

# Expressing an Opinion

## Objective

In this lesson, you will practice expressing an opinion in spoken English. You will also learn how to agree and disagree with others' opinions. Let's start by doing some brainstorming as a group.

## Warm-Up

Make a list of issues you and/or your classmates feel strongly *for* or *against*.

- dress codes at school
- plastic water bottle bans
- screen time limits for kids
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
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### Opinionated Vs. Open-Minded

A person who often has strong opinions and who thinks his/her opinions are always right is *opinionated*.

The opposite type of person is *open-minded*. Open-minded people listen to other people's opinions and points to help form their own opinions and decisions.

*Are you opinionated or open-minded?*

## Dialogues

Read Dialogues 1 and 2 with a partner.  
Then get into groups of three and practice Dialogue 3.

### Dialogue 1

#### AT SCHOOL

- Chase: I think our school dress code is unfair.  
It's too hot to wear pants.
- Anya: I disagree. Teachers can't wear shorts.  
Why should students be allowed to?
- Chase: In my opinion, everyone should be allowed  
to wear shorts in this heat, including teachers.
- Anya: You probably won't agree, but I actually  
think shorts look unprofessional.
- Chase: Really? I firmly believe that being comfortable  
is more important than looking professional.

### Dialogue 3

#### AT WORK

- Omi: I really think that Arnold is  
stealing cash from the till.
- Lia: Arnold? I doubt that. As far as  
I know, he's a trustworthy guy.
- Jan: I'm sure that Arnold wouldn't steal!
- Omi: I could be wrong, but he has been  
acting really nervous around me lately.
- Lia: In my opinion, we're all nervous about this.  
The thief could be anyone.
- Jan: I couldn't agree more. If you ask me,  
one of the managers is likely the thief.
- Omi: Come on! That doesn't make any sense.

### Dialogue 2

#### AT HOME

- Mom: I think we should move to a bigger house.
- Dad: I think so too. We've outgrown this house.
- Mom: It seems to me that we need  
a place with three washrooms.
- Dad: I'm not so sure about that.
- Mom: I'm always late for work these days. As far as  
I'm concerned, the kids need their own shower.
- Dad: Maybe you're right.

#### Word Stress

When expressing an opinion, remember to **stress** important words, such as *nouns* and *adjectives*.

#### OPINIONS

If your opinion differs from another person's opinion, stress the pronoun *I*:

A: I think school dress codes are **unfair**.

B: **Really?** I think they are **wise**.

#### ADVERBS

Adverbs (*really, firmly, totally, actually*) are also stressed:

- I **firmly** believe you're **wrong**.

#### DISAGREEMENT

Words that express disagreement, such as *not, don't, doubt, and disagree*, are usually stressed too:

- I **doubt** that.

## Useful Expressions

Review these common sentences starters for expressing an opinion.  
Then review different types of responses.

### A. Sentence Starters for Expressing an Opinion

#### Basic

- I think...
- I believe...
- I feel...
- In my opinion/view, ...

#### Strong & Personal

- I strongly/firmly believe...
- I really think...
- As far as I'm concerned, ...
- If you ask me, ...

#### Weak or Hesitant

- As far as I know, ...
- This is just my opinion, but...
- I could be wrong, but...
- It seems to me that...
- You probably won't agree, but...

### B. Responding to an Opinion

#### Agreeing

- I agree.
- I think so too.
- I absolutely agree.
- I couldn't agree more.
- Maybe you're right.
- That's true, but...

#### Disagreeing

- I disagree.
- I don't think so.
- I doubt that.
- I'm not so sure about that.
- That's not true.
- I totally disagree.

#### Reacting & Rejecting

- Really?
- Are you crazy?
- Come on.
- Whatever.
- As if.
- That doesn't make any sense.
- I don't buy that.
- Open your eyes/mind!
- Believe what you want.

## Comprehension

Now go back to the dialogues on page 2.

1. Identify at least one opinion for each speaker.
2. Underline all of the sentence starters for expressing an opinion.  
Use a darker underline to show that an opinion is strong.
3. Place a star beside any language that is weak or hesitant.
4. Circle the responses used for agreeing and disagreeing.
5. Which speaker seems the most open-minded?  
Which one seems the most opinionated?

## Practice

Now work with a partner or group and practice expressing opinions about these statements:

1. Uniforms should be worn at school.
2. Hats should be allowed at school.
3. Everyone should have a pet.
4. Screen time is bad for kids.
5. Minimum wage is too low.
6. Gas prices are too high.
7. This classroom needs rearranging.

**Tip:**

Use a variety of expressions and responses that you learned on page 3. Practice agreeing and disagreeing, and take turns being opinionated and open-minded.

## Asking for Opinions

### A. Questions

Now, let's go over some ways to ask others for their opinions.

Question	Example Response
What's your opinion?	In my opinion, we deserve a raise.
What do you think?	I think we should go to my parents for dinner.
How do you feel about <i>ghosts</i> ?	I truly believe that ghosts are real.
What's your take on this? ( <i>informal</i> )	If you ask me, this doesn't make any sense.

### B. Modals

Modals are often used when asking for and giving opinions (or advice).

It is possible, but not necessary, to use a sentence starter to show that you are expressing an opinion after being asked for one.

Modal	Example Question	Example Response
<b>Should</b>	Should we take the car or the truck?	I think we should take the car. We should take the car.
<b>Wh- + should</b>	Where should we go for dinner?	I think we should go to Grandma's.
	What should they order for dinner?	They should order pizza.
	When should she leave?	She should leave by 7:00 pm.

### C. Game

Form a circle. Your teacher will express an opinion followed by a question. After 5–10 students answer, begin again with a new topic.

#### Example:

Teacher: I think this classroom is too small. What do you think, Tula?

Tula: I agree. We need a bigger classroom. Should we change rooms, Ani?

Ani: No, I don't think we should. In my opinion, this classroom is just the right size. What's your take, Amir?

## Review

### Task 1

#### RESPONDING TO AN OPINION

Provide a response using the prompts provided.

Do not use the same response twice.

Your teacher will tell you whether to write or say your answers.

Ex. *Winter is the worst season.* **(agree strongly)**

*I couldn't agree with you more.*

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1. If you ask me, it's always cold in movie theaters. **(disagree)**

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2. I think that grade four was the most difficult year in grade school. **(agree)**

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3. In my opinion, English is the easiest language to learn. **(reject)**

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4. I think it's going to rain on our wedding day. **(disagree)**

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5. I could be wrong, but I think this is the nicest haircut you've ever had. **(reject)**

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6. You probably won't agree, but Mr. Harris was a pretty good science teacher. **(agree)**

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## Review cont.

### Task 2

#### AT SCHOOL

Complete the dialogue. Then ask a partner to practice it with you. Try to memorize it. Then perform it for your teacher. Think about word stress.

A: In my \_\_\_\_\_, man-made global warming is the biggest problem of our generation.  
1.

B: I \_\_\_\_\_ agree. If you ask me, it's our job to do something about it.  
2.

A: I'm not \_\_\_\_\_ sure \_\_\_\_\_ that. Our parents' generation did a lot of the damage.  
3. 4.

B: That's \_\_\_\_\_, but our generation is just as wasteful.  
5.

I \_\_\_\_\_ believe plastic beverage bottles are destroying our planet.  
6.

A: I \_\_\_\_\_ agree \_\_\_\_\_ you more.  
7. 8.

I \_\_\_\_\_ we should stop allowing plastic beverage bottles on campus.  
9.

B: \_\_\_\_\_ .  
10.

### Task 3

#### ROLE-PLAY

Work with a partner. Choose one topic from page 4 (or choose your own topic) and create a short role-play. Perform your role-play for your teacher/classmates. Include at least six exchanges during the role-play. Use a variety of expressions and responses that you learned in this lesson (including agree and disagreeing and asking for someone's opinion).

Your audience will have to answer the following:

1. What is the subject of the conversation?
2. What is speaker A's opinion?
3. What is speaker B's opinion?
4. What do the speakers agree about?
5. What do the speakers disagree about?

# Speaking Assessment Tool

Student / Group: \_\_\_\_\_

Date	Level	Assessed By	Role-Play Scenario	Skill
			Expressing and Responding to an Opinion	Speaking

Criteria	Meets the Mark	Getting There	Needs Improvement
uses sentence starters to express an opinion			
asks for / responds to an opinion effectively (agreeing and disagreeing)			
uses appropriate and varied language for the scenario			
uses word stress properly when expressing an opinion			

<b>Notes</b>          
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## Learner Reflection

### EXPRESSING AN OPINION

Add check marks (✓) to show what you've learned in this lesson.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Can I...	Yes (very well) 	Yes (with help) 	Not yet 
understand and use expressions from this lesson?			
express an opinion using sentence starters?			
respond to an opinion that I agree or disagree with?			
use <i>should</i> properly when expressing an opinion?			
use word stress correctly when expressing and responding to an opinion?			
ask others for their opinion?			

**My Notes**