

Canva Presentation: <https://canva.link/humblebragging>

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Before starting, ask students if they know the word *humblebragging*. If they don't, explain that it means presenting a boast as if it were a complaint or a modest remark. For example, "I'm so annoyed, three people asked to be my mentor this week."

Part 1. Read the four humblebrags below. Which one is the most cringeworthy? Which have you heard — or said — yourself?

"Ugh, why does everyone assume I'm younger than forty? So annoying."	"I hate that my boss keeps giving me the big projects — I just want a quiet life."
"Sorry for the bad photo, my new phone camera makes my skin look weird."	"I can never find clothes that fit right because I'm so tall."

Part 2. Choose one option in each pair and explain your choice.

Someone humblebragging about their promotion	or	someone humblebragging about their holiday?
A humblebrag on social media	or	a humblebrag in real conversation?
Complaining about being "too busy" (when secretly proud)	or	complaining about being "too tired" (when secretly proud)?
Catching yourself humblebragging	or	catching a friend doing it?
A humblebrag about looks	or	a humblebrag about intelligence?
Genuine modesty	or	a well-disguised humblebrag?

Part 3. Read the statements. Which feel true for you? Which do you resist?

- I've definitely humblebragged at least once this week.
- I find humblebragging more irritating than straightforward bragging.
- I think I'm quite good at spotting other people's humblebrags.

- I sometimes complain about good problems — too many invitations, clothes not fitting — without noticing.
- I'd rather someone bragged honestly than pretended to complain.
- I've caught a close friend or family member humblebragging and said nothing.

Part 4. Discuss the following questions.

- Why do you think people humblebrag instead of just bragging honestly?
- Is humblebragging worse on social media than in person, or is it the same thing?
- Do you think humblebragging is a modern habit, or have people always done something like it?
- Is there a real difference between humblebragging and genuine modesty that happens to sound impressive?

Part 5. Look at the humblebrag types below. How often do you actually encounter each one? Rate them: never, sometimes, or often.

Complaining about being busy	Complaining about a "difficult" decision (which offer to accept)
Self-deprecating comments that fish for compliments	"Sorry, I'm just too honest sometimes"
Complaining about too much attention or too many messages	Downplaying an achievement ("it was nothing, really")
Mentioning a designer brand "by accident"	Complaining about jet lag from a nice trip
"I always forget how good my memory is"	Turning a compliment into a story about hard work
Complaining about a gym injury from "overtraining"	Mentioning a prestigious school or company casually

Part 6. Read the situations. Choose the response closest to how you'd actually behave. Then discuss what your choice reveals.

A colleague says: "I'm exhausted — everyone keeps asking me to run things because apparently I'm 'the only one who gets it done properly.'"

1. *You think: classic humblebrag, but you let it slide.*
2. *You genuinely feel sorry for them — work does sound intense.*
3. *You ask a follow-up question, just to see how far they'll take it.*
4. *You quietly humblebrag back about your own workload.*

A friend posts a photo from a beautiful holiday with the caption: "Ugh, so sunburnt, my skin just doesn't agree with nice weather."

1. *You like the photo and say nothing about the caption.*
2. *You comment something pointed, like "must be so hard."*
3. *You genuinely don't notice anything odd about it.*
4. *You screenshot it to send to a friend who'll appreciate the irony.*

Someone at a dinner party mentions, almost apologetically, that they "accidentally" got upgraded to first class again.

1. *You find it mildly impressive and mildly annoying, in equal measure.*
2. *You ask exactly how that keeps happening "accidentally."*
3. *You change the subject before they can say more.*
4. *You quietly resent them for the rest of the evening.*

Part 7. Read the statements. Say whether you agree, disagree, or partly agree.

- Humblebragging is more socially acceptable than bragging outright, and that's a problem.
- Most people don't realise when they're doing it.
- Humblebragging says more about insecurity than confidence.
- Calling someone out on a humblebrag is more awkward than just letting it go.
- Social media has made humblebragging much more common.
- A bit of humblebragging is harmless, even quite charming.

Part 8. Before you ask, guess your partner's answers. Then check — how well do you know them?

- Has your partner ever complained about being “too busy” when they were secretly proud of it?
- What's the humblebrag your partner is most likely to make — about work, looks, money, intelligence, or something else?
- Would your partner admit to humblebragging, or deny it completely?
- Has your partner ever called someone out on a humblebrag, to their face?

Part 9. Read the two viewpoints. Which do you find more convincing? Where do you personally sit?

Viewpoint A

Humblebragging is basically harmless. It's just a slightly awkward, very human way of sharing good news without seeming too pleased with yourself. Most people do it without any real intention to deceive — it's more nerves than manipulation.

Viewpoint B

Humblebragging is a subtle form of manipulation. It lets people boast while claiming the moral high ground of modesty, and it puts the listener in an impossible position: agree, and you're flattering them; stay quiet, and you seem unsupportive. That's not harmless — that's strategic.

Reflection

Complete the sentences in your own words.

1. The type of humblebrag I'm most guilty of is...
2. A humblebrag I've heard recently that I still remember is...
3. If I noticed myself humblebragging, I would probably...
4. The difference between confidence and humblebragging, for me, is...