

## Language Tips — Confusing words!

**A** PAIR of words which English learners sometimes find confusing is to wear or to use.

People quite often say:



I like using blue jeans and a T-shirt.  
I like using a hat that is fashionable.  
I will use my favourite shirt tonight.  
I'm using a skirt and black shoes.

Whereas to wear/wearing means to have something on your body as a piece of clothing.



**For example:**  
I'm wearing a hat.  
Sana is wearing a wedding ring.  
Fahad likes wearing

sneakers.

**Exercise:**

To use/using means to do something with a machine, a method, an object, etc for a particular purpose.

**For example:**

I'm using my dad's car.  
Can I use your phone?  
I have some equipment you can use.

Shatha and Badria from Nizwa went to the Fashion Show last night. Shatha ..... a long skirt and a floral shirt. Badria decided to ..... her favorite abaya with her new dress. They both ..... scarves. Badria was late because she was ..... public transport. Shatha ..... her friend's GSM to call her to see where she was as she was getting worried that they would be late for the show.

**Remember when you describe a piece of clothing using patterns, remember the order of adjectives:**

colour	pattern	origin	material	noun
red		Spanish	leather	boots
brown	floral		cotton	shirt
blue	checked			jacket
colourful		Italian		bag

## Your personal carbon footprint

### How you can help keep Oman clean!



#### Bring your own shopping bag

**W**HEN Intisar, an Omani went to visit Australia, she was surprised at the supermarket when the cashier asked if she would like a shopping bag. She was even more surprised when she was asked to pay for it!

To reduce the use of plastic bags, Australian shoppers are encouraged to bring their own bags from home. If they don't, they have to buy them.

YO is calling on all students to STOP using plastic bags and to encourage your fathers and mothers to bring their own bags when they go shopping!

## Successful Debates

**M**ANY students have written in Masking for information about conducting successful debates and running a debate club.

Here are three reasons why debates are a good way to practise a foreign language:

- they can energise students and teachers
- subjects, which once appeared boring and abstract, can come to life in a debate situation
- students become actively involved in their own learning process



**Students must:**

- ask themselves what the issue means to them personally
- research the social, political, ethical and historical contexts in which the issues are situated
- learn to see complex problems from widely different perspectives
- learn and use new vocabulary
- be able to think on their feet and react quickly to opposing arguments

Because all this learning is geared towards a specific purpose (performing well in the debate itself) students have added incentive and a clear goal to work towards.

a secretary and a treasurer from committed members of the club. New debaters can learn from experienced members.

**Topics**

Topics can be local issues, which affect the people, and or environment around you personally, or more global issues. Below is the address of a fantastic debate website with great topics and arguments, ideas for activities and much, much more. Have fun! [www.idebate.org](http://www.idebate.org)

**Here's an activity to practise in your club**

#### Starting a debate club

A successful debate club has a strong sense of group identity. No one member works alone, rather, the whole club should work as a team.

*Some useful steps to creating a successful debate club:*

**Where will the club meet?**

- A club-room should:
- be easily accessible to all members,
  - have resources such as dictionaries, newspapers and if possible access to the Internet

**How often should the club meet?**

The club members should meet regularly to build friendship and trust. Weekly meetings of all club members will improve fluency. Members can practise and prepare arguments on a variety of topics.

**Leadership**

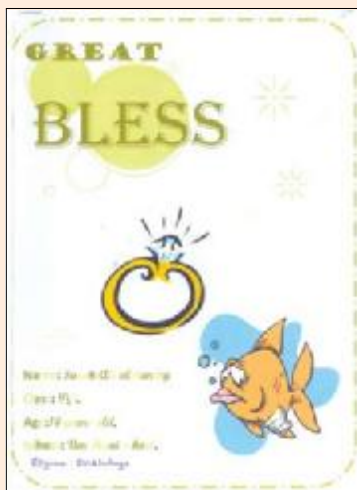
Students should elect a president,



Go to [www.idebate.org](http://www.idebate.org), open up the home page and choose a debate topic. Each topic has a list of arguments — the pros and cons. Divide the members of your debate club into 4 groups. Print out the arguments and cut them up. Make a set for each group. Distribute one set to each group.

The members must read the arguments and decide if they belong on the pro side or on the con side (against side). Then they must match each pro argument to a con argument. Check the members understand any new vocabulary, then hold a 15 minute debate — two groups argue for the motion and two groups argue against.

## A Great Blessing



(My grandmother told me this story a long time ago while she was making Omani bread. I would like to share it with you.)

ONCE upon time, there lived a woman. She and her husband had been married for many years, but they never had any children. Although she never had children, she was happy and satisfied.

This woman had a habit which annoyed her husband a lot. She drove him nuts. However, this habit was actually a good one. Before doing anything, she always said, "In the name of Allah." She said this to make her life blessed. Her husband tried to convince her that what she was doing was not useful, and it was not going to get her anywhere. She always ignored him because she believed that she was right.

One day her husband felt that she had crossed her limits. He had got to the point where he felt he had to do something. He spent the entire day and night thinking. Finally, he got an idea, which he thought would prove to his wife that what she was doing was not doing her any good. He bought her a ring. When he gave it to her, she said, "In the name of Allah" and before she wore it, she said the same thing.

Later, while she was cooking, she took off the ring and put it back into the box. Her husband took it when she was not looking. He went to the beach and rented a boat. When he was far away from the shore, he threw the ring into the water. Then he returned home.

Next day he bought a fish and asked his wife to cook it for him. He also asked her to wear the new ring because her finger looked beautiful when she was wearing it. She went to her room to the place where she left the ring. Before she had opened the box, she said, "In the name of Allah". She did not find the ring. She looked everywhere but she still did not find it. She decided to finish her cooking and not tell her husband anything. When she cut the fish, she found the ring inside the fish. She cleaned it up and put it on. When her husband saw the ring on her finger, he got mad. He told her that he had thrown the ring in the sea. She told him that she found it inside the fish. He realised that he was wrong. He apologised to her and changed himself.

— Sarah Ali Al Harthy  
Grade 10, Um Hani School  
Dakhiliyah Region

## The Scary Camel

ONE day my grandmother told me a traditional Omani tale. It was about a poor man called Mubark. He lived in a small hut with his children. One day, he decided to travel to find a job, so he could buy food for his children.

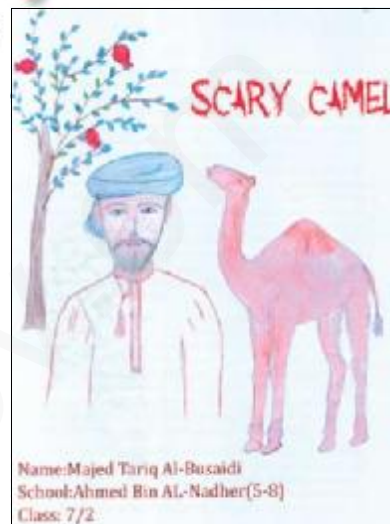
He had a good friend. He told his good friend about his plan, and asked him to look after his children. He told him he could take half of anything he would send. The next morning, he rode his donkey towards the big desert. After few days, he found a great kingdom. He asked the king to give him a job.

The king said, "I have only one job, and I will pay you four pieces of silver." Mubark agreed immediately. The king said, "But it's a dangerous job." Mubark asked, "What is the job?" The king answered, "I want you to watch my camels." Mubark said, "That's an easy job." The king said, "There's one problem." "What's it?" said Mubark. The king answered, "There's a big camel in my herd. It kills a guard every year. It has already killed ninety nine guards." Mubark thought of his starving children and agreed to work. He was very active. He always started his work early. Every month he sent the four silver pieces to his friend, so he could buy food and give his children.

After a year, the big camel attacked Mubark. He ran and climbed a pomegranate tree. He saw three big pomegranates. One of them was ripe so he picked and hid it for his children. When the camel went away, Mubark got down from the tree.

He sent the pomegranate with the four silver pieces to his friend. When his friend received them, he took two silver pieces for himself and put the other two aside for Mubark's children. When he cut the pomegranate, he was surprised. It was full of small pieces of gold. He took them to the market and sold them. With the money he bought food and clothes for the children.

At the end of the second year, the big camel attacked Mubark again. Once more he ran and climbed the pomegranate tree. He saw two big pomegranates. He picked the ripe one and hid



it for his children. When the camel went away, Mubark got down and sent the pomegranate with the silver pieces to his friend. When his friend got them, he cut the pomegranate. It was full of small diamonds. He took them to the market and sold them. He bought a big house with furniture for Mubark's family.

At the end of the third year, the big camel attacked Mubark again. He ran to the pomegranate tree and picked the last pomegranate.

When the camel went away, Mubark went to the king and told him that he wanted to go back because he missed his family. When he arrived home, he was surprised to find his children living in a big house. He was very excited when his friend told him the story of the pomegranate.

— Majid Tariq Al Blushi  
Grade 8  
Ahmed bin Al Nadhr School  
Dakhiliyah Region

## Calling all English Language Teachers

### What positive effects has YO had on your teaching?

Maybe you learnt some new ideas at a YO workshop, or have adapted some YO materials. Perhaps you introduced your students to the YO magazine.

Send your entry to YO and you could win great teaching prizes from YO. PLUS a member of the YO TEAM will make a special visit to your school and meet with you, other

teachers and your students. Send us a letter of no more than 200 words in English to:

YO, Ministry of Education,  
PO Box 3, Ruwi 112,  
Sultanate of Oman,  
or email to youthobserver@moe.om  
before October 30, 2009.