



# ENGLISH CLUBS

THE CONCISE GUIDE  
FOR LEADERS AND MEMBERS



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# ENGLISH CLUBS:

## THE CONCISE GUIDE FOR LEADERS AND MEMBERS

Kathleen F. Malu, Ph.D.



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# **ENGLISH CLUBS: THE CONCISE GUIDE FOR LEADERS AND MEMBERS**

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# INTRODUCTION



Club Members celebrate their success at the English Clubs Festival in Togo.

If you are reading this *Introduction*, it is probably because you want to practice English. This is an important first step—congratulations!

Welcome to the worldwide community of English speakers and those who want to practice and improve their English!

This *Guide* gives you strategies for creating and sustaining an English Club. It also provides you with ideas that will excite, inspire, and encourage you to practice English and create positive changes in your communities.

The focus of this *Guide* is on practicing English—not on teaching English, although some sections in this *Guide* may seem similar to a textbook because some topics include definitions of useful vocabulary and

expressions. Nevertheless, as you focus on practicing English, I am sure that your vocabulary knowledge and ability to speak English will increase. How? Because you will be engaged in meaningful conversations and activities. You will also find that your confidence—and that of Club Members—in conversing, reading, and writing in English will improve.

This *Guide* is a condensed version of three other sources. If you want more ideas and information about English Clubs, see these publications: *The English Club Leader Guide*, *The English Club Member Handbook*, and *The Readers Club Handbook* at: [www.americanenglish.state.gov](http://www.americanenglish.state.gov) as well as the *English Teaching Forum* article, “Community-Based English Clubs: English Practice and Social Change Outside the Classroom” at: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/english-teaching-forum-volume-54-number-3#child-2162> and the English Club webinar recording “Creating and Sustaining English Language Clubs to Enhance English Learning” at: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/american-english-webinars#child-2146>.

Now, please turn to the next section, *Getting Started*. Here you’ll find more about English Clubs and how you can start one in your community.

Good luck! Have fun! Practice English! Help your community!

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## SECTION 1: GETTING STARTED

### Suggestions for Using this Guide

This *Guide* is divided into three sections:

- Section 1: Getting Started
- Section 2: For English Club Members
- Section 3: For the English Club Leadership Team

*Section 1: Getting Started* gives you ideas about how to start an English Club. Everyone who is interested in creating and launching an English Club should read this section. Topics include:

- Suggestions for using this *Guide*
- What is an English Club?
- How is a Leadership Team different from Members?
- How is an English class different from an English Club?
- The first English Club meeting

*Section 2: For English Club Members* has topics and activities for Club meetings. Members will use this section during Club meetings based on the directions given by the Club Leader. Topics in this section include *Democracy*, *Freedom of Expression*, and *Leadership*. Activities in each topic will provoke thoughtful conversations during English Club meetings. For each topic, there are activities such as:

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- Background information
- Skits
- Interviews and guest speakers
- Debate topics
- Reading and writing activities
- Vision boards
- Action plans

*Section 3: For the English Club Leadership Team* contains information about how to set up, manage, and lead Club meetings and activities. People who want to organize an English Club and the Club Leadership Team who are elected during the first Club meeting should read this section because it includes:

- Directions for how to organize Club meetings
- Techniques to use during Club meetings
- Problems and solutions for Club meetings
- Strategies for active listening and brainstorming
- Directions for organizing activities including skits, interviews, role-plays, debates, reading and writing activities, vision boards, and action plans

Now, continue reading to find out how to create and launch your English Club.



## What is an English Club?



### *An English Club is:*

- A group of people—Club Members—who meet regularly to practice speaking, listening, reading, and writing in English.
- A series of regularly scheduled meetings where Members practice English and help the community solve problems.

### *Why start an English Club?*

- English is a global language.
- Knowledge of English can help people in their jobs and with international business.
- Knowledge of English can help people get work online with international companies.



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- Members can have fun, interesting, thoughtful, and provocative conversations in English.
- English Clubs can solve problems in the community—while practicing English.

### *Who can join an English Club?*

- Everyone who wants to practice English.
- Anyone who wants to practice English, no matter who they are.

### *Where can the English Club meet?*

- At a convenient place for Members.
- In American Corners, American Spaces, or American Libraries.
- At public places such as a school, library, or park, or a Member's house.
- At a place with easy access to public transportation.

### *When can the English Club meet?*

- At a convenient time for Members.
- Once a week, twice a month, or once a month—at a convenient time for Members.
- In the evening for professionals, Saturday afternoons for secondary students, or Saturday nights for university students—at a convenient time for Members.



- Before or after a religious service.
- At a time that is agreed to by the Members and the Club Leadership Team.

### *For how long can the English Club meet?*

- Members can decide whether Club meetings are one or two hours, and for one year or many years.

### *What happens during English Club meetings?*

- After the first meeting, or within the first few, Members choose the Club Leadership Team and establish a meeting time, date, and place.
- Leaders organize meetings on topics of interest to Club Members, using *Sections 2 and 3* of this *Guide* and other resources.
- Members—guided by the Leaders—use *Section 2* of this *Guide* and other resources during meetings.
- Club meetings are conducted in English.
- Leaders and Members participate in conversations, skits, role-plays, interviews, debates, reading and writing activities, and community events to help improve the community.

*A note about atmosphere ...*

- The goal of the English Club is to practice English.
- Club meetings have a Leadership Team and Members.
- The Leadership Team and Members are equal and treated respectfully.
- Club meetings are fun, interesting, supportive times when everyone practices English.
- Club meetings are NOT a time to teach English—they are a time to practice English.
- Leaders are NOT teachers—they are coaches and guides for Members.
- Club meetings give Members opportunities to experiment and play with English.
- Leaders and Members must be kind, caring, and thoughtful.
- Leaders and Members must be supportive, encouraging, and respectful.
- Club meetings must be safe, supportive places where people talk about topics or ideas without fear.
- Club meetings have like-minded people who want to practice English and help their community.

*For more information about English Clubs, go to:*

1. The American English webinar at: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/american-english-webinars#child-2146>
2. The *Forum* article, “Community-Based English Clubs: English Practice and Social Change Outside the Classroom” at: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/english-teaching-forum-volume-54-number-3#child-2162>
3. *The English Club Leader Guide*, *The English Club Member Handbook*, and *The Readers Club Handbook* at: [www.americanenglish.state.gov](http://www.americanenglish.state.gov)

*Good luck!*

*Practice English!*

*Help the community!*

*Have fun!*





Leadership Team	Members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emails or calls Members when needed (for example: wish Members a happy birthday, ask about attendance)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give each other birthday wishes, support Members to attend meetings</li> <li>• Use <i>The English Club Member Handbook</i></li> </ul>

## How is an English class different from an English Club?

Although anyone can organize an English Club, English teachers who may want to organize English Clubs at their schools or in their community must know and understand the differences between an English class and an English Club.

In many English classes, the teacher stands in front of the classroom. Students sit and listen to the teacher. Students answer the teacher's questions, and the teacher decides if the answers are right or wrong. The atmosphere in English classes is often very formal. Students study, concentrate, and memorize what the teacher tells them. English classes are usually held during regular school hours.

In English Clubs, the teacher is a facilitator. If the teacher is elected to the Leadership Team, the teacher must remember to facilitate—not teach. The teacher must be a guide, a coach. Everyone who attends English Club meetings are called Members—not students. Members actively participate

in Club activities because they want to practice English. They do not study—they practice English by doing fun, interesting, and enjoyable activities. Practice focuses on the creativity and complexity of language. Members enjoy attending Club meetings because the atmosphere is relaxed and playful. Clubs meet at times that are convenient for Members.

## The First English Club Meeting

### Preparing for the First Meeting

The people who want to create an English Club (called “organizers”) should:

- Decide on a date, time, and place to meet.
- Reach out to and invite friends, family members, and/or professional colleagues who may be interested in joining an English Club and give them the information about the meeting.
- Tell everyone who wants to come to the meeting to bring a pen/pencil.
- Prepare enough slips of paper for voting ballots—these pieces of paper should be blank and the same size.
- Organize the meeting room and make sure there are enough chairs for everyone.

### The First Club Meeting Agenda: Step-by-Step

1. The organizers should:
  - Welcome the attendees;



- Encourage attendees to take seats and be attentive during the meeting;
- Ask the attendees to introduce themselves to the group, telling each other why they want to join the Club and what they hope to do at Club meetings; students might want to tell each other what their fields of study are; professionals might want to tell each other what their jobs are;
- Encourage the attendees (depending on how many are present) to speak for no more than five minutes.

Another way to begin the meeting is to ask the attendees to:

- Introduce themselves to their neighbor, the person sitting on their right or left;
- Present their neighbor to the group.

**2.** Next, the organizers should:

- Explain what an English Club is (consider using *What is an English Club?* on [page 5](#)) and what they want to do in the English Club;
- Ask attendees to share their ideas about what they want to do in the Club using a format similar to the one they used to introduce Club Members to each other;
- Explain about and hold elections for the Club Leadership Team (see below);

- Create a list of club rules that all Members agree to respect (see [page 16](#));
- Decide on the next meeting date, time, and place;
- Thank everyone for their attendance and participation.

Note: It is not necessary for the organizers to follow the agenda above exactly—this is a suggested agenda. It is important to adapt and modify the agenda so that it meets the needs of everyone interested in creating an English Club.

## Club Election Procedures

Organizers should follow these rules for holding a democratic election for the Club Leadership Team.

1. Organizers invite Members to serve on the Club Leadership Team.
2. Organizers ask a volunteer to be a Timekeeper (to keep watch on the time and help supervise the election). The Timekeeper may not run for office.
3. Ballots (small pieces of paper, prepared in advance) are given to the Timekeeper.
4. Organizers explain the possible roles and responsibilities for each of the Leadership Team positions: Leader (President), Associate Leader (Vice President), and Secretary (Assistant) (see [page 85](#)).
5. Club Members either self-nominate or nominate Members as candidates for each Leadership Team position.

6. All Candidates accept—or decline—the nomination.
  7. All Candidates for Leader (President) stand in front of the Members and explain why they want to lead (speeches should be no more than three minutes each).
  8. At the end of the speeches, Candidates answer questions from Club Members. The Timekeeper sets a reasonable length of time for questions and answers.
  9. Steps 5, 6, 7, and 8 are repeated for the positions of Associate Leader (Vice President) and Secretary (Assistant).
  10. When these steps are completed, the Timekeeper asks for two Member-Volunteers (they may NOT be candidates) to help distribute the ballots—one to each member, including all the Candidates—and witness the tally count.
  11. Members vote in silence, writing the names of their choices for each of the three positions on the ballot.
  12. Members deposit their ballots in a box at the front of the meeting room and return to their seats.
  13. When all Members have deposited their ballots, the Timekeeper and the two Member-Volunteers open and read aloud the names on each ballot.
  14. The Timekeeper makes a public tally of each vote (preferably on a chalkboard or paper easel) in view of all Club Members.
  15. When all the ballots are recorded, the Timekeeper and Member-Volunteers count up the votes and announce the winners.

Note: Ballots with any errors including inaccurate names, more than three names, or names of two candidates for the same position must be eliminated from the tally. Such errors void these ballots. These ballots are invalid and must not be counted.

For more information about election procedures and different kinds of leadership configurations, see the webinar at: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/american-english-webinars#child-2146> and the *Forum* article, “Community-Based English Clubs: English Practice and Social Change Outside the Classroom” at: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/english-teaching-forum-volume-54-number-3#child-2162>.

## Club Rules

Equally important at the first Club meeting (or within the first few meetings) is the creation of club rules. These rules should come from the Members and should address roles, responsibilities, and procedures that the Leadership Team and Members will follow. The most effective club rules should support and promote the goals and values of the Club Members. Below is a sample list of club rules that one English Club created:

- The Leadership Team and Members must attend all meetings.
- The Leadership Team should arrive early, and Members must be on time.
- The Leadership Team and Members must respect all opinions.

- The Leadership Team and Members must make sure that boys/men and girls/women participate equally.
- No one must talk about politics or use the names of government officials.
- When the Leader is absent, the Associate Leader (Vice President) or the Secretary (Assistant) leads the meeting.
- Members who can't attend a meeting must tell another Member or the Secretary.
- No one must talk about religion.
- Everyone must respect each other.
- Club meetings are not the place for finding a husband or wife.

## Conclusion

Congratulations! Once you have held elections and created the club rules, your Club is ready to hold regular meetings. The Leadership Team should read *Section 3*. During meetings, the Club can use activities in *Section 2* and other Club resources found at: [www.americanenglish.state.gov](http://www.americanenglish.state.gov).



It is important for the Leadership Team and Members to remember that English Clubs should meet Club Member needs and goals. Information, topics, and ideas in this *Guide* are suggestions. Clubs should develop their own activities, modifying the ideas presented here as needed, and use these ideas as springboards for making English Clubs unique experiences that are meaningful for each Club.

Please remember this: There is no one right way to organize and run an English Club! Each Club should be unique because it should address the needs and desires of Members and the Leadership Team.



*Good luck!*

*Practice English!*

*Help the community!*

*Have fun!*

## SECTION 2: FOR ENGLISH CLUB MEMBERS

### Introduction

If you are reading this section, then you are probably an English Club Member interested in practicing English. Welcome! Congratulations on taking this important step in improving your English. *English Clubs: The Concise Guide for Leaders and Members* will give you and your Club Leadership Team topics and activities that you can use in Club meetings.

As a Club Member, please follow the directions from the Club Leader when using *Section 2*. This section gives you a few topics you can talk about during English Club meetings. You will find many more topics online at: [www.americanenglish.state.gov](http://www.americanenglish.state.gov).

As a Club Member, do you have any responsibilities to the Club? Yes, you do! Here are a few responsibilities you have. Your Club may decide that you have a few more, or different, responsibilities when you meet. Unless your Club decides differently, you should:

- Attend all meetings.
- Come on time—or a few minutes early—for Club meetings.
- If you will be absent, tell the Leadership Team—if you can't reach someone on the Leadership Team, tell another Club Member to report your absence.
- If the Leader asks you to prepare something for a meeting, be sure to come prepared with whatever you are asked to bring or do.
- Follow the club rules—Club Members and the Leadership Team will create these.

- Be open and honest with Club Members.
- Remember that the goal of the Club is to practice English, have fun, and help your community.

Before going further, your Club Leader may want you to practice two important techniques. These are called:

- Active listening
- Brainstorming

Follow the directions from your Club Leader as you learn to use these techniques. Below are the rules you should follow when using these techniques.

## Active Listening

Before we can understand others, we must walk a mile in their shoes. Before we can walk in other people's shoes, we must first take off our own.\*

- Listen to the words and feelings of the Member.
- See the world and feel the world through the Member's eyes—empathize with this person.
- Try to understand the Member's feelings.

### *Rules for Active Listening*

- Let's not think about our opinions—let's listen to each other.
- Let's try not to judge others.
- Let's try to understand each other as if we are walking in each other's shoes.



- Let's listen with:
  - Our ears;
  - Our eyes;
  - Our hearts.
- Let's watch for non-verbal signs when Members talk.
- Let's allow Members to talk and then ask them to explain further.

Below are questions that Members can ask each other when using active listening:

- Could you explain further?
- Can you tell me more about \_\_\_\_\_?
- I want to try to summarize your idea—may I?  
[Member summarizes the other's idea.]
- Let me check. Did you say \_\_\_\_\_? [Member summarizes the other's idea.]
- You said \_\_\_\_\_. Is this correct?
- I want to try to restate your opinion without criticizing you—may I?

\*<http://grammarist.com/phrase/walk-a-mile-in-someone-elses-shoes/>

*Practicing Active Listening: A Skit**The Characters*

Narrator (N)	Anne (A)	Martin (M)	Club Leader (CL)
<b>N:</b>	The English Club is talking about the advantages and disadvantages of a dowry, the money or objects that a woman's family gives to their future son-in-law when she marries him. Anne and Martin tell each other their opinions about dowry. Martin has just finished his explanation, and Anne is trying to understand his point of view and express hers too. The Club Leader wants to be sure they are using active listening.		
<b>M:</b>	This is why I'm in favor of a dowry.		
<b>A:</b>	OK. You say you favor the dowry because it gives respect to the woman. Am I right?		
<b>M:</b>	Yes, you're right.		
<b>A:</b>	Now, I disagree with you. Don't you know that a man will choose the woman with the highest dowry?		
<b>M:</b>	But that's stupid. Why would ... ?		
<b>CL:</b>	Stop Martin. Stop. First of all, Anne didn't finish her point. Second, you didn't summarize her idea before giving yours. Third, we don't use words like "stupid" in this Club.		
<b>M:</b>	I apologize.		

<b>A:</b>	So, I wanted to say that the family will let their daughter marry the man with the best future—someone who will earn a lot of money. Should women be given away for money?
<b>M:</b>	OK. That's not going to happen because ...
<b>CL:</b>	Stop. What did Anne say?
<b>M:</b>	You're right. Anne thinks the family will give their daughter to the richest man—not to someone who might love her. But I disagree ...
<b>CL:</b>	Just a second. Anne, do you think Martin sees your point?
<b>A:</b>	No.
<b>CL:</b>	Martin, would you please try again? Or should Anne repeat her idea?
<b>N:</b>	Martin repeats Anne's idea. At the end of the conversation, everyone agrees that active listening is not easy to do but it helps everyone have a respectful conversation, especially when topics are controversial and difficult.

## Brainstorming

### *Rules for Brainstorming:*

- Everyone has ideas.
- All ideas are good.
- Don't criticize any ideas.
- Don't debate any ideas.
- No idea is crazy or bad.
- Use one idea to create a new idea.
- Give lots of ideas.
- Be creative, funny, crazy!

## Democracy



### Introduction

This section explores democracy with several activities including a skit and an interview with Joshua Wong, the founder of a group of young people fighting for free elections. Quotations from world leaders give ideas about what democracy means around the world. This topic examines the question: What does democracy mean to us?

## Can't You Vote Another Day? A Skit

### *Useful Vocabulary and Expressions*

<b>First</b>	The first time for something
<b>Semester</b>	One of two eighteen-week periods of instruction which divide an academic year
<b>Credit card</b>	A card that allows purchases on credit
<b>Dorm</b>	Dormitory; a residence hall that provides rooms with multiple beds for students
<b>Polling station</b>	A place where people go to vote in an election
<b>Vote</b>	To make an official choice for or against someone or something by casting a ballot, raising a hand
<b>Election</b>	The act or process of selecting someone for a public office by voting
<b>Flat out</b>	In a very clear or direct way
<b>Hover</b>	To stay very close to a person or place
<b>Cafeteria</b>	A place where people get food at a counter and carry it to a table for eating
<b>Park</b>	To leave a car in a particular place
<b>To roll one's eyes</b>	To move one's eyes up and around as a sign of annoyance or impatience
<b>Bored</b>	Feeling tired and annoyed because there is nothing interesting or new to do or see
<b>Awesome</b>	Extremely good

<b>Elect</b>	To select someone for a position or job by voting
<b>Amazing</b>	Causing great surprise or wonder
<b>Receive</b>	To get or be given something
<b>Sticker</b>	A piece of paper with a picture or writing on it and a sticky substance on its back that is used to attach it to a surface
<b>Wave</b>	To move your hand or something held in your hand usually in a repeated motion in order to signal or greet someone
<b>Clap</b>	To hit the palm of your hands together usually more than once

*Can't You Vote Another Day? A Skit*

*The Characters*

Narrator (N)	Farah (F)	Nadine (Na)	Jody (J)	Mom (M)	Little Boy (LB)
--------------	-----------	-------------	----------	---------	-----------------

**N:** Three young ladies are excited about a lot of **firsts** this year. It is their first **semester** in their first year of college. It is the first time they have lived in a **dorm** away from their parents. They got their first **credit cards** last week, and today, they are going to the **polling station** to vote in their first election.

- F:** Wake up ladies! We've got to get to breakfast so we can go to the **polling station** before class.
- Na:** Farah! It's six a.m. You're just **flat out** mean to wake us up at six a.m.
- F:** Nadine! We all have eight o'clock classes. If we don't go and get in line, we won't be able to get to class on time.
- J:** OK! We're getting up. Just **hover** somewhere else till I wake up.
- F:** Now that you are both up, I'm going to breakfast. I'll see you both there in fifteen minutes.
- J:** Tyrant!
- F:** (laughing)
- N:** The ladies get ready and meet Farah at the campus **cafeteria** for a quick breakfast. After breakfast, they walk together to Farah's car, get in, and drive to the **polling station**.
- Na:** Here we are! Look, there's the **polling station**.
- F:** Well done! I'm going to let you two get out and get in line while I **park**.
- N:** Jody and Nadine get out of the car and stand in line behind a woman with a seven-year-old little boy and a baby.
- LB:** Mom, why do we have to stand in line today? It's too early. I want to go back to sleep.
- M:** Mommy has to **vote** today.
- LB:** Can't you **vote** another day or when I'm at school?
- M:** No, honey. I have to **vote** today, and this is the only time I have free.

<b>LB:</b>	Voting is stupid.
<b>N:</b>	The mother does not say anything. She <b>rolls her eyes</b> . Nadine is very upset by the mother's reaction to the little boy's comments, and she thinks about how to teach him the importance of voting in an interesting way. Then she has an idea. She decides she will be really excited about voting and she will talk about how important it is with her friends. The little boy is <b>bored</b> and will probably listen, she thinks.
<b>Na:</b>	What time is it?
<b>J:</b>	Six-thirty. Why?
<b>Na:</b>	Yay! We only have thirty more minutes till we can <b>vote</b> ! This is so <b>amazing</b> . I can't wait.
<b>F:</b>	Nadine, you're so excited to <b>vote</b> . You're dancing. That's <b>awesome</b> .
<b>Na:</b>	Of course I'm excited. This is the time when we, the people, speak. This is the time when we make laws, when we <b>elect</b> men and women to serve and protect our institutions. This makes our country stronger and freer. It makes our lives comfortable and gives us lots of opportunities. Voting helps us protect our rights as citizens and the rights of our children. To protect our democracy and to <b>vote</b> are the most important jobs we have as citizens.
<b>N:</b>	The little boy, <b>bored</b> with standing in line, listens to Nadine, Jody, and Farah talk about the importance of voting. When the <b>polling station</b> opens, he grows very excited. The line to <b>vote</b> takes longer than expected, and his mom begins to talk about leaving to get him to school on time. The little boy stops her by saying:

- LB:** No, mom. We cannot leave now. You must be a good citizen and protect my rights and my sister's rights until we are able to **vote**. My teacher will understand.
- N:** The little boy's mother agrees, and they wait. Soon the line moves forward and the little boy's mom and the ladies **vote**. After voting, Farah, Nadine, and Jody each **receive a sticker** that reads, "I **voted**." As they come out of the **polling station**, a car drives by. In the back seat, the boy **waves** at Nadine and proudly holds the **sticker** up to the window for her to see. Nadine **waves** back and **claps** her hands.

*Conversation Questions: Choose a Few to Talk About*

1. What is your opinion of Nadine?
2. What is your opinion of the boy's mother?
3. How does the little boy change during the skit?
4. Do you agree with the ideas that Nadine presented about the importance of voting? Why or why not?
5. Do you think it is important to vote? Why?
6. Imagine the little boy is at school. What do you think he does with the sticker?

## An Interview with Joshua Wong

### *Useful Vocabulary and Expressions*

<b>Demonstration</b>	A public group display of feelings towards a person or cause
<b>Protest</b>	An organized public demonstration of disapproval
<b>Indifferent</b>	Lack of interest or enthusiasm
<b>To throw away</b>	To get rid of or give away
<b>To have a voice</b>	To have a right or power to influence or make a decision about something

## *An Interview with Joshua Wong*

### *The Characters*

Interviewer (I)	Joshua Wong (JW)
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<b>I:</b>	<p>Joshua Wong, it is a pleasure to have the chance to interview you today. For those of you listening to the radio today, Joshua Wong is the leader behind Scholarism, a student group that led <b>demonstrations</b> in Hong Kong to <b>protest</b> for free and fair elections. We'll be discussing why he organized the <b>protests</b> and what's next for this remarkable young man. Joshua, you were seventeen years old when you staged a pro-democracy <b>protest</b> that grew to 200,000 people at one point. How do you feel about that?</p>
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**JW:** My purpose was to raise political awareness of the new generation. Many believed that we were **indifferent** to politics. As you can see, this is not true. The youth of Hong Kong are very interested in politics because it directly affects us.

**I:** You faced the possibility of jail time for your role in the **protests**. Was it worth it for you? Didn't you think you were **throwing your life away**?

**JW:** This is my home and my future. I want to take care of the community I am living in so that when the “one country, two systems” agreement ends in less than fifty years, my family and community are protected. We should be allowed to elect and vote for whomever we want in our community. We are in great danger of losing our basic human rights with the changes we are seeing in the government. So, no, I am not **throwing away** my future. I am protecting it. If it means going to jail, I will do so.

**I:** The point of the movement was for Hong Kong to get free elections. You were not successful. Do you feel that you failed?

**JW:** Absolutely not. We want free elections, but what is more important is to energize the youth of Hong Kong and to show them that **they have a voice**. I think it's also more important for the youth to continue to develop critical thinking, stay informed politically, care about the fate of Hong Kong, and take care of our great city and country. We should be independent thinkers. This is important, and it was these ideals that were sparked by the movement.

I:	How do your parents feel about your activities?
JW:	My parents have always been supportive of me and my activities. They understand what I am fighting for.
I:	Thank you, Joshua Wong. It has been a pleasure talking with you today, and I wish you the best of luck.

This interview is based on:

Garber, Jonathan. “This 19-year-old Started a Massive Protest Movement in Hong Kong – and Now the Government Is Putting Him on Trial.” *Business Insider*, 28 Feb. 2016, [www.businessinsider.com/joshua-wong-interview-trial-protest-movement-hong-kong-2016-2](http://www.businessinsider.com/joshua-wong-interview-trial-protest-movement-hong-kong-2016-2).

Wen, Philip. “Joshua Wong, the Teen Who Shook Hong Kong’s Future.” *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 Sept. 2015, [www.smh.com.au/world/the-teen-who-shook-a-hongkong-generation-into-action--future-in-joshua-wongs-hands-20150924-gju55k.html](http://www.smh.com.au/world/the-teen-who-shook-a-hongkong-generation-into-action--future-in-joshua-wongs-hands-20150924-gju55k.html).

### Conversation Questions: Choose a Few to Talk About

1. What is your opinion of Joshua Wong?
2. Do you think it is worth going to jail to stand up for your beliefs?
3. Should Joshua Wong’s parents allow him to participate in these activities? Why or why not?
4. Would you participate in a protest or other activities to preserve your rights?
5. Do you think it is important to be involved in politics? Why?
6. What is the best way for you to be involved in politics?

## Quotations about Democracy: A Conversation

Let's think and talk about these questions:

- What kinds of governments do we know?
- What is democracy?
- What does “democracy” mean?

After answering the questions above, think about this definition of democracy:

- Democracy is a form of government. All citizens can participate equally—either directly or through elected representatives, indirectly—in the creation of laws and other regulations that the society uses.

### *Useful Vocabulary and Expressions*

<b>Safeguard</b>	Something that provides protection against possible loss or damage
<b>To worship</b>	To honor or respect someone or something as a god
<b>To interfere</b>	To become involved in the activities and concerns of other people when this involvement is not wanted
<b>Keen</b>	Having or showing an ability to think clearly and to understand what is not obvious or simple about something

Notion	An idea or opinion
Pedestal	The base of a column or other tall object
To surround	To be on every side of something or someone
Beget	To cause something to happen or exist
Tyranny	Cruel and unfair treatment by people with power over others
Departure	The action of leaving, moving away from something
Wolves—a wolf	Large wild animals that are similar to a dog and that often hunt in groups
Lamb	A young sheep
To undermine	To make someone or something weaker or less effective usually in a secret or gradual way

Now, let's read the following quotations about democracy. As we read, let's try to decide which quotes we prefer. We can also think about these questions:

- What do each of the quotations mean?
- Which quotations interest you? Why?

### Quotations

1. To safeguard democracy, the people must have a keen sense of independence, self-respect and their oneness.

—Mahatma Gandhi

2. My **notion** of democracy is that under it the weakest should have the same opportunity as the strongest. That can never happen except through non-violence.

—*Mahatma Gandhi*

3. In a true democracy, every man and woman is taught to think for himself or herself.

—*Mahatma Gandhi*

4. It is the people who control the government, not the government the people.

—*Winston S. Churchill*

5. Democracy begins with freedom from hunger, freedom from unemployment, freedom from fear, and freedom from hatred.

—*Vandana Shiva*

6. My people are going to learn the principles of democracy, the dictates of truth and the teachings of science. Superstition must go. Let them **worship** as they will; every man can follow his own conscience, provided it does not **interfere** with sane reason or bid him against the liberty of his fellow men.

—*Mustafa Kemal Atatürk*

7. You see these dictators on their pedestals, surrounded by the bayonets of their soldiers and the truncheons of their police ... yet in their hearts there is unspoken fear. They are afraid of words and thoughts.

—Winston S. Churchill

8. Secrecy begets tyranny.

—Robert Heinlein

9. Protest beyond the law is not a **departure** from democracy; it is absolutely essential to it.

—Howard Zinn

10. Democracy is not freedom. Democracy is two **wolves** and a **lamb** voting on what to eat for lunch. Freedom comes from the recognition of certain rights which may not be taken, not even by a 99% vote.

—Marvin Simkin

11. I am a firm believer in the people. If given the truth, they can be depended upon to meet any national crises. The great point is to bring them the real facts.

—Abraham Lincoln

12. Democracy is necessary to peace and to **undermining** the forces of terrorism.

—Benazir Bhutto



### *Conversation Questions: Choose a Few to Talk About*

1. Which of these quotes is your favorite and why?
2. How are all these quotes related to democracy?
3. Which of the quotes do you feel is not about democracy?
4. Create your own quote about what democracy means to you.
5. Who created the most favorite quote? Why is it so popular?

### **Is this Democracy? A Short Story**

This section includes a short story. This story is true. As we read, think about this question: Is this story about democracy?

Last week, many people were arrested at a peaceful protest. They were protesting the government's decision to change the Constitution. The government said that these people were terrorists.

Earlier today, one of the political opposition leaders was released from jail. He was in jail for eight years. He was arrested because he said, "We must save our country. Our country is in danger; there are enemies surrounding us. We must join together and fight for our country."

### *Conversation Questions: Choose a Few to Talk About*

1. Is this a story about democracy or free speech? Explain.
2. Are there connections between democracy and free speech? Explain.
3. Is this a story about terrorism? Explain.
4. Was the government correct to imprison this person for eight years? Explain.

5. Was this a democratic decision? Explain.
6. What impact can this story have on the people in this country?
7. If this happened in our country, would we protest? Explain.
8. How can we let our government know when we do not agree with something it does?

## Guest Speaker: Ideas for a Presentation

Here are some ideas for presentations about democracy, free speech, and elections.

- How do different countries around the world practice democracy?
- How does the media influence democracy?
- Is any one country truly democratic?
- Can a democracy function without free speech?
- How can we support free speech?
- How do we encourage free speech?
- How do we monitor elections?
- How can we encourage everyone to vote?
- How do elections work in our country?

## Debate Topics

These are suggested debate topics. Members may want to choose (by consensus or vote) one or a few from this list. Or, Members and/or the Leadership Team can modify, change, or add topics that are of interest to the Club. The Leader will establish the debate rules using the directions in *Section 3*.



**TOPIC: Democracy**

**PRO**—Democracy is the best form of government for everyone.

**CON**—Democracy is not the best form of government for everyone.

**TOPIC: The Right to Protest**

**PRO**—The right to protest is a form of free speech.

**CON**—The right to protest is not a form of free speech.

**TOPIC: Democracy and Literacy**

**PRO**—Democracy requires a literate population.

**CON**—Democracy does not require a literate population.

**TOPIC: Free Press**

**PRO**—Free press is necessary for a democratic government.

**CON**—Free press is not necessary for a democratic government.

**TOPIC: Social Media and Developed Countries**

**PRO**—Developed countries have a right to block social media during riots in poor countries.

**CON**—Developed countries do not have a right to block social media during riots in poor countries.

Suggest other ideas for debate topics to other Members and also share them with the Club Leadership Team.

## A Vision Board for Democracy

Here are questions to help create a vision board for democracy. Let's use them or create our own questions to talk about democracy as we create our vision board.

- Are our local community leaders upholding democratic ideals?
- What ideals are missing?
- Is there a way we can encourage the development of these ideals in our community?
- Is there one democratic ideal in particular that we would like to be sure to have in our community?

Our vision board should answer one to three of the questions below:

- How do we want our community to look in the next five years?
- What can we do to support our goals?
- What democratic principles would we like in our life?
- In the next five years, what democratic principles would we like to have in our community?

Here are a few questions for us to think about—in private or as Club Members:

- Do I feel free to speak at my workplace or school?
- Do I feel supported at my workplace or school?
- How can I add more democratic ideals to my workplace or school?
- Do I feel free to speak in Club meetings?
- Do I feel supported in this English Club?
- How can I add more democratic ideals to our English Club?



## Freedom of Expression



## Introduction

What is freedom of expression? Let's take a minute to think about this idea and then share what we think with each other.

Freedom of Expression is a human right that is recognized by Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from the United Nations. Article 19 states that “everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.” Included in Freedom of Expression is the concept of Free Speech.

## Wangari Muta Maathai: A Short Story

Below we have a true story about a woman, Wangari Muta Maathai, who worked tirelessly to promote the rights of the citizens in her country. The government of her country did not support her right to freedom of expression, but she resisted. Here is a part of her story.

Before we read, let's play a guessing game. Let's ask ourselves a few questions. Answer these questions—make a few guesses. Let's see if we can predict some of the answers before we read. Don't look at the story. Let's try to guess the answers using whatever we can from what we read above.

- Where do we think Wangari lived? What country can we guess that she came from?
- How old do we think Wangari was at the beginning of this story?
- What was the policy that Wangari tried to change in her country?



- Could Wangari have worked in more than her own country? If yes, where else might she have worked?
- What might Wangari have done to become famous?

Now, let's share our answers with each other.

We tried to guess some ideas we might read about in this short story. Now, let's read. As we read, let's see if our answers—our predictions—are right or wrong. How close did we come to some good guesses? Remember, this is a true story!

### *Wangari Muta Maathai: A Short Story*

In the 1980s, Dr. Wangari Muta Maathai went to Nyeri, the area where she grew up. The women of that area told her they had problems. Their children were malnourished because the soil ran into the river during the rainy season. Furthermore, there were no trees, so they had to walk very long distances to gather firewood. The government cut down many trees and sold them, and after clearing the land, the government did not replant what they had taken. Dr. Maathai had a simple answer to the women's problems. Let's plant trees!

During this time, Kenya was under the rule of a leader who forbade public gatherings and people communicating with each other. The women of the community gathered together to create a tree nursery and plant trees. They shared their stories, their hopes, and their frustrations in a way that empowered them. What they learned about planting trees they shared with others, and environmental education began to spread. Dr. Maathai

created the Green Belt Movement (GBM), which ran community development programs across the country by planting trees. The Movement was such a success that in 1986 the Pan African Green Belt Network was formed. It included Uganda, Malawi, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and Ethiopia.

When the GBM learned that parts of the Karura Forest were being illegally sold off, they protested by blocking the people from cutting down the trees and by planting more trees. Dr. Maathai said about the experience, “What needed to be done was so compelling that I had to do it,” even though she was clubbed in the head and thrown in jail. She continued to fight for women’s rights, environmental education, planting trees, and democracy.

In 2002, Dr. Maathai was elected to the Parliament by ninety-eight percent of the votes. She also served as Assistant Minister for Environment and Natural Resources. For her work, Dr. Maathai received fifteen honorary doctorate degrees and several international awards including the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004 and the Legion d’Honneur in 2006. She was the first African woman to receive the Nobel Prize. She died in 2011, leaving an incredible legacy of effective programs for her country and the world. The GBM continues to positively impact Kenyans through education programs.

Information adapted from:

The Green Belt Movement. “Wangari Maathai.” [www.greenbeltmovement.org/wangari-maathai](http://www.greenbeltmovement.org/wangari-maathai). Accessed 12 Feb. 2017.

- Nobelprize.org. “Wangari Maathai—Biographical.” [www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/2004/maathai-bio.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2004/maathai-bio.html). Accessed 12 Feb. 2017.
- PBS. “Taking Root: Timeline.” *Independent Lens*, [www.pbs.org/independentlens/takingroot/timeline.html](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/takingroot/timeline.html). Accessed 12 Feb. 2017.
- PBS. “Taking Root: Wangari Maathai.” *Independent Lens*, [www.pbs.org/independentlens/takingroot/wangari.html](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/takingroot/wangari.html). Accessed 12 Feb. 2017.
- “Wangari Maathai Wins the Nobel Peace Prize.” *BBC World Service: Witness*, *iTunes* app. Accessed 12 Feb. 2017.

Now, let’s think about what we guessed before we read and what we learned from the reading. Share with each other the predictions and answers that we found in the story.

## Standing Up and Being Heard: A Skit

### *Useful Vocabulary and Expressions*

<b>Skyscraper</b>	A very tall building in a city—in this skit it is 60 levels/floors
<b>Activist</b>	A person who uses or supports strong actions (such as public protests) to help make changes in politics or society
<b>Afraid, to be afraid of</b>	Fearful, to be fearful of; scared, to be scared of

<b>To harm</b>	To cause hurt, injury, or damage to someone or something; to cause harm to someone or something
<b>To destroy</b>	To cause something to end or no longer exist; to cause the destruction of something
<b>To restore</b>	To bring back to an earlier and better condition
<b>Protest</b>	An organized public demonstration of disapproval
<b>To stand up for something</b>	To support something
<b>The Green Belt Movement</b>	A “grassroots” organization to support community development and protect and conserve the environment by planting trees

### *Standing Up and Being Heard: A Skit*

#### *The Characters*

Narrator (N)	Wangari (W)	Friend 1 (F1)	Friend 2 (F2)	Friend 3 (F3)
Friend 4 (F4)	Friend 5 (F5)	Friend 6 (F6)	Friend 7 (F7)	Friend 8 (F8)

**N:** Dr. Wangari Muta Maathai was a Kenyan **activist** for the environment and a politician. She was a peacemaker. After high school, she went to an American university for her B.A. and M.A. degrees. She then completed a Ph.D. in 1971 and was the first East and Central African woman to receive the degree. Dr. Maathai then returned to Kenya. In 1977, she started the **Green Belt Movement** to protect trees around Kenya. Wangari Maathai taught Kenyan women to plant trees. These trees **restored** the environment and gave women firewood. She saw more problems in Kenya and used the **Green Belt Movement** to peacefully address these problems. Her work continues through the **Green Belt Movement**, which is still active in teaching about trees, fighting for gender equality, and addressing climate change. To date, the **Green Belt Movement** has planted more than 40 million trees.

This skit takes place in 1989. We are in Nairobi, Kenya. There is a big, beautiful public park called Uhuru Park. The Kenyan government wants to give parkland to some businesses. The Kenyan people like this park. Wangari knows that the businesses will **destroy** the park as the government already tried to **destroy** the forest. The businesses will build a **skyscraper**. This will **harm** the environment for the people in Nairobi.

Wangari meets with her friends. They discuss the situation:

**W:** Come, my friends. Let's go to Uhuru Park and stop the government from constructing the **skyscraper**.

F1:	I want to go but I am <b>afraid</b> . The police will attack us.
W:	Why do you think the police will attack us?
F1:	Because the government is powerful.
W:	Yes, you are right. But if we do not take action, the government will <b>destroy</b> our public park. We are citizens. We must <b>stand up for</b> what is right. We must <b>stand up for</b> what we believe.
F2:	I am <b>afraid</b> . Maybe the police will arrest me.
W:	Don't be <b>afraid</b> . Fear does not give us security.
F3:	I don't understand. Why do you want to stop the government?
W:	If we do not stop the government now, when it has all the public land, it will take my land and your land.
F4:	The police can arrest my children and my husband. Maybe they will also go to prison because of me.
W:	We must speak out and stand up while we have time. If we don't, our children will not have a park. The government will <b>destroy</b> it.
F5:	Wangari, listen to me. The government is responsible for this decision. We are not responsible for this decision.
W:	Yes, the government is responsible. But we are responsible too. We are citizens, and we must do something about this situation.
F6:	My husband says you are crazy. I should not be with you. I don't think I will go.

<b>W:</b>	Why am I crazy? Because I <b>stand up</b> for what I believe? We must stand up.
<b>F7:</b>	You are right, Wangari. I know you are right. We can write letters to the government.
<b>W:</b>	I wrote letters, many letters. This government always responds to something that is loud and public. We must make a <b>public protest</b> .
<b>F8:</b>	Look into our eyes. We want to go but we are <b>afraid</b> .
<b>W:</b>	Yes, I am <b>afraid</b> too. We will go together. When we are together, we are strong.
<b>All Friends:</b>	We will go to Uhuru Park. We will stand together, Wangari. You are right. When we stand together, we are strong.

This skit is a fictionalized reconstruction of actual events and conversations from:

Maathai, Wangari. *Unbowed: A Memoir*. Random House, 2008.

### Conversation Questions: Choose a Few to Talk About

1. Let's imagine we are Wangari's friends. Will we go to the protest—or not? Talk about our decision to go—or not—and why we have made this decision.
2. What problems about freedom of expression and environmental protection does this skit present to us?
3. Is there a community organization in our community? Talk about the pros and cons of having a community organization.

4. What are some problems we have in our community?
5. How might we solve some of the problems in our community?

### Talking about the Protest: Writing Activity

Here are two ideas for writing a skit based on the *Standing Up and Being Heard* skit above. Use details from that skit to help with the writing ideas below.

1. Wangari's Friend 6 said that her husband did not want her to be with Wangari. Imagine that you are the husband of Friend 6. What is the conversation you have with your wife when you find out that she did not listen to you? She went with Wangari to protest.

Write this conversation as a skit. Be prepared to share this skit with the Club at this meeting or at the next meeting.

2. Wangari's Friend 4 said that she was afraid the police would arrest her children and her husband and put them in prison. Imagine that you are Friend 4, you go to the protest, and when you return home you find out that your husband and children are in prison. What is the conversation that you have with Wangari—or your husband—or your children?

Choose one (Wangari, your children, or your husband) and write this conversation as a skit. Be prepared to share this skit with the Club at this meeting or at the next meeting.

Note: If you do not like either of these ideas, create your own writing activity. Be sure to share your idea with other Members and the Club Leadership Team.



## An Interview with Wangari Muta Maathai

### *Useful Vocabulary and Expressions*

<b>Broadcast</b>	Program on the radio or television
<b>To congratulate someone</b>	To tell someone “good wishes” for success
<b>Grateful</b>	Feeling or showing thanks
<b>To expect</b>	To think that something will probably or certainly happen
<b>Proper</b>	Correct according to social or moral rules
<b>Quiet</b>	Making very little noise
<b>Crazy</b>	Unable to think in a clear or sensible way
<b>Ignorant</b>	Lacking knowledge or information
<b>Unusual</b>	Different or strange in a way that attracts attention
<b>To release someone</b>	To allow [a person or animal] to leave a jail, cage, prison; to set someone or something free
<b>Hunger strike</b>	A protest during which the protesters stop eating
<b>Nobel Peace Prize</b>	The most prestigious prize in the world. It is usually given each year to a person—or group of people—who, in the year before, worked for peace. The prize winner is selected by five judges from Norway.

<b>Discrimination</b>	To treat someone differently than others because of ethnicity, religion, age, gender, or any reason other than individual merit
<b>Sacrifice</b>	The destruction or surrender of something for the sake of something else
<b>Bizarre</b>	Very out of the ordinary; odd; eccentric
<b>To testify</b>	To make a statement based on personal knowledge or belief
<b>Native</b>	Naturally occurring in a particular place; from a local area; indigenous
<b>Indigenous</b>	Naturally occurring in a particular place; from a local area; native

*An Interview with Wangari Muta Maathai*  
*The Characters*

Interviewer (I)	Wangari (W)
<b>I:</b>	Welcome to our <b>broadcast</b> , Dr. Wangari Muta Maathai. We are happy you are here today.
<b>W:</b>	Thank you. I am very happy to be here too.
<b>I:</b>	Let me begin by <b>congratulating</b> you on your <b>Nobel Peace Prize</b> . You are the first African woman to win this prize. And you are from Kenya. We are very honored that you are a citizen of Kenya.



- W:** Yes, I am **grateful** to the **Nobel Peace Prize Committee**. I was not **expecting** this award. In fact, it took me a long time to believe that I had really won the award. My daughter had to convince me.
- I:** As an African woman, I am sure you experienced gender **discrimination**. Can you tell us about one experience?
- W:** You know I have many experiences. Your radio station reported what the President said about me. Do you remember?
- I:** Yes, he said that **proper** women should respect men and be **quiet**.
- W:** He also called me a **crazy** woman and **ignorant**. These are very good examples of gender **discrimination**. Why must women be silent? Are we **crazy** when we speak the truth? We are not. Someone must stand up for the environment, for us, for our future.
- I:** Let me change the subject. Your family decided to send you to school. Wasn't it **unusual** for a Kikuyu family to send their daughter to school?
- W:** Kikuyu families send their daughters to school. Families in most African countries send their daughters to school. We believe that education is very important. This is why I became a professor. My family came from a simple village. I will always be **grateful** to my family for the **sacrifice** they made to send me to school in the U.S.A. and other countries.
- I:** A few years ago, you joined fifty-two mothers in a Nairobi church. They were protesting against the government to **release** their sons from prison. Why did you join them?

**W:** They went on a **hunger strike** to protest their sons' imprisonment. At that time, the government did not allow us the freedom of speech or protest. I wanted to support them.

**I:** You were arrested, beaten by the police, and hospitalized with injuries. Weren't you afraid?

**W:** The mothers were brave and courageous. They didn't have their sons. I am a mother too. It was important to be with them and support each other. Many tried to silence me in the beginning of the Green Belt Movement, and I thought it was important to give a voice to those without one. In the end, the government **released** all the prisoners.

**I:** You are a highly educated woman. You have a doctorate. But you plant trees—with your hands? Isn't this **bizarre**?

**W:** No, it is not strange. Education should not take people away from the land. Education should give people respect for the land. Think of it this way: You empower people by teaching them about the environment and how the choices they make affect it. Once they understand that these resources are their resources, they know that they must protect the **native, indigenous** trees and other resources. Besides, you don't need a diploma to plant a tree.

**I:** What impact has your work with the Green Belt Movement had on others?

**W:** The rural women whom I work with accept and appreciate that I work with them. They know I work to improve their lives and the environment. Many of them have **testified** that their quality of life has improved since we have been working together. For some, their lives have improved by better access to water. For others, they have been able to buy clothing or beds for their homes. For everyone, we recognize that trees bring life and are a symbol of hope to the communities.

**I:** Yes, you are right. You are a **Nobel Peace Prize** winner and a member of the Kenyan Parliament. You are a mother and an activist. You are an environmentalist and an advocate for democracy. We thank you for participating in our interview today.

This interview is a reconstruction of actual events and conversations from: Maathai, Wangari. *Unbowed: A Memoir*. Random House, 2008.

### *Conversation Questions: Choose a Few to Talk About*

Note: Members may want to talk about these questions in gender groups. If this is the case, then girls/women should go to one place and boys/men should go to a different place. The groups should be separated so they cannot hear each other's ideas.

1. What do you think about Wangari?
2. Wangari died in 2011. If she were alive today, what questions would you like to ask her?

3. Were Wangari's actions typical of women in your country? Yes? No? Explain.
4. Wangari was a leader. What kind of leader do you think she was?
5. Would you join Wangari's organization if you could? Explain.
6. How would you react if your wife, mother, daughter, or girlfriend wanted to join Wangari's organization? Why would you react in this way?
7. What problems do you have as a woman where you live? How can men help to solve these problems? What advice do you think Wangari might give you to solve your problems?
8. Does your city have a lot of areas with trees? Could there be more trees planted? How might you get people interested in helping you plant trees?
9. Is it important for mothers to teach their sons to be respectful and supportive of women's rights? Is it important for fathers to teach their daughters to be strong and independent? Explain.

## Guest Speaker: Ideas for a Presentation

Here are some ideas for presentations about topics related to freedom of expression and/or environmental concerns including climate change and other important problems.

- Free speech
- Social movements
- Climate change
- Green spaces
- Women’s rights

## Debate Topics

These are suggested debate topics. Members may want to choose (by consensus or vote) one or a few from this list. Or, Members and/or the Leadership Team can modify, change, or add topics that are of interest to the Club. The Leader will establish the debate rules using the directions in *Section 3* of this *Guide*.

### Topic: Free Speech

**PRO**—Citizens of a country should have free speech.

**CON**—Citizens of a country shouldn’t have free speech.

**Topic: Community Organizations**

**PRO**—Community organizations strengthen a community and should be encouraged.

**CON**—Community organizations do not strengthen a community and shouldn't be encouraged.

**Topic: Protecting the Environment**

**PRO**—Communities should work together to plant trees and other native, indigenous plants.

**CON**—Communities shouldn't plant trees and other native, indigenous plants.

Suggest other ideas for debate topics to other Members and also share them with the Club Leadership Team.

## A Vision Board for the Environment

Here are a few questions we can use to start creating our vision board:

- How many green spaces do we have in our community?
- How many types of indigenous trees do we have in our community?
- Could we add green space to areas that are eroded or lack plants? Explain.
- What would our community look like if there were more green spaces?

Our vision board may want to give answers to some of these questions:

- How should our community look in the next five years?
- What can we do to support our goals?

Here are a few questions for individual vision boards:

- How can I add more green space to my office or living space?
- What types of plants grow well with the light and climate that I have?
- How should I care for the plants that would grow in the space that I have?

Our individual vision boards may answer the following questions:

- In the next five years, what would I like my green space to look like?
- How can I develop my space to achieve my green goals?





During his tenure as South Africa’s president, he worked to create a more equal South Africa. He developed programs to combat poverty, to improve land reform, and to provide wider health-care services.

President Mandela died in 2013 and left a lasting legacy as a dynamic and internationally acclaimed leader.

In this section on *Leadership*, we will explore the concept of leadership through an analysis of Mandela’s work from the time he was a student to his founding of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

## Majority Rules or Consensus: A Skit

### *Useful Vocabulary and Expressions*

<b>Consensus</b>	A general agreement; an agreement that most people accept
<b>To reach a consensus</b>	To get to an agreement that most people accept
<b>Majority rules</b>	The group with the biggest number has power/control
<b>Britain</b>	The United Kingdom of Great Britain; U.K.
<b>British</b>	The people from the U.K.
<b>To make a decision</b>	To pick a choice; to decide
<b>To crush</b>	To defeat with violence; to stop with violence
<b>Diverse opinions</b>	Different points of view

*Majority Rules or Consensus: A Skit**The Characters*

Narrator (N)	Mandela (M)	Friend 1 (F1)	Friend 2 (F2)	Friend 3 (F3)
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<b>N:</b>	This skit takes place in 1940 at the University of Fort Hare in South Africa. During this time period, Mandela is a student and supporter of the British war effort in the Second World War. He creates an organization to balance the power between first- and second-year students, and he becomes a member of the Students' Representative Council. Mandela is twenty-two years old. Mandela and his friends talk about a problem.
<b>M:</b>	Right now we are represented by students who do not live here. This is not right. We must represent ourselves.
<b>F1:</b>	I agree.
<b>F2:</b>	I disagree.
<b>F3:</b>	I'm not sure.
<b>F1:</b>	Let's take a vote. First, let me call our friends and tell them to vote with us.
<b>M:</b>	No, that's not the way to do this. We need a <b>consensus</b> .
<b>F1:</b>	Why? <b>Majority rules</b> . Isn't this what they do in <b>Britain</b> ?
<b>M:</b>	Are we <b>British</b> ? Do we want to continue doing what is not just? Look at our fathers. When they needed to <b>make a decision</b> , they made it together as one people.

F2:	That's the old tribal way.
M:	Yes, and it worked very well. We are not here to <b>crush</b> a minority—anyone who doesn't agree with us. Let us hear from everyone first.
F1:	That will take too long. We need to act now.
F2:	What are you afraid of if we listen to Mandela? We can take time. We can talk about this. Let's try <b>to reach a consensus</b> .
M:	Let's listen to everyone first. Then we will sum up the different ideas. Maybe we can form a <b>consensus</b> among the <b>diverse opinions</b> . It will not be good if we force a decision on people who disagree with us.
F3:	Well, what will we do if we don't agree?
M:	We will hold another meeting in a few days. We will give everyone more time to think. It is important to listen to each other first.
N:	At the end of the meeting, everyone agrees to continue talking before they <b>make a decision</b> . Mandela says that great leaders keep their people united. All remain loyal to him, not because they always agree with him, but because great leaders listen and respect all different opinions.

This skit is a fictionalized reconstruction of actual events and conversations taken from Nelson Mandela's life:

Mandela, Nelson. *Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela*. Little, Brown and Company, 1994.

Nobelprize.org. “Nelson Mandela—Biographical.” [www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/1993/mandela-bio.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1993/mandela-bio.html). Accessed 19 Nov. 2014.

Wikipedia. “Nelson Mandela.” [en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Nelson\\_Mandela&oldid=634555519](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Nelson_Mandela&oldid=634555519). Accessed 19 Nov. 2014.

### *Conversation Questions: Choose a Few to Talk About*

1. Which person in this skit was the most important for you? Why?
2. If you were one of Mandela’s friends, would you want to vote or look for consensus? Explain.
3. Describe Mandela as a leader. What does he do as a leader?
4. Which is better to do in a democracy: majority vote or consensus? Explain.
5. If you could speak to Mandela, what would you say to him?
6. If you could ask Mandela a question, what question would you ask him? Why would you ask him this question?
7. Do we have leaders in our community? Do they have a leadership style that is similar to Mandela’s leadership style?
8. What parts of Mandela’s leadership style do you think would be helpful in our community?
9. How can we work together to develop ourselves as leaders? What do we need to do?

## Friends Talk: Two Writing Activities

### *Point of View*

Re-read the comments by Friend 1 and Friend 2 in *Majority Rules or Consensus*. Then, imagine that Friend 1 and Friend 2 meet the following day to talk about Mandela's ideas. What do the friends talk about? Here are a few questions to help you think about their conversation:

- Do they argue with each other? Do they try to convince each other to change their minds?
- Do these friends reach consensus, as Mandela wants them to?
- What do these friends think about the notions of consensus and majority rules?
- Why do they hold these opinions?

Using these questions and any other ideas, write a skit that is a conversation between these friends. Be sure they express their opinions about consensus and majority rules—and what they might decide when they come together with Mandela at the next meeting.

### *Continue the Skit*

The skit on *Majority Rules or Consensus* ends with Mandela telling everyone to think about the question of self-representation. He wants everyone to think about their opinions and then return in a few days to talk more about the problem and the solution.

Use creativity and imagination to write about this next meeting. Write either a skit or a story. Use some or all of the characters in the skit above.

You may find the questions below can help with the writing:

- Who attends the next meeting?
- What do they talk about?
- Do they talk about the ways that they have changed their opinions?
- What are some of the new opinions that the attendees express?
- What does Mandela do? What does he say?
- Does the meeting end with consensus on the problem of self-representation—or is there no solution yet?
- Does the meeting end with an action plan that describes the actions the students will take next? If yes, what actions do they plan to take?

## An Interview with Nelson Mandela

### *Useful Vocabulary and Expressions*

<b>Apartheid</b>	A former social system in South Africa in which black people and people from other racial groups did not have the same political and economic rights as white people and were forced to live separately from white people
<b>To retire</b>	To stop a job or career because you have reached the age when you are not allowed to work anymore or do not need or want to work anymore
<b>Term limit</b>	The maximum amount of time that a person, such as a politician, can hold an office
<b>Truth and Reconciliation Commission</b>	A group of people responsible for finding and reporting the wrong practices of a government or people
<b>To heal</b>	To become healthy or well again
<b>Wound</b>	An injury that is caused when a knife or bullet cuts or breaks the skin; to feel intense psychological pain
<b>Rainbow</b>	A curved line of different colors that sometimes appears in the sky when the sun shines through rain
<b>To forgive</b>	To stop feeling anger toward someone who has done something wrong; to stop blaming someone

<b>To hurt</b>	To cause pain or injury to [yourself, someone else, or a part of your body]
<b>Rugby</b>	A game played by two teams in which each team tries to carry or kick a ball over the other team's goal line
<b>Consensus</b>	A general agreement; an agreement that most people accept
<b>Inclusion</b>	The act of bringing people together from different religions, cultures, backgrounds, ethnic groups, and/or linguistic groups
<b>Accountability</b>	Required to explain actions or decisions to someone
<b>Queen</b>	A woman who rules a country and who usually inherits her position and rules for life; the wife of a king

## *An Interview with Nelson Mandela*

### *The Characters*

Interviewer (I)	Mandela (M)
<b>I:</b>	Welcome to our broadcast, President Mandela. We are happy you are here today.
<b>M:</b>	Thank you. I am very happy to be here too.

- I:** Let me begin by congratulating you on the Nobel Peace Prize. You shared this prize with President de Klerk, the white president of South Africa in 1993.
- M:** Yes, he freed me from prison after twenty-seven years.
- I:** Why did two people get this prize?
- M:** We received this prize because we worked together for a peaceful end to **apartheid**.
- I:** You became president in 1994. Now, it is 1998. What will you do at the end of your term in 1999? Will you run for a second term?
- M:** No, I will **retire** in 1999.
- I:** This is unusual. Many presidents run for two terms, and some presidents change the Constitution so they can stay for many years.
- M:** A **one-term limit** is enough for me. I think two terms is enough for all presidents.
- I:** What is your biggest problem as president?
- M:** Racial violence is a big problem. We have the **Truth and Reconciliation Commission**. The goal is to **heal the wounds from apartheid**—for White South Africans, Black South Africans, Indian South Africans, and Colored South Africans.
- I:** Some people say that South Africa is the “**Rainbow Nation**.”
- M:** Yes, this is correct. We are a nation of many peoples.
- I:** How can this be possible after the violence against Black South Africans?
- M:** Courageous people do not fear **forgiving**, for the sake of peace.
- I:** So we are courageous when we **forgive**—even the people who **hurt** us?

- M:** Yes, we must **forgive**.
- I:** Was it easy for South Africans to **forgive**?
- M:** No, it wasn't. I worked hard to help everyone understand.
- I:** Tell us about the **Rugby** World Cup in 1995.
- M:** South Africa hosted this competition. I encouraged Black South Africans to support our team. They didn't want to support this team. It only had White South Africans. When our team won, I presented the trophy to our captain, an Afrikaner, a White South African. I wore a **rugby** shirt with his number on my back.
- I:** Was this important?
- M:** Yes, I accepted these white players. I respected them and honored them.
- I:** So peace is important. What else is important?
- M:** Good leaders are important. When I was young, I watched the leaders in my tribe.
- I:** But there is no democracy in our tribal customs.
- M:** Yes, we have democracy—we believe that everyone can speak. Everyone is heard. A decision is made together, by **consensus**, by agreement. I believe in **inclusion**, **accountability**, and freedom of speech. These are fundamental for a democracy.
- I:** Are there other ideas from African culture that you agree with?
- M:** Yes, let me tell you a story. One day, I was visiting a tribal leader, a **queen** in one of the tribal lands. She spoke Xhosa—the language of my people.
- I:** You have a tribal leader who is a woman, a **queen**?

- M:** Yes. When she spoke to me in Xhosa, I wasn't able to answer her. I forgot my language. I studied English, spoke English, and forgot the language of my family.
- I:** What did she say to you?
- M:** She said, "How can you be a leader if you can't speak to your people?" I was surprised. I started thinking, and I realized I must continue to speak the language of my people.
- I:** For people who are not in South Africa, they are curious about your name, Madiba.
- M:** This is my clan name, my tribal name. I am a member of the royal Thembu family. To show me respect, people use this name for me.
- I:** Let me ask you about *Ubuntu*. We hear people talking about this.
- M:** Yes, this word is in our language. It means that we belong to each other. People say, "I am because you are." We are united because we are humans. My name, *Ubuntu*, our African cultures and languages—they are all important. We must not forget about them.
- I:** Madiba, President Mandela, we thank you very much for joining us today.
- M:** It was my pleasure.

This interview is a fictionalized reconstruction of actual events and conversations taken from:

Mandela, Nelson. *Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela*. Little, Brown and Company, 1994.

Nobelprize.org. “Nelson Mandela—Biographical.” [www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/1993/mandela-bio.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1993/mandela-bio.html). Accessed 19 Nov. 2014.

Wikipedia. “Nelson Mandela.” [en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Nelson\\_Mandela&oldid=634555519](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Nelson_Mandela&oldid=634555519). Accessed 19 Nov. 2014.

### *Conversation Questions: Choose a Few to Talk About*

1. Choose one of Mandela’s answers and explain why you chose it. Did you like it? Was it controversial? Was it interesting? Why did you choose it?
2. If Mandela were alive today, what would you like to say to him or ask him?
3. Are there similar problems in our country that Mandela had in South Africa? Can you apply any of his ideas or practices to dealing with these problems?
4. What did Mandela say was important about African culture? Explain.
5. Do you see similarities between your culture and the cultures in South Africa that Mandela describes? Explain.

### **Characteristics of Good Leaders: A Conversation**

In this activity, we will talk about leadership. To begin, let’s brainstorm a list of leaders. Leaders can be radio announcers, television broadcasters, musicians, Internet personalities, university professors, characters in books, and people we learn about in school. They can be famous or not very famous.



Now, let's have a volunteer who will write down our list as we brainstorm.

Here are a few questions we can use to help us brainstorm a list of leaders. Let's take ten minutes to brainstorm our list:

1. Who is a famous leader?
2. Who is a popular leader?
3. Who is a leader you know but may not be famous?

We will keep our list of leaders and think about leadership qualities and skills. Now, let's look at the useful vocabulary and expressions below.

### *Useful Vocabulary and Expressions*

<b>Empathetic</b>	To have the same feelings as another person; to feel empathy for someone
<b>Tenacious</b>	Very determined to do something
<b>Open-minded</b>	Willing to consider different ideas or opinions
<b>Ethical</b>	Involving questions of right and wrong behavior; relating to ethics
<b>Resourceful</b>	Able to deal well with new or difficult situations and to find solutions to problems
<b>Humble</b>	Not proud; not thinking of yourself as better than other people

<b>Kind</b>	Having or showing a gentle nature and a desire to help others; wanting and liking to do good things and to bring happiness to others
<b>Visionary</b>	Having or showing clear ideas about what should happen or be done in the future
<b>Persistent</b>	Continuing to do something or to try to do something even though it is difficult or other people want you to stop
<b>Trustworthy</b>	Able to be relied on to do or provide what is needed or right; deserving of trust
<b>Team player</b>	Someone who cares more about helping a group or team to succeed than about his or her individual success
<b>Dependable</b>	Trustworthy and reliable
<b>Critical thinker</b>	A person who can examine difficult and complex problems
<b>Dedicated to</b>	To decide that something will be used for a special purpose; to use [time, money, energy, or attention] for something
<b>Accountable to</b>	Required to explain actions or decisions to someone
<b>Candid</b>	Expressing opinions and feelings in an honest and sincere way

### *Continuing the Conversation: What Makes a Good Leader?*

Let's think about the leaders we identified and prioritize the list of leadership characteristics. Let's choose five characteristics that we think are most important for good leaders. Then, let's choose five characteristics that we think are not important. Groups should try to agree on these choices.

### *Characteristics of a Good Leader*

*A good leader is ...*



### *Conversation Questions: Choose a Few to Talk About*

1. How can we encourage good leadership?
2. Do we have anyone in the community who is a good leader? Which characteristics does this person display?
3. Do any of us have any of the characteristics of a leader? If not, how could we develop them? What would we need to practice?
4. How can we help to lead our community?

### **Characteristics of Good Followers: A Conversation**

We have an idea about who we think are good leaders. Now, let's think about what makes good followers. We know that good leaders need good followers, so it is important to think about the characteristics and skills that good followers need to have.

Below are characteristics of followers. Let's look at the list and prioritize the list. Let's choose the five most important characteristics and the five characteristics we think are not important. Groups should be sure to try to agree on their lists. Let's do this in twenty minutes.

*A good follower is ...*



*Conversation Questions: Choose a Few to Talk About*

Let's compare the lists of "Characteristics of Good Leaders" and "Characteristics of Good Followers" to help us answer some of these questions:

1. What characteristics are similar between leaders and followers?  
What characteristics are different?
2. What is the most valuable characteristic of being a leader? What is the most valuable characteristic of being a follower?
3. Are you a leader or a follower? Which would you prefer to be?  
Why?

4. A leader cannot exist without followers. How can the followers of a leader help their leader grow in a positive way? What actions can the followers take?
5. How can leaders help their followers grow in positive ways? What actions can the leader take?
6. To become a leader or a follower, what characteristics will you need to develop?

## Guest Speaker: Ideas for a Presentation

Let's brainstorm ideas for a guest speaker and a presentation topic. Below are a few ideas for presentation topics.

- How do people develop leadership skills?
- Who might be a role-model leader?
- What are some challenges of being a leader?

## Debate Topics

These are suggested debate topics. Members may want to choose (by consensus or vote) one or a few from this list. Or, Members and/or the Leadership Team can modify, change, or add topics that are of interest to the Club. The Leader will establish the debate rules using the directions in *Section 3* of this *Guide*.

**TOPIC: Violence and Peace**

**PRO**—Sometimes violence is needed to bring peace.

**CON**—Violence is never an acceptable road to peace.

**TOPIC: Corruption**

**PRO**—Corruption is necessary and useful in certain situations.

**CON**—Corruption is never necessary or useful.

**TOPIC: Good Leaders**

**PRO**—A good leader commands and controls followers.

**CON**—A good leader collaborates with and supports followers.

**TOPIC: Leaders and Followers**

**PRO**—For a nation, it is more important to have a good leader.

**CON**—For a nation, it is more important to have good followers.

**TOPIC: Finished or Right**

**PRO**—A good leader gets things finished.

**CON**—A good leader does “the right thing.”

**TOPIC: Men and Women Leaders**

**PRO**—Men make better leaders than women.

**CON**—Women make better leaders than men.

Suggest other ideas for debate topics to other Members and also share them with the Club Leadership Team.

## A Vision Board for Leadership

Let's use these questions to create a vision board.

- What would positive change and leadership look like in our community?
- How can we spread information in our community to encourage positive change and leadership?
- How can we encourage others to become leaders?

Our vision board should answer these questions:

- How should our community be empowered by positive leadership in the next five years?
- What can we do to support this positive change?

## Individual Reflection

My vision board can address these questions:

- What would it look like to be a leader every day? What kinds of changes would I have to make to my life?
- As a leader, what would I like my life to look like?



- How can I practice and model leadership every day?
- In the next five years, what would I like my role as a leader to look like?
- How can I develop myself to achieve my leadership goals?

## To Continue Learning

Videos on developing leadership:

**Simon Sinek:** In an interview with Marie Forleo, author and public speaker Simon Sinek discusses the responsibility of leaders to create a certain environment that leads others towards success. When the environment is correct, people will do incredible things to forward a leader's vision.

<https://www.marieforleo.com/2016/06/simon-sinek/>

[https://www.ted.com/talks/simon\\_sinek\\_how\\_great\\_leaders\\_inspire\\_action](https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action)

## **SECTION 3: FOR THE ENGLISH CLUB LEADERSHIP TEAM**

### **Introduction**

If you are reading this section, you have probably been elected to your Club Leadership Team! Congratulations! Leaders have lots of responsibilities. One of your most important responsibilities is to be sure that you lead Club meetings that are well-planned, thoughtful, and fun. Members will support the Club if the meetings are interesting, relevant, enjoyable, and creative.

For these reasons, it is important that, as a Team, you read this section together. Included here is information about the responsibilities of the Leadership Team and ideas for preparing, organizing, and managing Club meetings.

It is not necessary to read through the entire section page-by-page. You can skip around and read the sections that you find most interesting first. Then read the other sections next.

You may need to re-read some sections when you prepare for a specific Club meeting activity—this is good! You can't remember everything you read the first time you read it.

So, it's time to learn what you can do as the Leadership Team to create a successful, engaging, dynamic, and fun English Club!

### **What is the Club Leadership Team?**

People elected by Club Members are the Leadership Team. The Team has three people:



- English Club President—or Leader (Clubs can decide which word they want to use)
- English Club Vice President—or Associate Leader
- English Club Secretary—or Assistant

The first responsibility of the Leadership Team is to decide what each person on the Leadership Team will do. It is important that the Team shares responsibilities so no one person does everything. Below are suggested responsibilities for the three people on the Team.

The President/Leader is responsible for leading the Club. Examples of responsibilities for the President/Leader include:

- Collaborate with Members in choosing the Club meeting dates, places, and times;
- Plan and prepare each Club meeting using this *Guide* and other resources;
- Create a meeting agenda that is clear and organized;
- Present meeting activities that are fun, interesting, exciting, and thoughtful;
- Attend all Club meetings ... OR ... Inform the Leadership Team as soon as possible if you will be absent from a Club meeting; if possible, help to plan the meeting so there is continuity for Members;
- Bring all necessary materials needed for Club meetings;

- Arrive early for the Club meetings (suggested time—at least fifteen minutes);
- Welcome Club Members to meetings;
- Listen and share Member ideas and concerns with the Leadership Team;
- Communicate on a regular basis with the Leadership Team.

Examples of responsibilities of the Vice President/Associate Leader include:

- Help the President lead the Club;
- Exchange ideas with the Leadership Team about Club meetings and activities;
- Lead Club meetings when the President is absent;
- Arrive early for Club meetings (suggested time—at least fifteen minutes);
- Be sure the meeting location is clean;
- Set up the chairs for the meeting;
- Welcome Club Members to meetings;
- Listen and share Member ideas and concerns with the Leadership Team;
- Communicate on a regular basis with the Leadership Team.

Examples of responsibilities of the Secretary/Assistant include:

- Assist the President and Vice President with leading the Club;
- Exchange ideas with the Leadership Team about Club meetings and activities;

- Support the Leadership Team with Club meeting plans and preparations;
- Lead Club meetings if the President and Vice President are absent;
- Keep a record of the names and contact information for all Club Members;
- Set up a communication network with Club Members in case there is a need to communicate with Members before a meeting;
- Remind Members a few days in advance of meetings;
- Arrive early for the Club meetings (suggested time—at least fifteen minutes);
- Welcome Club Members to meetings;
- Listen and share Member ideas and concerns with the Leadership Team;
- Communicate on a regular basis with the Leadership Team.

There are a variety of ways that the Leadership Team can be configured. For more ideas about Leadership Team structures, listen to the English Club webinar (online at: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/american-english-webinars#child-2146>) and read the *Forum* article, “Community-based English Clubs: English Practice and Social Change Outside the Classroom” available online at: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/english-teaching-forum-volume-54-number-3#child-2162>.

Continue reading to find out how to prepare, organize, and manage Club meetings.

## Preparing for Club Meetings

The President should be sure to follow suggestions and ideas from Club Members when preparing Club meetings. Topics of interest to the Club should be selected, and a wide variety of activities that deal with the topic should be included in Club meeting agendas. Note: If the President cannot attend a Club meeting, then the Vice President or Secretary must lead the meeting in the President's absence.

Consult the list below when preparing a Club meeting:

1. To choose a topic for a Club meeting, browse through *Section 2*;
2. Select a topic of interest;
3. Read the activities included in the topic;
4. Select one, two, or three activities—depending on the length of time for meetings;
5. Refer to *Section 3* to plan and organize each activity;
6. Prepare the meeting agenda and sequence the activities in an interesting way for the Club Members;
7. Check through the activities for supplies needed such as paper, pens, markers, and pencils and bring these to the meeting;
8. Share the meeting agenda with the Leadership Team and ask for feedback to ensure the meeting agenda is clear and interesting.

## Important Techniques for Club Meetings

Sometime during the first few meetings it is important that Club Members learn several techniques. These are designed to help Members interact so that everyone can feel free to practice English. When Members learn these

techniques, it will be easy for the Club meeting to run smoothly. Techniques include:

- Active Listening
- Brainstorming
- Organizing and managing pairs and small and large groups
- Using gender-based groups

## Active Listening

Active Listening is a useful technique for people to use when they exchange ideas, particularly when the ideas may be controversial or when Members have different opinions on a topic. Below is a script that the Leader can use to introduce and practice this technique with Club Members.

[The Leader says to Club Members:]

*Do you know who the Native Americans are?* [The Leader should give Members time to answer and then say:] *Native Americans lived in the United States before Europeans came. Many Native American ideas and proverbs were used by the European immigrants to America to encourage good behavior as citizens and human beings.*

*Mary T. Lathrap\* is a writer from the 1800s who wrote many poems and short essays on good behavior. One of her famous poems, “Walk a Mile in His Moccasins,” uses a Native American term, moccasins, for shoes.*

**BEFORE WE CAN UNDERSTAND OTHERS, WE MUST WALK A MILE IN THEIR SHOES. BEFORE WE CAN WALK IN OTHER PEOPLE’S SHOES, WE MUST FIRST TAKE OFF OUR OWN.**

[\*The Grammarist. “Walk a Mile in Someone Else’s Shoes.” [grammarist.com/phrase/walk-a-mile-in-someone-elses-shoes/](http://grammarist.com/phrase/walk-a-mile-in-someone-elses-shoes/). Accessed 27 Jan. 2017.]

[The Leader continues:] *What does this proverb mean to you?*

[The Leader should encourage Members to share their ideas. Here are a few ideas they might share:

- We have to listen without judging the other;
- We should not assume that we know what someone means; we should ask;
- We should be willing to put our own beliefs aside to try to understand someone else.

After Members share their ideas, the Leader says:]

*The goal of this English Club is to practice English. We can’t practice unless we talk to each other. We will have many ideas, and some ideas will be controversial—this is a stimulating way to practice English. However, we must talk to each other respectfully by asking polite questions and rephrasing what the other person has said until we understand what the other person means. This technique is called Active Listening.*

*Today we will talk about this technique. We will practice Active Listening and use it in our Club meetings. We must remember the lesson of this proverb for Active Listening: listen without judging others. We will use Active Listening in our meetings when people have different opinions. By listening actively we can understand different points of view—even though we may not agree. It is OK if we don’t always agree.*

*What do we do when we listen actively?*

- *Listen to the words and feelings of the Member.*
- *See the world and feel the world through the Member's eyes—empathize with this person.*
- *Try to understand the Member's feelings.*

[The Leader must let Members ask questions or make comments. Then the Leader says:]

*Now, let's read together the Rules for Active Listening:*

### **Rules for Active Listening**

- *Let's not think about our opinions—let's listen to each other.*
- *Let's try not to judge others.*
- *Let's try to understand each other as if we are walking in each other's shoes.*
- *Let's listen with:*
  - *Our ears;*
  - *Our eyes;*
  - *Our hearts.*
- *Let's watch for non-verbal signs when Members talk.*
- *Let's allow Members to talk and then ask them to explain further.*

[The Leader pauses to see if Members have questions or comments. Then the Leader says:]

*Here are some questions that Members can ask each other to clarify ideas:*

- *Could you explain further?*
- *Can you tell me more about \_\_\_\_\_?*
- *I want to try to summarize your idea—may I?*  
[Member summarizes the other’s idea.]
- *Let me check. Did you say \_\_\_\_\_?* [Member summarizes the other’s idea.]
- *You said \_\_\_\_\_. Is this correct?*
- *I want to try to restate your opinion without criticizing you—may I?*

[The Leader must let Members ask questions or make comments. Then the Leader says:]

*As the Club Leader, I have rules to follow to help all of us be active listeners. Here are my rules. I will:*

- *Ask Members to summarize or restate their comments;*
- *Stop anyone from criticizing another Member;*
- *Make positive comments to the Members who follow the rules.*

*Now, let’s try practicing these rules.*

[The Leader selects a topic and asks Members to talk about their opinion of the topic while they practice Active Listening. The Leader says:]

- *Talk with the Member sitting next to you. To practice Active Listening, let’s talk about the topic of [the Leader chooses a topic—be sure to prepare the topic before the Club meeting. Examples of topics to use to practice Active Listening: People should be free to*

smoke as many cigarettes each day as they want ... or ... Everyone should learn English. The Leader should be sure to choose a topic that will be easy—and controversial—for everyone to talk about.].

- *One of you is Club Member 1, and one of you is Club Member 2.*
- *Tell each other what you think about [the Leader says the topic chosen].*
- *Member 1 speaks first. While Member 1 speaks, Member 2 must practice Active Listening.*
- *When Member 1 is finished speaking, Member 2 must restate what she heard Member 1 say.*
- *Then, Member 2 must check with Member 1 that she is correct.*
- *When Members 1 and 2 are finished, do the reverse. Member 2 tells Member 1 what she thinks, and Member 1 practices Active Listening.*

[The Club Leader walks around and helps Club Members practice Active Listening. Members may need approximately fifteen minutes to practice. When time's up, the Club Leader asks everyone to share their experience, thoughts, and reactions. The Leader can ask some of these questions and/or create other questions that can help Members think about and understand the value of Active Listening:]

- *What were your thoughts and feelings as you practiced Active Listening with your partner?*
- *What was easy to do?*

- *What was hard to remember to do?*
- *Do you think this strategy can be helpful for us to use? Explain.*

[For additional practice, the Leader can use the skit in *Section 2, Practicing Active Listening*. The Leader uses the topic *Skits, Interviews, and Role-Plays* to prepare the Members for this skit. When the skit is finished, the Leader says:]

- *Let's think about this skit. Does anyone have any observations? Anything you'd like to say?*

[The Leader waits for Members to make comments and helps Members explore this technique further. When the conversation is finished, the Leader says:]

- *This skit gives us more of an understanding of this important technique, Active Listening.*
- *As we continue to have Club meetings, we will continue to work on developing these skills.*
- *We have all done a good job as we begin to learn how to use this technique.*

## Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a useful technique for people to use when they want to create new ideas. Below is a script for what the Leader can say about this technique with Club Members.

*Brainstorming is a technique to find new ideas. Brainstorming is NOT a technique to find the best idea. It's a technique to find LOTS of fun, interesting, silly, or important ideas. Let's read the rules for brainstorming.*

### Rules for Brainstorming

- *Everyone has ideas.*
- *All ideas are good.*
- *Don't criticize any ideas.*
- *Don't debate any ideas.*
- *No idea is crazy or bad.*
- *Use one idea to create a new idea.*
- *Give lots of ideas.*
- *Be creative, funny, crazy!*

[The Leader says:]

- *Any questions?*
- *Let's practice brainstorming.*
- *Now, I need a volunteer who can write down our ideas.*

[The Leader chooses a volunteer to write ideas on paper or the chalkboard—all ideas—without comment. Then the Leader says:]

- *Here's an exercise for us to practice brainstorming. Here is the problem: What can we do with plastic bottles? We use them to hold water, but now let's brainstorm creative ideas for using them.*

[The Leader encourages Members to give ideas. The volunteer writes them down. Stop after five to ten minutes. Then the Leader says:]

*Good ... now, here is another practice. This is not a true story—it is a brain game!*

*Let's imagine that last week we found 1,000,000 footballs. What can we do with these balls?*

[It may take Members time to begin brainstorming. If no one gives suggestions, the Leader can give some ideas. Remember that all brainstorming ideas must be accepted. The Leader can say:]

*I see that some of you are hesitating. I will give a few ideas to help us get started. For example, we can sell the balls at the market and use the money for our Club. We can cut up the balls and use the leather to make bags or covers for books. Here is another idea—we can give everyone in town a ball. Or, we can fill up all the balls with water and float them on the river. You see that some of my ideas may be good, others are not good, some are silly. It doesn't matter how my ideas are. When we brainstorm, we give any ideas we may have and we don't worry if they are reasonable or not.*

*Now, it's your turn to give ideas.*

[The Leader should encourage the brainstorming for five to ten minutes. Be sure the volunteer writes down all ideas—without comment. After the brainstorming stops, the Leader asks the Members to think about the experience of brainstorming. The Leader should have a conversation with the Members. The Leader can ask some of the following questions:]

- *How did you feel when we brainstormed?*
- *Do you think brainstorming can be a useful technique?*
- *How might it be useful—and how not?*

## Organizing and Managing Pairs and Small and Large Groups

The number of Members in English Clubs varies widely. Some Clubs have ten Members; others have 150 Members. In addition, each activity may require that Members work together in different ways. For example, at the beginning of meetings it may be easy to have Members work in pairs, turning to the person next to them for a conversation.

It is important that Club meetings take into account the number of Members, the activities, and the best ways for everyone to practice English.

Club meetings with eight Members or less may work as one group, pairs, or two small groups. Clubs with more than eight Members may divide into small groups. Small groups give members more opportunities to practice English. A good small group size is four or five persons.

If Members work in small groups, each Member should select a role (see table below) that he or she will be responsible for in the group. When Members are finished with the small group activity, it may be useful to share this with all Club Members. In this situation, each group can give a short (three-minute) report to the entire Club. This report can summarize the small group work. The Note-taker or Group Director can give this report. Reminder: Clubs should adjust this list to fit their own, individual, unique Club needs.

*Small Group Roles*

Role	Responsibility
<b>Group Director</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Makes sure Members speak and listen to each other;</li> <li>• Helps Members use Active Listening;</li> <li>• Gives opportunities to each Member to speak.</li> </ul>
<b>Note-taker</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Makes notes about what the Members say;</li> <li>• Prepares a short report to give to the Club about the small group discussion.</li> </ul>
<b>Timekeeper</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watches the time and makes sure the group completes the task;</li> <li>• Helps the Group Director make sure everyone in the group speaks equally.</li> </ul>
<b>Vocabulary Collector(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Makes a note of vocabulary questions the Members have;</li> <li>• Tries to find answers to these questions from other Members, or an English speaker in the community, or the Internet;</li> <li>• Gives the Leader a list of the vocabulary questions.</li> </ul>

Role	Responsibility
Grammarian(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Makes a note of grammar questions or problems the Members have;</li> <li>• Tries to find answers to these questions or problems from other Members, or an English speaker in the community, or the Internet;</li> <li>• Tells the Leader what grammar problems the Members are interested in learning more about.</li> </ul>

## Using Gender-Based Groups

There are some topics that may require Clubs to create gender-based groups.

What are gender-based groups? One group is for boys/men only. The other group is for girls/women only.

Why use gender-based groups? There are two reasons for using these groups. Gender-based groups should be used for sensitive topics. Second, gender-based groups may give people an opportunity to speak more freely about a topic.

How should gender-based groups be created? It is important that the Club Leader makes plans in advance. The Club Leader needs to be sure there are two separate meeting places, one for each group. The meeting places should be private so that no group can hear the other's conversations. It is important to ensure the privacy and safety of each group's conversations.

## The First Ten Minutes: Starting a Club Meeting

There are many ways to start Club meetings. The Leadership Team might want to start each meeting in the same way. Sometimes, they might want to change the way that a meeting starts. It is important that the Leadership Team plans meetings that are interesting, fun, and enjoyable. The first ten minutes can play a role in making a meeting interesting—or boring.

Here are a few ideas for starting a Club meeting. Remember—start the Club meeting in a way that Members will enjoy!

- Welcome Members by greeting them by name and asking about something that is important to them;
- Ask Members to introduce themselves to the group;
- Ask Members to speak to the person next to them and then introduce this person to the Club.

Ask Members to share information such as:

- Name, occupation
- Reason for attending the Club
- Favorite color, food, musician, sports team

After Members know each other, there are lots of ways to start a meeting:

- Sing a song—in English (lots of American songs are available online at: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/culture-music-and-game-resources>);

- Memorize a short poem and recite it as a group;
- Have Members give a “news report” about international, national, or local news;
- Ask Members to report on news from an English-speaking country;
- Listen to a short podcast (lots are available at Voice of America: [www.voanews.com](http://www.voanews.com)) and then talk about it;
- Watch a short video clip and then talk about it;
- Play a quick game (lots of English language games are available online at: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/culture-music-and-game-resources>);
- Use ice breakers (see this activity for an example: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/teachers-corner-modals#child-2300>);
- Ask Members to talk about what happened in the previous Club meeting.

After the welcome and introductory activity, it is time for the Leader to present the topic for the Club meeting. The Leader can:

- Ask Members to share ideas with a partner for two minutes on the topic;
- Tell returning Members to share what was talked about in the previous meeting with new Members;
- Ask Members to suggest relevant vocabulary words for the meeting topic;

- Give two or three vocabulary words about the topic that Members must use in the meeting.

Remember: There are many different ways to begin meetings. If Members have fun, they will be happy to return each week.

## Club Meeting Activities

This section gives step-by-step directions for planning, organizing, and managing many of the most popular Club meeting activities:

- Skits, interviews, and role-plays
- Guest speakers
- Debates
- Introductions and short stories
- Conversations
- Reading activities
- Writing activities
- Vision boards
- Action plans
- To continue learning

After deciding on the topic for the meeting, the Leader needs to choose the activity(ies) the Club will participate in during the meeting. Each activity is explained below.

### *Preparing for Skits, Interviews, and Role-Plays*

Before the Club meeting, the Leader must:

1. Prepare the meeting by reading the skit, interview, or role-play and the Conversation Questions in *Section 2*;
2. Re-read the generic directions in *Section 3*;
3. Prepare the script for the skit, interview, or role-play—fill in the topic and other information in the *Script Outline for Skits, Interviews, and Role-plays* below;
4. Count the number of characters needed for the skit, interview, or role-play;
5. Be prepared to ask Members to volunteer to play each of the character roles;
6. Prepare Conversation Questions that are culturally relevant for this activity—OR—select questions from the Conversation Questions provided in this *Guide*;
7. Write down the questions;
8. Check the Conversation Questions included with each activity throughout *Section 2* and select a few that might be of interest to Members for discussion.

It is very, very important that the Club Leader read the skit, interview, or role-play and make the preparations before the Club meeting.

### Script Outline for Skits, Interviews, and Role-Plays

To introduce skits, interviews, or role-plays, the Leader should fill in (using a pencil so it can be erased and used again) and read from the following script. The Leader should always prepare the script before the meeting.

Reading this script, the Leader says:

- *For this meeting, we have a/an \_\_\_\_\_ [skit, interview, or role-play] about \_\_\_\_\_ [say the topic].*
- *Who will volunteer to read the introduction to the section? Thank you. Please read the information at the beginning of the section. (If the introduction was read during the previous meeting, say: Please read the information at the beginning of the section to remind us what the topic is about.)*
- *We need volunteers to be the Narrator and other characters. Who will be the Narrator? Who will be \_\_\_\_\_ [read the names of other characters until everyone is assigned a role]?*
- *Volunteers, please prepare the skit (interview or role-play) and dramatize it if you can by pretending you are the character. Volunteers can use props (clothes such as hats, jackets, or skirts—or furniture such as a table or chairs). These props will help the presentations be more dramatic. We will give you ten minutes to prepare. You may read the skit (interview or role-play) or memorize your section—whatever you like. [If this is a role-play, then the Leader says: Please act out the role-play and say what you think your character would say in the situation presented.]*

While the volunteers prepare the skit (interview or role-play), the Leader presents the vocabulary. The Leader says:

- *Let's look at the vocabulary for this activity.*
- *What vocabulary do we know?*
- *What vocabulary can we practice?*

After ten minutes, the volunteers preparing the skit (interview or role-play) return and present to the Club what they prepared. The Leader says:

- *We are ready to begin the skit (interview or role-play). Let's watch quietly.*
- *The Narrator may begin.*

The volunteers present the skit (interview or role-play) to the Club. The Leader must be careful—particularly for the role-play—to stop the volunteers if they take too much time.

When the skit (interview or role-play) is finished, the Leader checks that the Members understand the skit (interview or role-play). The Leader asks:

- *What happened first?*
- *What happened next?*
- *After that, what happened?*
- *What happened at the end of the skit (interview or role-play)?*

When the Leader is sure that the Members understand the skit (interview or role-play), the Club Members are ready to have a conversation about what they saw

and heard (see the section below, *Conversations and Conversation Questions*).

Remember: The Leader should prepare the Conversation Questions before the Club meeting. For the conversation, Members can talk in pairs, in small groups, or as one large group (see *Organizing and Managing Pairs and Small and Large Groups*).

## Guest Speakers: Invitations and Interviews

Guest speakers can be invited to give presentations at Club meetings. The guest speakers can be selected based on Club Member interests. What do Club Members want to learn more about? They can also be selected because Club Members want information about ways they can solve a community problem such as pollution, garbage on the streets, poor schools, or any other community problem. Guest speakers can give ideas for solving the community problem. They can help Club Members create an action plan to solve the problem.

### *Preparing for the Guest Speaker*

1. The Leader and Members brainstorm a list of experts who Members would like to have attend a Club meeting as a guest speaker.
2. The Leader writes the names of the guest speaker and the Club Member who will make the invitation.
3. The Leader and Members choose (by consensus or vote) one speaker from the list who they will invite, and they choose the date they want the guest speaker to attend the Club meeting.

4. The Member invites the guest speaker and asks the speaker to prepare a fifteen- to twenty-minute presentation on the issue or problem identified by the Club Members in a previous meeting. Points about the issue or problem that the speaker can address in the presentation might include some of the following:
  - Definition of problem or issue;
  - Brief history or background about the development of the problem or issue;
  - Current status of the problem or issue;
  - Possible partners or groups for collaboration to solve the problem or issue;
  - Possible solutions;
  - Proposed actions.
5. A few days before the meeting, the Leader and/or Member must confirm the guest speaker's attendance at the meeting.
6. If the Leader learns at the last minute that the guest speaker cannot attend, the Leader must be prepared with a meeting activity to replace the guest speaker presentation. Or, if the guest speaker is late, the Leader should have a short activity for Members to do while they wait.

### *At the Club Meeting*

[If the guest speaker does not speak English, the Leader asks for five Members to volunteer to be interpreters. Each interpreter translates the guest

speaker's presentation into English (five minutes each), and one interprets the questions from the Members and answers from the speaker.]

The Leader or inviting Member introduces the guest speaker, giving information about the speaker's training, education, experience, and/or expertise on the presentation topic. Members are invited to ask short questions about this introduction. Then the guest speaker begins the presentation. The Leader asks the guest speaker to pause after every few minutes so Members can ask questions.

Here is an idea about what the Leader can say to introduce the guest speaker:

- *Today, I want to introduce you to [name of guest speaker], who is our guest speaker.*
- *Please give a round of applause for our guest speaker.*
- *We will have a fifteen- to twenty-minute presentation.*
- *Please listen carefully.*
- *If you have questions, wait for the guest speaker to pause and then you will be able to ask your question.*
- [If the guest speaker does not speak English and there are Members who are interpreters, the Leader can say: *I will watch the time and change each volunteer interpreter after five minutes. Thank you to the volunteers for helping us. Now, volunteers, please come to the front of the room and stand next to the guest speaker.*]
- *Are we ready to begin? Let's start.*

At the end of the presentation, the Leader calls on Members to ask the guest speaker questions that will help them think and plan for taking action to help the community. The Leader should ask Members to focus questions on advice and solutions for the problem they want to address in the community.

### *After the Club Meeting*

The Leader and/or inviting Member should send a thank-you note via SMS or email, or mail the note to the guest speaker.

## Debates

### *Preparing for a Debate*

There are two ways to prepare for a debate. The Leadership Team should choose the way that works best for the Club Members.

1. One way to prepare for a debate is to ask Members to choose the debate topic and decide on the Members who will be on the PRO and CON teams (see *Steps to Begin the Debate*—2 and 3). The choice of debate topic can be done by consensus or vote. This decision should be made in the meeting BEFORE the debate. In this way, the Member Debate Teams have an opportunity to prepare for the debate. They can do research and check resources for information that they can use during the debate. The Leader should prepare paper ballots in case the Members want to vote in secret (see below).

2. Before the Club meeting, the Leader reads the debate topics and prepares ideas to help Members with information for the debate. The Leader should also prepare paper ballots in case the Members want to vote in secret (see below).

### *On the Day of the Debate*

The Leader follows these steps:

- If Preparation 1 is used:
  1. The Leader begins the meeting by reviewing useful vocabulary and phrases that can be used in debates [check the online *English Club Handbooks* available at: [www.americanenglish.state.gov](http://www.americanenglish.state.gov)].
  2. The Leader reminds Members of the debate topic.
  3. Then the Leader follows the *Steps to Begin the Debate* (1 and 4) below.
- If Preparation 2 is used:
  1. The Leader asks Members to choose the debate topic they want to discuss. See *Section 2* for debate topics—also check the online *English Club Handbooks* available at: [www.americanenglish.state.gov](http://www.americanenglish.state.gov).
  2. Members choose (by consensus or vote) the topic they want to debate.
  3. Then the Leader follows the *Steps to Begin the Debate* below.

## *Steps to Begin the Debate*

The Leader should:

1. Choose a Member to be the referee—the referee is the Timekeeper and stops Members when “time’s up.” [Note: The referee must be strong and direct; if the referee cannot stop the debate speakers, the Leader must intervene.]
2. Ask six Members to volunteer and divide them into two teams.
  - a. Team A is **FOR** the topic—this is the “**PRO**” side.
  - b. Team B is **AGAINST** the topic—this is the “**CON**” side.
3. Tell Team members to select their debate role—each team has three speaker roles:
  - a. Speaker 1—this person prepares the main arguments of the debate (Pro or Con).
  - b. Speaker 2—this person gives the rebuttal against the opposing team (Pro or Con).
  - c. Speaker 3—this person prepares a summary and conclusion of the argument (Pro or Con).
4. When the Team members and referee are ready, the debate begins!

### *Debate Sequence and Timing*

Here is the sequence for the debate speakers:

1. Speaker 1 (Team A) PRO presents the arguments (two minutes).
2. Speaker 1 (Team B) CON presents the arguments (two minutes).
3. Speaker 2 (Team A) PRO presents the rebuttal (two minutes).
4. Speaker 2 (Team B) CON presents the rebuttal (two minutes).
5. Speaker 3 (Team A) PRO presents the summary/conclusion (one minute).
6. Speaker 3 (Team B) CON presents the summary/conclusion (one minute).
7. Audience asks questions (ten minutes).
8. Audience votes on the best debate team, the Leader and referee count the votes and announce the winner, and teams congratulate each other. [The Vote Procedure: Members can raise their hands to vote, and the Leader and referee count the hands. OR, Members can vote on pieces of paper—in secret. If paper ballots are used, the Leader must prepare the ballots in advance of the Club meeting.]

# Debate in Eight Easy Steps

## Team A



Speaker 1

1. PRO  
Presents the arguments  
**2 min**



Speaker 2

3. PRO  
Presents the rebuttal  
**2 min**



Speaker 3

5. PRO  
Presents the summary/conclusion  
**1 min**

## Team B



Speaker 1

2. CON  
Presents the arguments  
**2 min**



Speaker 2

4. CON  
Presents the rebuttal  
**2 min**



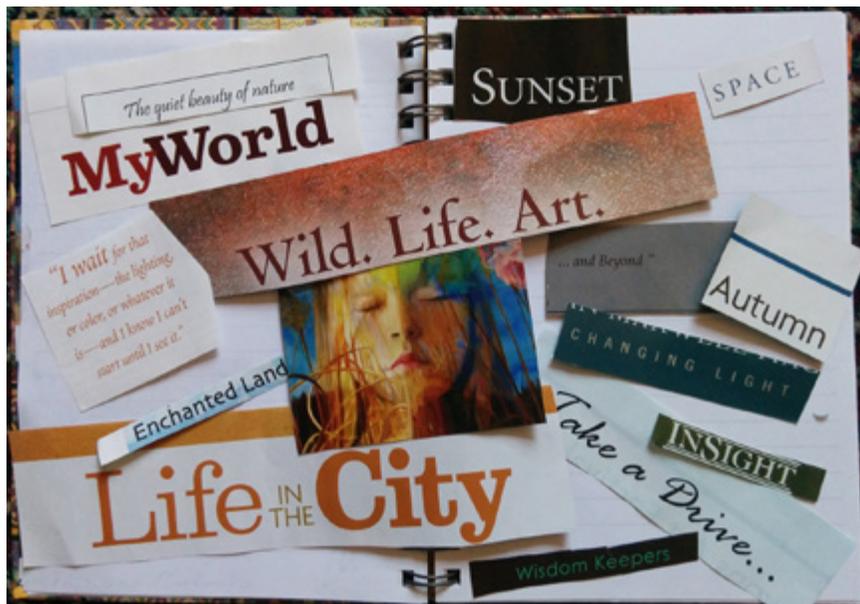
Speaker 3

6. CON  
Presents the summary/conclusion  
**1 min**



7. Teams A and B answer audience questions.
8. The audience votes on the best debate team.

## Vision Boards



A Vision Board can be a poster, paper, screenshot, or mural on the side of a building. It can be a piece of paper or poster board with drawings, photos, and pictures cut from magazines. The Vision Board is a visual representation of your wishes, dreams, and/or desires for positive change in your community.

For English Clubs, the Vision Board is a visual reminder of the positive changes the Club wants for the community in the future. For example, imagine that your community would like to have all children wear school uniforms, but the reality is that many families cannot afford school uniforms. On the Club Vision Board, Members can draw or find pictures of

students in school uniforms. Members can also draw pictures or find photos to show what the Club can do to ensure that all children get uniforms.

To prepare for the Club meeting in which Members will create Vision Boards, the Leader should:

- Ask Members at the end of the previous meeting to come to the next meeting with photos and magazines, scissors, tape/glue, and/or their phones or laptops;
- Collect and bring photos and magazines with pictures to the next meeting;
- Collect and bring scissors, tape/glue, markers, and pencils to the next meeting;
- Prepare the Club agenda, including plans for grouping the Members (pairs, small or large groups) during the Vision Board activity;
- Review the steps in creating Vision Boards.

At the Club meeting, the Leader should:

- Ask Members to brainstorm (see Brainstorming in *Section 2*) their visions for their community;
- Group Members according to the prepared plans;
- Have Members in each group collaborate on creating a Vision Board;
- Ask groups to present their Vision Boards to the entire Club;
- Place the Vision Boards where Club Members can see them and feel inspired;

- Select (by paper ballot, hand vote, or consensus) a vision that Members want to focus on in the community;
- Return to groups and create Action Plans (see below).

## Action Plans



An Action Plan is a step-by-step guide that Members use to solve their community problems and enact their visions. Action Plans are social-change activities. Social change begins when Club Members talk about important community issues. When Members take actions to change their society, they are committed to improving the lives of their neighbors. Social-change activities can be paired with skits, guest speaker

presentations, and role-plays. These activities can lead to Vision Boards. From these Vision Boards, Action Plans can be created.

By creating a Vision Board, Club Members identify the problem or issue that they want to change. When the problem is identified, Members can create the Action Plan.

Here are the steps for Leaders to take when Members want to solve a problem in their community. To prepare for the Club meeting, the Leader should:

1. Plan one or two brainstorming prompts that will give Members an opportunity to be playful and creative;
2. Prepare a chalkboard, poster paper, and/or a computer with screen;
3. Bring pens, poster paper, regular paper, and/or laptops;
4. Prepare paper ballots in the event Members want to take a secret vote;
5. Identify a few ideas, wishes or desires, and problems in the community that Members might be interested in solving.

At the Club meeting, the Leader should:

1. Welcome Members to the meeting;
2. Identify the topic of the meeting: A community Vision Board and/or Action Plan;
3. Ask Members to create a Vision Board for a community idea/wish/desire that they have (using pairs, small groups, or large groups);
4. Ask groups to share their Vision Boards;

5. Encourage Members to select (by paper ballot, hand vote, or consensus) one vision they want to make as the Club goal;
6. Lead Members in one or two warm-up brainstorming prompts that are playful and fun;
7. Record Members' brainstorming ideas;
8. Ask Members to brainstorm various strategies they might use to reach their vision goal and be sure to record all brainstorming ideas;
9. With Members' input, complete the Action Plan (see below).

After the Club meeting, the Leadership Team should follow up with the various Members who committed to take responsibility for different parts of the Action Plan.

For more specific, detailed information about creating a Vision Board and Action Plan and sustaining social change in the community, check the following online resources:

- The online *English Club Handbooks* available at:  
[www.americanenglish.state.gov](http://www.americanenglish.state.gov)
- The *Forum* article, “Community-based English Clubs: English Practice and Social Change Outside the Classroom” available at:  
<https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/english-teaching-forum-volume-54-number-3#child-2162>
- Information from UNICEF at:  
[http://www.voicesofyouth.org/files/Connect\\_Action\\_Plan\\_en\\_54b5478097b3b.pdf](http://www.voicesofyouth.org/files/Connect_Action_Plan_en_54b5478097b3b.pdf)

*Sample Action Plan\**

What is the issue/problem Club Members want to solve?

---

---

How will the Members solve the issue/problem?

---

---

Complete the boxes below to create the Action Plan. If more work boxes are needed, add more below. If there are fewer, leave boxes empty.

What	Who	When	How	Results	Complete
Work	People Responsible	Timeline	Materials Needed	Solutions	Work Completed (Yes/No)
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					

\*Adapted from UNICEF’s *Voices of Youth Connect Action Plan* at:

[http://www.voicesofyouth.org/files/Connect\\_Action\\_Plan\\_en\\_54b5478097b3b.pdf](http://www.voicesofyouth.org/files/Connect_Action_Plan_en_54b5478097b3b.pdf)

## Conversations and Conversation Questions

Most Club meetings should include time for conversations after activities. For most Club activities in this *Guide*, Conversation Questions are included. The Leader should carefully choose some of these questions before the Club meeting and give them to Members when it is time to talk about the activity. In addition, the Leader can create new or different Conversation Questions that might be more interesting for Members to talk about. Remember: The Leader should use this *Guide* for ideas—and create the Club’s own, unique, distinct Conversation Questions that may be more relevant and appropriate to the particular Club atmosphere.

To begin the conversation, the Leader says:

- *Look at the Guide* (or the resource the Leader has for the Club) *on page* [Leader gives the page number].
- *Let’s talk about the Conversation Questions* [Leader can suggest the prepared questions for the Members to talk about].
- *Who will volunteer to read the questions aloud for us* [the Leader selects a volunteer(s) to read the questions]?

- [When the volunteer finishes reading the questions, the Leader says:] *Good job. Are there any questions about the meaning of words in these questions?*
- [The Leader and Members can help explain words that are difficult.]
- *Good. Now we're ready to have a conversation. Let's use these questions to help us talk with each other.*
- *Today we will talk about these questions in [pairs, small groups, or large groups—the Leader and/or the Members decide this].*

During these conversations, the Club Leader visits each pair (small or large group). If there is arguing, the Leader reminds Members to use Active Listening. After fifteen to twenty minutes, the Leader says:

- *Time's up. Let's listen to each pair's (group's) ideas.*

The Leader gives each pair (small or large group) time—no more than five minutes—to share their conversation. After each pair (small or large group) speaks, the Leader can respond in a few different ways depending on what was reported. Here are some ideas for the Leader to say:

- *Thanks for sharing.*
- *Please remember that we are here to practice English.*
- *Remember to use Active Listening.*
- *All Members have a right to their own opinions.*
- *We understand that this story presents a difficult dilemma.*
- *For this reason, there is not just one correct answer.*

When everyone is finished sharing ideas, the Leader asks:

- *Now, what issues does this story raise for us?*
- *What problems do we have in this community that are similar to \_\_\_\_\_ [say the topic of the skit, interview, or role-play or the person the skit, interview, or role-play is about]?*

The Leader must remember to give Members time to think and then ask them to share their ideas. The Leader should ask a volunteer to write down the Members' answers so the Club can use them at other Club meetings.

Then the Leader says:

- *I hope you enjoyed this meeting.*
- *At our next meeting, we will talk about \_\_\_\_\_ [tell them the topic of the next meeting].*
- [OR] *At our next meeting, what topic would you like to talk about? Here are some topics or ideas that we can choose \_\_\_\_\_ [tell them the topics and ask them to select the topic they would like to talk about].*
- *I hope you will return so we can continue practicing English.*
- *Thanks for coming.*

Note: If the Club wants to talk about a topic that is not in this *Guide*, the Leader should encourage this. Also, the Leader can find many more topics in the online collection of *English Club Handbooks*. These are available at: [www.americanenglish.state.gov](http://www.americanenglish.state.gov).

## Advice for English Club Leadership Teams

The success of Club meetings depends on the Leadership Team and the preparations that the Team makes for the Club meetings. After every meeting, the Leadership Team should answer the questions in the table below, *Successful English Club Meetings*. For “no” answers, the Team should read *Problems and Solutions for English Club Meetings*. As the Leadership Team masters the skills of helping Members communicate more effectively, it will become easier to facilitate Club meetings.

After every meeting, the Leadership Team can ask Members for their feedback by asking them the “yes/no” questions in the table below. The Team can write the questions on a chalkboard or whiteboard, and Members can write “yes” or “no” on a piece of paper at the end of the meeting. Or, the Leader can read the questions and ask Members for a show of hands for “yes” and “no” answers.

The Leadership Team should use this information to help them improve Club meetings and apply some of the strategies in the *Problems and Solutions for English Club Meetings* section.

### Successful English Club Meetings

	YES	NO
Do all Members speak English at the meetings?		
Do all Members—men and women (boys and girls)—participate equally?		
Do all Members feel free to speak?		

	YES	NO
Do all Members want to practice English?		
Do all Members have equal time to speak?		
Do Members help each other with vocabulary?		
Do Members help each other with grammar?		
Do most Members attend regularly?		
Are the meetings fun, lively, and interesting?		
Do Members want to select the topic for the next meeting?		
When the meeting ends, do all Members know the next meeting date and place?		

## Problems and Solutions for English Club Meetings

Using the “no” answers from *Successful English Club Meetings*, the Leadership Team should check the table below to find solutions to the problems they have identified in Club meetings. It can also be helpful to speak with Club Leadership Teams from neighboring Clubs to see what problems they have and what solutions they may have found for solving their problems. Remember—there is no one correct way to solve problems in Club meetings!

Problem	Solution
<p><b>Some Members talk all the time.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members decide how much time each person can speak. Recommended time is three minutes.</li> <li>• Pick a Timekeeper. The Timekeeper is the referee (similar to a football referee). The Timekeeper watches the time and says “time’s up” when appropriate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Members who are one gender speak more than Members who are another gender.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Leader can talk with the women privately and the men privately to listen for solutions.</li> <li>• Have two or three meetings for women only and two or three meetings for men only. Then, men and women meet and talk about the differences when the genders meet separately.</li> <li>• For some Club meetings, the men and women can go into different rooms for forty-five minutes. Then, they come back and form a big group to talk about this experience. Try this for two or three meetings.</li> <li>• In the <i>Guide</i>, each topic has discussion questions. Men and women can be divided and meet in single-sex groups to discuss the topic.</li> </ul>

Problem	Solution
<p>Some Members don't come regularly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Leader can ask Members:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Is our meeting day and time still convenient?</li> <li>▪ Is our meeting location still convenient for most of us? If “no,” brainstorm different dates, times, and locations.</li> <li>▪ Would you like different conversation topics and activities?</li> <li>▪ If our conversations are not interesting, what would you like to talk about?</li> <li>▪ Can we choose the topic for our next meeting before we go?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Leader must use Active Listening and try to understand the Members and find solutions to the problem.</li> <li>• At the end of each Club meeting, the Leader should say, “Remember that we will meet [give the date, time, and place for the next meeting].”</li> <li>• The Leader can ask Members to call each other one or two days before the next meeting to remind Members about the meeting.</li> <li>• Or, the Leader can schedule a reminder email or social media post one or two days before the meeting and on the day of the meeting.</li> </ul>

Problem	Solution
<p>Some Members argue about English grammar or vocabulary.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Leader should:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Choose a Member to write down confusing vocabulary or grammar and find an English speaker to explain the confusion;</li> <li>▪ Have the Members give a report at the next meeting about the vocabulary or grammar problem.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Some Members get angry or disagree with other Members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Leader can say:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Remember that we are here to practice English and not to convince others to accept our point of view;</li> <li>▪ Let's use Active Listening.</li> <li>▪ First tell us the Member's opinion and then say yours.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Problem	Solution
<p>Some Members want to talk about politics.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Leader can say:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We are not here to discuss the negative elements of people or politicians. We are here to identify how to solve problems in our community, discuss how others have solved similar problems, and decide how we can learn from those experiences.</li> <li>▪ Remember what President John F. Kennedy said, “Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.” Now, let’s find ways the English Club can help our people!</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Some Members like to talk about their religion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Leader can say:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ We are not here to talk about religion.</li> <li>▪ We are discussing _____ [state the topic] and thinking about ways to help our community.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Problem	Solution
<p>Some Members feel threatened or bullied because they struggle to speak at a meeting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Leader can say:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Remember that we are here to practice English and not criticize anyone.</li> <li>▪ The more you practice, the better you'll get.</li> <li>▪ Allowing ourselves and others to make mistakes is part of the learning process.</li> <li>▪ Remember that we want the Club to be a safe place where Members can speak freely.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The Leader must also remind Members to speak freely and to feel confident about practicing English.</li> </ul>

## Conclusion

Congratulations! You now have the basic information that you need to create a successful English Club Leadership Team! Be sure to also check the resources at:

- The *English Club Handbooks* at:  
[www.americanenglish.state.gov](http://www.americanenglish.state.gov)
- The English Club webinar at:  
<https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/american-english-webinars#child-2146>



- The *Forum* article, “Community-based English Clubs: English Practice and Social Change Outside the Classroom” at: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/english-teaching-forum-volume-54-number-3#child-2162>

Remember: It is important to be creative and listen to Members—use their ideas, concerns, and comments as you plan Club meetings.

Don't be discouraged if a meeting is not successful. Don't forget: *The best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry.*\* No matter how carefully you plan, it is always possible that something goes wrong. It may be impossible to predict the outcome of a meeting—but—planning a Club meeting is better than not planning a meeting!

Be open, be honest. Communicate with the Leadership Team and Club Members.

Most importantly—don't give up! Keep on trying. Leading a Club is a bit like being a scientist. Try something at one meeting. If it doesn't work, try something different. Keep experimenting until something works. Sooner or later you will discover ways to make your English Club meetings successful!

Remember also: There is no one correct way to lead an English Club—make your Club unique, make it your own! Make your Club a safe, fun place where your family, friends, and colleagues can practice English, talk about interesting topics, and help the community.

Be in touch with and reach out to the Leadership Teams in other Clubs. Share your ideas, problems, and solutions with each other. See how you can support and encourage each other as you all work to practice English. Create a national English Club Facebook page and share ideas, activities, strategies, and advice. Build a national movement and hold an English Club Festival to meet and exchange ideas with a broad audience. Be as creative as you can!

Also, be in touch with the U.S. Embassy. They can help and support the work of your English Club. Share your successes with them—let them know the progress your Club is making.

Most importantly ...

*Good luck!*

*Practice English!*

*Help the community!*

*Have fun!*

\*From the poem “To a Mouse,” by Robert Burns

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# Practice English!

Choose Interesting Activities!

Be Creative!

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