CELPIP speaking practice

Four typical tasks to practice, written for this page

Task A: giving advice (the practice below)
Your cousin is moving from Winnipeg to Toronto for a new job. She asks you for advice on finding an apartment. What do you suggest, and why? Tip: give two or three suggestions, each with a reason.

Task B: talking about a personal experience (the practice below)
Tell me about a time when you had to learn something quickly, for example at a new job or at school. What happened? Tip: start with when and where, say what happened in the past tense, and end with how it finished.

Task C: dealing with a difficult situation (the practice below)
You promised to help your friend paint her apartment on Saturday. Your manager has just asked you to work that day. Call your friend and explain. Then offer another day. Tip: be polite and firm. Say sorry, give the reason, and offer something else.

Task D: expressing an opinion (the practice below)
Do you think public transit in big cities should be free? Why or why not? Tip: say what you think in the first sentence, then give two reasons.

More tasks to try on your own
Advice: A friend in Calgary wants to buy a used car and asks you what to check. What do you suggest? Difficult situation: You work at a café in Ottawa. A customer wants a refund for a coffee he drank. Explain what you can do. Opinion: Do you think students in high school should have a part-time job?

The same answer at B1 and at B2
Task: Do you think public transit in big cities should be free? B1: Yes, I think so. Many people don't have much money, so free buses help them. Also, fewer people use cars, and the air is cleaner. B2: I think it should be free, or at least much cheaper. Many people can't afford a monthly pass, and free transit also takes cars off the road. The city would lose some money, but it would save on roads and health.

1. Give her advice and say why

Your cousin is moving from Winnipeg to Toronto. What do you suggest for finding an apartment?	I suggest she looks near a subway station, because she won't need a car. She should also visit the apartment before she pays, and ask about the heating.
A friend in Calgary wants to buy a used car. What do you suggest?	I'd ask for the car's history report first. Then I would take it to a mechanic, because a problem with the engine is expensive. If the seller says no, I'd look for another car.

I suggest that she looks for...

She should visit it before she pays.

It would be a good idea to...

If I were her, I would...

2. Tell her about a time you learned something fast

Tell me about a time when you had to learn something quickly.	Two years ago I started a job in a shop. On the first day I had to learn the cash machine. My manager showed me once, and then I did it alone. It was hard, but by Friday I was fast.

A few years ago, I...

At first it was difficult, but then...

In the end, I...

3. Explain to your friend why you can't help

You can't help your friend on Saturday because of work. Explain.	Hi! I'm really sorry, but I can't come on Saturday. My manager asked me to work, and I can't say no. I know you were counting on me.
A customer at your café in Ottawa wants a refund for a coffee he drank.	I'm sorry the coffee was not good. I can't give you a refund because you drank it, but I can make you a new one for free.

Hi! I'm really sorry, but I can't come on Saturday.	My manager asked me to work, and I can't say no.	I know you were counting on me.

4. Offer another day to your friend

What can we do about the painting?	How about Sunday morning? I can come early, help you all day, and bring lunch.

How about Sunday morning instead?	I can come on Sunday and bring lunch.	I'll make it up to you, I promise.

5. Say what you think and why

Do you think public transit in big cities should be free?	I think so, for two reasons. Many people don't have much money, so free buses help them. Also, fewer people would use cars.
Do you think students in high school should have a part-time job?	Yes, a small one. Students learn to be on time and to manage money. But school comes first, so a few hours a week is enough.

In my opinion, it should be free, because...	I think so, for two reasons.	On the other hand,...
That's why I believe...		

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