

HER OWN WORST ENEMY: PRAGMATICS ACTIVITY, WEARING SOMEONE DOWN

In scene 4, Laith and Aida have a conversation in the car. Laith is trying to convince Aida to do an audition, but she does not want to. He tries to wear her down.

1. Have students listen to/read the scene and answer the questions in a pair/share.
 - What happens?
 - Who wears the other down?
 - How do they do it?
2. Have students listen/read again and tick the strategies they hear? (see next page for printable/photocopyable forms.)

1. Playing down the difficulty or effort required	
2. Playing up the positive outcome(s)	
3. Bargaining, e.g., promising never to never bring it up again	
4. Bringing up obligations	

3. Examine the script for useful language for “wearing someone down,” and brainstorm additional examples of words and expressions people use:

Examples:

“Oh come on!”

“It’s not that big a deal!”

“It won’t kill you!”

4. Have students pair up and develop a role play using one or more of the strategies.
5. Have students perform for another pair and get feedback.
6. Invite volunteers to come up and perform for the class.
7. Give feedback on anything that comes up such as language, appropriateness regarding status and context, or pronunciation and intonation.

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PRAGMATICS: WEARING SOMEONE DOWN

Choose a role play topic and practice with a partner. Then work with another pair. Listen to the role play and check the strategies you observe. Then share your observations and switch roles.

Strategy	Group 1	Group 2
5. Playing down the difficulty or effort required		
6. Playing up the positive outcome(s)		
7. Bargaining: Promising never to never bring it up again		
8. Bringing up past favors (if you are desperate)		
Which partner wears the other one down?		

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