

Learner Level: Intermediate - Advanced
Theme: Any theme you are using in class (or no particular theme)
Skills: Speaking quickly, eliminating ums and uhs
Time: 10-15 minutes
Materials: None
Grouping: Pairs (or groups of 3)
Preparation: None

Quick Reference:

Students take turns talking non-stop to a partner about a certain topic. If the student stops talking for more than five seconds, the pair is out for that round.

Teacher Instructions: 

1. Brainstorm a list of topics on the board. If you are working on a certain theme in class (such as travel) use that as your main topic and have students come up with subtopics.
2. Put students in pairs. Tell each pair to decide which person is going to be the **Speaker** and which person is going to be the **Listener**. Explain the term “chatterbox”. Tell the Speakers that they are going to try to talk as much as possible without pausing.
3. Shout out one topic from the board. All of the speakers should begin talking to their partners at once. The speakers should keep talking about this topic as quickly as possible. If they can’t think of anything to say, their listening partner will start counting. Each time a speaker pauses for more than a few seconds (including saying “um” or “uh” or “I don’t know”) his partner begins to count. If the partner counts up to 5 the pair is “out” for that round and the pair must listen to other speakers in the room.

For Example:

Teacher: The first topic is fruit! Speakers begin talking to your Listeners about fruit.

Speaker: I like fruit. My favorite fruit is apples. I like red apples. Apples are good because you can make apple pie, apple juice, apple... Sometimes I go apple picking. I planted an apple tree once. Do you know why I like apples so much? They are juicy and sour. I prefer crisp apples. Apples have to be cold. I don’t like apples if they aren’t in the fridge. I like apple cider at Christmas time. Um...oh fruit. Not just apples..uh

Listener: 1...2...

Speaker: Um, uh

Listener: 3...4...

Speaker: Oranges are delicious. Um...I dunno...

Listener: 5 We’re out for this round.

4. The last person to be still talking on each topic is declared the chatterbox for that round. Write his or her name on the board. Choose a new topic. Switch roles so that the previous listeners become the speakers. Continue playing by changing the topics every few minutes until time runs out. Let all of the chatterboxes stand up and take a bow!

Teacher 2 Teacher: 

If your students are getting “out” too quickly allow their partners to count up to 10 instead of 5. If your students love this game, have all of the chatterboxes face off at the end of the day.

Related Topics from the ESL-Library.com:

Famous People, Places and Things, Discussion Starters (use for topic ideas)