

Nancy Bergstrom, email [alanbergstrom@comcast.net](mailto:alanbergstrom@comcast.net); Shandong Medical University  
We teach AVO English and generally have very large classes, so we have divided them into teams, in which they sit, converse, present, and question.

We have found that one of our greatest challenges is *having the students understand our oral English without the use of text at the same time*. When we give instructions for an assignment or quiz/ test, we have them listen first. Then they must share in English, in their groups, what we have just told them, until everyone understands. We then call on one person from a couple of groups to explain it to the class. It usually takes about 3 rounds before the entire team, and the entire class understand, but through English conversation from those who understand best to those who understand least, all are speaking to confirm understanding, and they make it clear what the assignment is.

Our second BIG challenge is getting them all to speak when the classes are so large. Thus the teams. My classes really respond to roll playing. “Mary’s Choice” brought a lot of acting and relaxed speaking. In the role play, Mary’s family tries to convince her of where they want her to attend. She (One Mary from each team) goes into the hall to decide. While we predict and record what we think she will decide, Mary is preparing how she will present her decision to her family. There is a lot of relaxed talk, hammy acting, and laughing, as each “Mary” tells her parents and boyfriend what her school choice will be and why.

Other topics we have found in various books include what behaviors will a young woman put up with from her boyfriend; if you are making a flag for a new country called *CHINUSA*, what will it look like and why; and imagine you are a medical specialist on a tropical island when a terrible disease breaks out. Who will you treat and why? Example follows:

*Explain with a PPT the situation. Only give the info for 1 round at a time, followed by team discussion and defense of their positions. After class discussion, give the next round of info, and repeat discussion and defense. I found this led to interesting info about the Chinese medical system/values.*

Imagine that you are the medical specialist on a tropical island. A large number of tourists have arrived for the weekend. Unexpectedly, the weather forces the airport to close for at least the next 24 hours. Four patients come to you for help as they are very ill. You diagnose them with the rare disease of Island Tropical Fever. The treatment for Island Tropical Fever is a series of injections that must be administered every 6 hours. You check your supplies and discover that most of the antibiotics have expired. You only have enough medicine to properly treat 2 people. The other two people may survive the disease, but their chances are slim. Because you are the medical specialist on the island, you must make the difficult decision of who will receive the medicine, and who will not. Who will you give the medicine to?

YOUR PATIENTS (round 1) a 6-year old girl, a 26-year old woman who has recently graduated from medical school, a 39-year old man awaiting trial for murder, and a 67-year old man who appears to be under a great deal of stress.

(Round 2) The 6-year old girl said that she would be willing to give her medicine to one of the other patients; the 26-year old woman had traces of an illegal drug in her blood when you did tests on her; the 39-year old man says that he is innocent of the accusations and will be found “not guilty” by the court; and the 67-year old man said that he must be kept alive for at least 2 more months.

(round 3) the 6-year old is dying of cancer and is taking one last vacation with her family. That is why she offered her medicine. The 26-year old woman admitted to you that she is a drug user and that she also sells prescription drugs illegally for money. The 39-year old came home and found his wife being beaten by an intruder. He hit the intruder with a lamp and killed him. The 67-year old is the Secretary General of the United Nations. He is in the middle of very delicate negotiations with two rival countries.

