

## GREAT IDEAS

Leo Jones & Victoria Kimbrough  
Cambridge University Press  
1987

Great Ideas is an interesting example of how to combine a topical format with communicative exercises as well as listening practice through an accompanying cassette. The book is divided into 15 chapters each with a distinct topic such as Personal Information, The Past or Home entertainment in addition to 88 communication activities in the back section of the book. The particularly attractive feature of this resource book is the tie-in the authors make between the topics and the communicative activities. As an example I can cite Chapter 9, "One of these days"; whose topic is The future. Communication activity 9.6 Boa Boa proposes that the students divide into three committees to plan the development of a fictional island state. Each committee has to read the instructions given in one of the activities in the back of the book each dealing with a separate aspect of planning; Building, Transportation and Commerce.

The activities are usually varied and I found most of them held my attention especially those dealing with personality. As most of us find that we are our favorite topic of conversation these activities are particularly fascinating. There is, however, a very slight emphasis on the interview and the you-are-a-waiter/waitress format. All contain an information gap which presupposes will promote "genuine" communication.

The purpose of the majority of the activities and classtime revolving around the use of this book is to "involve you in talking to partners in small groups or pairs". I feel that the communicative activities could promote communication if handled well by a knowledgeable teacher. I could not find any attempt at grading thus adding another dimension of flexibility. The material in the text could be used judiciously to supplement a well prepared intermediate or advanced class' language communication skills.

By: T. Bryant Hitema  
Universidad Juárez Autónoma  
de Tabasco