

Stephen: Dear Valentine, I want the world to know I love you... Roses are red, violets are blue... I love you more than I can say...

It's Valentine's Day next week and I'm writing the cards I'm going to send. Aren't you going to send any?

Ashlie: Oh, what's the point? I never get any back. I'm just so unlucky in love.

Stephen: Oh, you're just not meeting the right people. You should send more. The more cards you send, the more you receive.

Ashlie: I don't think it works like that, Stephen.

Stephen: That's it, Ash. You need to join a dating agency. You know, where they find the perfect partner for you.

Ashlie: Hmm... I don't know, Stephen. I think they just take your money and match you up with the first person who comes along. And besides, I don't want a computer to make decisions for me.

Stephen: Well, what about speed dating?

Ashlie: What?

Stephen: You know, speed dating. Where you meet lots of different people in one night. Like lots of little dates. Like an interview for a boyfriend. And...

Ashlie: And?

Stephen: You get to choose someone. Or they get to choose you. I'm sure there's a speed dating night down at the club. It's a great chance to meet new people. And anyway it'll be a lot of fun.

Ashlie: Well, OK then. But will you come with me?

Stephen: Of course I will. If you meet the man of your dreams, I need to check him out.

Ashlie: Oh, Stephen!

Ashlie: Wow, Stephen! There are a lot of people here. It seems really popular.

Stephen: Good. Lots of choice for you then.

Ashlie: What's this bell for?

Stephen: You ring the bell when you don't want to speak to someone any more. Then they move on. Now, come on, Ashlie – sit up straight, smile.

Ashlie: Stop it, Stephen!

Stephen: Don't forget, you have to make a good impression. Make some jokes, try and be nice. And if you get bored of them, just ring the bell.

Stephen: Ashlie, the lady's about to talk.

Lady: Welcome to speed dating, the place where you will find love and romance and passion. Or perhaps just a new friend. Now, you ladies know what to do. You remain seated and these handsome gentlemen will come to your table. If he's not Mr Right, you can always ring the bell. Are you ready? Begin!

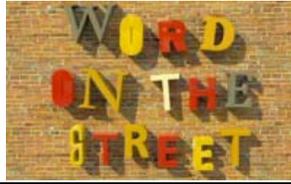
First Date: Yes, so, I really like computers. Don't you? My favourite is the Wakefield CPC four six four nine hundred. I've got some photos here somewhere...

Second Date: Well, I'm really looking for a girl who likes doing housework. Someone who'd like to wash my clothes, do my ironing...

Third Date: Your hair's too dark. I like blonde hair. Have you ever thought about changing your hair colour?

Stephen: So Ashlie? How's it going?

Ashlie: Terrible! So far they've been either totally boring or just weird!



Stephen: Hmm, well, I think you should keep trying. It's supposed to be fun, remember!

Ashlie: Look, Stephen! He's very handsome. And tall. Go on, Stephen. Go, go, shoo. He's coming over...

Ted: Hi!

Ashlie: Hi.

Ted: I'm Ted.

Ashlie: I'm Ashlie.... or, or Ashlyn, in Irish. Or Ash, actually. My brother calls me Ash so that would be fine. But, well, my full name is Ashlie Bridget Alice Walker but you can call me...