



## Lesson 4: Understanding your skills and talents *by Emma Sue Prince*

<b>Age</b>	Teenagers / Adults
<b>Level</b>	Pre-Intermediate +
<b>Time</b>	60 - 90 mins
<b>Aim</b>	To practise functional language for discussing skills and talents. To recycle vocabulary for interests and hobbies and introduce new vocabulary.  To raise awareness of own skills and talents.  To feel comfortable talking about personal skills and talents.
<b>Life and language skills</b>	Speaking, presenting, self-awareness, understanding strengths and weaknesses
<b>Materials</b>	Images of 'talents' and 'skills' eg cooking, playing piano, singing, sewing, running, playing an instrument, playing a sport, making something, building, working at a computer, taking photographs  Worksheets 1 and 2

### How to use this lesson:

This lesson is about building self-awareness. It encourages students to think about their skills and talents and present them in a positive way.

This lesson can be done in class but if you are short of time, parts of the lesson can be done at home.

Try to allow time in class for students to discuss the different exercises. This will give them useful practice with asking and answering questions, as well as an opportunity to use the lesson vocabulary.

### Procedure

#### Lead-in – 15 minutes

1. Split class into groups and distribute copies of the 'talents' and 'skills' images. You could also ask students to make a list of talents and skills, or bring in their own images from magazines before the class.
2. Write 'skills' and 'talents' on the board. Ask the students "*What is a skill?*" i.e. something you learn, and "*What is a talent?*" i.e. something you are born with.
3. Ask students to discuss and find out who in their groups has these skills or talents. Listen to the language they are using and note down language components you want to focus on. Note down any vocabulary that needs explaining.
4. Ask the groups to decide which images are of talents and which are of skills. (For smaller classes have magnets, small pieces of Velcro or Blu-Tack on the board to hold the 'skills' and 'talents', and ask students to come up and place the images under one of the headings). This should promote further discussion. Use this opportunity to explain any key vocabulary. If you are aware that some students might know the vocabulary and others not, ask those students who are familiar with the terms to explain/define.

#### Exercise 1 – 15 minutes

Using a mind mapping activity, ask students to now identify all the skills and talents in the classroom. Students should be encouraged to use positive reinforcement during this activity to highlight the special skills and talents of everyone in the room.

This activity should be done with the whole group on a flip chart/board to clearly show the mind map. Do not stop until everyone has been included. Encourage positive inclusion and make suggestions, eg "*Lara, I've heard you are really good at tennis*" etc. and then write this up. No need to include student names.

#### Exercise 2 – 20 minutes – Worksheet 1

This activity aims to match – where possible – skills, talents and personal attributes or qualities.

For example:

*"Mike is great at soccer and plays in the local team. He has excellent physical coordination and he's a good listener and communicator."*



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**Skill** – great at soccer; plays in local team

**Talent** – excellent physical coordination

**Quality** – good listener and communicator

Split students into pairs and ask them to think of qualities and what these might be. Elicit these and write on the whiteboard.

Alternatively, ask the class to brainstorm what they think:

- a) a personal skill is – and give an example
- b) a personal quality is – and give an example

Answers:

1a. A personal skill is the ability to do something, eg manage money, play an instrument – something that can be learned.

1b. A personal quality is a characteristic, eg being enthusiastic, considerate, open-minded – it is a trait we can have naturally or can develop.

First, using the examples on the mind map, help students make the connection between *talent*, *skill* and now *quality* (for lower-ability students write up the qualities from worksheet 1). At this point add qualities to the mind map.

Any discussion should show now, if not later in the lesson, that there might be some overlap and that having a specific quality or being good at something does not necessarily mean you are talented or using that talent. Likewise, having a natural talent may or may not result in your having a developed skill. If this discussion ensues, encourage this.

Then distribute Worksheet 1 to work on in pairs.

### Worksheet 1: Skills, talents and qualities

Read the list of skills, talents and qualities. Circle the ones that apply to you. Then work with your partner and use the class mind map and your own experiences to think of more.

Skill	Talent	Quality
Swimming	Athletic ability	Being energetic
Managing time well	Thinking ahead	Encouraging others
Speaking another language	Musical ability	Helping others to understand
Using computers efficiently and well	Analytical mind	Being persistent
Writing stories and poems	Imagination, creativity	Listening to people
Dancing	Body awareness, coordination	Being expressive and open
Using numbers to solve problems	Analytical mind	Creativity
Playing the piano	Musical ability	Entertaining others
Taking a leading role	Encouraging others	Good communication
Sewing or knitting	Eye for detail	Self-motivated
Building a house		Motivating others
Working with machinery		Adaptable
		Open-minded
		Calm
		Being optimistic

This activity should promote plenty of discussion around skills, talents and qualities, and encourage students to think about themselves and what they might be good at. Use this time to monitor activity, and listen in for language points to highlight. Where appropriate draw the class together to highlight or drill specific language.

**Exercise 3 – 20 minutes** – Worksheet 2. This can be done for homework

This activity aims to get students to think about **their** skills and qualities. Using the ideas from worksheet 1 (and any additional skills/talents/qualities they or their partner may have thought of) students should try and complete all six sections.

Stress to students they don't need to be the best or be an 'award winner' for their skills to be included, it simply has to be something they show an ability at/for and this includes hobbies, etc.



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'Demonstrate' means to give an example of when this skill and quality has been shown – it may be in a physical piece of work (making a dress if the skill is sewing) or an outcome (the skill of managing time well resulted in more family time with your children before they go to bed).

Distribute Worksheet 2 – students work individually and then share in groups.

### Exercise 3: Worksheet 2

Note down your three strongest personal skills and qualities and give an example of when you have demonstrated each of them.

SKILL	QUALITY
Example	Example
SKILL	QUALITY
Example	Example
SKILL	QUALITY
Example	Example

#### Wrap up – 15 minutes

Ask the students:

- ▶ What new talents have you discovered in the class?
- ▶ How many people have the same skills as you?
- ▶ Has this changed how you see/what you think of the people in this class?
- ▶ Has anyone found someone with a skill they would like to learn?



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Student's Copy



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### Worksheet 2

Note down your three strongest personal skills and qualities and give an example of when you have demonstrated each of them.

SKILL	QUALITY
Example	Example
SKILL	QUALITY
Example	Example
SKILL	QUALITY
Example	Example

Student's Copy

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