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## **PERSPECTIVES ADVANCED. STUDENT'S BOOK.**

**By Amanda Jeffries, Lewis Lansford, Daniel Barber  
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Promoted as a series of resources aimed to “help learners develop effective and confident English communication skills” by encouraging them to invest effort in keeping “an open mind, a critical eye” and in having “a clear voice in English”, as indicated on the back cover of the books, the *Perspectives* set of study materials uses the same fresh approach to multilingual communication that *National Geographic Learning* has offered to its readers in the past few years. For instance, those who are already familiar with the *Keynotes* series will probably be glad to discover that *Perspectives* also includes TED Talks as one of the key discussion starters, thus expanding the list of subjects and sources of inspiration available for planning engaging and customised lessons, a necessary feature in a period when the shift to exclusively online classes in many educational institutions has made it more difficult than ever to capture an audience that is one click away from leaving any meeting.

*Perspectives* is addressed to Pre-Intermediate to Advanced learners of English and comes with a wide range of study resources, from the traditional printed Student's Book, Workbook and Teacher's Book, with the incorporated audio CDs and DVDs, to the online version of the Workbook.

*Perspectives Advanced. Student's Book* includes ten units aimed to help learners develop their accuracy and linguistic proficiency, while at the same time improve their critical thinking skills by objectively analysing points of view and by expressing their own opinions about compelling issues adapted to current trends and areas of interest. Personally, I'm looking forward to seeing my students' reactions and listening to their opinions regarding the discussion topics included in *Unit 5 – Global citizen*. Divided, as all the other ten chapters of the book, in five sub-sections that are connected, but at the same time independent enough to make it possible for trainers to leave some of them out, depending on the learners' needs, previously acquired language skills and group preferences, the units bring forth a topic of discussion that has played a central role in public discourse in the past months, ever since the rapidly spreading Covid-19 pandemic has made it obvious that people from

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various parts of the world can be affected by the same problems and have to work together to find a solution. What is interesting and effective in terms of boosting confidence and facilitating communication is that each sub-section gives learners the opportunity to reflect on their own experience and share it with their colleagues. They are constantly invited to get involved actively, not just passively by listening to or reading about other people's ideas.

In 5A, the various grammar, vocabulary and listening activities lead the way to discussions and brief presentations about famous or personal role models, while in 5B everyone has a chance to read about volunteering and charity before speaking about their own contribution – past or future – to making changes around them. 5C is centred around the Ice Bucket Challenge, world-famous a few years ago, and the discussion slowly shifts from the challenge itself to other methods that can be used to raise money for any chosen cause. The TED Talk is introduced in 5D. Featuring Hugh Evans, whose speech supports the idea that it is a global outlook rather than a local one that is necessary for the world to change for the better, the video will hopefully raise the learners' interest and will be the starting point of a heated debate on the topic, especially since, as already mentioned, we are going through a period when it is more visible than ever before that we are all interconnected, irrespective of the geographical distance that separates us. Finally, 5E gives learners a chance to practise their writing and at the same time to become aware of their own active role as members of society: their task is to send a message to one of their local or national representatives to suggest changes meant to improve a specific situation that has a negative impact on their community.

The other nine units of the book also encourage self-reflection and idea-sharing on themes that cover multi-dimensional personal, local and global concerns, such as achieving personal and professional dreams and hopes, staying true to yourself and allowing your creativity to express itself, becoming more informed, more tolerant and more socially and environmentally involved, maintaining a healthy lifestyle or growing confident enough to share ideas with others. All of them come with a comprehensive list of types of activities aimed to cater for a large variety of learning styles and to help users have fun while improving their skills and raising their level of confidence in their own ability to participate actively in conversations in English by using appropriate language structures and by adding relevant information to the discussion.

Due to all these features, I am confident that *Perspectives Advanced. Student's Book*, as well as the other books in the *Perspectives* series, will be a valuable tool for language trainers and learners, both in the face-to-face and in the online interactions.