

50 natural English Tips

10. "JOIN THE DEBATE"



natural English giving opinions about issues

I think it's OK to make people look more attractive. ☹
I don't see any problem if newspapers change pictures.
I don't think it's right to take pictures of celebrities on holiday.



natural English I (don't) agree / it depends

I agree with you / that. (= I have the same opinion)
NOT I'm agree with you / that.
I think it depends. NOT it's depend
Sorry, I don't (agree with you / that).



natural English rephrasing an idea

You can use these phrases to clarify what someone has said.

So, what you're saying is, we don't need ...
So, you mean that we can ... do you?
So are you saying that ... ?



natural English clarifying your position

If someone hasn't understood your argument, you can say:

That's not what I meant.

No, what I meant was ...

That's not what I was trying to say.

What I'm trying to say is ...



natural English taking time to think

Just a moment / minute ...
Let me think ...
I'm not sure - let me see ...

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10. "JOIN THE DEBATE"



What's the context?

These *natural English* phrases could be used:

- with friends
- at school, college, or university
- in an interview

Look through the *natural English* boxes. Find *natural English* phrases that you could use in each of the different contexts above.

Example: with friends

I don't see any problem if people want to make themselves look younger.
So are you saying it's ok to pretend to be something you're not?



Study the *natural English* phrases

Make three mini-debates by putting the sentences below into the correct order.

Dialogue 1

Is it ok to break the speed limit?

Giving an opinion	A
Rephrasing an idea	
Clarifying your position	
Agreeing or disagreeing	

Giving an opinion

- I don't think it's right to** punish people for driving a little bit over the speed limit.
- I don't see any problem if** people have children when they are older.
- I think it's ok to** lie in a job interview.

Rephrasing an idea

- So what you're saying is,** it's ok to be a new parent when you're fifty?
- So you mean** people should be able to drive at any speed they like, even in towns?
- So are you saying that** you'd be happy to be employed to do something you weren't really qualified to do?

Dialogue 2

What's the best age to have children?

Giving an opinion	B
Rephrasing an idea	
Clarifying your position	
Agreeing or disagreeing	

Clarifying your position

- Well, what I'm trying to say is,** sometimes you're driving along and there's nobody around, and it seems stupid to drive slowly just because the sign tells you to.
- That's not what I meant.** I mean, it's ok to have a baby in your thirties.
- No, what I meant was** it's ok to exaggerate a bit about your experience, if you know you can do the job.

Agreeing or disagreeing

- I think it depends.** You might find you have real problems later on.
- Well, I agree with that.** Thirty's not too old.
- Sorry, I don't agree with you.** There are just too many accidents on the road. We have to respect the rules.

Dialogue 3

Is it ok to lie at a job interview?

Giving an opinion	C
Rephrasing an idea	
Clarifying your position	
Agreeing or disagreeing	



Activate the *natural English* phrases

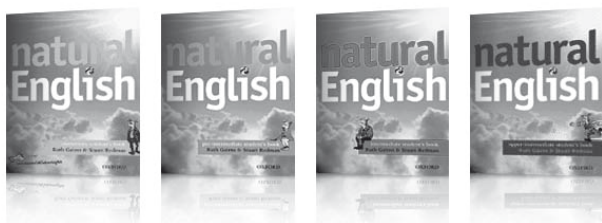
1 Practise reading the dialogues above aloud with a partner. Concentrate on your pronunciation of the natural English phrases.

2 Discussion

What do you think about the situations below? Mark them 1-5 according to how you feel.

- 5 = **I (really) don't see any problem** if someone does this. **I think it's ok to** do this.
- 4 = I (mostly) **agree with this.**
- 3 = **I really don't know how I feel about this. I think it depends. I'm not sure.**
- 2 = **I don't agree with this.**
- 1 = **I (really) don't think it's right to do this.**

	a woman in her twenties has cosmetic surgery to make herself more attractive
	a man in his forties has cosmetic surgery to make himself more attractive
	a student makes illegal copies of CDs, DVDs, and computer software for his friends
	a student makes illegal copies of CDs, DVDs, and computer software and sells them to other students
	a fifteen-year-old boy pretends to be eighteen
	a forty-five year-old woman pretends to be thirty-nine
	a woman carries a knife for self-protection
	a man carries a gun for self-protection
	someone goes fishing for sport
	someone goes fishing for supper



These tips are brought to you by *natural English*, the course where students use English naturally.