

Introductions, Greetings, and Small Talk with Strangers

Materials: Handout for Introductions, Greetings, and Small Talk with Strangers

Objectives: how to introduce yourself, how to greet people in different settings, and how to make ‘small talk’ with strangers.

Vocabulary: introduce, greet, ‘small talk’, ‘strike up’.

1. Tell students that today you will be talking about introductions, greetings, and small talk with strangers.
2. **Introduce** yourself by saying, “Hello, *my name is* _____ and I’ll be your teacher for this class.” Note that sometimes people say, “Hi, *I’m* _____.” Tell students that *hello* is more formal than *hi*, and people say *my name is* or *I’m* when they introduce themselves.
3. Ask each student to introduce herself to the class. After she has introduced herself say, “Hello, (use the women’s name). It’s nice to meet you.” Coach her to respond, “It’s nice to meet you, too.”
4. You can decide if you want to model this exchange with each student OR if when the next student introduces herself, the student before her can say, “Nice to meet you _____.”
5. After you have gone around the room once, you can have all the students mingle randomly with one another giving them a chance to practice introducing themselves to a variety of women. Monitor the students and help anyone who seems to need it.
6. Ask the women, “Now you all know each other’s names. How will you **greet** each other the next time you see one another?” If you don’t get any appropriate responses you can suggest, “The next time I see you I’ll say, ‘Hi, (use one woman’s name). It’s nice to see you again.’” Coach her to say, “Nice to see you again, too”
7. If the women want to practice this, let them mingle. Monitor the students as they practice.
8. Tell the students that in the United States it is not uncommon for complete strangers to ‘strike up’ a conversation. Ask them if that is the same in their home cultures. Ask them if there are certain unspoken rules for conversing with strangers. For example, would it be improper for a woman to address a man she didn’t know? Would it be improper for a man to address a woman he didn’t know? Give each woman a chance to talk about the customs of **small talk** with strangers in her culture.

9. Let them know that we usually don't give our names to strangers when we engage in small talk. Ask how they might know if someone is open (willing) to having a conversation. Ask if they feel safe talking to a stranger. Ask if they feel safe when a stranger talks to them. Let them discuss situations when they would or would not feel safe talking with a stranger.

10. Give each woman a Handout and direct their attention to the 'small talk' section.

Choose one of the situations and ask for a volunteer to act out what you could say in the situation. For example: You are at a bus stop on a windy and rainy day. The bus is late. You are standing next to a woman who is holding on to her hat so it won't blow away. She looks in your direction.

You say, "Wow, the wind is so strong today!"

She says, "Yes, it's really incredible. I feel like I'm going to blow away!"

You say, "What a day for the bus to be late."

If your volunteer gets stuck for something to say, ask the rest of the class to help her. Let them know the conversation doesn't have to be long. The point of 'small talk' is simply to have a *friendly exchange* with someone.

11. Have each woman work with a partner to practice 'small talk'. Monitor the students as they practice. Give them a chance to work with two or three partners.

Ask one or two pairs to demonstrate their 'small talk' for the class.

Homework: If your culture and/or religion permit it, engage in small talk with a stranger. Do this only when you feel safe!

Handout for Introductions, Greetings, and Small Talk with Strangers

Vocabulary:

1. Introduce yourself (verb) – to give your name to someone for the first time.
2. greet (verb) – to say hello, hi, etc. to someone.
3. small talk (noun) - friendly conversation about unimportant subjects.
4. strike up a conversation (verb) – begin a conversation.

Introductions and Greetings: How we introduce ourselves lets other people know how we want to be addressed. For example, if I introduce myself as Ms. Jones, that means I want you to call me (to address me) Ms. Jones. If I introduce myself as Susan Jones, you might call me Ms. Jones. If I prefer to be called Susan, I will say, “Please call me Susan.”

The first time we meet someone we might say: “It’s nice to meet you”, or simply, “Nice to meet you”, “Pleasure to meet you”.

In a more formal introduction: Person A says, “I’m Dr. Jones”. You would reply, “How do you do, Dr. Jones. I’m Ms. Smith.” Dr. Jones might reply, “How do you do, Ms. Smith.” You are not really asking for information about how the other person is doing! This is just a formal way of meeting and greeting someone.

Small Talk:

1. You are at a bus stop on a windy and rainy day. The bus is late. You are standing next to a woman who is holding on to her hat so it won’t blow away. She looks in your direction.
2. You are standing in line at the supermarket the day before a major holiday. The line is moving slowly and there are six people in front of you. The person in front of you looks at you and rolls her eyes.
3. You are walking down the street on a snowy day. The sidewalk is slippery. A woman with a small child is walking down the street. They are both slipping and sliding. The little child is laughing.
4. You are at your child’s school watching a basketball game. Your child is on the team. A woman walks toward you and she *asks if the seat next to you is taken* (if you are waiting for a friend to sit in that seat).