Let's Shake On It!

EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

Learn polite expressions and modal verbs. Practice conversations.
Reading comprehension practice.

Activity One - Discussion Questions



Ask and answer the questions with your partner or teacher.

1. Before the pandemic did you usually shake hands with people you met?
2. Did you kiss people you met?
3. Which people did you kiss and which did you shake hands with?
4. Do you tend to be physically affectionate with friends and colleagues or not?
5. Do you enjoy shaking hands or kissing people to say hello?
6. Do you ever give people a hug when you meet them?
7. Since the pandemic how do you greet people?
8. Do you miss shaking hands, kissing friends, hugging, etc.?

Activity Two - It's good to talk!

Read the article at home, then discuss with a partner or your teacher about what you understood.

You will have noticed that practicing speaking English always helps you to progress. Have you ever wondered why? Here are some explanations which can help you to understand how to optimize your learning.

1/ Speaking makes you aware of what you need to learn.

Even if there are gaps in your understanding, you can understand the general meaning when listening. When speaking, however, you need to be more precise. You need to know the right words and expressions to explain your idea. So when you express yourself orally you will immediately know what knowledge you lack. This will act as a trigger for you to learn what you need to learn. Speaking forces you to pay attention to what you need in order to communicate your thoughts. If you are speaking to a teacher, who corrects your mistakes and gives you any missing vocabulary then you will easily remember that new information because it will be important to you. Even if you talk to yourself, you can benefit from this process. By noticing the difference between what you want to say and what you can say, you will know what you need to study further.

2/ Speaking allows you to practice new techniques.

If you are talking to a fellow learner, or to any other person in English, you will also learn from their reactions. If you notice that they didn't understand what you said, then you will be pushed to correct your output. There's also a feedback loop that operates in your brain comparing what you utter to what you

have previously learned. This is how you manage to correct yourself sometimes. Even if this feedback mechanism slows down your fluency at first, it's an important part of learning to speak correctly. You need to experiment with anything you have learned through theoretical study or picked up through listening. To acquire new language structures and vocabulary you need to practice speaking.

3/ As we so often repeat; practice makes perfect.

If you want to get speedy access to knowledge, you need to use it repeatedly and in a meaningful context. You need to develop automaticity in grammatical structures and in lexical knowledge by committing them to long-term memory. Your new vocabulary is temporarily stored and rehearsed using the phonological loop in your working memory before it is finally stored long-term. Practicing speaking is essential to this process. Therefore, in order to gain fluency, you need to practice speaking.

So, notice and learn, correct yourself, practice, use and own your new knowledge. In short; it's good to talk!

Activity Three - Polite expressions

Read the expressions then match them to the purposes listed below. Then write some examples with each expression with your teacher or a partner.

1. ***Could you...? (+ verb)***

Close the door -> ***Could you*** close the door?

Send me the report -> ***Could you*** send me the report?

2. ***I was wondering if... (+ past simple)***

Will you pick me up from the airport? -> ***I was wondering if*** you could pick me up from the airport

Do you want to come to the cinema? -> ***I was wondering if*** you wanted to come to the cinema

3. ***By any chance...***

Do you know where the train station is, ***by any chance***?

By any chance, are you free on Thursday?

4. ***Do you mind if...?***

Can I use your phone? -> ***Do you mind if*** I use your phone?

5. ***What if...? (+ past simple)***

Let's meet on Tuesday instead -> ***What if*** we met on Tuesday instead?

Let's throw a surprise party -> ***What if*** we threw a surprise party?

6. ***Pardon me?***

Repeat please -> ***Pardon me,*** could you please say that again?

What did you say? -> ***Pardon me***, I didn't hear what you said

7. ***Sorry to bother you....***

What time is it? -> ***Sorry to bother you***, do you know what time it is?

8. ***I would love to, but...***

I can't come, I'm busy this weekend -> ***I'd love to*** come, ***but*** I'm busy this weekend

Now, match the purpose to each expression and create some examples:

A. means "possibly", asking questions or making requests
B. asking for help or inviting someone
C. asking someone to repeat
D. making a suggestion
E. making requests
F. declining invitations
G. asking for permission
H. interrupting someone

Activity Four - Reading Comprehension

Read the article and answer the questions which follow.

Studying the handshake

Ella Al-Shamahi, a paleoanthropologist and evolutionary biologist at University College London, argues that the handshake is biological and embedded in our DNA. “I don’t think the handshake died in March 2020,” she writes in The Handshake: A Gripping History. “Rather it’s in temporary lockdown, social-distancing, quarantining but, like most of us, going nowhere.”

The handshake can be traced back to before we were even a species. Chimps and bonobos, humanity’s closest living relatives, can be observed sheepishly linking fingers after a conflict, like “two teenagers begrudgingly shaking hands after a fight”, she quotes a primatologist saying. This indicates that the practice began before our species diverged seven million years ago.

“Our prehistoric ancestors left handprints on cave walls, as if they wanted to reach through time towards us,” she writes. “The Greeks shook hands on the battlefield, and the Romans did so to mark marriages.”

What is the biological purpose of this trait? It has many uses, Al-Shamahi argues. “Touch creates comfort, connection and empathy and its effects are physiological, biochemical and psychological.”

The fingers and palms are packed with sensory receptors. A handshake triggers a surge of oxytocin, a hormone linked to trust, social bonding and protective instincts. This, in turn, releases dopamine in the reward-processing part of the brain.

“I believe we underestimate the importance of touch to the human condition,” Al-Shamahi writes. “It is an innate impulse. Both psychologically valuable and comforting, the handshake is one of the gold standards of human connection.”

She believes handshakes are also a delivery system for “chemosignals”, a complex set of unconscious emotional triggers linked to smell. Many animals use such systems to communicate: dogs mark their territory and many species signal when they are on heat.

"Humans are animals too," Al-Shamahi says. By bringing humans into close proximity, shaking hands allows us to take in another's scent, which biologists believe can contain enough information about fear, anger or disgust to act as a subconscious warning system.

"It might be dirty, unhealthy and even banned. But once the immediate pressure is off, the handshake will return. It always does. The constant resurrection of the darn thing, its sheer bloody resilience, is a testament to its significance, power and universality as a gesture and its deep intertwining with our biology."

Source: The Handshake: A Gripping History by Ella Al-Shamahi is published on March 25 by Profile Books

Comprehension Questions:

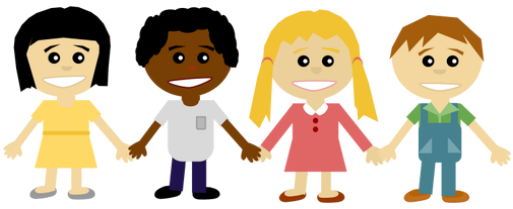
1. Why does the author compare handshakes to people being in lockdown?
2. How are handshakes related to primates?
3. What is the biological purpose of shaking hands?
4. What information do handshakes give our brains?
5. Why does she think handshakes will always be part of our humanity?

Activity Five - Idioms

With a partner or your teacher, match the meanings of these idiomatic expressions to their meaning.

1. *Let's shake on it*	a. get over something and move on
2. *I've got to hand it to you*	b. people who change things
3. I'm *taking matters into my own hands*	c. be very busy
4. The youth are the real *movers and shakers*	d. ask how it's going
5. This is *getting out of hand*	e. very quickly
6. I had that experience *first-hand*	f. get out of control
7. *What's shakin'?*	g. ask for help
8. I've *got my hands full* right now	h. absolutely
9. Can you *lend me a hand*?	i. agree to something
10. *Shake it off!*	j. take control
11. This is *hands-down* the worst day of my life!	k. give credit, be impressed
12. I'll be back in *two shakes of a lamb's tail*	l. personally

**Now try to create a dialogue using as many of these expressions as possible!*



Activity Six - Sing Along!

Listen to the song and try to find the missing words!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jenWdylTtzs - *I Want to Hold Your Hand* by The Beatles

Oh yeah, I'll [1]_____ you somethin'
I think you'll understand
When I [2]_____ that somethin'
I want to hold your hand *(x3)*

Oh please, say to me
You'll let me be your [3]_____
And please, say to me
You'll let me hold your hand
Now, let me hold your hand
I want to hold your hand

And when I [4]_____ you
I feel [5]_____ inside
It's such a feelin' that my love
I can't [6]_____ *(x3)*

Yeah, you [7]_____ that somethin'
I think you'll understand
When I say that somethin'
I want to hold your hand *(x3)*

And when I touch you
I feel happy inside
It's such a [8]_____ that my love
I can't hide *(x3)*

Yeah, you got that somethin'
I think you'll understand
When I [9]_____ that somethin'
I want to hold your hand *(x4*

Now create a dialogue with your partner or teacher based on what the song is about. Use polite language and the missing words you found in the dialogue!

Activity Seven - Role Play

Create a dialogue for the following situations, act out the scenarios with your teacher or a partner using the polite expressions above!

A. You are at the bus station, but you don't know the time or which bus to take, so you ask a stranger to help you
B. You ask a friend to dinner, but they are busy and have to politely turn you down
C. Your coworker calls you on the phone to ask for a favour, but the connection isn't very good and you can't hear them very well!
D. You are planning a holiday with your friends/family, and you have lots of ideas and suggestions

