



Teacher notes for Business Card role play

Many ESL students are self-conscious about speaking English. This oral English role play helps students relax and practise introductions and introductory small talk.

Vocabulary pre-check:

Slogan	Fax
Consultant	President
Manager	CEO
Networking	Introduction

Material:

Pretend Business Cards. (I've made 19, but you'd need to make more for a larger class as every student needs their own card.)

Some pairs of scissors

Before the game:

Students should have familiarity with common phrases used when introducing oneself.

How do you do, I'm _____

Pleased to meet you

Where are you from?

Oh, I've heard that _____ is a very nice city.

What kind of work do you do?

Let me give you my card.

Step One:

The teacher distributes one sheet of business cards, which can be printed on ordinary paper, to every student. Students cut out their cards. Students look up any unfamiliar words in pairs and rehearse a small talk conversation with their partner, until everyone is familiar with their pretend identity.

Teacher circulates and checks to be sure every student understands what his or her company does.

Step Two:

Teacher tells the students they are all business people who are at an airport (Chicago, Beijing, New York, or wherever) and that there has been a big snowstorm and the planes can't fly. As businesspeople, they use the time to meet other businesspeople and exchange business cards.

This works best if you have room to stand and mingle in the classroom. Students go from person to person, introducing themselves.

My students loved collecting business cards from each other.

Additional activities:*Third party introductions:*

The cards can also be used to practice third-party introductions, ie:

Mrs. A., I'd like to you to meet Mr. F. He is in the _____ business.

Mr. D, may I introduce Mrs. C. She is from _____.

Chain introduction:

Student A introduces self to Student B. Student B then introduces Student A to Student C. Student C then introduces Student B to Student D, and so forth.

English name origins:

Teacher points out that the last names of all of the business people are English names that refer to specific jobs or trades, like Baker, Fisher or Fuller. Or students are challenged to research the last name on the Internet and report to the class. This could be an introduction to a history lesson about the Middle Ages and life in a typical English village. Students discuss similarities between their own ancestors' way of life and the way of life practiced by peasant farmer in England.

Geography and Cities:

Students are asked to research the city on their business card and give a brief presentation to the class.