

Block 2

An Introduction to Bidding

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NEW TERMS MET IN THIS LESSON

auction	balanced	bidding	bidding box	call	contract
denomination	game bid	grand slam	no bid	opener	opening bid
pass	raise	rank	response	responder	small slam
throw in	weakness	takeout			

LESSON PLAN

Topic	Method	Time	Notes on activities
Revision	Q&A	5	Very brief mention of results 'Well done you were third E/W' as students arrive.
What is bidding? B2TR1 B2TR2	CHAT	20	Very quick explanation of how bridge is different from MiniBridge – as auction determines the contract. Brief statement of what bidding is. WE ARE ONLY GOING TO TEACH ONE BID 1NT 12-14 balanced (B2TR1) What we mean by a balanced hand Won't do for 1NT (B2TR2) or get students to put typical hands on the table
Practical Learning B2H1	SYNC DRAG	25	Have a set of 4 boards for each table. Get students to put board 1 on the table the right way round. Ask the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who bids first? • what does dealer at table 1 bid? Do others agree? • discuss differences, agree the bid. • ask next player to bid. Do others agree? • make sure all understand the process of bidding • do they know when the auction has finished? • do they know what the contract is? • who is declarer? Who makes opening lead? • play the hand at each table in normal fashion Don't rush the activity, you need not play all four hands. Better to get the students thinking in the right way and working out what to do around the table.
Review			Emphasis on working things out not on memorising them
Break		10	
Practical B2H2 – 4	SYNC DRAG	40	Three more boards, hands 2 – 4, as before. Omit hand 4 if time runs out.
Recap	Q&A	5	How is bridge different from MiniBridge? What have we learned about the bidding process? What is a balanced hand? When do we open them 1NT? How do we work out what to do?
Something to try B2R1	CHAL	10	Construct hands to justify the bidding sequences. Try to start this exercise in class so students understand the instructions and see the benefit of working together. Remind them that trying a few is better than doing nothing.
Next time			A look in more detail at the bidding following a 1NT opening
Notes B2N1			Student Notes. B2N2 makes a more formal statement about what they learned by doing.

NEW TERMS MET IN THIS LESSON

ethics game force game try forcing invitational jump bid
 jump shift maximum three-level two-level Yarborough

LESSON PLAN

Topic	Method	Time	Notes on activities
Revision B2R1	Q&A	10	The quiz from last time. Check who tried it; they can look at answers again after today's lesson.
Opening and responding to 1NT	CHAT	15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder of 1NT on all 12-14 balanced hands • Responses on balanced hands, worked out from 25 points for game, Pass, 2NT, 3NT etc. • Bidding game in a major – what we have to say • Jump shift to offer choice of games (omit if hard going) • Weakness takeout (omit with slower group)
Bidding practice B2R2	QUIZ	15	Use the hands given. Students work in pairs bidding the hands. Make them write the auction down: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • who bids first? • what does dealer bid? • what is the response? • what does the 1NT bidder think the response means? Don't worry if students don't manage to bid all eight hands
Go over quiz	DISC	15	Put up hands so both are visible One pair suggests auction, discuss differences Try not to put students in the wrong but help them to understand the reasons for choices
Break		10	
1NT openings B2H1 Hands 5 to 8	PLAY	50	Use the four hands given, to bid, play and score These can be made up at the table if not done in advance
Discussion	RECAP	5	Summarise the types of bid responder can make: Pass, weakness take-out, three-level, four-level Make sure students understand which reply to use and when
Something to try B2R3	QUIZ		Responses to 1NT opening bid
Next time			Bidding when we cannot open 1NT but don't be afraid of splitting this lesson in two, if it was too long for the class. But don't overdo the detail, get the general principles established.
Notes B2N3 B2N4			Student Notes. Point out the summary sheet. Only mention B2N4 if you did weakness take-out

Hands 9 – 12 are available for extra class practice. If you split this lesson to run over two weeks, you may need them. Otherwise tell the students to make up the hands when they play at home and use them for practice.

TEACHING NOTES

Objectives

On completion of this block, the students will have made progress in four aspects of the game. They will be able to:

Basic mechanics

- describe the differences between MiniBridge and bridge
- take part in a bridge auction, using bidding boxes if available
- understand that bidding should be in an even tempo, conveying information only by the bids used.

Recognise and make a one no trump opening bid

- give a definition of a balanced hand
- identify and construct balanced hands that should be opened with 1NT
- identify hands with 12-14 points that are not 1NT openings (don't say what instead)
- bid an opening 1NT

Respond to a 1NT opening bid

- respond correctly to a 1NT opening with balanced hands of varying strengths
- bid game in a major, construct suitable hands to show the 4♥ and 4♠ bids
- investigate alternative game contracts using the jump shift response
- make a weakness takeout and pass by 1NT opener

TEACHING NOTES

<i>Difference between MiniBridge and Bridge</i>	<p>Describe these, pointing out the main difference is how the declaration is decided and how precise it is.</p> <p>Emphasise that the play is identical and the scoring very similar so all they have already learned will be useful.</p>
<i>What is bidding?</i>	<p>Explain what this means and how it works. Don't make explanations complicated, better to learn by doing than hearing the full rules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a 'bid' is a number from 1 to 7 followed by a 'denomination' • to be legal the bid must outrank all previous bids • a 'call' is any bid or a 'pass' • bidding starts with the dealer. <p>The auction finishes when any bid has been followed by three consecutive passes OR if all four players pass at their first turn to bid.</p> <p>Point out the vocabulary is limited to the 14 words. Don't even think of mentioning double or redouble yet. These are:</p> <p>One Two Three Four Five Six Seven No Trumps Spades Hearts Diamonds Clubs Pass (or No Bid).</p>
<i>Take it slowly</i>	<p>Don't talk for too long, this is a topic we will revisit often so there is no need to say everything in the first or second lesson on bidding. No trump bidding is easier learnt in practice than in theory.</p> <p>This material is still very early in the students' learning. Don't do more than they can cope with, cut some parts or spread the material over more time. Hands 5-8 are there for further practice. We cannot afford to lose people early on. Use your judgement. Watch their faces.</p>
<i>Bidding boxes</i>	<p>Try to use bidding boxes from the very start, if available. It helps the deaf, the dumb, the foreign students as well as everybody with poor memories. Show bidding boxes with the bids displayed on the cards (bidding boxes are one reason we prefer pass to No Bid, it is what the green card says). It reminds all players of the auction to date. Teachers can see at a glance what has happened. Tell students that they can get the score from the back of the bidding card.</p>
<i>Language of bridge</i>	<p>Because of limited vocabulary, we have to code our messages. The first coded message to be learned is 1NT which says 'I have a balanced hand and between 12 to 14 points and no 5-card major'.</p>
<i>Balanced hands</i>	<p>Explain what is meant by balanced</p>
<i>The auction after partner opens 1NT. Let students find out for themselves</i>	<p>Do not discuss the auction following a 1NT opening, we are going to get the students to work it out from first principles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important to take this slowly. Don't rush the exercise; let the students do the working out at their own pace. • It is sensible to put the hand that has to make a bid on the table, so that all can share in the problem solving. Students will not remember the cards when they picked up! When it comes to playing the hand, only the dummy should be visible.
<i>The first bidding lesson is intuitive</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should discover how to respond to a 1NT opening using the definition of a 1NT opener. Encourage discussion about each bid. Ask others what the auction has shown so far when it is their turn to bid.

TEACHING NOTES

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After the hand is played, display the full deal. You can do this by showing all four hands on the table but it is helpful to put them up on the display board too. Students need to get used to seeing auctions and hands written down, so when you do it for the first time explain the notation used. Review the auction. • Answer any questions on play but do not over-stress the play elements. • It is not so important to get the 1NT opening and responses crystal clear, as we will cover this more formally subsequently. • Remember that we don't just want students to learn a set of rules, we want them to be able to work out why we do what we do.
<p><i>The auction after partner opens 1NT</i></p> <p><i>The second/third bidding lesson is a more formal presentation</i></p>	<p>KEEP THIS SIMPLE, DO NOT GO INTO ANY MORE THAN YOU NEED TO. OMIT PARTS IF TIME RUNS OUT.</p> <p>The choices open to responder are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pass • bid game in a suit • raise no trumps stressing that 2NT is used to invite game • investigate alternative games by a jump shift • bid slam – miss this out if students have had enough • weak takeout to a suit - students find it hard to see why they should bid with nothing. Call it 'damage limitation' <p>Until Stayman is taught, there is no invitational bid available. Just bid game and hope to make it! We revisit bidding over 1NT later in the course, showing how to get accuracy in the auction.</p>
<p><i>More to come</i></p>	<p>You can say that there is more to bidding over 1NT than we have learned. It comes later in the course. This may come up as a question because some students have played a bit before and have heard of Stayman. Don't be drawn further unless you are totally confident in the ability of all students (not just the noisy ones).</p>
<p><i>Ethics</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only use the bids provided • Don't pull faces (it is best to act out happy and cross expressions) • Try to bid in an even tempo, again acting fast and slow passes or getting the students to do so.
<p><i>Provide lots of reassurance and support</i></p>	<p>Remind the students, who may be rather daunted at this stage,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everybody was a beginner once, so we all understand it's hard to do things quickly • You don't have to get the answers right! • Don't allow yourself to be rushed, so you don't know what has happened • Ask for help if you haven't a clue what is going on or what you should do. <p>You are trying to ensure that students know what they are aiming for even if they are not yet able to achieve it! If you have very slow students, it is probably true that the appearance of thought actually shows they haven't a clue what to do! Help them to talk through the problem with the rest of the table. Otherwise everybody gets very bored waiting for something to happen.</p> <p>Don't hover too much and put students off! Don't rush students, this is still very early in their bidding understanding. If students are stuck, try to elicit the options rather than telling.</p>

RESOURCE MATERIALS

Topic	Resource Materials	Reference
Responses to 1NT	Sample hands to make up	B2 R1
Responses to 1NT	Bidding quiz	B2 R2
Responses to 1NT	Quiz	B2 R3

TEACHER'S MATERIALS

Topic	Resource Materials	Reference
Hands suitable for opening 1NT	Quiz for OHP or board	B2TR1
Hands not suitable for opening 1NT	Quiz for OHP or board	B2TR2

B2TR1 Hands that open 1NT – Why?

♠ A 7 5 3
♥ J 7 6
♦ K 4 3
♣ A J 2

♠ Q J
♥ A 7 2
♦ K Q 9 8 6
♣ Q 10 9

♠ A Q 8 5
♥ A 7 5
♦ J 9
♣ K 10 8 4

♠ Q J 5 4
♥ Q 10 6 2
♦ A 4
♣ K 9 6

B2TR2 Hands that do not open 1NT – Why?

♠ A 8 7 5 3
♥ J 6
♦ K 4 3
♣ A J 2

♠ Q J
♥ A 7
♦ K Q 9 8 6
♣ Q 10 9 2

♠ A Q 8 5
♥ A 7 6 5
♦ J
♣ K 10 8 4

♠ Q J 5 4
♥ Q 10 6 2
♦ K 4
♣ A K 9

SUMMARY OF HANDS TO PLAY

Hand	Bidding	Play points	Dec.	Other points
B2H1 Sheet 1	Opening 1NT	For use with the very first bidding lesson when students have to work out bids from first principles		
1	Raise of 1NT to 3NT	Do not worry about the play on these hands	N	
2	4 in response to 1NT		W	
3	Pass 1NT		S	
4	Weak take out of 1NT		E	
B2H1 Sheet 2	Responding to 1NT	Four hands for use after the lesson when you have gone over the bidding after 1NT more formally		
5	Jump shift in major in response to 1NT		E	
6	Weak take out of 1NT		W	
7	Jump shift in major in response to 1NT		N	
8	Jump to game in major	Drawing trumps	S	
B2H1 Sheet 3	Responding to 1NT	Sheet 3 provides hands for another lesson on bidding after 1NT. If you don't use it now, it is useful revision later. Or tell the students they can play these hands at home.		
9	Pass 1NT		S	
10	Weak take out of 1NT	Opening lead	N	
11	2NT in response to a 1NT opening		E	
12	Bidding a slam directly		W	