Lesson plans

A1 Silver Speaking Part 1 – Teacher’s Notes

Description
This activity gives students practice in talking about differences between two pictures.

**Time required:** 15–20 minutes.

**Materials required:** Student’s Worksheet (one copy for each pair of students).

**Aims:**
- to introduce students to Part 1 of the A1 Silver Speaking test and the task type
- to encourage students to work together
- to practice language of asking someone to repeat themselves.

**Procedure**

1. **Introduce the activity**
   - Before the lesson, choose a picture, in color, from a previous unit in your course book, which shows a scene in which different things are happening.
   - Tell the students that they are going to talk about pictures today and then they are going to try part of the A1 Silver Speaking test.

2. **Useful language**
   - On one side of the board, write some questions the examiner will ask at the beginning of the test, e.g.:
     - What’s your name?
     - How old are you?
   - On the other side of the board, write some different sentence stems that may be useful for describing what you can see, e.g.:
     - Here, there is / there are ...
     - It’s raining / windy / sunny
     - The man / woman / boy is eating a banana
3. Practice

- Tell students to practice asking their classmates their name and age. Model with one or two students to start.
- Tell students to look at the picture you chose before the lesson and to tell you what they can see. Provide a few examples, if necessary.
- Elicit about ten or twelve sentences from students depending on the detail in the picture. Encourage them to look closely, using prompts if necessary.

For example:

**Teacher asks:**  
*Can you see the bike in the park?*

*Where is it?*

*What color is it?*

**Students answer:**  
*The bike in the park is under the tree.*

*It is green and yellow.*

- Students should be able to describe a number of different aspects of the picture, e.g. color, size, number, appearance, activity, position.

4. Student’s Worksheet

- Put students into pairs. Hand out a copy of the **Student’s Worksheet** to each pair.

- Tell students to study the pictures for 2 minutes without speaking and to look for differences between them. (They can point to show their partner the differences, but they can't speak.)

- Tell students that there are 7 differences.

- **Note:** In the real test, students will have to identify 4 differences between the pictures.

- After 2 minutes, tell students they can talk about the differences in their pairs.

- Provide an example on the board to help them.

For example:

*In this picture / Here (pointing) the boy is … but in this picture / here he is …*

- Give them about 4–5 minutes to talk about the differences. They don't have to write them down as they need to focus on speaking.

- Elicit the differences from different pairs. Prompt students to use appropriate classroom language when listening to each other.

For example:

*I don’t understand*

*Can you repeat that, please?*

*Sorry?*

- Stress to students that there is more than one way of talking about the differences.
For example:

- The boy’s eating a sandwich in this picture but in this one he’s eating some french fries.
- Here he’s eating sandwich. Here he’s eating french fries.
- Here sandwich, here french fries.

Simple language is acceptable though you should encourage students to say more if they can.

5. Important things to remember

- At the end of the activity, ask the students the following questions:
  *What should you say to the examiner at the start of the test? (Hello)*

You may also want to tell the students that there will be one examiner and one child in the test, i.e. 
they will not do the test with a partner.

*How many pictures will you look at in Part 1 of the test? (2)*

*How many differences do you have to find? (4)*

*What should you say if you don't understand? (e.g. I don't understand / Can you repeat that, please? / Sorry?)*

This shows good knowledge of English.

Suggested follow-up activities

Students write the differences in their notebooks using the example you gave them in Step 4.

The activity described in Steps 1–3 is a useful activity to do with the class on a regular basis to get 
students used to looking for details and describing pictures.
Key to Procedure Step 5

Possible answers:

- In this picture it’s cloudy. In this picture it’s sunny. Or Here, there are clouds in the sky. Here, there aren’t any clouds.
- The bottles in this picture are in front of the rock. There, they are behind the rock.
- The girl’s playing with a ball in this picture. In that picture, she’s playing with a toy boat.
- In this picture, the girl is wearing a watch. In that picture, she isn’t wearing a watch.
- The boy is eating with both hands here. There he’s eating with one hand.
- Here, there are five fish. Here, there are four fish.
Look at the two pictures.
How many differences can you find?
Additional information about the A1 Silver Speaking test

There are three areas that are assessed in the A1 Silver Speaking test:

- **Reception** – listening and interaction
- **Production** – appropriacy, how quickly they respond, how much they say
- **Production** – pronunciation.

Each criterion carries a maximum score of 3.

In the test, each student is taken into the examination room by an usher. The usher is someone who speaks the student’s first language and who is possibly known to the student, e.g. a teacher. The usher explains the test format in the student’s native language, before taking the student into the examination room and introducing him/her to the examiner.

A1 Silver is aimed at students who have some experience of speaking English and probably also have some experience of test situations. A1 Silver builds on the foundations laid at Bronze level by asking the students to give more extended responses (e.g. describing a picture) as well as showing their comprehension (understanding) of what the examiner says. Test-takers may be asked questions such as Where do you go after school? or Tell me about your favorite sport.

At this level, test-takers are expected to answer with greater expansion than at Bronze level, and to answer reasonably promptly, although they will not lose points for taking their time to think in tasks such as Tell the Story (Part 2), or Find the odd-one-out (Part 3).
Lesson plans

A1 Silver Speaking Part 2 – Teacher’s Notes

Description
This activity gives students practice in describing pictures before they do a sample task from the A1 Silver Speaking test.

Time required: 20–25 minutes.

Materials required:
- Sample Task, (one copy for each group of 3 students)
- A1 Movers Sample Test downloaded from the website
  https://michiganassessment.org/test-takers/tests/myle/myle-sample-tests/
  Please download the Sample Test for this lesson.

Aims:
- to introduce students to Part 2 of the A1 Silver Speaking test and to the task type
- to give students practice in describing pictures
- to give students practice in using language asking for repetition and clarification.

Before the lesson
- Choose about 4 pictures from the course book to practice descriptions.
- They do not have to be on the same page or even in the same unit, but they should be in units that students have already studied.
- Select pictures which show people doing actions and which contain objects and color, e.g. a kitchen scene with a family eating breakfast or a café scene with people eating and ordering.

Procedure
1. Introduce the activity
   - Greet the students by saying, e.g. Hello, everyone. Prompt students to reply Hello to you.
   - Tell the students that they are going to talk about pictures today and then they are going to do a sample task from the A1 Silver Speaking test.
   - Ask students to open their course books and look at the first picture you have chosen.
• Depending on the ability of the class, either, ask different students to describe the picture for you, or provide a model by describing the picture for the class.

Use a range of the following structures:
  ➢ the present continuous of some action verbs
  ➢ the present simple of the verb to be
  ➢ have got
  ➢ the modals can/can’t and should/shouldn’t
  ➢ expressions to describe simple feelings, e.g. She is unhappy.

If you describe the picture, then ask students to describe it back to you afterwards.

• Ask students to look at the other three pictures. In pairs they describe each of the pictures orally.

• Elicit descriptions from the students for each picture.

• Prompt students to use appropriate classroom language when listening to each other’s descriptions, as well as using this language yourself.

  For example:
  ➢ I don’t understand.
  ➢ Can you repeat that, please?
  ➢ Again, please.
  ➢ Sorry?

• Encourage students to repeat what they have said themselves; don’t repeat their sentences for them too quickly.

• The descriptions do not have to be long: 3 or 4 sentences are enough.

• Students should use the range of language you provided in the model. If students do not do this, prompt them by asking them questions, e.g. Do you think he is happy? / Can he see the bird in the tree?

2. Sample Task

• Divide the class into groups of three.

• Hand out a copy of the Sample Task to each group.

• Tell them that this is a task from the second part of the A1 Silver Speaking test.

• Tell students to look through the whole story silently first. Then ask them:
  ➢ How many pictures are there? (4)
  ➢ Are the pictures connected? (Yes, they make a story.)
  ➢ What do you think you have to do? (Children have to describe each picture in the story.)

They do not have to show story telling skills or develop a narrative. For example, they do not have to use first, then, next, after that.
• Quickly elicit some of the things/people they can see in the pictures.

• Provide a description of the first picture (the examiner provides this in the test).

Fred is in the kitchen. It is dinner time. He has fish and french fries for dinner. His mom’s saying ‘Here’s your dinner, Fred.’

• Students then continue to describe the pictures in their groups. Monitor and help with ideas if necessary.

• Elicit the descriptions of the other three pictures first from one group of three, and then from another.

• The descriptions do not have to be long, but should contain a range of structures as mentioned in Step 1.

• If the rest of the class does not hear or does not understand something the other students say, prompt them to use the appropriate classroom language. (Again, see Step 1).

3. Important things to remember

• At the end of the activity, ask the students the following questions:

  ➢ How many pictures will you look at in Part 2 of the test? (4)

  ➢ What should you say if you don’t understand? (e.g. I don’t understand / Can you repeat that, please? / Sorry?)

  This shows good knowledge of English.

• Remind students that:

  ➢ they should take their time to look at the pictures and should not worry if they don’t understand the ‘story’; they should still try to describe what they can see

  ➢ the examiner will start the story by talking about the first picture

  ➢ they should try to talk about different things in the pictures, e.g. what people are doing, what they can/can’t or should/shouldn’t do, how they are feeling

  ➢ they can point to the pictures as they talk about them if they can’t remember how to say something in English.

You may also want to remind the students that there will be one examiner and one child in the test, i.e. they will not do the test with a partner.

Suggested follow-up activities

1. Students can work in pairs and write the story in their notebooks.

2. With other picture stories like this, you can cut up the pictures before you give them to groups of students. The groups sequence the pictures to make a story. When students do this activity, you may find that groups of students do not all end up with the same sequence or story. This is not a problem. It encourages students to be creative and to use a variety of language.
A1 Silver Speaking Part 2 – Answer Key

Key to Procedure Step 2

Possible answers:

- **Picture 2**: Fred and his family are at the dinner table. Fred’s brother is talking to his mom. Fred and his sister are eating their dinner. Fred only has three french fries left.

- **Picture 3**: Fred doesn’t have any dinner left. He looks hungry. He is taking some french fries from his brother’s plate. His brother can’t see him because he is talking to his mom. His sister looks surprised.

- **Picture 4**: Fred’s brother is looking at his plate. He should be angry. He doesn’t know where his french fries are. Fred’s sister is laughing and Fred is eating french fries. Fred’s mom doesn’t know what happened.
A1 Silver Speaking Part 2 – Sample Task

Original can be found in the A1 Silver Speaking Sample Test, which can be downloaded from: https://michiganassessment.org/test-takers/tests/myle/myle-sample-tests/
**A1 Silver Speaking Part 2 – Teacher Support Page**

**Additional information about the A1 Silver Speaking test**

There are three areas that are assessed in the A1 Silver Speaking test:

- **Reception** – listening and interaction
- **Production** – appropriacy, how quickly they respond, how much they say
- **Production** – pronunciation.

Each criterion carries a maximum score of 3.

**In the test, each student is taken into the examination room by an usher. The usher is someone who speaks the student’s first language and who is possibly known to the student, e.g. a teacher. The usher explains the test format in the student’s native language, before taking the student into the examination room and introducing him/her to the examiner.**

A1 Silver is aimed at students who have some experience of speaking English and probably also have some experience of test situations. A1 Silver builds on the foundations laid at Bronze level by asking the students to give *more extended responses* (e.g. describing a picture) as well as *showing their comprehension* (understanding) of what the examiner says. Test-takers may be asked questions such as *Where do you go after school?* or *Tell me about your favorite sport.*

At this level, test-takers are expected to answer with greater expansion than at Bronze level, and to answer reasonably promptly, although they will not lose points for taking their time to think in tasks such as *Tell the Story (Part 2)*, or *Find the odd-one-out (Part 3).*
Lesson plans

A1 Silver Speaking Part 3 – Teacher’s Notes

Description
This activity gives students practice in how to do ‘odd one out’ activities before they do a sample task from the A1 Silver Speaking test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time required:</th>
<th>20 minutes.</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials required:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student’s Worksheet (one copy for each pair of students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Task (one copy for each pair of students)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(Taken from A1 Silver Sample Test)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A1 Silver Sample Test downloaded from the website</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="https://michiganassessment.org/test-takers/tests/myle/myle-sample-tests/">https://michiganassessment.org/test-takers/tests/myle/myle-sample-tests/</a></td>
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Please download the Sample Test for this lesson.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aims:</th>
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<tr>
<td>to introduce students to Part 3 of the A1 Silver Speaking test and to the task type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to give students practice in using language asking for repetition and clarification.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Procedure

1. **Introduce the activity**
   - Greet the students by saying, e.g. *Hello, everyone.* Prompt students to reply *Hello* to you.
   - Write the first four words from line 1 of the **Student’s Worksheet** on the board: *puppy, tiger, mouse, dolphin.*
   - Tell students to think about which one is different; **the odd one out.** Give them silent thinking time.
   - After about 30 seconds, ask students for answers.
   - There is more than one possibility, e.g. *A puppy is a baby dog. The others are not babies / A dolphin is different because it lives in the sea.*
   - Accept different answers as long as the student has a good reason for their choice.

2. **Student’s Worksheet**
   - Divide the class into pairs. Hand out a copy of the **Student’s Worksheet** to each pair.
They read through the rest of the words on the worksheet and decide which one is different (the odd one out) in each line, and why.

Monitor pairs and help where necessary.

Elicit ideas from pairs for each set of words.

Encourage them to give different answers/possibilities for each set.

Remember, students can use very simple language to communicate their ideas.

- Prompt students to use appropriate classroom language when listening to each other’s descriptions, as well as using this language yourself.

For example:

- I don’t understand.
- Can you repeat that, please?
- Again, please.
- Sorry?

3. Sample Task – introducing the task

- Hand out a copy of the Sample Task to each pair.
- Ask them what is different about this exam task to the activity they have just done. (The exam task uses pictures; in the activity, there are only words.)
- Tell them they are going to do the same with this activity, namely, say which one is different in each line and why.
- Give students a 2 minutes’ thinking time.
- Set the whole class an activity from their workbook or activity book that they can do on their own for about 5 minutes, e.g. a word search, a coloring activity, a sentence-matching activity. This will give you time to listen to each group doing the Sample Task.

4. Sample Task – complete the task

- Put two pairs together to make a group of four.
- Begin by giving the answer to the first set of pictures, as the examiner does in the test (the book is different because it’s not a fruit).
- Ask the students what is different about each set of pictures and why.
- Any answer is possible as long as students can say why.
- Make sure that all the students in the group have a chance to give their ideas.
- Spend about 1–2 minutes with the group.
- Listen for any language problems students have, e.g. This / These, and / but. Make a note of these so that you can work on these areas with the whole class in another lesson.
- Repeat the steps above, working with a different group each time until all the students have had a turn to talk about the pictures.
5. **Important things to remember**

- At the end of the activity, ask the students the following questions:
  - *How many pictures will you look at in Part 3 of the test?* (4 lines of 4 pictures, 16 in total)
  - *What should you say if you don't understand?* (e.g. I don't understand / Can you repeat that, please? / Sorry?)
    
    This shows good knowledge of English.

- Remind students that:
  - they should take their time to look at the pictures
  - the examiner will describe the differences in the first line of pictures
  - they then have to talk about the ‘odd-one-out’ in the other 3 lines.

You may also want to remind the students that there will be one examiner and one child in the test, i.e. they will not do the test with a partner.

**Suggested follow-up activity**

- This type of odd-one-out activity can be played in class as a game.
- You can use flashcards (on the board) or pictures taken from magazines.
- Either play it as a class game, with sets of pictures on the board for teams to say which is the odd one out and why, or students can play with small cards in groups of four or six.
A1 Silver Speaking Part 3 – Answer Keys

Key to Student’s Worksheet
Possible answers (accept any as long as the student can justify it):

2. You can have curly, blonde or long hair, but you can’t have exciting hair.

3. Towel, bath, and toothbrush are found in the bathroom, but table isn’t.

4. You buy things in the supermarket, the store (shop) and the movie theater (cinema), but not in the library.

5. Nurse, doctor, and farmer are jobs. Bus station is a place.

6. Below, inside, and on are all where you can put things. Both means two.

7. Game, party, cake are for birthdays but pirate isn’t.

8. Skip, dance, skate are actions where you have to move, but read isn’t.

Key to Sample Task
Possible answers (accept any as long as the student can justify it):

Set 1: The book is different because it’s not a fruit.

Set 2: This (shopping) is different because she is buying something but in the other pictures, they are painting something.

Set 3: This (fish) is different because it is small. All the others are big.

Set 4: This (the second picture) is different because he is swimming in the water. In these (the other pictures), people are using the water to wash something.
Read and think.

Which one is different in each line?

1. puppy, tiger, mouse, dolphin

2. curly, blond, exciting, long

3. towel, bath, table, toothbrush

4. library, supermarket, store, movie

5. nurse, doctor, farmer, bus station

6. both, below, inside, on

7. pirate, game, party, cake

8. skip, read, skate, dance
A1 Silver Speaking Part 3 – Sample Task

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A1 Silver Speaking Part 3 – Teacher Support Page

Additional information about the A1 Silver Speaking test

There are three areas that are assessed in the A1 Silver Speaking test:

- **Reception** – listening and interaction
- **Production** – appropriacy, how quickly they respond, how much they say
- **Production** – pronunciation

Each criterion carries a maximum score of 3.

In the test, each student is taken into the examination room by an usher. The usher is someone who speaks the student’s first language and who is possibly known to the student, e.g. a teacher. The usher explains the test format in the student’s native language, before taking the student into the examination room and introducing him/her to the examiner.

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At this level, test takers are expected to answer with greater expansion than at Bronze level, and to answer reasonably promptly, although they will not lose points for taking their time to think in tasks such as Tell the Story (Part 2), or Find the odd-one-out (Part 3).
Lesson plans

A1 Silver Speaking Part 4 – Teacher’s Notes

Description
This activity gives students practice in asking and answering personal questions in a semi-spontaneous way. This activity takes the form of a game.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time required:</th>
<th>20–25 minutes.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Materials required:</td>
<td>questions which you have prepared before the lesson (see below).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Aims: | to introduce students to Part 4 of the A1 Silver Speaking test and to the task type  
| | to give students practice in giving answers to questions in a semi-spontaneous way. |

Before the lesson

- Prepare about 16 personal questions to ask the students.
- Number the questions.
- Example questions:
  1. How many people are there in your family?
  2. What’s the name of your best friend?
  3. What’s your favorite lesson at school?
  4. What are your hobbies?
  5. What do you have for breakfast?
  6. What do you have for lunch?
  7. How many brothers and sisters do you have?
  8. What do you like doing on the weekend?
  9. What did you do last Saturday morning?
 10. What did you do last Sunday?
 11. What’s your mother’s name?
 12. Where did you go on your last vacation?
 13. How many lessons do you have in a day?
14. What’s the weather like today?
15. Who’s the youngest in your family?
16. Who’s the oldest in your family?

Procedure

1. **Introduce the activity/game**
   - Greet students by saying *Hello (name). How are you?* to different students in the class. Prompt them to respond appropriately, e.g. *I’m fine thanks / Fine thanks.*
   - Divide the class into four teams.
   - The students in each team give themselves letters of the alphabet from A onwards (for however many students there are in the team).
   - Tell them to do this at random and not to sequence the letters in the order they are sitting.
   - For example, if there are seven students in a team they will have the letters A–G. In the class as a whole, there will be four students with the letter A, four with the letter B and so on.
   - Write numbers 1–16 on the board (numbers only).
   - Start with the first team. Call out a letter at random, e.g. *E.*
   - The student with this letter chooses a number between 1 and 16.
   - Cross out the number they have chosen and ask student E the question with this number.
   - If the student **answers appropriately**, then **award a point to the team.**
   - **Students do not have to give complete answers.**
     - For example:
       - **Question:** What’s your best friend’s name?
       - **Answer:** Paula / Her name’s Paula / She’s called Paula.
   - Do not repeat the question unless a student asks you to do this using appropriate language, e.g. *I don’t understand. Can you repeat that, please? Again, please? Sorry?*

2. **Play the game**
   - Repeat for the other three teams, calling out a different letter each time for the student to choose a question.
   - Cross out the numbers on the board as they are used up so that students cannot choose questions which have already been asked.
   - Repeat the steps above, choosing different letters so that you ask different students each time. Then if you have students in the teams who have not yet answered questions, quickly renumber the questions and repeat the steps above as many times as you need until everyone has answered a question.
   - If you have a team with fewer students than another team, ask them one or more extra questions so that all the teams are asked the
same number of questions.

• Add up the points to see which team is the winner.

2. Important things to remember

• At the end of the activity, tell students that these are the kinds of questions that they will be asked in Part 4 of the A1 Silver Speaking test.

• Ask students:
  ➢ What should you say if you don’t understand? (e.g. I don’t understand / Can you repeat that, please? / Sorry?)
  This shows good knowledge of English.

• Point out to the students that:
  ➢ questions will normally be in the present tense but sometimes they will be in the past, e.g. asking about last weekend
  ➢ their answers should be short, between one and four words.

• Ask students what they should say at the end of the test (Thank you and Goodbye).

Suggested follow-up activity

• Students can do a similar activity using these types of questions, but in the new activity give them a time limit to ask each other similar questions.

• Students can do this in pairs.

• Stop the activity at the end of the time limit.

• Ask students to try to remember their partner’s answers and to write them down.

• Students check what they have remembered by reading their texts aloud for their partner to correct as necessary.
A1 Silver Speaking Part 4 – Teacher Support Page

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- **Production** – pronunciation.

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