Talk Italian 2 in the classroom

Make the most of Talk Italian 2 with a range of ideas for classroom activities designed to:

- make your lessons lively, sociable and motivating

- get your learners talking

- practise, consolidate and extend the core material of the Talk Italian 2 book and audio

- contribute portfolio evidence for accreditation purposes

Many of the ideas also lend themselves to preparation for externally assessed Asset Languages Preliminary Level speaking tasks.

Please feel free to print out the classroom activities that follow, but make sure you have read the terms and conditions for their use set out in the legal statement. Further resources to help you in the classroom are also available on our dedicated tutors' page.

Before you get started, however, find out why activities are needed, how Talk Italian 2 can be used successfully in the classroom and how to make the most effective use of the activities:

Why do I need these activities?

1. They promote a sociable atmosphere, and research shows that adults learn better and are more likely to stick to their course when the group dynamic is strong.

2. People are far more likely to retain words and phrases they've used themselves in context, than ones they've seen or heard passively.

3. When concentrating on exchanging specific information, learners will quickly lose any self-consciousness and inhibitions they might have.

4. Repetition is vital to retaining language, but it can be tedious. During these activities key language elements have to be repeated in an interesting and natural way to communicate the required information.

5. The activities allow an element of choice in the language used and are structured to prepare learners for the unpredictability inherent to language. They also provide the opportunity to include additional vocabulary relevant to the class.

6. Realising that they can communicate information successfully – entirely in Italian – promotes a great feeling of achievement in the learner and offers immediate confirmation of progress.

7. Adults tend to lead busy lives and, given that many classes take place in the evening, may well be tired and stressed before they even start the class. On a purely practical level therefore, it makes sense to add variety and interest to the lesson and to ensure people participate in a sociable, motivating learning experience.

Using Talk Italian 2 in the classroom

Adults attending a language class expect it to add another dimension to their learning – they want more than they could do at home by themselves. So here are a few ideas on how to make Talk Italian 2 the backbone of your course and still allow learners to find fresh material in the book when they are studying alone.

1. The **introductory page** is there to focus on the learning aims of the unit and to put them in context. It's very motivating for your class to hear your personal take on Italian culture, and many of them are likely to have experiences of their own to contribute.

2. The audio intentionally uses a lot of English when **presenting the key words and phrases**, to cater for people learning on their own without a teacher. In the classroom, you can introduce the language with as little or as much English as you choose, using devices such as images, mime and paraphrase.

3. Instead of using the **exercises illustrating the key language** exactly as they are in the book, why not create your own alternative exercises for learners to use with the Talk Italian 2 audio clips. These can include simple comprehension questions, multiple-choice questions, gap-fill, true or false, tick the right option, and so on.

4. When you feel learners have been sufficiently prepared, slot in **the interactive activities**. You can personalise the course by supplying new vocabulary which you feel would make the situation particularly relevant to your group – and also encourage them to use a dictionary.

5. Modify and add to exercises on the Put it all together page to **practise vocabulary and grammar**. For example, match phrases in the two languages by writing them out, cutting them into individual strips and getting groups to match the strips. You can extend this to a full dialogue, cut it into its component parts and ask learners to rearrange it. There are some very effective cards and dice on the market which can be useful for specific grammar practise - tenses, irregular verbs, pronouns, agreement.

6. If you change just a few of the details in the Now you're talking **role-plays** for use in the classroom, it leaves learners with an additional one for each unit to do at home.

7. Leave the **quiz** for homework.

8. At the end of a unit, **use the Checklist** as the basis for a class discussion – to motivate the group by showing them how much they've learnt. Make sure they're aware of the learning hint for the unit and add any of your own that you feel are appropriate. This is another opportunity for personalising the course.

Making the most of the Talk Italian 2 ideas for classroom activities

There are several activities outlined for each unit. It is not suggested that you use them all, but that you pick and choose what will suit your class. But, whichever you use, you can make sure of their effectiveness with these simple guidelines.

1. Before starting an activity, make sure that …

- the room layout allows everyone to move around freely and talk to one another easily
- you've covered the appropriate material and learners are thoroughly familiar with the language they'll need to use
- you've set the context convincingly to bring the situation to life
- everyone knows exactly what they're meant to be doing

2. During the activity, monitor closely and …

- keep the pace and momentum going
- praise often to promote confidence
- encourage good pronunciation
- use your judgement as to when to correct mistakes and do so constructively and tactfully
- don't let the activity go on too long even though some learners inevitably take longer than others to achieve a task

3. At the end of the activity, draw it all together and provide feedback:

- summarise the task, reinforcing the language used and discussing any common mistakes
- encourage discussion and questions in Italian
- generate a sense of achievement by pointing out to learners what they've achieved using Italian
- on portfolio-assessed courses, make sure everyone retains and files completed worksheets or cards
- encourage learners to evaluate their progress using the checklist on the final page of the relevant unit in the Talk Italian 2 book

www.bbcactivelanguages.com