<i>end</i>	<i>other</i>
<i>To begin with</i>	<i>After this</i>	<i>Finally</i>	<i>While</i>
<i>To start with</i>	<i>When that is done</i>	<i>Lastly</i>	<i>Simultaneously</i>
<i>The first step is</i>	<i>Following this</i>	<i>To finish</i>	<i>At the same time</i>

b. *The words in the 'other' column are used when two things are happening at the same time*

- When you've checked the answers with the class, students move on to task 4, where they describe an everyday process to their partner using the words from the box in task 3.

- Explain to the groups that they should imagine their product has not yet been marketed. In order to get it launched, the company needs some investment. Split the class into two groups: half are inventors and half are investors. In groups of two or three, ask inventors to brainstorm their answers to the investor questions in task 5. Simultaneously, the investors should read the investor section and brainstorm additional questions to ask the inventors.
- Match a group of inventors with a group of investors. Firstly, the inventors present their product. They should describe how it works it using the diagram and the staging language from task 3. They should also explain their answers to the questions discussed in task 5. When they are finished, the investors can ask their questions, if they haven't already been addressed. In the end, ask the investors to decide if they have been convinced enough to invest in the company product.
- Round off the lesson with a discussion about the future of the products, explaining how they will need to be adapted in order to stay popular on the market. For example, will people want the products in different colours, with different features or in different languages? If so, what will those colours, features and languages be?

1. Introduction

In groups, choose a modern, popular product that you and your partners often use. This could be a machine, a device or a gadget. Discuss these questions:

- Why was it created?
- What is it for?
- Has it changed since the first one came onto the market?

2. The product

Your teacher will give you markers and paper. Draw a diagram of the product to show other groups. Label the most important features. If possible, annotate your picture to show how the product works.

3. Explaining how something works

a. You can use the language in the box to explain how something works. Complete the table with the language.

After this	To finish	To begin with
At the same time	Following this	To start with
Finally	Simultaneously	When that is done
Lastly	The first step is	While

beginning	middle	end	other

b. When would you use the words in the 'other' column?

4. Practice

Explain one of the following processes to someone else in your group.

- how to make a cup of coffee
- how to make some toast
- how to cut the grass
- how to send an email
- how to make a phone call
- other

5. Preparing to sell your product

Imagine your group is a company and your product has just been invented. Now, you are looking for an investor who will help you pay for production. Your teacher will split you into two groups: inventors and investors.

Inventors: Discuss your answers to the investor questions below.

Investor questions

1. What is the product and how does it work?
2. What are the product's strengths?
3. Are similar products already available?
4. How is it different from your competitors' products?
5. What does it come with?
6. Why should you receive our investment?

Investors: What other challenging questions would you ask the inventors? Think of at least five and write them down.

For example:

- What are the weaknesses of the invention?
- What kind of after-sales service can you offer?

6. Selling your winning idea

Inventors should present their product to the investors. Investors must decide if the inventors have made a convincing presentation and if they wish to fund the project.

7. What the future holds

Discuss in groups or as a whole class how your product(s) will need to be adapted over time in order to stay popular.