# Conversation Based LEARNING

*Because life is not a grammar test*

**Speaking Improves 50%**

**Standardized Test Scores 20%**

**From First-Day Placement Test to Last-Day Improvement Data**

GUNTHER BREAUX

# From first-day placement test to last-day improvement data

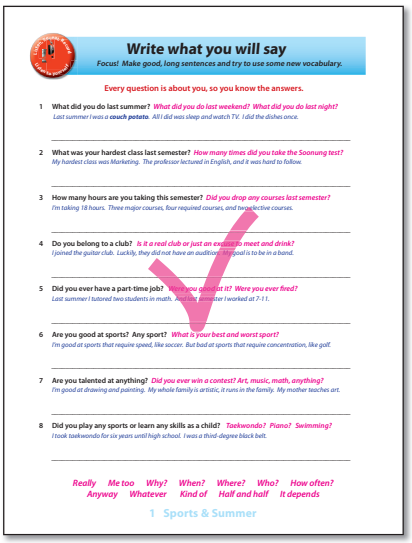
## 1 Placement Test

Gives your ability, and your first test partners.

| Placement Test Score | First Test Partners |
|---|---|
| 99<br>92<br>90 | 1 |
| 89<br>88<br>87 | 2 |
| 85<br>83<br>80 | 3 |
| 79<br>78<br>76 | 4 |
| 73<br>72<br>68 | 5 |
| 67<br>64<br>58 | 6 |
| 57<br>57<br>54 | 7 |

## 2 Homework Check

Forces you to do the book, prepares you to speak, and it's easy to count.



**Write what you will say**

*Focus! Make good, long sentences and try to use some new vocabulary.*

Every question is about you, so you know the answers.

1 **What did you do last summer?** *What did you do last weekend? What did you do last night?*
*Last summer I was a* ***couch potato****. All I did was sleep and watch TV. I did the dishes once.*

2 **What was your hardest class last semester?** *How many times did you take the Soonung test?*
*My hardest class was Marketing. The professor lectured in English, and it was hard to follow.*

3 **How many hours are you taking this semester?** *Did you drop any courses last semester?*
*I'm taking 18 hours. Three major courses, four required courses, and two elective courses.*

4 **Do you belong to a club?** *Is it a real club or just an excuse to meet and drink?*
*I joined the guitar club. Luckily, they did not have an audition. The goal is to be in a band.*

5 **Did you ever have a part-time job?** *Was it any good at it? Were you ever fired?*
*Last summer I tutored two students in math. Actually, last semester I worked at 7-11.*

6 **Are you good at sports? Any sport?** *What is your best and worst sport?*
*I'm good at sports that require speed, like soccer. But bad at sports that require concentration, like golf.*

7 **Are you talented at anything?** *Did you ever win a contest? Art, music, math, anything?*
*I'm good at drawing and painting. My whole family is artistic, it runs in the family. My mother teaches art.*

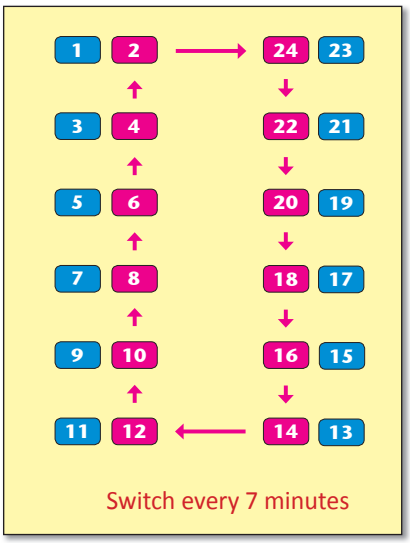
8 **Did you play any sports or learn any skills as a child?** *Taekwondo? Piano? Swimming?*
*I took taekwondo for six years until high school. I was a third-degree black belt.*

*Really Me too Why? When? Where? Who? How often?*
*Anyway Whatever Kind of Half and half It depends*

1 Sports & Summer

## 3 Conversation Class

Speed Dating
One topic, many partners.

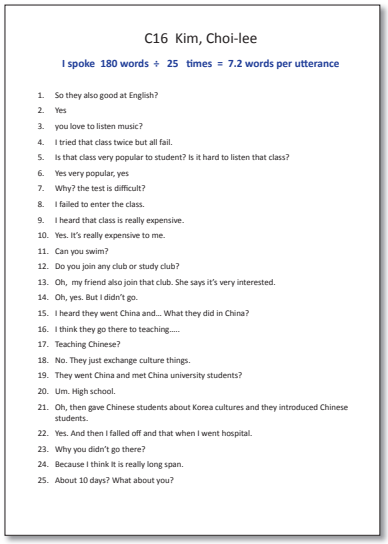



## 4 Conversation Test

3 students, 17 minutes
Students record and transcribe.

## 5 Self-Correction

Personal feedback for students and accurate grading data for teachers.



C16 Kim, Choi-lee

**I spoke 180 words ÷ 25 times = 7.2 words per utterance**

1. So they also good at English?
2. Yes
3. you love to listen music?
4. I tried that class twice but all fail.
5. Is that class very popular to student? Is it hard to listen that class?
6. Yes very popular, yes
7. Why? the test is difficult?
8. I failed to enter the class.
9. I heard that class is really expensive.
10. Yes. It's really expensive to me.
11. Can you swim?
12. Do you join any club or study club?
13. Oh, my friend also join that club. She says it's very interested.
14. Oh, yes. But I didn't go.
15. I heard they went China and... What they did in China?
16. I think they go there to teaching.....
17. Teaching Chinese?
18. No. They just exchange culture things.
19. They went China and met China university students?
20. Um. High school.
21. Oh, then gave Chinese students about Korea cultures and they introduced Chinese students.
22. Yes. And then I falled off and that when I went hospital.
23. Why you didn't go there?
24. Because I think It is really long span.
25. About 10 days? What about you?

## 6 Ability

The first test gives your ability, and your second test partners.

| | Total Words Spoken | Second Test Partners |
|---|---|---|
| A | 662<br>649<br>621 | 1 |
| B | 582<br>569<br>552 | 2 |
| | 549<br>523<br>518 | 3 |
| C | 451<br>427<br>423 | 4 |
| | 360<br>341<br>314 | 5 |
| D | 291<br>254<br>225 | 6 |
| D- | 172<br>140<br>129 | 7 |

**After midterm, do it again.**

**A comparison of midterm and final test data will show 50% improvement.**

## 50% Improvement

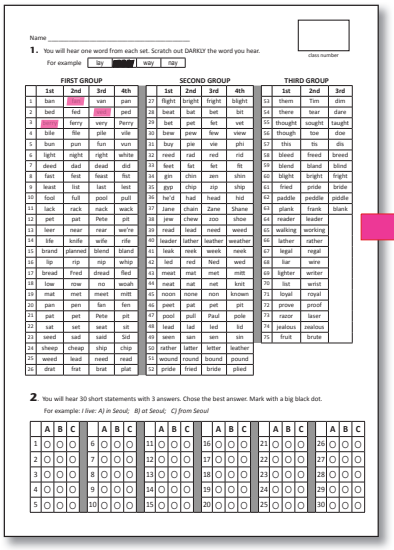
| | How many times I spoke | Average words per utterance | Total words I spoke |
|---|---|---|---|
| Midterm test | 47 | 8.5 | 400 |
| Final test | 28 | 15.3 | 480 |
| Improvement | | **80%** | **20%** |

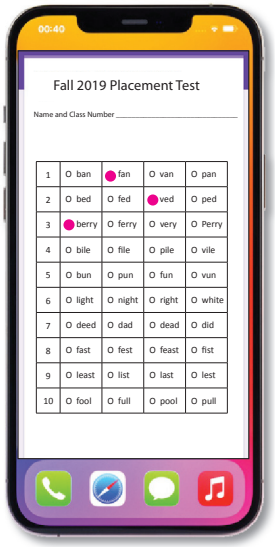
# 1 Placement Test

## This Test Changes Everything

**It changes the mindset, which changes the class from grammar based to ability based.**

12 minutes to give, 5 minutes to grade. And more accurate than the 3-hour American SAT test.






The test can be Google graded. Grade hundreds in 2 minutes.

Students mark their answer on paper (for a permanent record).

Then, they enter answers on their phones.

1. Because you know their ability on the first day, everything after is to improve ability, not determine it.
2. You don't have to waste class time and midterm and final weeks on grammar-grades tests to determine their ability and provide a basis for grades.
3. Ultimately, *how can you improve their ability if you don't know their ability?*

The university entrance exam measures intelligence and attention span for cramming.
**This test measures their ABILITY.**

This is also a levels test for the first conversation test. Partners are grouped by similar ability. This makes the test fair, and accurate.

Knowing their ability on the first day POWERFULLY changes your mindset. It's like you're a superhero with magic psychic powers. You know their ability, and you have not even spoken to them yet.

**On the first day of class I know their:**

1. Speaking ability
2. Pronunciation problems
3. Prepositions problems
4. First conversation test partners

*That's a pretty good use of 20 minutes.*

| Pronunciation | Prepositions | Score | 1st conversation test partners |
|---|---|---|---|
| 74 | 25 | 99 | 1 |
| 70 | 22 | 92 | |
| 69 | 21 | 90 | |
| 69 | 20 | 89 | 2 |
| 65 | 23 | 88 | |
| 66 | 21 | 87 | |
| 65 | 20 | 85 | 3 |
| 67 | 16 | 83 | |
| 64 | 16 | 80 | |
| 60 | 19 | 79 | 4 |
| 58 | 20 | 78 | |
| 63 | 13 | 76 | |
| 59 | 14 | 73 | 5 |
| 58 | 14 | 72 | |
| 53 | 15 | 68 | |
| 54 | 13 | 67 | 6 |
| 52 | 12 | 64 | |
| 48 | 10 | 58 | |
| 49 | 8 | 57 | 7 |
| 47 | 10 | 57 | |
| 45 | 9 | 54 | |

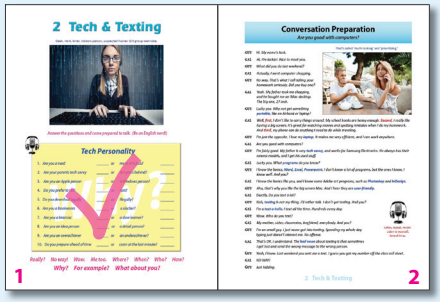
# 2 Homework

## Homework is important. It's worth 40%. They do it or they fail.

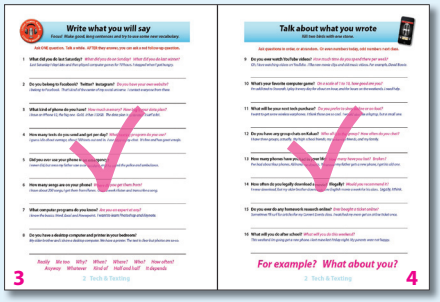
This is a new century with new technology. Every page is on audio. They do the book at home.

Each unit has 12 pages, 9 of them require student input. Each page is worth 1 homework point.

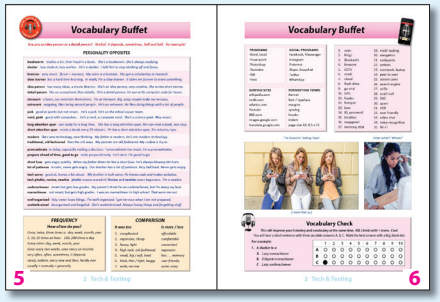
**1** Warm up



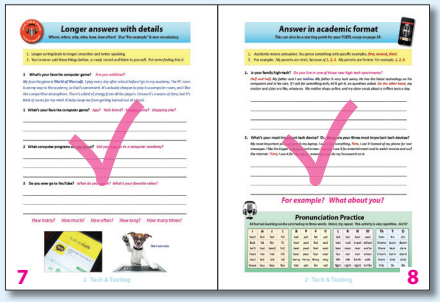

**2** Writing for Speaking



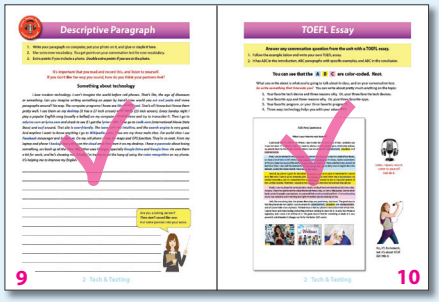

**3** Vocabulary & Pronunciation




**4** Short Paragraphs with details




**5** Descriptive Paragraph & TOEFL Essay

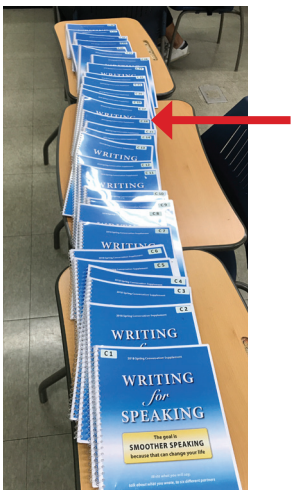



**6** Advanced Questions & Conversations

## 30 minutes of homework generates 2 hours of conversations. *Just add partners.*

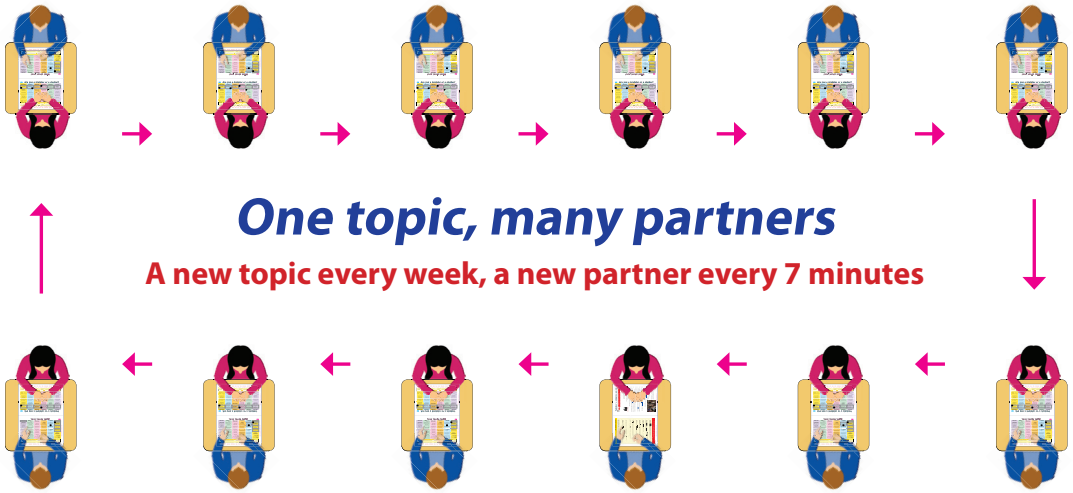
**Students can basically choose their own grade:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| C = | Do the first 8 pages, takes | **30 minutes** |
| B = | Do the first 8 pages, and the Descriptive Paragraph | **1 hour** |
| A = | Do the first 8 pages, Descriptive Paragraph and TOEFL essay | **2 hours** |




1. Homework forces students to show up prepared, and homework pages are easy to count. The home work grade is transparent and objective.
2. Homework for a class of 30 can be checked in class in 15 minutes, while students are using their paragraphs or essays to start conversations.
3. Homework is conversation preparation. The more they prepare, the more they improve. So their homework grade is also a reliable improvement grade.
4. Because homework is 40% of the grade, this prevents great speakers who are lazy students from making an easy **A**.
5. If students are too lazy to do 30 minutes of homework a week, that's not a Conversation Based Learning problem. That's a lazy student problem.

# 3 The Class: Speed Dating



## *One topic, many partners*

**A new topic every week, a new partner every 7 minutes**

**The bigger the class the better.**

More partners = more variety = more interesting = more repetition = more improvement

1. Walk in, put your phone on the roll sheet, look at the board, find your seat and partner, and sit.
2. Meet, greet, introduce yourself, and chat. After 7 minutes, the teacher yells, ***SWITCH!***
3. Students seated on the inside say, ***Bye, Gotta go, Nice meeting you, See you later***, and move on.
4. Next class you'll do it again, better, smoother, with new partners.

We don't give you new grammar to study every week. ***We give you new partners!*** THEY provide you with new information, pronunciations, vocabulary, and questions.

We don't give you advanced (and irrelevant topics), we give you advanced ways to talk about yourself. That's a very relevant topic on a job interview.

**How do you get good at something? *You do it more than once.***

# 4 Conversation Test

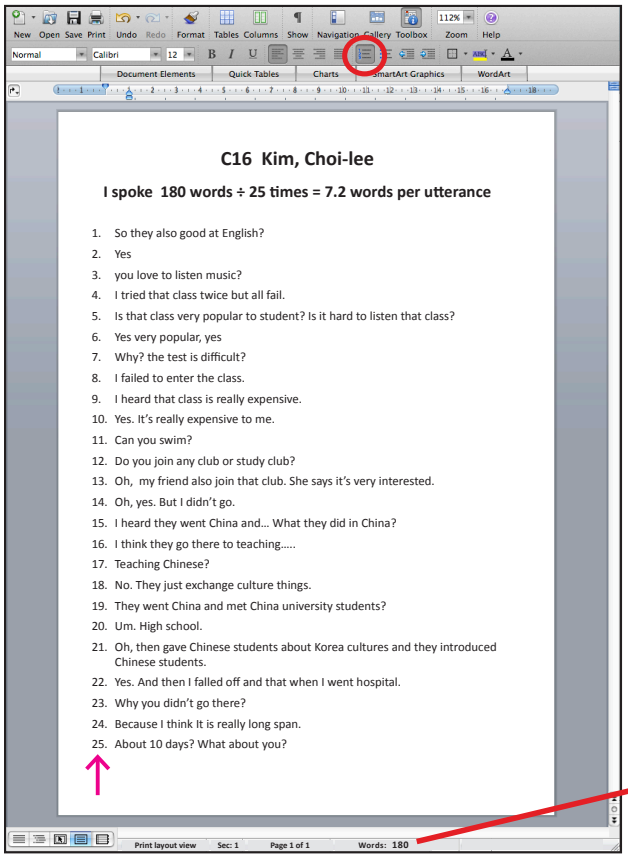
## MS Word can measure speaking ability.
## It's as easy as 1, 2, 3.

## 1

1. Three students of similar ability have a 17-minute conversation.
2. Students record with their phones.
3. Students transcribe just what they said on MS Word (about 2 hours).
4. MS Word gives the total words spoken, and how many times they spoke.
5. Simple division gives their average words-per-utterance.

## 2

Students go home or to the computer lab and type just what they said. It takes 2 hours or less. *Easy.* They email or upload it, and go meet their friends.



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23. Why you didn't go there?
24. Because I think It is really long span.
25. About 10 days? What about you?

Print layout view Sec: 1 Page 1 of 1 Words: 180

## 3

| | Total words |
|---|---|
| 1 | 695 |
| 2 | 668 |
| 3 | 643 |
| 4 | 582 |
| 5 | 564 |
| 6 | 544 |
| 7 | 521 |
| 8 | 509 |
| 9 | 453 |
| 10 | 421 |
| 11 | 421 |
| 12 | 398 |
| 13 | 367 |
| 14 | 345 |
| 15 | 321 |
| 16 | 288 |
| 17 | 267 |
| 18 | 245 |
| 19 | 180 |
| 20 | 167 |
| 21 | 149 |

### Total Words is their speaking ability

After 10 years of English education, and two hours after the test, the speaking ability of everyone in class is known.

Total words on the first test determines partners for the second test. This ensures fair and accurate testing.

For example, these three students will be partners on the second test.

They are beginning speakers, speaking as fast as they can.

**It's a communicative test, and MS Word measures precisely how much they communicated.**

# The second test gives their improvement

Their second test partners are determined by their total words spoken on the first test.
This makes the test fair and accurate.

**C24 Park, Lee kim**

**2nd conversation test**

| | How many times I spoke | Average words per utterance | Total words I spoke |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Midterm test** | 25 | 8.4 | 210 |
| **Final test** | 22 | 15.4 | 285 |
| | **Improvement** | **84%** | **36%** |

**Thus, my speaking improved 60% this semester.**

**VOCABULARY**

| MOVIES | FOOD & FITNESS | SUMMER BREAK |
|---|---|---|
| Love at first sight | Pig out | Weekend warrior |
| Crush on someone | Appetizer | Couch potato |
| Soul mate | Freebie | |
| Steady girlfriend | | |
| Outdoor person | | |

**The top 5 mistakes and how to fix them.**

1. No, I didn't heard about that.
   No, I didn't hear about that.
2. I have never been gone to there.
   I've never been there.
3. I am interesting in that.
   I am interested in that major.
4. What is your best favorite movie?
   What is your favorite movie?
5. Will you go to a festival or them park on this winter vacation?
   Will you go to any festivals or theme park this winter vacation?

---

1. Usually I'm weekend warriors, but last weekend I stayed at home because this week is midterm exam, so I was staying at home and studying for midterm exam. What did you do last weekend?
2. No, I didn`t heard about that.
3. Last weekend I was couch potato. What about you?
4. I don't like gory films. I like superhero movies, like the Avengers and Ironman.

Each semester every student has about 100 conversations with about 25 different partners. Of course they improve. *But, exactly how much?*

**There. That's how much.**

**Their utterances are 84% longer.**
Longer speaking is smoother speaking.

**They spoke 36% more.** That means shorter pauses and fewer pauses.

This is a **direct measure** of speaking ability, and improvement.

***What about mistakes?***
They find and fix their own mistakes. This is a new world, and finding mistakes is no longer part of the teacher's job.

***Get a hobby.***

**Measure how much students do, not how much they do wrong.**

That's it. It's a communicative test and MS Word gives you ***precisely*** how much they communicated. And, how much ***more*** they communicated on the second test. *What about mistakes?* It's not a mistake test, it's a conversation test. You let your students speak. They improved, and you can prove their improvement.

# 5 Semester Results

## You know their ability

| Average of 3 tests | | |
|---|---|---|
| Total words spoken | Words per minute | |
| 682 | 40 | |
| 649 | 38 | A |
| 621 | 37 | |
| 582 | 34 | |
| 569 | 33 | |
| 552 | 32 | B |
| 549 | 32 | |
| 523 | 31 | |
| 481 | 28 | |
| 451 | 27 | |
| 427 | 25 | |
| 423 | 25 | C |
| 360 | 21 | |
| 341 | 20 | |
| 314 | 18 | |
| 291 | 17 | |
| 254 | 15 | D |
| 225 | 13 | |
| 196 | 12 | |
| 184 | 11 | D- |
| 172 | 10 | |

## You have wide-spread grades

| Homework | Conversation Tests | Attendance | Final grade |
|---|---|---|---|
| **40%** | **40%** | **20%** | **100%** |
| 39 | 39 | 20 | 98 A+ |
| 38 | 38 | 20 | 96 A+ |
| 39 | 36 | 20 | 95 A+ |
| 37 | 35 | 20 | 92 A |
| 38 | 33 | 20 | 91 A |
| 36 | 33 | 20 | 89 B+ |
| 36 | 32 | 20 | 88 B+ |
| 33 | 32 | 20 | 85 B+ |
| 34 | 29 | 20 | 83 B |
| 33 | 29 | 20 | 82 B |
| 32 | 28 | 18 | 78 C+ |
| 29 | 29 | 20 | 78 C+ |
| 35 | 22 | 20 | 77 C+ |
| 28 | 27 | 20 | 75 C |
| 28 | 27 | 20 | 75 C |
| 27 | 27 | 18 | 72 C |
| 25 | 29 | 18 | 72 C |
| 24 | 24 | 17 | 65 D |
| 22 | 17 | 16 | 55 F |
| 12 | 17 | 16 | 45 F |
| 10 | 15 | 10 | 35 F |

## You can prove they improved

| | Average words per utterance | Total words I spoke |
|---|---|---|
| 4 week test | 8.6 | 436 |
| 8 week test | 13.4 | 482 |
| 14 week test | 17.2 | 523 |
| **Improvement** | **100%** | **20%** |

***Therefore, my speaking improved 60% this semester.***

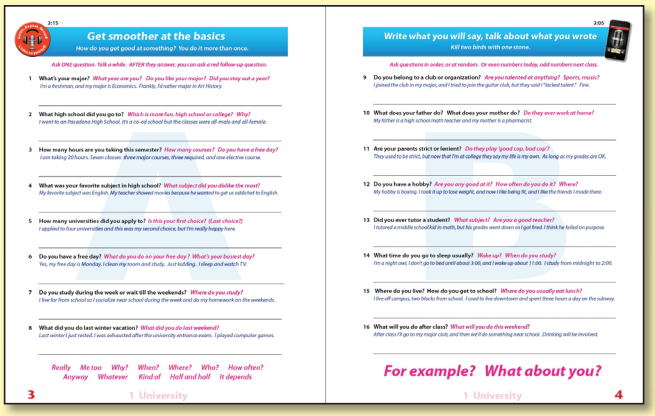
**When Speaking Ability improves, so do Standardized Test Scores**

# We use partners, not grammar

*This book has a wire spine. Why?* **It's a conversation book.**

# It's all about you

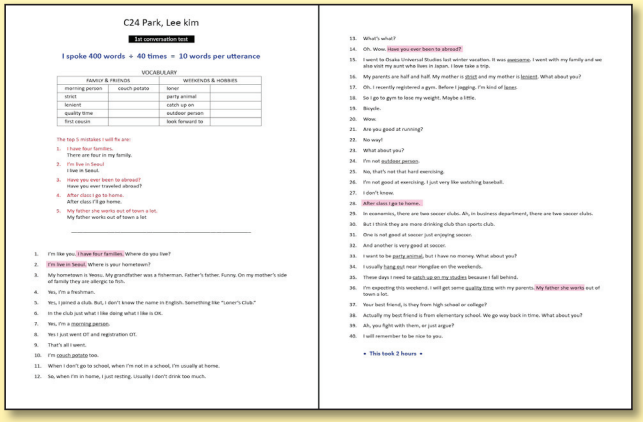
## Write what you will say




## Talk about what you wrote

## Transcribe what you said

## Correct what you said




***Say, it looks like students do all the work.***

**EXACTLY. That's why they improve so much.**