

Phrasal Verbs in Context: Reading and Practice

Directions for the teacher:

STEP 1 – In Task A, study the 10 phrasal verbs in context. The matching task can be done together or in pairs.

Answers:

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| a. talk at length about unimportant things | chat away |
| b. leave a room for a short time | step out |
| c. become calm | settle down |
| d. behave in a silly way, wasting time | goof off |
| e. return | come back |
| f. stop an undesirable behavior | snap out of |
| g. start something unintentionally | set off |
| h. start a difficult activity | get down to |
| i. tolerate | put up with |
| j. produce (a thought or concept) | come up with |

STEP 2 – Help students identify the grammar of each phrasal verb by completing Task B together.

Answers:

Intransitive phrasal verbs	chat away settle down step out goof off came back [also: come back into a place, come back to a place]
Transitive phrasal verbs	get down to (business) snap out of (it)/ snap (someone) out of (something)* came up with (good ideas) put up with (this kind of behavior) set (them) off* *separable

STEP 3 – This speaking task can be done in pairs or small groups. You can also create a competition. Read out one question and have groups compete to write a list of examples. Whoever gets the most examples within 1 or 2 minutes wins a point. The team with the most points wins.

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A. Read the text. Match the phrasal verbs to their meanings.

CRAZINESS AT WORK

It's amazing that we got anything done yesterday. Wendy started the meeting, and it was clear that most of us were ready to **get down to** business. But Chris and Brian kept **chatting away** about the basketball game they watched the night before. It took a couple of minutes before they **snapped out of** it and gave Wendy their attention. They listened for a while, but neither of them **came up with** any good suggestions when Wendy asked for ideas. Then Michelle



made a joke about something and that **set** them **off** again. Chris and Brian wanted to share more jokes. Wendy was trying to get them to **settle down**, but she had to **step out** for a phone call. The group continued to brainstorm, while the two guys **goofed off**. I don't know why Wendy **puts up with** this kind of behavior. I guess it's because we actually had some good suggestions when she **came back** into the meeting room.

- a. talk at length about unimportant things _____
- b. leave a room for a short time _____
- c. become calm _____
- d. behave in a silly way, wasting time _____
- e. return _____
- f. stop an undesirable behavior _____
- g. start something unintentionally _____
- h. start a difficult activity _____
- i. tolerate _____
- j. produce (a thought or concept) _____

B. Sort the remaining phrasal verbs according to their structure.

Intransitive phrasal verbs	chat away
Transitive phrasal verbs	get down to (business)
Which are separable?	

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C. Discussion. Talk with a partner. How many examples can you think of?

1. Name an inappropriate time to **goof off**.
2. Name a reason for a teacher to **step out** of the classroom.
3. What might someone say or do to signal that it's time to **get down to** business?
4. What might **snap** someone **out of** bad mood?
5. Name a behavior that a spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend would not **put up with**.
6. Why might a person **come back** to their home after only five minutes?
7. What would **set off** widespread worry in a town?
8. What kinds of activities do people do while they **chat away** for long periods of time?
9. How do parents get excited children to **settle down** before bedtime?
10. What tools or strategies help advertisers **come up with** new ideas?