Overview

2 15-minute conversations
Topics: Festivals, Social Media & Chores
- Review: Pre-conversation activities
- Interact: Conversation outlines
- Reflect: Post-conversation activities

Purpose: TalkAbroad will coordinate regular conversation practice for you with native speakers during the semester. This workbook will guide you through that process with preparation activities, conversation topics, and reflection activities.

Student Quick Setup

Step-by-step instructions with screenshots are located in the section labeled Detailed Student Setup at the end of this document.

1. Navigate to talkabroad.com
2. Click on “Create Account” or “Login” if you already have an account
3. When prompted enter section code "XXXXXXXXXXX" (provided by professor)
4. Click “Add Credits” to purchase conversation credits.
5. Click “Make a Reservation” on the homepage and scroll through the partners.
6. Complete a test call before scheduling.
7. Choose a partner and schedule a conversation using their calendar.
8. Complete your conversation.

Contact our support team with any questions.

Conversation 1 - Festivals

Prepare (45 min)
- Schedule your conversation
  - Remember to schedule at least 36 hours in advance.
- Review
  - Review vocabulary relevant to conversations about different types of celebrations and festivals.
- Learn at least 10 new words about celebrations and festivals.

- Plan
  - Write a list of 5-7 questions you can ask your conversation partner about themselves and the celebrations and festivals that they are familiar with.
    - Avoid questions that elicit a simple one-word (yes/no) answer.
    - Think about how you would respond to each of the questions if they were asked to you (prepare for any vocabulary that you might not know).
    - Read through the Interact and Reflect portion of the sequence to help anticipate any other questions you might need to ask of your partner.

- Practice
  - Practice asking and answering your questions out loud. If available, find a partner from class and practice together.

- Consider
  - What are some places that you notice you are having trouble communicating? Are there any new words or structures that you can learn before your conversation?
What are some techniques to help navigate a conversation? What sort of phrases would be helpful?

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Interact (15 min)

Remember, you do not have to talk for the entire 15 minutes. It is a conversation!

- (3-5 minutes) Introduce yourself to your conversation partner and get to know some basic information about each other.
- (10 minutes) Ask about and share some of the celebrations, holidays, and festivals that you, your friends, and family take part in. Also share and ask about some common traditions surrounding these occasions.

Tips

- Try to think in the language of your conversation. Your ability to think in English is much more complex right now and often, problems arise when you think of something to say in English that you are not able to say in the target language.
- If there are words or major ideas that you don’t understand, please ask your partner to help explain/elaborate.
- Remember, the conversation will be recorded so you don’t have to understand 100% of what your partner says during the conversation. You will have time later to look up specific words.
- If your conversation goes a bit off topic, that is ok! The important takeaway from this is that you are building the ability and confidence to interact in the language.
- When your partner answers a question, try to ask a related follow-up question instead of moving directly to another prepared question that might not be related.

Reflect (60 minutes)

- Review
  - Download and listen to the audio recording of your conversation.

- Write in English
  - Overall, how did your conversation go? Explain.

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  ○ About what percentage of your partners’ speech did you understand?

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What are three things that you would phrase or say differently after having listened to your conversation?

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List three interesting things you learned about your conversation partner based on their answers to your questions.

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Choose the most interesting part of your conversation during the discussion and transcribe (write in Spanish) 1.5 minutes of the recording. This will involve listening to the audio a few times. Focus on an area in which your partner was speaking the majority of the time. Write down both what you and your partner said. Be sure to indicate where this portion of the conversation is by indicating the time elapsed at the beginning of your transcription (ie. [2:35] if the section begins 2 minutes and thirty-five seconds into the conversation).
○ What sort of cultural inferences or comparisons can you make about your interaction with your partner? If there is insufficient evidence, what comparisons can you make between your families?
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○ List three new words you learned from this conversation.
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○ Is there anything else about the language that you noticed?
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○ What can you do to better prepare for your next conversation?
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Conversation 2 - Social Media & Chores

Prepare (45 min)

● Schedule your conversation
  ○ Remember to schedule at least 36 hours in advance.

● Review
  ○ Review vocabulary relevant to conversations about different types of social media and working around the dorm/house.
  ○ Learn at least 10 new words about social media & chores.
• Plan
  ○ Write a list of 5-7 questions you can ask your conversation partner about themselves, the technology they use (and don’t use), circumstances surrounding driving, a social media platforms and usage, and chores they do around the home/dorm.
    ✤ Avoid questions that elicit a simple one-word (yes/no) answer.
    ✤ Think about how you would respond to each of the questions if they were asked to you (prepare for any vocabulary that you might not know).
    ✤ Read through the Interact and Reflect portion of the sequence to help anticipate any other questions you might need to ask of your partner.

• Practice
  ○ Practice asking and answering your questions out loud. If available, find a partner from class and practice together.

• Consider
  ○ What are some places that you notice you are having trouble communicating? Are there any new words or structures that you can learn before your conversation?
○ What are some techniques to help navigate a conversation?
What sort of phrases would be helpful?

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Interact (15 min)
Remember, you do not have to talk for the entire 15 minutes. It is a conversation!
● (3-5 Minutes) Introduce yourself to your conversation partner and get to know some basic information about each other.
● (10 minutes) Share a little about what a typical day looks like for you in regard to different technology you use. Describe circumstances with driving that you encounter. Touch on social media and different platforms you use and the different types of content you create and consume. Ask your conversation partner about what technology they use in a typical day, how they deal with circumstances related to driving in their country, what social media and how their routine and usage varies. Describe the chores you need to do around your home/dorm. Say what is your favorite and why. Ask your partner what their chores are and if they like them.

● Tips
  ○ Try to think in the language of your conversation. Your ability to think in English is much more complex right now and often, problems arise when you think of something to say in English that you are not able to say in the target language.
  ○ If there are words or major ideas that you don’t understand, please ask your partner to help explain/elaborate.
  ○ Remember, the conversation will be recorded so you don’t have to understand 100% of what your partner says during the conversation. You will have time later to look up specific words.
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  ○ When your partner answers a question, try to ask a related follow-up question instead of moving directly to another prepared question that might not be related.

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○ List three new words you learned from this conversation.

○ Is there anything else about the language that you noticed?

○ What can you do to better prepare for your next conversation?

Detailed Student Setup

Account Setup

1. Navigate to talkabroad.com

2. If you already have an account, click Login and then skip to step 8, Class Registration.
3. If you do not already have an account, click **Create Account**.
4. Fill out your required information and be sure to: select the time zone where you live, the Student Account option, and the language you are currently studying. Don’t forget to agree to the Terms of Service.

5. After clicking on Create Account you will see a confirmation page that asks you to verify your Email account to finalize the account creation.

6. Sign in to the email account that you provided to verify the account and follow the link provided.
Class Registration

7. After clicking on the Confirm Email link, you will be redirected to talkabroad.com and asked to enter a Section Code. When prompted, enter the section code provided by your instructor. Then click Submit.

8. If you already have an account you can click on the Account tab from the student homepage section and then Add New Section. When prompted, enter the section code provided by your instructor. Then click Submit.

Purchase Credits
9. From the Student Homepage click Add Credits.

10. The Purchase Credits screen will show you how many credits you already have and allow you to purchase new credits. The appropriate language will be pre-selected for you. Select the number of credits for the 15-minute conversations that you would like to purchase (the same number that your instructor has assigned to you). Enter the following in the Redeem code box: Then click Redeem. Once you see that the discount is applied, click Purchase.

11. Now fill out your billing info and credit card number in the following boxes.
12. Once successful, you will see the number of conversations available on your Homepage.

Complete a Test Call
13. Before you make your first reservation, you must complete a test call.
14. Click Help and Instructions on the Homepage.
15. Now click *Test Call*.

16. You will see a screen with the test call instructions. The easiest way to complete a test call is to ask a friend to help by joining on the call with their device. You can also use another device you own to complete the test call.
17. Click *Accept* and then follow the instructions to allow your browser access to the camera and microphone. This will look different across devices, platforms and browsers.

18. You will now be able to complete the test call. If anything is not working, you can follow the troubleshooting tips at the bottom of the call window.
Make a Reservation

19. Click *Make a Reservation* on the Student Homepage to begin.

20. Now you will be able to see the available partners. You can scroll down the list or choose to search by country or specific date and time. If you have had a conversation in the past, you can also select the box to only search for past partners.
21. Click View Full Profile underneath the partner’s picture to learn more about the partner and to schedule a conversation. You will notice that some partners also have a star above their picture with the text Approved for beginners. These partners are trained especially to help students that are just getting started on the language journey.
22. After reading through the profile, decide if you want to schedule a conversation with this partner. To keep looking at other partners, click Back on your browser. To schedule the conversation, scroll down to the calendar. Here you will find a list of available time slots. Click on one to schedule the conversation for that time. Remember, you can only schedule a conversation 36 hours in advance.
23. Once you click on the time to schedule the conversation you will see a Student Reservation screen asking you to confirm your reservation and enter your phone number. It is a good idea to enter your phone number in case of technical difficulties.

24. After you make the reservation you will be asked if you want to introduce yourself to the partner before the conversation starts. This will be in the form of a text comment. This step is completely optional but highly encouraged.
25. Head back to the Homepage to see your scheduled reservation in the calendar. You will also receive an email with the conversation information.

Complete Your Conversation

26. Now you can view your conversation in your calendar on the Student Homepage. Click on the conversation to view information or change the reservation. When it is time for your conversation to begin, you will be directed to the conversation when you login to talkabroad.com

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Download your conversation

27. After your conversation has ended you will be prompted to rate the conversation and given the opportunity to download the audio file of your conversation. You will also receive an email with a link to the feedback form. The feedback form will also load the next time you login to talkabroad.com.
28. If there were any issues due to technical problems during the conversation or with the audio file, you can report them here and someone from TalkAbroad will be in touch.

29. You can also download the audio from any previous conversation by clicking on the link to that conversation in the calendar.
Contact
If you have any questions, please contact our support team.