

Gardening vocabulary and speaking

Presentations on gardens

Student A

Speak about one garden that you know or know about for as long as you can, without looking at the list below. Your partner will just listen and tick off the topics you speak about, then ask you questions when you finish, e.g. about things you didn't talk about. You can prepare what you are going to say while your partner is reading through the list below.

Student B

Make sure you understand all the things below.

- Architectural features
- Atmosphere/ What feelings it invokes
- Best time to see it
- Changes by season
- Changes recently or since it was planted
- Colours
- Comparisons to other parks/ gardens
- Decorations/ Ornaments
- Features
- Furniture
- Good condition?
- Good things and bad things about it
- History
- How famous it is
- How you would improve it if it could
- Kinds of people it appeals to/ would appeal to
- Location/ How to get there
- Opinions (yours and other people's)
- Owned by?
- Parts it is/ can be divided into
- Plants and animals
- Rules
- Size/ Dimensions
- Style
- Suitable for/ Interesting for children?
- Surrounding buildings/ Surrounding area
- Uses (possible and actual), and things it isn't suitable for
- Water features
- What kind of garden it is
- Who planted and maintains it
- Who visits it/ uses it, and how many people
- Why you chose this one to speak about

Listen to your partner without interrupting (unless you don't understand something) and just tick off topics above that they mention. When they finish, ask them about any relevant things that they didn't mention.

Switch roles and do the same again.

Brainstorm vocabulary that you could have used in the previous stage into the categories below. Some words can go in more than one category.

Actions that gardeners and other people do in gardens

Actions that things in the garden do

Adjectives for describing gardens

Animals in gardens

Architectural features of gardens

Decorations/ Ornaments

Garden furniture

Negative words connected to gardens

Parts of gardens

Plants and parts of plants

Positive words connected to gardens

Gardening supplies

Things connected to animals in gardens

Things connected to water and gardens

Things for children in gardens

Gardening tools/ equipment

Gardening compound nouns

Match up the halves of the compound nouns below and then add them to the categories above

- | | |
|----------------|-----------|
| 1. back | heap |
| 2. bird | bath |
| 3. bird | table |
| 4. compost | chair |
| 5. deck | garden |
| 6. exotic | basket |
| 7. flower | plant |
| 8. front | garden |
| 9. green | bed |
| 10. hanging | house |
| 11. kneeling | pool |
| 12. lawn | plant |
| 13. mole | hill |
| 14. ornamental | mower |
| 15. paddling | pad |
| 16. patio | stone |
| 17. paving | patch |
| 18. vegetable | can |
| 19. watering | killer |
| 20. weed | furniture |
| 21. wheel | box |
| 22. wild | louse |
| 23. window | barrow |
| 24. wood | chips |
| 25. wood | flower |

Use the suggested answers on the next page to check your answers to this and the last page.

Suggested answers

Actions that gardeners and other people do in gardens - bend down, dig/ dig up, eat outdoors, harvest, kneel, mow (the lawn), pick, plant, prune, rake, relax, replant, smell the flowers, sow (seeds), spray, sunbathe, trim, water, weed

Actions that things in the garden do - bloom/ flower, decompose, die, dig, go to seed, grow, hatch, lay eggs, nest, rust, take over, wilt

Adjectives for describing gardens - big/ large/ huge, compact, dry, English, French, Italian, Japanese, long, low maintenance, muddy, narrow, natural, overgrown, shared, small, symmetrical, traditional, unkempt/ messy/ untidy, waterlogged, wide

Animals in gardens - aphid/ greenfly, bee, butterfly/ caterpillar, crow, fish/ koi, fly, fox, frog/ tadpole, hedgehog, hornet, ladybird (= ladybug), mole, mosquito, mouse, pigeon, rabbit, rat, slug, snail, sparrow, spider, squirrel, wasp, woodlouse, worm

Architectural features of gardens - barbecue, boulder, decking, fence, fountain, garden path, gate, gravel, greenhouse, patio, paving stones, pebble, rock garden, shed, trellis, wall

Decorations/ Ornaments - flower pot, gnome, hanging basket, statue/ sculpture, topiary (= ornamental hedge), window box

Furniture - awning, barbecue, bench, bird bath, bird box, bird table, deckchair, hammock, outdoor heater, parasol/ garden umbrella, patio table, sun lounger

Negative words connected to gardens - creepy crawly/ bug, damp, dark, hay fever/ allergy, infestation/ overrun, messy, mud/ muddy, overgrown, prickly/ thorn, rot, unkempt, waterlogged, weed, wilt

Parts of gardens - border, compost heap, flowerbed, lawn, nursery, orchard, patio, vegetable patch

Plants and parts of plants - aromatic plant (lavender etc), blossom, branch, bulb, bush/ hedge, cactus, climbing rose, flower, fruit tree, grass, herb (rosemary, basil, etc), ivy, leaf, moss, petal, pollen, root, seed, stem, stick, thorn, trunk, twig, weed, wild flower

Positive words connected to gardens - aromatic/ scent, child friendly, ecologically friendly, green, leafy, low maintenance

Supplies - bulb, cane, compost/ fertiliser/ nutrients, cutting/ seedling, insecticide, seed, soil, turf, weed killer/ herbicide, woodchips

Things connected to animals - bird bath, bird box, bird table, insecticide, kennel, molehill

Things connected to water - fountain, garden tap, hose, paddling pool, pond/ lake, sprinkler, stream, swimming pool, water barrel/ water tub, waterfall, watering can

Things for children - basketball hoop, climbing frame, paddling pool, sandpit, slide, swimming pool, swing, tyre

Tools/ Equipment - boots/ wellington boots (=wellies), fork, garden shears, gloves, hoe, hose, kneeling pad, lawnmower, rake, secateurs, shears, spade, sprinkler, strimmer/ trimmer, trowel, watering can, wheelbarrow

Check any words that you brainstormed which aren't above.

Gardening discussion questions

Choose questions from below to ask your partner. When there are follow up questions, only use them if you need to. When there are several options, choose one.

- Which of the words that you brainstormed above is most important to you and why? What about for people in your country?
- Is gardening a popular hobby in your country? Why/ Why not?
- Are houses in your country usually built with substantial gardens? Why/ Why not?
- How would you describe a typical garden in your city? Why do you think it is usually that way?
- Is there a traditional kind of garden in your country? How could you explain that style and how popular it is now to a foreign person?
- How would you feel about working as a gardener, garden designer, landscape designer or landscape architect? Why?
- How do you feel about gardening? Where would it rank as a way of spending free time for you?
- How much time would you choose to spend gardening if you could choose freely? Has that changed over time or is it likely to?
- Which parts of gardening do you/ would you find most and least interesting?
- Do you know any other people who are interested in gardening? What interests them about it?
- What kinds of people does gardening most suit? What benefits does it have for those people?
- How interested are you in visiting parks and gardens, e.g. on holiday and on your days off?
- How much time would you spend in a garden if you could choose freely?
- What do you/ would you most enjoy doing in a garden?/ What is the most important purpose of a garden for you?
- How important is a garden to you? Would you be willing to give up some floor space to have a garden?
- How much would you be willing to pay to have an allotment near your house?
- How much would you be willing to pay to have more garden space added to your house?
- How much would you be willing to pay to have someone do the gardening for you?
- Generally, what kinds of gardens and features do you like and dislike?
- If you could, how would you improve your own garden or a garden you know well?
- Do you think the government should do more to make gardening more popular as a hobby and accessible to those that want to do it? What could they do?
- Do you think the government should do more to make this a green city? What do they already do and encourage others to do, and what other ideas could you suggest?

Gardening opinions

What do you think about these gardening ideas? Choose one and say what you think of it, and your partner will respond. OR Take opposite sides on one of the things below and debate whether it is a good thing or not.

- a brick barbecue
- a garden designed to attract wildlife
- a garden which is mainly cactuses
- a greenhouse
- a lawn
- a roof covered with grass or moss
- a vegetable garden
- abstract sculpture
- barbed wire
- bird feeders
- compost heap
- garden ornaments, e.g. gnomes, Greek columns or cupid statues
- a gravel garden/ Zen garden
- high hedges or fences
- insecticide
- leaving the whole or part of the garden to go wild
- moss
- ornamental hedges (= topiary)
- paving the whole garden
- sun loungers
- symmetrical gardens/ Italian gardens
- tall trees
- weed killer/ herbicide
- woodchips

Which of these things do you prefer and why?

- a mix of styles or one style
- beautiful or low maintenance
- bush, fence or wall
- exotic plants or local plants
- flowers or herbs
- kennel or dog living inside the house
- large front garden or large back garden
- lawn or paving
- mainly to look at or mainly to do things in
- more lawns, more flowerbeds, or more park equipment for kids in parks
- pond or paddling pool
- swing or tyre
- tidy or natural looking
- vegetable patch or flowerbed
- watering can, hose or sprinkler
- weed killer or weeding

Neighbourly disputes over gardens

What things could you do in your garden which might be unpopular with your neighbours?

Choose one of the situations below and try to negotiate a settlement with your neighbour. You can choose to communicate face to face (going to their front door or over the garden fence), by phone, by email, or through a mediator.

- allergic to plants in the neighbouring garden
- animals digging under fence
- balls over the fence causing damage
- balls which have gone over the fence not being returned
- cat eating things in the pond
- flowers attracting bees
- front garden is a mess
- leaning over the fence and picking flowers or fruit from your trees
- mechanical noise, e.g. of mowing or the electrical motor of a fountain
- new fence encroaches on your garden
- noise from children playing in the garden
- pets escaping under the fence
- roots of tree growing under fence
- smells, e.g. of compost
- smoke, e.g. from bonfires or barbecues
- tree growing over fence
- trees or hedges blocking sunlight
- undressed people, e.g. sunbathing
- water rotting the fence
- weeds spreading from one garden to another

Make suggestions for solving the problems above if your neighbours won't talk.

Gardening advice

Make suggestions for gardens for these people:

- Blind
- Can't bend down/ Can't kneel
- Disabled
- Don't want to be seen by neighbours, e.g. so can sunbathe
- Have hay fever
- Have small children
- Little money
- Little or no time for gardening
- Lots of pets
- Old
- Wants a garden mainly for barbecues/ parties
- Wants a garden mainly for relaxing
- Wants to do yoga, tai chi or meditation there
- Wants to give a Japanese touch to an English garden without too much effort and without it looking strange
- Worried about the environment
- Worried about water use

Make suggestions for gardeners with these gardens and gardening situations. Choose one of the situations, ask for your partners' opinions and react to what they say.

- a bad lawn (dry, moss, etc)
- a hose pipe ban
- a lot of snow every year
- a paved garden with no greenery
- animals eating vegetables
- birds eating seeds
- children ruining the lawn
- children walking mud into the house
- earthquake cracked walls/ path/ patio
- foxes
- little rain
- little space
- moles/ molehills
- moss
- not much sunlight
- poor soil
- roots cracking path/ patio/ wall
- slugs
- something eating the fish in the pond
- squirrels eating bird food
- strong winds common
- very hot in the summer
- wasps

Gardening inventions

Can you think of any particularly clever or easy ways of doing any of these things, e.g. through the use of new technology?

- Attract wildlife
- Collect fallen leaves
- Cook outdoors
- Cut branches
- Cut down a tree
- Cut flowers
- Cut hedges into shape
- Deal with garden waste
- Divide your garden from your neighbours'
- Eat outdoors
- Get rid of bugs/ Save plants from bugs
- Keep your privacy
- Know where to put particular plants
- Make your garden useable in the winter
- Mow
- Not bring mud into the house
- Not get pricked by thorns
- Plant seedlings
- Plant seeds
- Produce your own compost
- Protect fish
- Protect plants from cold weather/ strong winds
- Protect plants from kids playing
- Protect the garden from animals
- Protect the lawn
- Prune
- Remembering when to water/ plant/ prune
- Save energy
- Save water
- Water
- Weed/ Get rid of weeds

Can you think of a way of improving on the traditional/ low-tech/ basic versions of any of these things?

- awning
- barbecue
- bench
- bird bath
- bird box
- bird table
- deckchair
- fence
- garden path
- garden tap
- gloves
- gnome
- greenhouse
- hammock
- hose
- kennel
- kneeling pad
- lawnmower
- paddling pool
- padlock on a shed door
- parasol
- patio
- patio furniture
- rake
- secateurs
- shed
- spade
- sprinkler
- swing
- watering can
- wellington boots
- wheelbarrow

Take the photo of a real invention that your teacher gives you and try to guess its functions and how it is better than a basic version, then read the description and guess.

OR

Take the inventions that your teacher gives you and make up an explanation for the only one you don't have a text for. Explain all of the inventions to another group (letting them see the photos), and see if they can guess which one you made up.