

Intermediate – Use lists to help you organise your time

Aim: To help students learn to use lists to prioritise and organise their time.

Lead-in: Put students into pairs. Write the categories below on the board and ask students to make lists of things they want to or have to do on a daily basis within each of the categories:

- a. school and study
- b. socialising or social networking
- c. sports or hobbies
- d. household chores

Elicit answers and write them on the board. Now ask students to work alone and decide which of the categories is most important for them personally and mark them (P). Then ask them to think about which is most important for their life generally and mark them (L).

Discuss with students which tasks they normally give priority to, the P tasks or the L tasks.

Elicit whether students ever forget a task they need to do or if they are ever late doing tasks, and why. Ask them how they feel when this happens and elicit ways that this could be avoided (e.g., make lists, try not to leave things until later – do them straight away, save fun tasks for later and do important tasks first, etc.).

Ask individual students in which of the four areas above technology plays an important role. Find out from them how and why and write their answers up on the board (e.g., doing research on the internet for school homework, using mobile phones for texting and messaging friends through social media, technological items that are used for chores such as vacuum cleaners, etc.).

Finally, encourage students to think of ways that they can use technology to organise or make better use of their time (e.g., electronic calendars, reminders on phones, watching favourite programmes later via streaming).

Choose A Scenario: Ask students to work in pairs and choose one of the three scenarios (A–C). Write on the board: *What are the challenges?* Encourage pairs to identify and list the potential problems in the scenario they chose (e.g., *in A there are exams on every day, but they need to find time to revise*).

Ask pairs to write a task list, prioritise the tasks and make a plan for dealing with the time and organisation problems. Add the questions below to the board for guidance:

Which are the most important tasks? Can you leave any tasks out? Encourage students to look at the Reflection Point and take it into account while doing the task.

Reflection Point: Explain to students that making a list will help them solve their time and organisation problems because they will be able to choose which tasks are the most important, and what order to complete them in.

Class discussion: Ask each pair to work with another pair who chose the same scenario, and to compare their lists. Encourage them to identify any differences and similarities, focusing on whether the order is the same and whether they left out the same tasks.

Write the questions below on the board. Allow students time to think of the answers before holding a whole class discussion:

- How did you decide what to put at the top of the list?
- What was difficult about the problem?
- What was easy?
- Did you put first the things that were necessary or the things you wanted to do?

Work alone: Ask students to work alone to choose a second scenario from A–C and follow the same steps to create a list in order to deal with the problem. Once they have finished, invite volunteers to present their list to the class and explain why they put things in this order.

Extension: Ask students to work in pairs and think about a time when they've argued with a friend or sibling, and then made up. Be clear that you're looking for simple, light-hearted arguments. You might want to give a simple example (e.g., She borrowed your favourite jumper without asking.) to clarify this. What caused the argument and what happened afterwards? Ask students to think about whether they would deal with the problem differently now. What would they do?

Elicit from students which strategies for dealing with problems work and which don't work (e.g., talking about it works; shouting or pretending nothing has happened doesn't work).

Suggest students apply the problem solving to their lives. Ask them to think of a situation at home that they don't like. Ask them to work out how to change it (think of the different points of view of all involved).