Expressing yourself: ways of praising someone

Overview: In this lesson learners review, consolidate and practise expressions for praising people and their achievements.

Total time for activities: 30 – 35 minutes

Level: upper intermediate to advanced

1. Before class, cut up the Student’s Copy so that you have copies of Worksheets A and B for each learner. You will also need to prepare slips of paper or pieces of card with imaginary achievements. There should be one set per group of 5 or 6 learners, used in step 6 of the lesson. Your choice of achievements will depend on the class you are teaching, but here are some possible examples:
   - You’ve just been promoted.
   - After hesitating for a while, you’ve told your boss that you think you should get a raise.
   - You’ve just passed an important exam.
   - After a lengthy internet search, you’ve found some amazingly cheap fares for your holiday.
   - You’ve been working for the same company for ten years.
   - You’ve won a lottery prize.
   - You’ve just finished your dissertation.
   - You’ve finally finished redecorating your flat.
   - You’ve given up smoking.
   - During the last week, you’ve managed to solve computer problems for four of your friends.

2. Distribute Worksheet A. Explain that X represents the name of a person. Learners work on the task in pairs.

Answers
   - Well done!
   - Good for you!
   - Way to go!
   - Good job!
   - Good thinking!
   - That’s an idea!
   - You’re a genius!
   - Let’s hear it for X!
   - Hats off to X!
   - Congratulations!
   - You are to be congratulated (on ...) / X is to be congratulated (on ...)

3. Elicit and confirm answers. As learners call out answers, help them with pronunciation:
   a. These expressions are often written with an exclamation mark, because they are said with energy and enthusiasm.
   b. They usually have a falling intonation pattern, starting from a high pitch level.
   c. In ‘Good for you!’ the main stress is on ‘you’.
   d. In ‘That’s an idea!’ the main stress is on ‘That’s’. After the fall on ‘That’s’, the voice rises again on ‘idea’.
   e. Point out that ‘X is to be congratulated’ can be extended with ‘on’. For example:
      - You are to be congratulated on your exceptional performance.
      - Everyone in the team is to be congratulated on doing a wonderful job.
      - Ask what can usually be heard after ‘Let’s hear it for X!’ Answer: cheering or applause.
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4. Distribute Worksheet B, which summarises the expressions and then provides a further task. Learners work on the task in pairs. Elicit and confirm answers.

**Answers**

1. used for praising someone who has achieved something important, such as passing a major exam:
   - Congratulations!

2. an informal way of telling someone that they have done something well:
   - Good job! Way to go!

3. a formal way of saying that someone has done well:
   - X is to be congratulated.

4. used to praise someone because you think their idea or suggestion is good:
   - Good thinking! / That’s an idea! / You’re a genius!

5. the most common way of praising someone when they have done something well:
   - Well done!

6. used for saying that you think someone deserves a lot of praise:
   - Let’s hear it for X! / Hats off to X!

7. an informal way of telling someone that you approve of what they have done:
   - Good for you!

5. Ask learners to turn their worksheets over. Provide further oral practice in forming and pronouncing the expressions by giving the following words to prompt complete expressions, which learners should shout out with appropriate enthusiasm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>done</th>
<th>hats</th>
<th>thinking</th>
<th>way</th>
<th>congratulated</th>
<th>genius</th>
<th>you</th>
<th>hear</th>
<th>job</th>
<th>idea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Answers**

- Well done!
- Hats off to X!
- Good thinking!
- Way to go!
- You are to be congratulated.
- You’re a genius!
- Good for you!
- Let’s hear it for X!
- That’s an idea!

6. Divide learners into groups of five or six. Give each group a set of ‘achievement slips’, face down. Learners take turns to pick an achievement slip and tell the other members of the group what they have achieved, e.g. ‘I’ve just passed an important exam’. The others react by using the expressions they have studied in this lesson and, if possible, making a follow-on remark, e.g.:

- ‘I’ve just passed an important exam.’
- ‘Well done! Let’s go out and celebrate!’
- or: ‘That’s great news!’
- or: ‘You must be really pleased!’
- If time allows, the slips can be shuffled and the activity repeated.

**Follow-up**

The activity described in step 6 can be repeated for a few minutes in subsequent lessons, and with different achievements - including learners’ real achievements!

You can solicit expressions of praise in subsequent lessons by telling the class about your own achievements, e.g.:

- I finally got round to cleaning my flat yesterday.
- I solved a tricky translation problem for a friend yesterday.
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Worksheet A

Use the words in the box to form expressions for praising people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>good</th>
<th>for</th>
<th>be</th>
<th>you</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>for</td>
<td>go</td>
<td>you’re</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>hear</td>
<td>you</td>
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<tr>
<td>well</td>
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<td>a</td>
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<td>an</td>
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<td>congratulated</td>
<td>it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>off</td>
<td>idea</td>
<td>congratulations</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Worksheet B

Ways of praising someone

Well done!  Good thinking!  Hats off to X!
Good for you! That’s an idea! Congratulations!
Way to go! You’re a genius! You are to be congratulated (on ...) / X
Good job! Let’s hear it for X! is to be congratulated (on ...)

Which of these expressions is:

1. used for praising someone who has achieved something important, such as passing a major exam?
2. an informal way of telling someone that they have done something well?
3. a formal way of saying that someone has done well?
4. used to praise someone because you think their idea or suggestion is good?
5. the most common way of praising someone when they have done something well?
6. used for saying that you think someone deserves a lot of praise?
7. an informal way of telling someone that you approve of what they have done?

(Some of these questions have two or three answers.)