

5.13

Ping pong of talents

Focus: To review the structure *To be good at* + the *-ing* form of a verb. To reinforce students' feeling of competence in other areas of their lives, which can influence their beliefs about their abilities regarding language learning.

Level: Lower intermediate +

Time: 10–15 minutes

Preparation: Optional; bring in a pair of puppets. Stopwatch or other device to time a minute. Optional; hand bell.

in class

1. Remind students that all of us are good at a lot of things, and that they don't have to be big things to be important in our lives. Explain to your students that they are going to remember some of these now. To give them examples, tell them some things you are good at (listening to friends, gardening, baking cakes ...). Give them a few moments to think of some things they can do well, whether they are small things or very significant ones. They don't write these – just think for a little while.
2. Demonstrate the activity with a student (or use two puppets and invent their 'talents'). For one minute, you tell the other person as many things as you can that you do well, each one beginning with *I am good at ...*, *I am good at ...*. Stress that they need to use the *-ing* form after the expression 'good at'. After the minute is over, the student who was listening repeats back what their partner was good at, repeating before each point *You are good at ...*, *You are good at ...*.
3. Get students into pairs, and ask them to stand up. The As raise their hands and you then tell your students that the Bs will begin speaking first. At the end of a minute, ring a bell or clap your hands, and As repeat back what Bs are good at. After another minute, stop and give As their minute to say what they are good at. Finally, Bs repeat back to As. Control the time carefully.

Extension

As a follow-up, if you wish, your students stand in a circle, and each person says one thing that their partner is good at.

Variation

If you have an interactive whiteboard*, you can play **Guess what I'm good at**; for homework beforehand, students find at least four or five images that are related in some way to things they are good at. It is better if the images chosen do not have too obvious a connection with one another. Your students email their images to you, and you

5.13

Ping pong of talents

can paste each student's images on a different page.

In class, one student begins by saying 'Guess what I'm good at!' and the rest of the class looks at the images on the page; when the class guesses one correctly, the student erases the image. If any are too difficult to guess, the student can give hints. After all images are gone, you can have someone try to remember all the things and say, *You are good at ..., you are good at ..., you are good at ... and you are good at*

* If an interactive whiteboard isn't available you can still play it; students could bring in drawings they have made or photos from magazines, one to a page.