

## 2.1c Flat hunting

### About the activity

<b>Mediation task type</b>	Relaying specific information in speech
<b>Mediation strategies</b>	Selecting and omitting information, translating, explaining sociocultural elements
<b>Summary of the activity</b>	Students help somebody who doesn't speak the local language find and decide on rental accommodation.

### Rationale



Deciding where to live in a new place is difficult and it can be particularly stressful if you are unfamiliar with the local language. So it can be very useful to have a local who is willing to help you.

### How to run the activity

<b>Levels</b>	A2–B1	<b>Learners</b>	Teens/Adults	<b>Time</b>	30 minutes
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Preparation	Go on a website that lists rooms, flats and houses for rent in the students' hometown or city, for example, <a href="http://www.idealista.com">www.idealista.com</a> for Spain, Italy and Portugal. Find six listings in the students' L1 that might be suitable for the people in the role cards and print them out.
Procedure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lead into the topic by asking students what the best way would be to find a room, flat or house to rent in their city or town.</li> <li>2. Explain the situation: a visitor who does not know the local language is coming to live in your city or town for six months. They have asked for your help finding a room, flat or house to rent. You find a number of listings of available accommodation on a website, but they only appear in the local language.</li> <li>3. Assign roles. Give the adverts to the students in role of the mediator. Students in the role of the foreign visitors each get one of role cards 1–3.</li> <li>4. Allow students time to prepare. In small groups, students in the role of the mediator look at the adverts and discuss the best way to describe the rental accommodations in English. Students in the role of the visitor, who are also in small groups, fill out their role cards and discuss what kind of accommodation they are looking for and why.</li> <li>5. Put the students into pairs, with one student in the role of the mediator and the other in the role of the visitor. They perform the roleplay. Explain that there is only a very limited number of accommodations available and that students in the role of the visitor must choose one from the available options.</li> <li>6. Give feedback on the task in open class.</li> </ol>
Procedure	


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<p>Language</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lexis to describe flats, room or houses: <i>balcony, blinds, furnished, in the outskirts</i></li> <li>- Modals of obligation and prohibition: <i>You can't use the bathroom downstairs, You must put down a deposit.</i></li> <li>- Functional language for:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describing accommodation: <i>It's got high ceilings, There's one available parking space.</i></li> <li>• Expressing preferences: <i>I like rooms with..., I'd prefer a place that is...</i></li> <li>• Expressing rules: <i>Smoking is not allowed, It says no loud music after 11 p.m.</i></li> <li>• Making recommendations: <i>This one seems like a good fit because... If I were you, I'd go with this one because...</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p> Differentiation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If you think some of your students might struggle to describe accommodation in English, you could pre-teach certain keywords or lexical phrases.</li> <li>- Some students might find the spontaneous nature of roleplays challenging. To reduce the stress of having to think on the spot, they could write out their dialogues and then perform them.</li> <li>- To make the task more challenging, instead of finding examples of possible accommodation yourself, ask the students in the role of the mediator to use the search function on the website to find suitable rental accommodation.</li> </ul>
<p>Variation and extension</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- You could ask students to find adverts in their L1 and email them to you before the lesson, so you can print them out.</li> <li>- For multilingual classes, the adverts could be in English. If mobile phones or tablets are allowed, you could provide the students in the role of the mediator with a list of the links to available accommodations and they could look at the listings on their phones.</li> </ul>
<p>Feedback</p>	<p>This should focus on how well the students in the role of the mediator select and relay key information from the adverts, and how well they explain it to their classmates.</p> <p>After finishing the task, students could discuss the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How well was the mediator able to explain the information in the rental listing?</li> <li>- Was the explanation clear and easy to follow?</li> <li>- Was there anything that needed further explanation?</li> <li>- What made the task challenging? Why? Were you able to overcome these challenges?</li> <li>- Do you think you could do this in real life? Why or why not?</li> </ul>
<p> Adaptation for the virtual classroom</p>	<p>Instead of roleplay, this activity could be done via email with the teacher copied in. The students in the role of a visitor could send the first email, explaining that they need help finding a place to live and what they are looking for. Students in the role of the mediator could respond with a link to available rental accommodation and a short description of the rooms, flats or houses. The email correspondence could then continue with students asking and answering specific questions about the accommodation.</p>

## 2.1c Flat hunting – the cards

**Card A**

You work for multinational company. It's important for you to learn the local language for work, so your company has paid for you to do a six-month intensive language course. You are looking for accommodation.



Complete the following information:

- How much you can pay in rent .....
- Kind of accommodation you are looking for (room, flat, house) .....
- Preferred location .....
- Preferred amenities (lift, back garden, washing machine, etc.) .....
- Other preferences .....




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**Card B**

You have recently finished your university degree in an English-speaking country. You will be working as a language assistant at a local secondary school. You are looking for accommodation.



Complete the following information:

- How much you can pay in rent .....
- Kind of accommodation you are looking for (room, flat, house) .....
- Preferred location .....
- Preferred amenities (lift, back garden, washing machine, etc.) .....
- Other preferences .....




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**Card C**

You are a seasonal worker who has been given a six-month work visa. You will be employed by a local farm. You are looking for accommodation.



Complete the following information:

- How much you can pay in rent .....
- Kind of accommodation you are looking for (room, flat, house) .....
- Preferred location .....
- Preferred amenities (lift, back garden, washing machine, etc.) .....
- Other preferences .....



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