


## Activity 10: My Telephone Voice

<b>Activity aim:</b>	Learners discuss why talking on the phone is more difficult, and what they could do to compensate. They collect together phrases for checking understanding and clarifying arrangements made, and then have phone conversations in which they have to arrange to meet their friends.
<b>Time:</b>	30 minutes
<b>Delivery:</b>	<p>Before the activity, you will need to print off a 'Useful Phrases' handout for each learner and cut up the 'Cards' so that every learner has their own set of six separate cards that they can use in any order. Below are the delivery steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask the learners to think for a minute about how they feel about talking on the telephone. Is it harder or easier than talking face-to-face? Why? After they have thought for a while on their own, put them with a partner to share their ideas. If you have time, put the pairs with other pairs to see if they think the same. Then elicit their responses as a group.</li> <li>2. Reassure the learners that most people find it a bit harder to talk on the phone, because so much of our communication is done visually – facial expressions, gestures, etc. To make a phone call work well, it's a good idea to prepare for it, and have some key phrases ready to use at certain points.</li> <li>3. Ask the learner how they know someone is listening to them talking when they can see them. If you have done <b>Activity 3 – Engagement</b> with them, they should know the answer to this! Tell learners that we often nod and make eye-contact to let the other person know we are listening. On the phone, this doesn't work. Ask the learners what they could do instead to let the other person know they are listening. Try to elicit suggestions such as saying 'yes' or even just 'uh-huh' from time to time.</li> <li>4. Put the following headings on the board: <b>(A) Starting the call; (B) Answering the phone; (C) Showing you are listening; (D) Asking for clarification; and (E) Finishing the call.</b> Ask the learners to work in pairs to think of phrases they could use at each of these stages of a phone call. You could write in 'uh-huh' and 'yes' in the third section, as examples.</li> </ol> <div style="text-align: center; margin: 20px 0;">  </div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. When the learners have had time to think, ask each pair to contribute a phrase and say when they would use it. Write them up on the board. Keep going until the group runs out of suggestions.</li> </ol>

6. Give out the 'Useful phrases' handout – one per student. Did they get all of these expressions? Do they have more to add to the sheet?
7. Finally, arrange the seating so that the learners are in pairs, sitting back-to-back if possible. Explain that they are going to have a phone call, in which they can say anything they like, but they must try to arrange to meet up. Give each learner a set of six cards (making sure to give both learners in a pair the same number, i.e. 1a and 1b are working together). They have to try to get rid of all of their cards during the conversation. When they say a phrase from a card, they can put it down. At the end of the conversation, the person with the fewest cards left is the winner. The person with the starred phrase (\*) starts the conversation.

**Differentiation:**

- Consider how to pair the learners – is it better to have one stronger speaker in each pair who could help the other? Or better to have learners working at the same level? Perhaps after the first conversation, the pairs could be rearranged.
- For learners working at lower levels, reduce the number of phrases on the handout and the cards.
- For learners working at higher levels, encourage them to extend their repertoires by adding more phrases to the handout. Give them a blank card that they can write their own phrase on to use in the conversation.
- Some learners may find it hard to have a phone conversation in a noisy classroom. Try to find quiet corners for them to do the practice activity.