

ALAN MATTHEWS and CAROL READ. *Tandem: Communicative Practice Materials for Post-Elementary and Intermediate Students of English*. London: Evans Brothers Limited, 1981. Paperback. n.p.

Tandem consists of a series of communicative activities based on twenty-nine functional areas of language, such as: describing things and people, asking and telling the time, and expressing likes and dislikes. *Tandem* can be used as supplementary material by students following any structurally or communicatively organised coursebook.

The activities in *Tandem* presuppose that the necessary vocabulary has already been presented to the students. The twenty-nine exercises may be done in any order, depending on the needs of each group of students.

Tandem is both a student's workbook which each student must have, and a book of detailed teacher's notes. The student's workbook can only be used in conjunction with the teacher's notes. The student's workbook is divided into two halves, the A pages: 1A to 29A, and the B pages: 1B to 29B. All the activities are intended to be done in pairs, one student looking at a page in the A section and his partner looking at the corresponding page in the B section. The students each have information that the other does not yet possess, and by means of an exchange of questions and answers, they end up sharing the same information. The students are also required to write something in their workbooks - labelling, ticking boxes, indicating the sequence of drawings, etc. Ideas for follow-up written work are given after each activity.

The exercises in *Tandem* provide the students with interesting communicative activities. I do think, however, that these exercises will be more successful when used with a smaller group of students. In a large group it will be impossible for the teacher to give the students the necessary personal attention and to correct any pronunciation or grammatical errors.

Many of the cities mentioned in the book are in Europe. In exercise 12, for example, the students must explain how long it takes to get from London to Madrid, Paris or Rome. After doing an exercise like this, the teacher can change the names of the cities to ones that are familiar to the student. The South African students could, for example, be asked to explain how long it would take to get from Johannesburg to Pretoria or Durban. The aim of *Tandem* is to get the students to communicate, and I am sure that they will communicate more freely when discussing places that are familiar to them. Similarly the British currency that is used in the book can be changed to currency that is familiar to the

students. The exercises can therefore easily be adapted to meet the requirements of each group of students.

Tandem can be used to encourage students to communicate in English and it should be a useful guide for teachers who are looking for ideas to make their oral communication classes more interesting.

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L.A. HILL. *Techniques of Discussion*. London: Evans Brothers Limited, 1980. Paperback. n.p.

Techniques of Discussion was written as an aid to teachers in stimulating students to speak in a class-room. Announcing the subject a few days before the actual discussion is essential to help the students to think about the subject so that the shy members of the class will not leave all the arguing to a few good speakers. The teacher should not take part in the discussion, but can keep order among the students and see to it that the good talkers do not dominate the conversation.

The author has used topical subjects that should be of interest to the students. Such subjects as Package Tours, Working Hours and Flexitime, Women's Liberation, the Power of the Media, Youth and Violence in our Society, Military Service, Conservatism, and Old People in our Society should lead to spirited discussion. Most students do have to consider older relatives and the question will come more to the fore in the future.

Although the subject under discussion is opened with a dialogue, the information section on each discussion, together with the question section, is of great value to teacher and student and should produce opinions from even the shyest students. Students will find the phrases and words included and high-lighted in the dialogues and assembled in the Appendix worth studying and learning.

Class-room discussion is a very important part of the curriculum to-day and should become of even greater value in the future. Oral work is much more widely introduced than it used to be and this book will be a great help to teachers and students.

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