

Week 1 - Unit 1: Education

Ling 1-101: Language Mastery I

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- a) Freshers' week: How to make a good first impression (from skimming and scanning to intensive reading)
- b) Describing people and feelings: useful vocabulary
- c) Language awareness: vocabulary building, multiple senses of words

PART A

Freshers' week: How to make a good first impression



Going to university for the first time can be a daunting experience for anyone. The biggest fear many have is leaving their old friends behind and having to meet lots of new people from all walks of life. **[0. D]**

As a first-year transition tutor in the University of Leicester's School of Psychology, my role is to ensure that students have a sense of belonging and feel included. In my experience, students who fail to make friends at university can feel lonely and isolated. **[1....]**

On the flip side, psychologists have found that a person's sense of happiness and well-being is likely to grow when they seek out social connections and friendship groups, which lead to positive relationships. All very well if you're an extrovert, have natural charisma and get energised from being around people – you will make good first impressions easily. Introverts, don't worry – I have some advice for you.

A.

Psychologists have studied how to make good first impressions in detail. For example, research has shown that we form a sense of whether an individual is trustworthy in less than one tenth of a second. We can also deduce information such as their intelligence and sexual orientation, with some degree of accuracy.

We call this "*thin slicing*": when people make quick decisions on the basis of limited information. That's why it's important to come across as likeable in your first meeting with

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your housemates, and other people on your course or on campus. But how do you do this if you consider yourself to be shy, socially awkward, introverted or if English is not your mother tongue?

[2. ...] The first thing to remember is that you are all in the same boat. The best strategy is to use your strengths to your advantage. For instance, as an introvert, you are probably more comfortable making friends online than you are face to face.

B.

Luckily, you can do most of the groundwork on social media before you meet your housemates. People who find it difficult meeting others in the flesh for the first time can always create *WhatsApp* groups; perhaps one for intended housemates or for people in your tutorial group, before meeting face to face.

This way, you can build online relationships before you meet and so avoid thin slicing. [3. ...]

C.

Another way of making a good first impression is to shift the focus from yourself onto others. We mostly go into a social situation thinking, "What will people think of me?" [4....]

This way, the person you are talking to will become more comfortable, which will rub off on you. And they will probably be impressed by your confidence, which is a first step to building a good friendship.

Everyone likes to be listened to, so the four magic words that you can adopt are: "And how about you?" This takes the focus off you and allows you to learn a great deal about the other person, fostering a good feeling between you and the stranger you are talking to. They're then more likely to want to talk with you again. This is a good strategy to adopt when waiting to enter the lecture theatre; then you'll probably want to sit together.

[5....] We do this in the hope of being liked or accepted. But it's important to remember that no one likes a fraud, and especially a show-off.

We all like authentic people, so indulge in first impressions with honesty, humility and inclusivity. Authentic people make good first impressions as they show trust, forgiveness, gratitude, honesty, commitment, support, enthusiasm and gladness towards others, without wanting anything in return.

A) READING

1. Read the article. Who is the intended audience? Do you feel it is related to you somehow? Why (not)?

2. The following sentences have been removed from the text. Can you find their original place? Which are the clues you used to find their places? An example is given at the beginning (0-D). There is an extra sentence you do not need to use.

A. Most people that you meet are as anxious about making a good first impression as you are.

B. Shift this mind set and reach out to the one person that no one is talking to.

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- C. These feelings can often manifest into anxiety and depression – especially if they're far from home – which can lead them to become even more isolated, and ultimately drop out of university.
- D. The prospect of living with complete strangers is enough to make anyone nervous – especially if their culture is alien to you.
- E. The good news is that research has found people who are judged to be likeable via social media were also judged as likeable via face-to-face meetings, so go ahead and create that group.
- F. A person who might be an extrovert may retreat into a spiral of silence due to the new environment which he/she may start to dislike.
- G. We all engage in impression management, hoping to appear more interesting, successful or clever than we are – especially when we are nervous.

3. Read the text and match the headings given below:

It's all about others

Avoid snap judgements

Laying that ground work¹*

B) VOCABULARY

1) Find the words/phrases of the following definitions in the text and put them in the right gap in the sentences that follow (you may need to change the form):

- a. discouraging = _____
- b. unnatural, strange = _____
- c. show clearly through signs or actions = _____
- d. encourage the growth of ideas or feelings = _____
- e. in the same usually unpleasant situation = _____

2) Use the words of (1) to fill in the gaps below:

- a. The practice of having a siesta after lunch is _____ to me.
- b. I'm trying to _____ an interest in classical music in my children.
- c. Lack of confidence in the company _____ itself in a fall in the share price.
- d. In spite of unification the country was still faced with the _____ prospect of overcoming four decades of division.
- e. I've got no money, my friends have got no money, we are all _____.

3) Explain the meaning of the phrases:

to do most of the groundwork (B)

to rub off on someone (C)

¹ For the difference between *lay* and *lie* look at the end of this document.

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no one likes a fraud (C)

to indulge in first impressions (C)

4) Find words/phrases in the text that are related to feelings (e.g. nervous) and personality traits (e.g. socially awkward).

4a) Types of personality: Match the type with the definitions provided and consider whether it is a positive or negative trait.

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. approachable | a. practical, sensible |
| 2. poised | b. behaves sensibly, does what they say they will do |
| 3. astute | c. not able to see things clearly |
| 4. bouncy | d. is controlled and relaxed, even in difficult situations |
| 5. dependable | e. arrogant |
| 6. short-sighted | f. not easily upset or offended by the opinion of others |
| 7. (with) a turned-up nose | g. states an honest opinion, even if this upsets others |
| 8. mischievous | h. extremely determined |
| 9. thick-skinned | i. good at judging quickly; uses this knowledge for personal benefit |
| 10. outspoken | j. enjoys having fun by causing trouble |
| 11. resolute | k. friendly, easy to talk to |
| 12. down-to-earth | l. does not get angry or upset often |
| 13. even-tempered | m. lively, enthusiastic |

4b) Sociability and character traits²: Use the words given below to fill in the gaps in the sentences:

aloof, conceited, conscientious, diffident, gullible, modest, naïve, pig-headed, self-important, unscrupulous

1. Mr Rogers is such a ____ man [lacks confidence, has a low opinion of himself]
2. Barbara tends to be rather ____ I don't know if she is shy. [unfriendly and not sociable]
3. Nancy is so [thinks herself wonderful] and ____ [has an exaggerated sense of her importance], but Flora is a ____ person [prefers not to exaggerate her own qualities]
4. Joss is a somewhat ____ person; he thinks love can solve all the world's problems. [willing to believe simple things out of inexperience]
5. Telephone salespeople often take advantage of ____ people [easily deceived]

² Adapted from McCarthy & O'Dell. *English vocabulary in use. Advanced.* CUP.

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6. My father was a very ____ man. He never took time off work unless he was really sick. [always took work very seriously]
7. You are so obstinate and ____ [stronger than obstinate, more disapproving]! Why don't you listen when people give you good advice?
8. He's quite an ____ character; I should be very careful If I were you [lacks in moral principles; prepared to do very bad things]

4c) Passions: reactions and emotions

Choose one of the words below each sentence to fill the gaps.

- 1 Since giving up smoking, I now find that I chocolate.
a) thirst b) crave c) hunger
- 2 Martha is very good at difficult situations.
a) placating b) appeasing c) defusing
- 3 Everyone is to bits that Joe was so successful in the competition.
a) blissful b) thrilled c) exultant
- 4 If he has a tantrum, you mustn't try to him. Don't give in!
a) conciliate b) appease c) defuse
- 5 When Lorna retires, there will probably be a lot of internal applicants for what must be the most job in the company.
a) yearned b) hankered c) coveted
- 6 Fortunately, her parents were unaware of what was going on.
a) rapturously b) blissfully c) exultantly

5) Of the words that appear in bold in the text, choose the ones that complete each gap in the following sets of sentences. Only **ONE** word can be used appropriately in all 3 sentences in every set, as the example illustrates:

Example: The word missing in all 3 sentences is STRONG.

Some of the tourists are hoping to get compensation for the poor state of the hotel, and I think they have a very case.

There's no point in trying to wade across the river, the current is far too

If you're asking me which of the candidates should get the job, I'm afraid I don't have any views either way.

SET 1

- a) We've got lawyers in this club, and builders, and hairdressers; there's even an actor - people from all ____ of life.
- b) Do you know any nice ____ around here?
- c) Do not expect Annie to give you a hand with this. She just ____ away from problems.

SET 2

- a) When one side is done, ____ the pancake over to cook the other side.
- b) We are now starting to see the ____ side of the government's economic policy.

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c) My father would ____ the lid whenever I told him I'd been in trouble with the police.

SET 3

a) He always makes ____ decisions and never thinks about their consequences.

b) She only has to ____ her fingers and he'll do whatever she wants.

c) Come on, ____ out of it! Losing that money isn't the end of the world.

SET 4

a) When the conversation turns to politics, he's on familiar ____.

b) His latest film is interesting but not ____-breaking.

c) The committee will meet later today to lay the ____ work for interparty talks next month.

SET 5

a) ____ you take enough money with you.

b) Did you have anything in ____ for Helen's present?

c) I don't think their relationship will work - they are of a totally different ____ set.

Describing people: Character

Intellectual ability

Ability: intelligent, bright, clever, smart, shrewd, able, gifted, talented, brainy

Lacking ability: stupid, foolish, half-witted, simple, silly, brainless, daft, dumb

Attitudes towards life

Looking on either the bright or the black side of the things: optimistic, pessimistic

Outward looking or inward looking: extroverted, introverted

Calm or not calm with regard to attitude to life: relaxed, tense

Practical, not dreamy in approach to life: sensible, down-to-earth

Feeling things very intensely: sensitive

Attitudes towards other people

Enjoying other people's company: sociable, gregarious

Disagreeing with others: quarrelsome, argumentative

Taking pleasure in others' pain: cruel, sadistic

Relaxed in attitude to self and others: easy-going, even-tempered

Not polite to others: impolite, rude, ill-mannered, discourteous

Telling the truth to others: honest, trustworthy, reliable, sincere

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Unhappy if others have what one does not have oneself: jealous, envious

Describing a person (with a negative loading)

Amelia has a strong tendency to be offensive at times.

She shows a slight/noticeable tendency ...

She tends to be ...

She can often/sometimes/on occasions/occasionally be ...

Synonyms for Personality traits: nature, disposition, temperament, character

Describing a person (looks, personality, profile: background, childhood, education)

1. **Create a picture with words:** Have a system in mind to make sure you give your listener/reader a clear mental picture of the person
2. **Point out things that stand out:** gender (adult: man/woman; teenager: teen/youth+appropriate personal pronoun; child: boy/girl), age, size, race, and features
3. **Describe the person's expression:** happy, sad, puzzled, surprised, confused
4. **Character/Personality**
 - a. positive: intelligent, bright, clever, smart, shrewd, able, gifted, talented, brainy
 - b. negative: stupid, foolish, half-witted, simple, silly, brainless, daft, dumb
5. **Attitudes towards life:** optimistic, pessimistic; extroverted, introverted; relaxed, tense; sensible, down-to-earth; sensitive
6. **Attitudes towards other people:** sociable, gregarious; quarrelsome, argumentative; cruel, sadistic; easy-going, even-tempered; impolite, rude, ill-mannered, discourteous; honest, trustworthy, reliable, sincere; jealous, envious
7. **Accentuate the positive!** Try not to be insulting. Always focus on the positive features. Look for pretty hair, a beautiful smile, a pleasant expression ...

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Usually confused verbs: Lay vs. Lie

Lay could be used as a noun referring to “the general appearance of an area, including the direction of streams, hills, and similar features.”

On the other hand, **lie** can be used as a noun meaning “a false statement made with deliberate intent to deceive” or as a verb denoting “to speak falsely or utter untruth knowingly, as with intent to deceive.”

What often causes confusion is the use of the verbs **lay** (=to put down, esp. gently or carefully) and the verb **lie** (=to be in or assume a horizontal or resting position on a supporting surface)

The distinction is actually simple. **Lay** needs a direct object, something to be laid. (“Hundreds brave weather to lay wreaths at Arlington Cemetery”) while **lie** cannot be used with an object. (“This new office trend lets you lie down at work”)

In the present tense forms of the two words, it is actually easy to remember them. However, the tricky part would be their past tense and past participle forms.

Present	Past	Past Participle	Present Participle
Lay	Laid	Laid	Laying
Lie	Lay	Lain	Lying

Notice that while the forms of **lay** are quite easy to remember, the forms of the verb **lie** may cause a little confusion to some, esp. the past tense of **lie** which is **lay**. The present participle forms may also be tricky as they only differ with the additional letter **a**.

Examples

Present Tense

- The bird **lays** its eggs on the nest at the top of the tree.
- She **lies** down on that sofa during break time.

Past Tense

- The bird **laid** its eggs on that nest last week.
- She **lay** down on a different sofa yesterday because the other one was occupied.

Past Participle

- The bird has **laid** its eggs on that nest for years.
- She has **lain** on that sofa for hours.

Present Participle

- The bird has been **laying** its eggs on that nest since last year.
- She has been **lying** on that sofa since 10 a.m.