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# Splendid Speaking Podcasts

Topic: Working Together to  
Reach Agreement  
(Interview: Extra 1: May Archives)

This show can be listened to at the following address:  
<http://splendid-speaking.com/blog/?p=43>



## Comprehension Questions

As you listen, decide if the following questions are true or false according to what Isabelle and Andreea say.

- 1) Andreea seems to have experience of organizing sporting tournaments.
- 2) Sending out newsletters is a good way of getting the students active.
- 3) Both speakers agree that they will need to employ someone to work with the children.
- 4) The coffee shop is not one of Isabelle's favourite ideas.
- 5) Andreea wants to sell biscuits and croissants.

## Transcript

### Introduction

Welcome to the Splendid Speaking podcast. My name's Pete Travis and this week we're listening to Isabelle from Switzerland and Andreea from Romania. A reminder that transcripts for all podcasts including this one are available to subscribers of our mailing list. You can sign up to the newsletter from [www.splendid-speaking.com](http://www.splendid-speaking.com).

How good are you at coming to a joint decision in a role play with another person? Well, this week, Isabelle and Andreea were asked to discuss the following situation, which was sent to them shortly before the interview:

Imagine you both work for a sports centre and you've been asked to come up with suggestions how to encourage more young people to take part in sport. Decide which two or three of the following suggestions would be most successful:

- Running an open day to show the facilities the centre has available
- Visiting schools to promote the centre
- Publishing a newsletter sent out to local children
- Organising a sporting tournament for young people
- Opening a cafe to encourage people into the centre

In previous interviews we've looked at how important it is to work cooperatively in role plays like this. This approach can give you a better chance of completing the task in the limited time available and will also give you the opportunity to show off your communication skills as you acknowledge, respond to and develop points made by your partner. Listen to Isabelle and Andreea and decide how well they manage to do this. In addition, decide if they successfully complete the task in the three minutes that were allowed. If you have access to the transcript, listen a second time and answer the comprehension questions. Finally, make a note of their use of English, which we'll look at in the feedback session. Let's listen to Isabelle and Andreea.

Isabelle: Andreea, do you mind if I start?

Andreea: No, not at all, please do.

Isabelle: OK, we were given five examples how we could promote our sports club and we given quite many different ideas so ... I actually have some favourites. What do you think about those different ideas?

Andreea: I think the best one and the most brilliant one is ... the fourth one ... organizing a sporting tournament for young people. This is what ... we do most of the time and ... actually right ... this week I'm ... preparing for it because ... the 1<sup>st</sup> of June is coming very close (Isabelle: OK) and ... on this day we celebrate the kid's ... kid's anniversary or something like that over here ... celebrated worldwide.

Isabelle: I actually don't know but it sounds to be a really good idea and I entirely agree. I ... I also think that an open day would be quite ... quite a good possibility to promote our club ... I actually think that we should do something very active as we want the kids to be active as well and because of that I personally think that ... sending out newsletters isn't such a good idea ... I know ... do you agree or do you have a different point of view?

Andreea: Yes, I totally agree we never did that because kids don't open that sort of thing ... on the other hand the ... the thing you suggested about the open day's brilliant ... only provided that ... we have in our employment someone very qualified to address kids and show them around and ... someone to look after them so that they may not get injured or something like that.

Isabelle: Yes I think ... I think you're right but I think that again ... it ... it's not so difficult to train our people working in ... in ... in our sports club ... I mean we could ... prepare in advance the fact sheet or something like that that people are ... informed about the facilities and that they could give great information especially for the kids ... yeah ... I ... I think there's this other idea of opening a coffee shop which actually doesn't belong to my favourites because we want them to be active and we don't want them to be ... lazy ... lazybones ... what do you think?

Andreea: I agree ... yes you're totally right because the coffee always goes with a biscuit or a croissant and ... they'll definitely be tempted to grab one of those before running to the basket ... basketball field or to the (Isabelle: Yeah, exactly ... exactly) soccer one.

Isabelle: So ... I think we don't even need to find a compromise yeah? We ... I think we ... we've got our favourites ... we've found our favourites, haven't we?

Andreea: Yes we have.

## Feedback

Let's start by thanking Isabelle and Andreea for taking part in this Skype interview and for agreeing to be recorded. If you have opinions on how well they did remember that you can always comment on this talk by going to the Splendid Speaking website. Now for some feedback. Both Isabelle and Andreea embraced the topic, came up with good suggestions and reached an agreed decision within the time limit. As we've seen earlier it's important to treat a task like this as a collaborative activity with the aim of coming to some form of agreement. This role play was an excellent example of how to do this. Both speakers were very accommodating of each other's point of view and worked together well in order to choose their favoured activities. For example, the conversation started with a very polite negotiation as to who should start:

*Isabelle: Andreea, do you mind if I start?*

*Andreea: No, not at all, please do.*

Isabelle explained that she had already decided on her favourite suggestions from the list but was thoughtful enough to allow Andreea to explain what she liked first:

*Isabelle: ... I actually have some favourites. What do you think about those different ideas?*

When giving her own opinion as to why she didn't like one of the suggestions, Isabelle avoided expressing her view too forcefully to avoid confrontation. Notice her use of 'personally' and 'such' to soften her opinion and then remembering to allow for Andreea to have a different view:

*Isabelle: "I actually think that we should do something very active as we want the kids to be active as well and because of that I personally think that ... sending out newsletters isn't such a good idea ... I know ... do you agree or do you have a different point of view?"*

Andreea was equally gracious in acknowledging her partner and showing agreement. She picked up on and praised points her partner had made but was also able to develop the point with a view of her own:

*Andreea: ... on the other hand the ... the thing you suggested about the open day's brilliant ... only provided that ... we have in our employment someone very qualified to address kids and show them around and ...*

Andreea didn't just agree for the sake of it but offered examples:

*Andreea: ... yes you're totally right because the coffee always goes with a biscuit or a croissant and ... they'll definitely be tempted to grab one of those before running to the basket ... basketball field or to the (Isabelle: Yeah, exactly ... exactly) soccer one.*

In terms of their general use of English both Isabelle and Andreea were very fluent and had clear pronunciation. They both had no difficulty finding the vocabulary they needed for the discussion and were able to talk about the topic very naturally and with accurate use of English. However, can you spot anything in these extracts which could be seen as errors in an exam?

*"...and we given quite many different ideas ..."*

*"... I actually don't know but it sounds to be a really good idea and I entirely agree..."*

*"... yes you're totally right because the coffee always goes with a biscuit or a croissant and ... they'll definitely be tempted to grab one of those before running to the basket ... basketball field..."*

Did you spot the errors?

*"...and we given quite many different ideas ..."*

This should be 'quite a lot of' or 'quite a few different ideas'.

*"... I actually don't know but it sounds to be a really good idea and I entirely agree..."*

Rather than 'sounds to be' this should be 'sounds like a really good idea'.

*"... yes you're totally right because the coffee always goes with a biscuit or a croissant and ... they'll definitely be tempted to grab one of those before running to the basket ... basketball field..."*

'Totally right' isn't really an error as such but 'absolutely' collocates better with 'right' so you'd normally say 'absolutely right'. We also call the place you play basketball a 'basketball court'.

OK. That's the end of this podcast. Once again, many thanks to Isabelle and Andreea. Until next week it's 'Bye' from me Pete Travis. And remember that you can download the transcript to this and all previous podcasts by signing up to the Splendid Speaking newsletter, a link to which you'll find at [www.splendid-speaking.com](http://www.splendid-speaking.com). And of course, don't forget to visit the website from Monday to Friday for our daily quiz featuring three colloquial expressions.

## **Answers to Comprehension Questions**

1) Andreea seems to have experience of organizing sporting tournaments.

Ans: True

2) Sending out newsletters is a good way of getting the students active.

Ans: False

3) Both speakers agree that they will need to employ someone to work with the children.

Ans: False

4) The coffee shop is not one of Isabelle's favourite ideas.

Ans: True

5) Andreea wants to sell biscuits and croissants.

Ans: False

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