

Strangers on a train – Teacher’s notes

Level: Beginner (equivalent to CEF level A1)

Aim: (Grammar + Vocabulary) Students review and practice *going to* for future plans and vocabulary related to food and travelling.

Context: All the students are travelling alone on the same train from London to Istanbul (on the former Orient Express). They are in the restaurant car and making small talk before dinner.

Preparation: Make one copy of the worksheet for each student. Make copies of the food cards so there are enough cards for one for each student (optional).

Procedure:

1. Brainstorm ideas for a menu with students to recycle food and drink vocabulary and write up the menu on the board.
2. Each student has to decide what they would like to eat from the menu and write their choice in exercise 1. You can allow students to choose freely from the menu, or let them choose a card. This will depend on the size of your group. The aim is that not all students choose the same thing, but that all (or most) students will find another student who has chosen the same.
3. The students then have to mingle around the class and find someone who is also going to choose the same food/drink. They write down the names of the other students they talk to and the food they have chosen. When they find someone who has chosen the same food as them, they write down that person’s name.
4. Then ask students to report back to the group about what the other students *are going to* have. They can report back about everyone they spoke to, or just about the “matching choice” student they found.
5. Students look at the train stops and write them in the correct order in exercise 3.
6. Then in pairs or small groups (or as a whole class activity if you like) brainstorm what students can do in each city.
7. On their own, students then decide where they are going to get off the train and what they are going to do there. They write their decisions in exercise 5.
8. Finally, students mingle to find another student who is going to stop in the same city as they are to do the same thing.
9. After this activity, ask students to report back to the class about what the other students are going to do. Remember to model and focus on the *going to* form for future plans.

Answer: London-Paris-Strasbourg-Munich-Vienna-Budapest-Bucharest-Istanbul.

Option: if you want you could get tourist information online about these cities, simplify it, and hand it out to students to choose what they would like to do in each place when the train stops if they had one day.