Compelling Conversations
Questions & Quotations on Timeless Topics

WRITTEN, COMPILED, AND EDITED BY
Eric H. Roth and Toni Aberson
COMPELLING CONVERSATIONS
Questions and Quotations on Timeless Topics

AN ENGAGING ESL TEXTBOOK FOR ADVANCED STUDENTS

Written, Compiled, and Edited by
Eric H. Roth and Toni Aberson
Dedicated to
Dani Herbert Joseph Roth
(1937–1997)

A global citizen, he could talk with almost anyone, in six different languages, and share a laugh. This book attempts to capture some of his generous spirit, wit, and curiosity.

“Own only what you can always carry with you: know languages, know countries, know people. Let your memory be your travel bag.”
Alexander Solzhenitsyn (1918–),
Russian writer and historian
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Several people helped in the development, research, and creation of this hybrid ESL textbook. Several ESL professionals and students have offered numerous suggestions at critical moments in developing this conversation book. Here is a brief, and no means complete, list of kind individuals who have helped improve this book.

“Everybody is a student, and everybody is a teacher” goes the saying. This book reflects that philosophy. The eager students that worked with us during the last decade in various ESL classrooms have expanded our world.

From the adult students at the Santa Monica Adult Education Center, Indianapolis Ivy Tech, and Community Enhancement Services attending classes while working difficult jobs to energetic American Language Institute students in Long Beach, Santa Monica Community College, and UCLA Extension, you have shared your experiences and insights. Thank you.

Naturally, we also owe an exceptional debt to the ambitious USC graduate students at the American Language Institute; we have often shared questions, proverbs, and laughs. Your enthusiasm pushed us to complete this project. Our lively conversations, in and out of the classroom, have exceeded expectations and created small classroom communities where we could take chances and develop our skills. The adoption of this book by the Conversation Club promises to lead to even more compelling conversations.

Please visit our website, www.compellingconversations.com, to offer feedback, suggest additional topics, or contribute questions or quotations for future editions.

We hope this rich collection of questions, proverbs, and quotations will spark many compelling conversations. Let’s keep talking, sharing, and learning together!

Eric H. Roth
Toni Aberson
INTRODUCTION

The art of conversation, once considered the sign of a civilized individual, seems less common today. Yet I treasure the moments of sharing experiences, collecting news, and exchanging ideas. I make a point of knowing my neighbors, allowing casual greetings to become long conversations, and making time to explore in depth the feelings and perceptions of friends and relatives. These natural conversations provide information, encouragement, laughs, and pleasure.

Many people say that they are too busy to have long talks. Other people prefer to watch television, play computer games, or listen to the radio rather than talk to relatives and friends. Sometimes people feel too shy to speak to the people next to them. Many Americans have forgotten how to hold good, deep conversations, or even a friendly chat on the phone. I suspect this lack of real communication lessens their daily joy.

Of course, people learning English as a second, third, or fourth language face even more barriers to a satisfying conversation in English. First, English remains a confusing, difficult, and strange language. It’s easy to feel uncomfortable when speaking in this new tongue. What questions do I ask? How can I keep a conversation going? What vocabulary words are needed? How do I show agreement, or disagreement, in a lively, yet polite way? How can I share my experiences in a clear manner? How can I have better, more engaging conversations in English?

Compelling Conversations: Questions and Quotations on Timeless Topics addresses these issues for both native and non-native speakers. The focus is on learning by doing, and making good mistakes. (Good mistakes, by the way, are natural mistakes that help us learn so we can make different and better “good mistakes” next time.)

Each of the 45 chapters includes 30 or more questions, 10 or more targeted vocabulary words, a few proverbs, and 10 or more quotations. Although designed for advanced students, intermediate ESL students will find plenty of material to use and can benefit from exposure to the new words, phrases, and questions.

Each chapter focuses on a promising conversation topic. The questions allow the reader to practice exchanging experiences and ideas in a natural style. You can add questions, skip questions, and move on to related topics. Each chapter begins with easier questions and moves on to questions that are more abstract. Both native and non-native speakers will find the questions allow one to share experiences, exchange insights, and reflect on life.

A NOTE ON TERMS

ESL, short for English as a Second Language, remains the most common term in the United States—especially in public education. TESOL, the largest professional organization, stands for Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages. Many scholars prefer to break down the field into sub-categories such as:

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESP: English for Special Purposes

ELT: English Language Teaching, and

ELL: English Language Learners.

We use ESL for both simplicity and convenience since we live in the United States.
The questions are conversation starters, and not scripts to follow. The goal remains to create a real dialogue, increase your understanding of your classmates, and gently push you toward using a richer vocabulary in your English conversations.

Many of these conversation worksheets were originally developed for an Advanced Conversation class that met four hours a week, 15 weeks a semester. The original college course textbook offered little more than vocabulary lists, cost too much, and avoided any topic that might cause any controversy. Several lessons talked about the weather, colors, etc. So I dropped the book, and created conversation worksheets with 30 related questions on practical topics for adult students. I didn’t come in with a set point of view; I wanted to find out what people had experienced and their reflections on their lives, current events, and the bigger questions about our changing world. Why should we just talk about the weather and become bored when we could explore our lives, times, passions, and challenges?

Many students would contribute proverbs during our discussions since proverbs, sayings, and idioms can be useful in daily life. Often similar ideas, like “the sky is always blue somewhere”, can be found across cultures. Proverbs can point out some universal aspects of the human experience—in 21st century America, 19th century England, 17th century Paris, 4th century China, or 1st century Rome. Proverbs may often contradict each other, yet the trick is to use the right proverb at the right time in the right situation. Sometimes it’s good to know, and even hold, two opposite ideas. “Where you stand, depends on where you sit.” Therefore, each chapter includes a proverb section.

This collection of proverbs and quotations also includes many insights from religious leaders and philosophers that go back even more than 2,000 years such as Buddha, Confucius, Aristotle, and the Biblical prophets. These quotations remind us that some conversations have spanned centuries and cultures. The selected quotations present a wide range of ideas, beliefs, and perspectives. Some quotations might make you laugh, some might make you sigh, and a few might even annoy you. Share your genuine feelings and reasons. Join the conversation. Free speech remains a rare and precious right.

Including classic quotations also helps preserve the insights and comments of well-known and significant cultural figures. This habit helps us escape the too-common delusion that the world began when we were born and provides a larger perspective. Sometimes knowing the speaker and historical era invites another way of looking at our modern lives.

Your English may not be perfect yet, but daily practice does lead to significant progress. Compelling Conversations gives you the tools and phrases to talk more and listen better to friends and strangers in English. Finally, I hope you enjoy creating many compelling conversations!

A few more tips for satisfying conversations with your partners:
• Be active
• Be curious
• Be encouraging
• Be kind
• Be open
• Be tolerant
• Make good mistakes
• Be yourself

Eric H. Roth
eric@compellingconversations.com
Contents

SECTION 1 YOUR LIFE
1. Getting Started ........................................... 1
2. Going Beyond Hello ........................................ 4
3. Being Home ............................................... 7
4. Describing Family Ties .................................. 10
5. Eating and Drinking ..................................... 13
6. Exploring Daily Habits ................................... 16
7. Being Yourself ............................................. 19
8. Staying Healthy ........................................... 22
9. Parenting .................................................... 26
10. Making and Keeping Friends ......................... 29
11. Loving Dogs and Pets ................................... 32
12. Cats and More Cats ..................................... 35
13. Pet Peeves ............................................... 38

SECTION 2 FREE TIME
14. Traveling .................................................... 42
15. California Calling ....................................... 45
16. Reading Pleasures and Tastes ......................... 48
17. Moving to Music ......................................... 51
18. Talking about Television ............................... 54
19. Talking about Movies ................................... 57
20. Talking about Movies: The Sequel .................... 60
21. Playing and Watching Sports ......................... 63
22. Gardening ................................................... 67
23. Enjoying the Beach ...................................... 70
24. Holidays and Celebrations ............................. 73

SECTION 3 MODERN TIMES
25. What Do You Think? ..................................... 78
26. Change ....................................................... 82
27. Clothes and Fashion ..................................... 85
28. Appreciating Physical Beauty ......................... 89
29. Dating ........................................................ 93
30. Enjoying Money ........................................... 96
31. Eating Out ................................................... 99
32. Gambling and Spending Money ....................... 102
33. Do You Match? ............................................ 105
34. Handling Stress ............................................ 109

SECTION 4 CIVIC LIFE
35. Practicing Job Interviews ............................... 114
36. Work Relationships ...................................... 117
37. Learning in School ....................................... 120
38. Studying English ......................................... 124
39. Coming to America ...................................... 127
40. Exploring American Culture ........................... 130
41. Exploring Cities ........................................... 133
42. Driving Cars ................................................. 136
43. Crime and Punishment ................................... 139
44. Voting and Choosing Leaders ......................... 142
45. Searching for Heroes .................................... 145

APPENDIX
Tips & Gentle Advice for ESL/EFL Teachers ... 150
Bibliography ..................................................... 151
“In America, nobody says you have to keep circumstances somebody else gives you.”

AMY TAN
(1952–), Chinese-American novelist
Proverbs and quotations appear frequently throughout this text. Reading the ideas of other people and other cultures helps you look at many ways of thinking and introduces you to some famous people.

Also, throughout these lessons, you will be asked to work with others. You will be asking questions about their experiences, and you will be answering questions which they ask you. In this way, you will be practicing English, learning about other cultures, and practicing ways to make conversation pleasant and interesting. Our goal is to create compelling conversations.

**Activity One**

Divide into groups of four. In conversation, it is often helpful to show other people that we understand what they are trying to communicate. A smile, a nod of the head, and eye contact are encouraging to others and invite them to continue. Frowning, shaking one’s head no, or looking away while others are speaking will discourage others from trying.

In this class, we want to encourage others. In your groups, practice smiling at others and encouraging them. Take turns telling why you want to learn more English. Where do you speak English now? Where would you like to speak English more? Why?

**Activity Two**

Words can also show that we want others to feel comfortable speaking. In your group, take turns saying each of the following statements. Give eye contact to others as you speak. This practice will make it easier to use these encouraging statements in your conversations with others.

- That is interesting.
- You are right!
- I enjoy listening to what you have to say.
- I like that!
- What happened next?
- Can you explain more?
- Please continue.
- Cool

“Well begun is half done.”

Greek proverb
Activity Three

In your group, read aloud each of the following quotations. Decide among yourselves what you think the quotation means. Then, talk about how the meaning of the quotation will help you work well with the other students in this class. Remember to practice using encouraging gestures and words with each other.

1. “Courtesy costs nothing.”
   —Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), American writer, philosopher
2. “Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and health to the bones.”
   —Bible
3. “You catch more flies with honey than with vinegar.”
   —Proverb
4. “I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.”
   —Chinese proverb
5. “We learn by doing.”
   —English proverb
6. “The secret of education is respecting the pupil.”
   —Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), American poet, philosopher
7. “It is not best that we should all think alike; it is a difference of opinion which makes horse races.”
   —Mark Twain (1835–1910), American writer, humorist
8. “I am tomorrow, or some future day, what I establish today. I am today what I established yesterday or some previous day.”
   —James Joyce (1882–1941) Irish novelist

Vocabulary

Please circle the words that you know. Ask your partner or teacher for the meanings of the other words.

quotation..............................
proverb .....................................
conversation ..............................
pleasant ......................................
gesture..........................................
nod.............................................
communicate .............................
courage ......................................
discourage ..............................
encourage ..................................
argue ........................................
disagree .....................................

"An acquaintance that begins with a compliment is sure to develop into a real friendship."

Oscar Wilde (1856–1900), British playwright
ACTIVITY FOUR

With the other members in your group, make a list of five or more important rules to follow which will help you have pleasant conversations in this class.

1. ...............................................................................................................
2. ..............................................................................................................
3. ..............................................................................................................
4. ..............................................................................................................
5. ..............................................................................................................

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES

Take turns reading the following quotations out loud. Pick a favorite.

1. “Conversation means being able to disagree and still continue the conversation.”
   —Dwight MacDonald (1906–1982), American editor
2. “Speech is civilization itself...It is silence which isolates.”
   —Thomas Mann (1875–1955), German writer
3. “If it is language that makes us human, one half of language is to listen.”
   —Jacob Trapp (1899–1992) American religious leader
4. “Argument is the worst form of conversation.”
   —Jonathon Swift (1667–1745), English writer, satirist
5. “People have one thing in common: they are all different.”
   —Robert Zend (1929–1985), American writer
6. “Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.”
   —Theodore Roosevelt (1858–1919), 26th U.S. President
7. “Talk low, talk slow, and don’t say too much.”
   —John Wayne (1907–1979), American actor
8. “Keep it light, bright and polite.”
   —English proverb
9. “Man’s main task in life is to give birth to himself.”
   —Erich Fromm (1900–1980), psychologist
10. “There is only one beautiful child in the world, and each mother has that one.”
    —Latin American proverb
11. “Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one’s courage.”
    —Anaïs Nin (1903–1977), French-American author
12. “Man does not speak because he thinks; he thinks because he speaks. Or rather, speaking is no different than thinking: to speak is to think.”
    —Octavio Paz, (1914–1998), Mexican writer, Nobel Prize winner

ON YOUR OWN

People communicate with words 24 hours a day, seven days a week. During the next 24 hours, please carefully observe people talking to each other.

Note their communication style, gestures, and word choices. You can watch people in stores, on buses, at school and even on TV. Go head, be a spy!

Prepare to share three observations with the class.

1. .............................................
2. .............................................
3. .............................................
“Accept me as I am—only then will we discover each other.”

Federico Fellini (1920–1993), Italian director/screenwriter

GOING BEYOND HELLO

TELLING YOUR STORY

Please interview the person sitting next to you. Feel free to add or skip any questions that you want. Take turns talking, jot down some notes, and prepare to introduce your partner to our class. Let’s begin!

1. What’s your full name? How do you spell that?
2. Who chose your name? Why?
3. Where were you born? Were you the first child? Second? Fifth?
4. Do you have any older brothers? Sisters? Younger siblings?
5. Where did you grow up? Is that a city, village, or suburb?
6. How would you describe yourself as a child? Why?
7. When did you decide to move to the U.S.? Why?
8. How long have you been in the United States?
9. Did you move here by yourself? How was the trip?
10. What possessions did you bring with you? Why did you choose these objects?
11. Can you share some of your first impressions of U.S.?
12. Do you have a favorite color? Number? Season? Why?
13. What kind of music do you listen to? Do you have a favorite singer? Group?
14. What’s your favorite radio station or television channel? Why?
15. Can you recommend any movies to rent or see? Why do you like those films?
VOCABULARY

Please circle the words that you know. Ask your partner or teacher for the meanings of the other words.

- interview
- sibling
- suburb
- possession
- impression
- hobby
- smile
- frown
- enthusiasm
- goals

PROVERBS

Read the proverbs below. Can you add another saying?

- Strangers are just friends you haven’t met yet.—American
- Beauty is a good letter of recommendation.—German
- You never get a second chance to make a first impression.—American
- You’re never too old to learn.—Latin
- A single conversation across the table with a wise person is worth a month’s study of books.—Chinese

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES...

1. What do you like to do outside? Why?
2. Where do you walk, hike, jog, or bike on the weekends?
3. What’s your favorite sport? Why?
4. How do you like to spend your free time? What interests you?
5. Do you have a hobby? How long have you enjoyed it?
6. How long have you studied English? Where?
7. Where do you usually speak English? Who do you usually talk with?
8. What’s your best language? Where do you usually speak it? Why?
9. What makes you smile? Where do you feel most comfortable?
10. What are some things that might cause you to frown?
11. How do you express enthusiasm in a word or sound in your native language?
12. Do you have a favorite English word or expression? Why?
13. What are your goals for this year? Why? What’s your plan?
14. How would your friends describe you? What would you add?
15. What are three things that you appreciate about living in the United States?
SHARING VIEWS

Which quotation is your favorite? Why?

1. “I never met a man I didn’t like.”
   —Will Rogers (1879–1935), American humorist

2. “I am free of all prejudices. I hate every one equally.”
   —W. C. Fields (1880–1946), comedian

3. “There is no such thing as a worthless conversation, provided you know what to listen for. And questions are the breath of life for a conversation.”
   —James Nathan Miller, contemporary journalist

4. “He’s the sort of guy if you say, ‘Hi ya, Clark, how are you?’ he’s stuck for an answer.”
   —Ava Gardner, film star, describing her ex-lover, the film star Clark Gable.

5. “Conversation is an art in which a man has all mankind for his competitors, for it is that which all are practicing every day while they live.”
   —Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), American essayist/philosopher

6. “Don’t tell your friends about your indigestion. ‘How are you’ is a greeting, not a question.”
   —Arthur Guiterman (1871–1943), American poet

7. “The true spirit of conversation consists in building on another man’s observation, not overturning it.”
   —Edward G. Bulwer-Lytton (1803–1873), British novelist/politician

8. “Confidence contributes more to conversation than wit.”
   —Francois de La Rochefoucauld (1613–1680), French writer

9. “It takes two to speak truth—one to speak and another to hear.”
   —Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862), American philosopher

10. “There is no such thing as conversation. It is an illusion. There are interesting monologues, that’s all.”
    —Rebecca West (1892–1983), English writer

11. “I am simple, complex, generous, selfish, unattractive, beautiful, lazy and driven.”
    —Barbara Streisand (1942–), American singer, actress, director, producer

12. “Everything becomes a little different as soon as it is spoken out loud.”
    —Hermann Hesse (1877–1962), novelist

13. “Never let your fear of striking out get in your way.”
    —Babe Ruth (1895–1948), American baseball legend

14. “It was impossible to get a conversation going; everybody was talking too much.”
    —Yogi Berra (1925–) legendary baseball manager/catcher

ON YOUR OWN
Before next class, compliment three people. Tell your class partner what happened.
SHARING EXPERIENCES

Everybody lives somewhere. Share the story of your home with a conversation partner by responding to these questions. Feel free to add other questions.

1. Do you live in a house or an apartment?
2. How long have you lived there?
3. Why did you choose your current home?
   What attracted you?
4. Did you have a checklist when looking for a home?
   What was on it?
5. What legal documents did you have to sign before moving in?
   Lease? Mortgage? Other? Did you have to pay any fees?
6. What do you like about it?
   How long did it take you to make a decision?
7. What do you dislike about it?
   What, if anything, annoys you?
8. Which is your favorite room? Why?
   What does it look like?
9. Which room is the heart of your current home?
   Kitchen? TV room?
10. What changes have you made to this residence? Paint? Repairs?
11. What further changes would you like to make?
12. What paintings, posters, or other artwork do you have?
13. Do you have any pets? What’s their favorite spot?
14. What, if any plants or flowers, do you have? Where are they?
15. By the way, how did you find your current home?
   Word of mouth? Ad?
VOCABULARY
Which words do you already know? Working with your partner, use each of the vocabulary words in a sentence.

checklist.................................................................................................................................
lease..............................................................................................................................................
mortgage....................................................................................................................................... 
fees ................................................................................................................................................
repairs .......................................................................................................................................... 
hardware ....................................................................................................................................... 
artwork .......................................................................................................................................... 
neighborhood ............................................................................................................................... 
neighbors ....................................................................................................................................... 
prefer ............................................................................................................................................. 
residence ....................................................................................................................................... 
current .......................................................................................................................................... 
interior ........................................................................................................................................... 
homesick ......................................................................................................................................... 
suburb ............................................................................................................................................ 
appliances ....................................................................................................................................... 

SAYINGS
What do these proverbs and sayings mean? Discuss them with your partner. Circle your favorite.

Home is where the heart is.
You can’t go home again.
Home is where we grumble the most and are treated the best.

Birds return to old nests.—Japanese
A house is not a home.
Mi casa es su casa.—Spanish

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES...
1. When you were a child, did you live in a house or an apartment?
2. How long did you live in one residence?
3. What did you like about it? What did you dislike?
4. With whom did you live as a child?
5. Which was your favorite room? Why?
6. Which room was the heart of your childhood home?
7. Have you ever felt homesick? What did you miss the most?
8. What is your favorite childhood memory at home?
9. Is your old neighborhood the same today as it was when you were a child?
10. Would you like to live there now? Why or why not?
11. Would you rather live in an apartment or a house? Why?
12. Would you rather live in a city, a suburb, a small town, or the country? Why?
13. Can you suggest some places to find interior design ideas?
14. What would your dream residence be like?
   Can you describe it in detail?
15. What modern appliances would your dream house have?
16. What makes a house or an apartment a home?

QUOTATIONS
Please read and review these quotations in a small group. Discuss what each one means. Then label a quote you like and one you dislike.

1. “He is happiest, be he king or peasant, who finds peace in his home.”—Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), German playwright
2. “Anger in a home is like rottenness in a fruit.”—Talmud
3. “A man’s house is his castle.”
   —Sir Edward Coke (1552–1634), English lord
4. Home: “The place where when you have to go there, they have to take you in.”—Robert Frost (1875–1963), American poet
5. “Be it ever so humble, there’s no place like home.”
   —John Howard Payne (1791–1852), American lyricist
6. “A man builds a fine house; and now he has a master, and a task for life: he is to furnish, watch, show it, and keep it in repair, the rest of his days.”—Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), American writer
7. “A man travels the world over in search of what he needs, and returns home to find it.”
   —George Moore (1852–1933), Irish playwright
8. “No matter under what circumstances you leave it, home does not cease to be home. No matter how you lived there—well or poorly.”
   —Joseph Brodsky (1940–1996), Russian-American Nobel winner
9. “Home is the girl’s prison and the woman’s workhouse.”—George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950), Irish playwright and Nobel winner
10. “A woman should be home with the children, building that home and making sure there’s a secure family atmosphere.”
    —Mel Gibson (1956–), film director, actor
11. “The best way to keep children at home is make the home atmosphere pleasant, and let the air out of the tires.”
    —Dorothy Parker (1893–1967), American writer
12. “Modern apartments are built on the principle that half as much room should cost twice as much money.”
    —Evan Esar (1899–1995), American humorist
13. “Peace and rest at length have come, All the day’s long toil is past, And each heart is whispering, Home, Home at last!”
    —Thomas Hood (1798–1845), English poet

ON YOUR OWN
Select five adjectives (spacious, cozy) for your dream home:

1. ...............................................
2. ...............................................
3. ...............................................
4. ...............................................
5. ...............................................

Before the next class, find a home or apartment building that you would like to live in. Bring a specific address to class. Describe the building to your group.
“Am I my brother’s keeper?”

Genesis 4:9

4

DESCRIPTING FAMILY TIES

SHARING EXPERIENCES

Family remains the center of society. Share your experiences and discover your partner’s diverse experiences as a family member.

1. Do you have a large, medium, or small family? How many people are in your family?
2. What are your parents’ names? How do you spell their names?
3. Where were your parents born? Were they born in a hospital? Elsewhere?
4. How did your parents meet? What attracted them to each other?
5. How long did they know each other before they got married?
6. Do you know how old your parents were when they got married?
7. How many siblings do you have? Are you the oldest? Youngest?
8. What do you enjoy doing with your siblings?
9. While living in your homeland, did you live with your nuclear family or your extended family? With whom do you live now?
10. Does your extended family have a leader or dominant figure? Is there a patriarch or a matriarch?
11. How many aunts and uncles do you have?
12. Which aunt or uncle is your favorite? Why?
13. What language or languages did you hear in your childhood home? Which languages are spoken now?
14. Do you exchange gifts on holidays? Which holidays?
15. Who gives the best gifts in your family? Why?
16. What do you appreciate about your family?
17. How can families provide comfort?
VOCABULARY
Please circle the words that you know. Ask your partner or teacher for the meanings of the other words.

- sibling
- spouse
- nuclear family
- blended family
- extended family
- reunion
- matriarch
- patriarch
- stepsister
- ancestor
- half-brother
- in-laws

PROVERBS
Read the common sayings and proverbs below. Can you add one more?

- Half of your fortune lies in your family line.—Korean
- Of all the virtues, family duty is the first.—Chinese
- A brother helped by a brother is like a fortified city.—Book of Proverbs
- Like father, like son.—Latin
- Like mother, like daughter.—Persian
- Whoever marries for money will have unworthy children.—Talmud

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES...

1. What days were special for your family when you were a child?
2. Which relative do you feel closest to?
3. What makes that relationship special?
4. Whom do you respect the most in your family? Why?
5. Does your family hold reunions? Can you describe a recent one?
6. How do you keep in touch with distant relatives? Do you use email?
7. How many times has your family moved? Why?
8. Could you describe some of your favorite family photographs?
9. Is divorce legal in your homeland? Are there particular conditions required for divorce? What are they? Any other restrictions?
10. Why are “blended families” more common today?
11. What might cause someone to become a “black sheep” in a family?
12. What things might parents keep secret from their children?
13. What things might children keep secret from their parents?

REMEMBER...
Be yourself
Skip awkward questions
Add natural questions
14. Do you have any step or half brothers or sisters? Do you think these relationships are harder? Why?
15. What rivalries has your family had? Have you felt any rivalry with relatives?
16. How can families create stress?
17. What were some important events in your family history?
18. Which ancestor would you most like to meet? Why?
19. How are family habits and traditions different in the United States than in your native land?
20. What are your suggestions for stronger and healthier relationships?

QUOTATIONS
Which quotation is your favorite? Why?
1. “All happy families resemble one another; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own fashion.”
   —Leo Tolstoy in Anna Karenina (1828–1910), Russian novelist
2. “All that I am or hope to be, I owe to my angel mother.”
   —Abraham Lincoln (1809–1865), 16th U.S. President
3. “We never know the love of a parent until we become parents ourselves.”
   —Henry Ward Beecher (1813–1887), clergyman/abolitionist
4. “Rearing a family is probably the most difficult job in the world.”
   —Virginia Satir (1916–1988), family therapist
5. “Heredity is what sets the parents of a teenager wondering about each other.”—Laurence J. Peter (1919–1990) educator and author
   —Alex Haley (1921–1992), American novelist and biographer
7. “The greatest thing in family life is to take a hint when a hint is intended—and not to take a hint when a hint isn’t intended.”
   —Robert Frost (1874–1963), American poet
8. “We must learn to live together as brothers or perish as fools.”
   —Dr. Martin Luther King (1929–1968), Nobel Peace Prize recipient
9. “The family that prays together stays together.”
   —Slogan of Father Patrick Peyton’s Family Rosary Radio Crusade
10. “When you are a mother, you are never really alone in your thoughts. A mother always has to think twice, once for herself and once for her child.”
    —Sophia Loren (1934–), Italian actress
11. “Is solace anywhere more comforting than that in the arms of a sister?”—Alice Walker (1944–), American novelist and poet
12. “The first duty of love is to listen.”
    —Paul Tillich (1886–1965), theologian

ON YOUR OWN
Make a Family Tree back to your grandparents and, if you have children, including your children.
Give birth dates if they are known and death dates if a person has deceased.
Prepare to share with your class partner.
SHARING TASTES

Everybody eats. Food is both a necessity and a pleasure, and remains a safe and interesting way to learn more about people. Interview your partner and share your eating and drinking experiences.

1. Do you consider eating a chore, a duty, or a pleasure? Why?
2. What did you eat yesterday? Was it a typical day?
3. Do you drink juice/tea/coffee in the morning?
   Regular or decaffeinated?
4. Do you eat at the same time each day?
   Or do you eat when you have time?
5. Do you prefer salty snacks or sweet snacks?
   How often do you have snacks?
6. Where do you usually shop for food?
   What shopping tips can you share?
7. What drinks do you often have with your evening meal?
9. What is your favorite vegetable? Are you a vegetarian?
10. What is your favorite fruit? Which fruits do you find delicious?
11. Can you name three American dishes that you really enjoy or savor?
12. Has your diet changed since moving to the United States? How?
13. Which dishes from your country would you recommend to a tourist?
14. Is there any food you enjoyed in your homeland that you haven’t found here?
15. Are you a chef?
16. What’s your favorite recipe? Where did you get it?
   What dishes do you cook?
VOCABULARY
Please circle the words that you know. Write three questions using them.

decaffeinated ..............................................................
chef ..............................................................................
fast .............................................................................
famished .................................................................
feast ............................................................................
gluttony ....................................................................
famine ...........................................................................
vegetarian ..................................................................
culinary ......................................................................
savor ...........................................................................
edible.......................................................................... 

IDIOMS, PUNS, AND EXPRESSIONS
Which is your favorite?
I’m on a seafood diet. I see food and I eat it.
She loves candy, ice cream, and cookies. She has a sweet tooth.
A boiled egg in the morning is hard to beat.
Eat, drink, and be merry.
The most sincere love is the love of food.

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES...
1. What is your favorite restaurant? In what language do you order?
2. How often do you eat at a fast food restaurant? Why?
3. Are American fast food chains popular in your homeland? Why?
4. In your native land, did all members of your family eat the evening meal together? Who cooked the food? Who served the food?
5. In your native country, what foods or drinks are associated with weddings? Birthdays? Funerals?
6. What foods or drinks are associated with holy days or national holidays?
7. Have you ever eaten at a feast? When? What meals remind you of happy times?
8. Have you ever fasted? Why? Were you famished after skipping two meals?
9. Does your religion have dietary rules or restrictions? What are they?
10. Has there ever been a famine in your native country? What caused it?
11. Have you ever tried to diet to lose weight? What did you do?
12. Can you name several types of diets?
13. Is your diet restricted in any way by health considerations? How?
14. Do you ever read food labels? Do you have any food allergies?
15. What meals does your family share? Who cooks? Who serves?
16. Does your family share recipes? Which recipe would you like?
17. Would you like to share a favorite recipe?
18. Are you adventurous in seeking out new culinary delights?
19. What is your ideal dinner? Please describe the dishes, the guests, and the location.

QUOTATIONS

Circle the quotations that you like.

1. “Better beans and bacon in peace than cakes and ale in fear.”
   —Aesop (ca. 550 B.C.)

2. “The proof of the pudding is in the eating. By a small sample, we may judge the whole of a piece.”
   —Miguel De Cervantes (1547–1616), Spanish writer

3. “The satiated man and the hungry one do not see the same thing when they look upon a loaf of bread.”
   —Rumi (1207–1273), Persian poet and mystic

4. “More die in the United States of too much food than of too little.”
   —John Kenneth Galbraith (1908–) ambassador, economist

   —Wolfgang Puck (1949–), chef

6. “When I drink, I think; and when I think, I drink.”
   —Francois Rabelais (1495–1553), satirist

7. “Edible (adj). Good to eat and wholesome to digest, as a worm to a toad, a toad to a snake, a snake to a pig, a pig to a man, and a man to a worm.”
   —Ambrose Bierce (1842–1916), American writer

8. “I have taken more out of alcohol than alcohol has taken out of me.”
   —Winston Churchill (1874–1965), British Prime Minister, Nobel Prize winner

9. “The secret of staying young is to live honestly, eat slowly, and lie about your age.”
   —Lucille Desiree Ball (1911–1984), American TV star and actress

10. “People who drink to drown their sorrow should be told that sorrow knows how to swim.”
    —Ann Landers (1918–2002), American advice columnist

11. “I went on a diet, swore off drinking and heavy eating, and in fourteen days I lost two weeks.”
    —Joe E. Louis (1914–1981), world boxing champion

    —Slogan on a novelty kitchen apron in the United States

13. “If it’s beautifully arranged on the plate, you know someone’s fingers have been all over it.”
    —Julia Child (1912–2004), American chef/author

ON YOUR OWN

Write menu descriptions for your perfect meal. Include the major ingredients of dishes as one finds on a menu.

Be sure to include appetizers, beverages and desserts. Indulge yourself.

Now describe your delicious choices to your group.
“Curious things, habits. People themselves never knew they had them.”

Agatha Christie (1890–1976), British crime fiction writer

EXPLORING DAILY HABITS

SHARING STORIES

Do you know your own habits? Share stories about your habits and find out more about your partner’s habits in a friendly exchange.

1. How many hours of sleep do you usually get? Is that enough sleep for you?
2. Do you usually use an alarm clock to wake up? How often do you oversleep?
3. What time do you usually get up in the morning? Do you get up with the sun?
4. Do you jump out of bed? Are you a morning monster?
5. Can you describe your morning habits? Are you in a hurry?
6. What do you eat for breakfast? What do you prefer to drink in the morning?
7. Can you describe a typical summer afternoon for you? A winter afternoon?
8. How did you come to school today? Did you arrive by foot, by bus, or by car?
9. How long is your daily commute to work or school?
11. What was your daily schedule like five years ago? How is different now?
12. Do you do many things at the last minute? Why?
13. In your daily life, what modern appliances or machines do you use?
14. What task or chore have you put off or postponed?
16. Where do you like buying your groceries? Why? What do you usually buy?
VOCABULARY

Please circle the words that you know. Use them to write four sentences.

- curious
- habits
- oversleep
- routine
- schedule
- tend to
- disciplined
- addict
- lifestyle
- impulsive
- consumer

PROVERBS

Read the common sayings and proverbs below. Can you add two more?

The more you chew your meat, the better it tastes;
The more you speak, the lighter your heart becomes.—Korean
An old cat will never learn to dance.—Moroccan
Habits are first cobwebs, then cables.—Spanish
Love makes marriage possible, and habit makes it endurable.—American
The fool in a hurry drinks his tea with chopsticks.—Chinese
(Add yours) .................................................................
(Add yours) .................................................................

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES...

1. What kind of consumer are you? A bargain hunter? Impulsive buyer?
2. What are your TV viewing habits? Do you always watch certain shows? Which ones?
3. How often do you use a computer? When do you send email?
4. Do you find the daily lifestyle in the United States hectic? Can you give some examples?
5. What are some dangerous or unhealthy addictions?
6. Why do you think so many people are addicted to alcohol and illegal drugs?
7. Do you consider smoking a bad habit? Why?
8. In what ways are you self-disciplined?
9. Are you lazy in any ways? How?
10. Do you tend to see the glass as half-full or half-empty? Are you more of an optimist or a pessimist? Why?
11. What is your favorite time of day? Why?
12. How do your weekends differ from your Monday-Friday routine?

REMEMBER...
Be curious
Be open
Be tolerant
13. What are some of your healthier habits?
14. What are some of your less healthy habits?
15. How do your habits compare to your parents’ habits at your age?
16. Have your daily habits changed since moving to the United States?
17. Given a choice, would you prefer to live now or 100 years ago? Why?

QUOTATIONS
Which quotation is your favorite? Why?

1. “Nothing is in reality either pleasant or unpleasant by nature; but all things become so through habit.”
   —Epictetus (55–135), Greek stoic philosopher

2. “Men’s natures are alike; it is their habits that separate them.”
   —Confucius (551–479 B.C.E.) great Chinese philosopher

3. “We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.” —Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.), Ancient Greek philosopher

4. “Habit and character are closely interwoven, habit becoming like a second nature.”
   —Moses Maimonides (1135–1204), Jewish philosopher

5. “Don’t let your sins turn into bad habits.”
   —Saint Theresa (1873–1897), French nun and author

6. “Nothing so needs reforming as other people’s habits.”
   —Mark Twain (1835–1910), American humorist and novelist

7. “Habit for him was all the test of truth; ‘It must be right: I’ve done it from my youth.” —George Crabbe (1754–1832), English poet

8. “The perpetual obstacle to human advancement is custom.”
   —John Stuart Mill (1806–1873), English political philosopher

9. “The chains of habit are too weak to be felt until they are too strong to be broken.”
   —Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709–1784), English author

10. “Habit is habit, and not to be flung out of the window by any man, but coaxed downstairs a step at a time.”
    —Mark Twain (1835–1910), American humorist

11. “Habit will reconcile us to everything but change.”
    —Charles Caleb Colton (1780–1832), English writer and collector

12. “Any man who reads too much and uses his own brain too little falls into lazy habits of thinking.”
    —Albert Einstein (1879–1955), scientist and Time magazine’s Man of the 20th Century

13. “For many, negative thinking is a habit, which over time, becomes an addiction.”

14. “The unfortunate thing about this world is that good habits are so much easier to give up than bad ones.”
    —Somerset Maugham (1874–1965), English novelist
Questions and Quotations on timeless topics

Mahatma Gandhi (1869–1948)
Indian political leader and philosopher

“...freedom for the full expression of my personality.”

7

BEING YOURSELF

SHARING PERSPECTIVES

From consulting charts and reading palms to taking personality tests and reading self-help books, people love to describe themselves.

1. Which three adjectives would you use to describe your personality?
2. Are you shy or outgoing? When are you most outgoing?
3. Are you daring or cautious? In what ways?
4. Are you usually patient or impatient? Can you give an example?
5. Are you quiet or talkative? When are you most talkative? Least?
6. Would you call yourself a leader or a follower? Why?
7. Are you generous or selfish? Are you too selfish or over generous?
8. In what ways are you rigid? In what ways are you flexible?
9. In what ways are you traditional? In what ways are you modern?
10. If pessimistic is 1 and optimistic is 10, what would your number be on the scale? Why did you decide on that number?
11. On a scale of 1-10, how assertive are you?
12. Is your personality more like your mother or your father? In what ways?
13. Which color would you use to describe your personality?
14. Which animal would you use to describe yourself? Tiger? Mouse? Why?
15. Do you believe in astrology? Which sign are you in the zodiac? Does the pattern of this sign match your personality?
16. Which animal year are you according to Chinese astrology? Does this fit?
17. Have you ever taken a personality test from a magazine or online? Was it helpful? Was it fun? Was it accurate?
18. Which season of the year best describes your personality? In what ways?
VOCABULARY

Please circle the words that you know. Ask your partner or teacher for the meanings of the other words.

character .................................................................
patient ...........................................................................
talkative ........................................................................
generous .........................................................................
rigid ................................................................................
flexible ..............................................................................
autumn ..............................................................................
zodiac .................................................................................
accurate ........................................................................... 
optimist .............................................................................
pessimist ...........................................................................
nurture .............................................................................

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES...

1. Do you think our personalities are set when we are born?
2. Can we change our personalities? How?
3. How has your personality changed in the last ten years?
4. Which three words would you use to describe the personality of your best friend?
5. How are your personalities similar?
   How are your personalities different?
6. Why do you think opposites are sometimes attracted to each other?
7. Some cultures define personality in terms of the elements: Would you say you are primarily air, water, fire, or earth? Why did you choose that element?
8. Which three qualities do you think of as yin (feminine)?
9. Which three qualities do you think of as yang (masculine)?
10. Can you name one yin quality and one yang quality which describe you?
11. How might being raised in poverty influence someone’s personality?
12. Do you think being born in extreme wealth would change your personality? How?
13. If you had been born in another country, do you think your personality would be different? How?
14. Can you think of somebody with a good personality and bad character?
15. What is the difference between one’s personality and one’s character?

REM EMBER... 
Be encouraging
Make good mistakes
Be yourself
16. Are you primarily an extrovert or an introvert? Why do you say that?
17. Do you think nature (biology) or nurture (our circumstances) are more important in shaping our personalities? Why do you say that?
18. What are your best qualities?

**QUOTATIONS**

Circle the quotations you like.

1. “Know thyself.”
   —Socrates, Greek philosopher (470–399 B.C.E.)
2. “The man of character bears the accidents of life with dignity and grace, making the best of circumstances.”
   —Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.), Greek philosopher and scientist
3. “This above all: To thine own self be true, And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man.”
   —William Shakespeare, playwright (1564–1616)
4. “Character is much easier kept than recovered.”
   —Thomas Paine (1737–1809), writer and revolutionary
5. “It is absurd to divide people into good and bad. People are either charming or tedious.”
   —Oscar Wilde (1856–1900), English playwright
6. “Some people with great virtues are disagreeable, while others with great vice are delightful.”
   —Duc de la Rochefoucauld (1613—1680), French philosopher
7. “The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances; if there is any reaction, both are transformed.”
   —Carl Jung (1875–1961), Swiss psychiatrist
8. “The Doc told me that I had a dual personality. Then he lays an $82 bill on me, so I give him 41 bucks and say, ‘Get the other 41 bucks from the other guy.’ ”
   —Jerry Lewis (1926–), American comedian
9. “I am what is mine. Personality is the original personal property.”
   —Norman O. Brown (1913–2002), American scholar
10. “Man’s main task in life is to give birth to himself, to become what he potentially is. The most important product of his effort is his own personality.”
    —Erich Fromm (1900–1980), American psychologist
11. “I am absolutely convinced that no wealth in the world can help humanity forward. The example of great and fine personalities is the only thing that can lead us to fine ideas and noble deeds. Can anyone imagine Moses, Jesus, or Gandhi with the money bags of Carnegie?”
    —Albert Einstein (1879–1955), Nobel Prize winner in Physics
12. “Generous people are rarely mentally ill people.”
    —Karl Menninger (1893–1990) American psychiatrist

**ON YOUR OWN**

What do you like about yourself?

Write a postcard to a stranger which celebrates yourself and your strongest traits.
Walking the Walk

Sometimes it is easier to talk the talk about staying healthy than walking the walk to stay healthy. Interview your partner and exchange health tips.

1. What are some signs of being healthy?
2. What do your friends or relatives do to stay healthy?
3. What do you do to stay healthy?
4. Have your health habits changed in the last few years? How?
5. What is something that many people should do, but don’t do to stay healthy?
6. Do you know any home remedies for common ailments?
8. What are some causes of back pain? What are some possible remedies?
9. Do you take daily vitamins? Which ones? Why?
10. Do you regularly take over-the-counter drugs or prescription drugs? Why?
11. Is there a disease or condition which is common in your family? What steps have you taken to forestall or prevent this illness?
12. How often do you wash your hands? What other precautions do you take to prevent the spread of germs?
13. Do you eat healthy food? Do you have any unhealthy eating habits?
14. Do you enjoy smoking? What are some of the dangers of smoking?
15. How much sleep do you usually get? Is your sleep restful, or do you toss and turn?
16. How often do you feel tired or exhausted? What can you do to feel more energetic?

“If one has no illness, he is already rich.”

Korean proverb
VOCABULARY

Circle the words that you already know. Look up the other words.

- prevent
- prevention
- restrict
- hygiene
- germs
- symptoms
- operation
- restriction
- prescription
- remedy
- over-the-counter
- exercise
- meditation
- medication
- overcome

PROVERBS

What do these proverbs and sayings mean? Can you add another?

- An apple a day keeps the doctor away.—English
- Few desires, buoyant spirits; many cares, feeble health.—Chinese
- A sick person is a prisoner.—Yemenite
- He who has health has hope,
  and he who has hope, has everything.—Arab
- Nature, time, and patience are the three great physicians.—Irish
- In the emergency room, we can ease their pain, but we can not ease their lives.
- Prevention beats medication.
- Put a lid on what smells bad.—Japanese
- Old age is a thousand headaches.—Persian

(Add yours)
THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES...

1. Do you exercise regularly? What are your favorite exercises?
2. Do you take regular walks? Ride a bike? Go to the gym? Practice Tai Chi or yoga?
3. What can cause stomachaches? Do you eat quickly? Do you eat spicy foods?
4. Do you find yourself worrying a lot? Do you have ulcers?
5. Do you keep track of your blood pressure or cholesterol? How?
6. What are some warning signs for a heart attack? What do doctors recommend?
7. How is general health care easier in the United States than in your home country?
8. What inoculations or medical tests did you get before entering the United States?
9. Are there diseases that are common in your native country, but are rare in the United States? Which ones?
10. Are there common diseases in the U.S. which are rare in your homeland? Which ones?
11. Have you ever been to a hospital? Why? What made that visit memorable?
12. Are you at your ideal weight? Should you gain weight to attain your ideal? Should you lose weight to attain your ideal?
14. Have you seen TV ads for prescription drugs? Do you trust the ads? Why or why not?
15. Do our emotions and thoughts affect our health? How?
16. Do you follow any regimen like meditation, yoga, or prayer to calm your mind and body?
17. What three things could you do to improve your general health?
QUOTATIONS

Pick your favorite five quotations, and explain your choices.

1. “The secret of health for both mind and body is not to mourn for the past, not to worry about the future, not to anticipate troubles, but to live in the present moment wisely and earnestly.”
—Siddhartha Guatama (563–483 B.C.E.), philosopher

2. “The first duty of a physician is that he should do the sick no harm.”
—Hippocrates (460–380 B.C.E.), ancient Greek physician

3. “It is part of the cure to wish to be cured.”
—Seneca the Younger (4 B.C.E.–65 A.D.), Roman philosopher/statesmen

4. “Better use medicines at the outset than at the last moment.”
—Publilius Syrus (85–43 B.C.E.), Roman writer

5. “Body and spirit are twins: God only knows which is which.”
—Algernon Swinburne (1837–1909), English writer and critic

6. “A sound mind in a sound body is a short, but full description of a happy state in this world.”
—John Locke (1632–1704), English philosopher

7. “Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.”
—Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), American icon

8. “Health is so necessary to all duties, as well as the pleasures of life, that the crime of squandering it is equal to folly.”
—Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709–1784), British writer

9. “You can’t lose weight by talking about it. You have to keep your mouth shut.”
—The Old Farmer’s Almanac

10. “You can’t ignore the importance of a good digestion. The joy of life...depends on a sound stomach.”
—Joseph Conrad (1857–1924), English author

11. “There is no cure for birth or death save to enjoy the interval.”
—George Santayana (1863–1952), American philosopher

12. “The only way to keep your health is to eat what you don’t want, drink what you don’t like, and do what you’d rather not.”
—Mark Twain (1835–1910), American humorist

—Mark Twain (1835–1910), American humorist

ON YOUR OWN

List your top five tips for staying healthy and happy. Prepare to share your advice with the class.

1. ...............................................

2. ...............................................

3. ...............................................

4. ...............................................

5. ...............................................

QUESTIONS AND QUOTATIONS ON TIMELESS TOPICS • 25
“Honor thy father and thy mother.”

The Bible, Exodus

9

PARENTING

SHARING EXPERIENCES

Everyone was once a child; most are or will become parents. Share your experiences and exchange ideas on parenting pleasures and challenges.

1. Where are you in your family’s birth order?
2. How old were your parents when you were born?
3. Did your parents ever live with their parents?
4. When you were a baby, who was your primary caretaker?
5. What activities do you remember doing with your mother?
6. What activities do you remember doing with your father?
7. Do you remember playing with your parents? What did you play?
8. When you were a child, were you ever punished? How? Why?
9. Which of your parents was the main disciplinarian in your family?
10. Were the rules different for girls than for boys? What about family expectations for girls and boys?
11. Do you remember helping either of your parents with chores? Which ones?
12. Do you know any parents that hovered over their children like a helicopter? Why or why not?
13. What did your parents expect from you as a teenager? Did you rebel?
14. Which parenting duties do you think your parents did well?
15. What would you like to change about the way your parents treated you as a child? A teenager? Why?
16. Are you close with your father or mother now? What do you do together?
17. Do you resemble either of your parents? How?
18. What are you grateful to your parents for?
VOCABULARY
Circle the words that you know. Write three questions with them.
- primary
- duties
- caretaker
- chores
- estranged
- protect
- loyal
- sacrifice
- spank
- qualities
- resemble
- ideal

PROVERBS
Do you know these proverbs? What are some others about parenting?
- Love your children with your heart, but train them with your hands.—Ukrainian
- Don’t threaten a child; either punish him or forgive him.—Talmud
- It’s an ill bird that fouls its own nest.—Chinese
- Emeralds and crystals glitter when lit.—Japanese
- Spare the rod and spoil the child.—The Bible

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES...
1. Are you especially close with any of your siblings? What do you do together?
2. Are you estranged from any of your siblings? Why?
3. Do you have children? What are their ages?
4. Can you briefly describe each of your children? What do they like to do?
5. Do you want children? How many?
6. In what ways do you hope to repeat the parenting skills of your father and mother? How would you describe their parenting style?
7. Are there also ways you hope to be a better parent than your parents? How?
9. How do parents sacrifice for their children? Why isn’t this always appreciated?
10. What do you think is the ideal age for parents to be? Why?

“When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years.”
Mark Twain (1835–1910) American humorist

REMEMBER...
Be kind
Be open
Be supportive
11. In what ways was it easier to be a parent 40 years ago? How was it more difficult?
12. What are some problems that parents face today?
13. What are some “good mistakes” that parents sometimes make?
14. What are some of the satisfactions of being a parent?
15. What movies have touched you by their depiction of parents and children?
16. How would you describe an ideal father? Ideal mother?
17. What five qualities would you like your children to have?
18. Can you share your top five tips for being a loving parent?

**QUOTATIONS**
Circle the quotations that you agree with.

1. “Children today are tyrants. They contradict their parents, gobble their food, and tyrannize their teachers.”
   —Socrates (469–399 B.C.E.), Greek philosopher
2. “Obeying from love is better than obeying from fear.”
   —Rashi (1040–1105), rabbi and scholar
3. “Give me the children until they are seven and anyone may have them afterwards.”
   —Saint Francis Xavier (1506–1552), Catholic educator
4. “A child is not a vase to be filled, but a fire to be lit.”
   —Rabelais (1494–1553) French essayist and humanist
5. “Before I got married, I had six theories about bringing up children. Now I have six children and no theories.”
   —John Wilmot, Lord Rochester (1647–1680)
6. “The first half of our lives is ruined by our parents, and the second half by our children.”
   —Clarence Darrow (1857–1938) American lawyer
7. “No two children are ever born into the same family.”
   —Leo Rosten (1908–1997) American writer
8. “Insanity is hereditary; you can get it from your children.”
   —Sam Levenson, (1911–1980) American humorist and journalist
9. “The children have been a wonderful gift to me, and I’m thankful to have once again seen the world through their eyes.”
   —Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis (1929–1994) first lady
10. “No parent should ever have to choose between work and family; between earning a decent wage and caring for a child.”
    —Bill Clinton (1946–) 42nd U.S. President
11. “In the final analysis, it is not what you do for your children, but what you have taught them to do for themselves that will make them successful human beings.”
    —Ann Landers, (1918–2002) advice columnist

**ON YOUR OWN**
Interview a successful parent. What tips does that person offer?

OR
List five things you are grateful for.

1. ..............................................
2. ..............................................
3. ..............................................
4. ..............................................
5. ..............................................
SHARING MEMORIES

We all want good friends. How does one make good friends? Share your ideas about friendship with your partner.

1. Did you have a best friend when you were an 8-year-old? Who?
2. What did you do together? Can you describe your best friend?
3. Who was your best friend when you were 14? What did you do?
4. Are you still friends, or pals, with the best friends of your youth?
5. Why do best friends sometimes drift apart?
6. What are some tips for keeping a friendship strong?
7. Who is your best friend now? How did you meet your best friend?
8. What activities do you do with your friend?
   What makes this friendship special?
9. What do you and your best friend have in common?
10. How are you and your best friend different?
11. Have you seen the TV show “Friends”? Do you like it? Who is your favorite character?
12. Can you think of a good movie about friendship?
13. In your opinion, are there rules for a friendship?
14. What are some things that a good friend should do?
15. Are there things that a good friend should not do? Like what?
16. Do you think you are a good friend to others? In what ways?
17. Do you think friends should loan each other money? Why or why not?
18. How do you deepen friendships? Can you share five tips for making and keeping friends?
19. Which of your friends would make good roommates? Why?
20. Do you have any friends that you would not want as roommates?
VOCABULARY

Use the words or phrases you know in sentences.

fast friends.................................................................
pal ..............................................................................
drift apart ................................................................
crisis ........................................................................
opinion in common ................................................
circle of friends .......................................................
betray ........................................................................
roommate ................................................................
Googled .....................................................................
supportive ................................................................

PROVERBS

Circle the proverbs with which you agree.

A friend in need is a friend indeed.—Latin
Never catch a falling knife or a falling friend.—Scottish
Do not protect yourself by a fence, but rather by your friends.—Czech
Do not use a hatchet to remove a fly from your friend’s face.—Chinese
Lend money to a good friend, and you will lose the money as well as your friend.—Korean
Fate chooses your relatives; you choose your friends.—French
Your best friend is yourself.—American
Your best friend won’t tell you.—Mouthwash ad

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES...

1. Why do fast friends often form in crisis situations?
2. How do you meet new friends? Do you have any tips for making friends?
3. How do you keep in touch with friends?
4. Do you use instant messaging with friends?
5. Have you ever Googled a friend, coworker, or date?
6. Do you think that people of the opposite sex can be friends?
7. Have you ever had a good friend of the opposite sex?
8. Do you think one can truly be friends with former romantic partners?
9. Do you know a married couple who are best friends?
10. If so, why do you think that works?
11. Have you ever felt betrayed by a friend? How did you react?
12. Do you think it is fair to judge people by their friends? Why?
13. Do you have a close circle of friends? What unites you?
14. Can one be friends with one’s parents? Why or why not?
15. Can one be friends with one’s children? Why or why not?
16. Can you think of classic stories about true friendship?

**QUOTATIONS**

Read the quotations aloud. With your partner, decide what they mean. Then, circle the ones with which you agree.

1. “Without friends no one would choose to live, though he had all other goods.”
   — Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.), Greek philosopher
2. “Have no friends not equal to yourself.”
   — Confucius (551–479 B.C.E.), Chinese philosopher
3. “A faithful friend is the medicine of life.”
   — Ecclesiastes 6:16
4. “The shifts of Fortune test the reliability of friends.”
   — Cicero (106–43 B.C.E.), Roman statesman
5. “It is more shameful to distrust our friends than to be deceived by them.”
   — Duc de La Rochefoucauld (1613–1680)
6. “Don’t walk behind me, I may not lead. Don’t walk in front of me, I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend.”
   — Albert Camus (1913–1960), French novelist
7. “Each friend represents a world in us, a world possibly not born until they arrive, and it is only by this meeting that a new world is born.”
   — Anaïs Nin (1903–1977) French-American author
8. “If a man does not make new acquaintances as he advances through life, he will soon find himself alone. A man should keep his friendships in constant repair.”
   — Samuel Johnson (1709–1784) English scholar
9. (A friend is) “Someone who will help you move; a good friend is someone who will help you move a body.”
   — Alexei Sayle (1952–), British comedian and actor
10. “Animals are such agreeable friends; they ask no questions, they pass no criticisms.”
    — George Eliot/Mary Ann Evans (1819–1880), English novel
11. “One’s friends are that part of the human race with which one can be human.”
    — George Santayana (1863–1952) philosopher
12. “It is easier to forgive an enemy than to forgive a friend.”
    — William Blake (1757–1827), English poet
13. “Have friends. It’s a second existence.”
    — Baltasar Gracian, (1601–1658), Spanish philosopher

**ON YOUR OWN**

Write a letter, by hand or on a computer, to a friend that you have not communicated with recently. Feel free to include photos, etc. Share it with your group.
“Heaven goes by favor; if it went by
merit, you would stay out and your
dog would go in.”

Mark Twain (1835–1910)
American writer and humorist

11

LOVING DOGS AND OTHER PETS

SHARING MEMORIES

Please ask your partner about their dog or other pet. Take turns so the
corveration flows. Encourage your partner.

1. Are you an animal lover or a pet person?
   Can I call you a “dog person”?
2. What is the name of your favorite pet? How did you choose it?
3. What does, or did, your favorite dog/pet look like?
   Can you describe your pet?
4. Can you tell me about your dog’s personality?
   What makes this pet special for you?
5. How did your dog join your family?
   What were some factors in your decision?
6. What are your favorite photographs of your favorite dog?
   Are they displayed?
8. How do you take care of your dog? Give specific examples.
9. So, what makes a good pet owner or guardian?
   What are the tips and taboos?
10. How do you play with your dog (or other pet)?
    What do you enjoy doing together?
    with Frisbees?
12. What else does your favorite pet like to do?
13. How did others in your family feel about your favorite dog/rabbit/
    fish/bird/other pet?
14. Why are dogs good pets? Do you agree that dogs are the ideal pet?
15. What are some challenges with having a dog?
16. What are some dog breeds that you think are beautiful? Strange?
VOCABULARY
Define the words you know.

personality ...........................................................................................................
rescued .............................................................................................................
mutt ......................................................................................................................
purebred .............................................................................................................
veternarian .........................................................................................................
spayed ................................................................................................................
guardian .............................................................................................................
train ......................................................................................................................
pamper ................................................................................................................
allergies .............................................................................................................
fashionable ....................................................................................................... 
dogma ..................................................................................................................

IDIOMS
Do you know these common idioms? What do they mean?

His bark is worse than his bite.
It’s raining cats and dogs.
She’s sniffing the air before making a decision.
He’s like a dog marking his territory.

PROVERBS
Can you think of another proverb about dogs?

Let sleeping dogs lie.—German
A dog is man’s best friend.—English
Two dogs can kill a lion.—Jewish
(Add your own) .................................................................................................

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES...

1. What is a purebred? What’s a mutt?
2. Have you ever owned a purebred dog? What kind?
3. Have you ever owned a mutt? What did your mutt look like?
4. When did you first get a dog? How old were you?
5. How do dogs help people? Can you name some professions for dogs?
6. Have you ever known an animal that rescued a person? How?
7. What’s the most extraordinary thing you’ve heard a pet do?
8. What are some disadvantages to having pets? How could pets cause trouble?
9. Have you ever taken a pet to a veterinarian? Did it get a vaccination? Why?

REMEMBER...
Be active
Be open
Be sympathetic
10. Why do some cities encourage people to spay or neuter their pets?
11. How did you express your grief when your pet died?
   What did you do to honor your memories together?
12. Are pets treated different in the United States than your native country? Can you give an example?
13. Have you ever watched a dog show? What was your reaction?
14. Are you allergic to any animals? Which ones? What do you do for your allergies?
15. Can you name movies that star dogs? Other animals? Which was your favorite?
16. What books or songs celebrate dogs? Other pets? Which was your favorite?
17. What do you think children learn from having pets?
18. Pet robots and virtual pets are now available. Why do you think these hi-tech toys have become fashionable?
20. Why are we so devoted to our pets? Why do we love them so much?

**QUOTATIONS**

Pick your favorite three quotations. Explain your choices.

1. “If you lie down with dogs, you’ll rise up with fleas.”
   —Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790), American icon
2. “Mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the noonday sun.”
   —Noel Coward (1899–1973), dramatist
3. “A dog starved at his master’s gate, Predicts the ruin of the state.”
   —William Blake (1757–1827, English poet
4. “To his dog, every man is Napoleon; hence the popularity of dogs.”
   —Aldous Huxley (1894–1963) British novelist
5. “The more I see of men, the more I like dogs.”
   —Madame de Stael (1766–1817), French writer
6. “If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you; that is the principal difference between a dog and a man.”
   —Mark Twain (1835–1910), writer
7. “If man’s best friend is a dog, his worst is dogma.”
   —Leo Rosten (1908–1997), writer
8. “I like pigs. Dogs look up to us. Cat look down on us. Pigs treat us as equals.”—Winston Churchill (1874–1965), British Prime Minister
9. “Animals are such agreeable friends—they ask no questions, they pass no criticisms.”—George Elliot (1819–1890), English novelist
10. “What counts is not necessarily the size of the dog in the fight—it’s the size of the fight in the dog.”
    —Dwight D. “Ike” Eisenhower (1890–1969), 34th U.S. President
11. “Dogs are our link to paradise.”
    —Milan Kundera (1929–) Franco-Czech novelist

**ON YOUR OWN**

Some people say that dogs and their owners look alike. As you walk or ride around in the next few days, observe dog owners and their dogs.

Try to find at least five examples. What do you think? Do dog owners resemble their dogs? What did you find out?
CHATTING

Pet owners often enjoy talking about their animals. Interview your partner:

1. Do you like cats? Are you a cat person? Why or why not?
2. Which do you like better, cats or dogs? Why?
3. Have you ever owned a cat? What was its name?
4. Do you prefer indoor cats or outdoor cats? Why?
5. How can cats be helpful to people?
6. Why do farmers often have cats in their barns?
7. What are some of the things that kittens like to play with?
8. How do cats keep clean? Have you ever tried to wash a cat?
9. Can you name a purebred long-haired cat?
10. Can you name a purebred short-haired cat?
11. Have you ever read the popular children’s book *The Cat in the Hat*? Have you ever read any other books by Dr. Seuss?
12. Can you describe how a cat moves?
13. What are some colors that cats come in?
14. Can you make the purr sound a happy cat might make?
15. Can you make the hissing sound an angry cat might make?
16. Do you consider cats a blessing or a burden?
17. What is a feral cat? Are there many stray cats in your area?
18. Why do you think cats were considered sacred in ancient Egypt?
19. Can you name some of the big cats in the cat family?
20. Have you ever seen a lion or a tiger? Where?
VOCABULARY
Circle the words you know. Ask your partner about the other words.
- kitten
- sanctuary
- purr
- circus
- feral
- hiss
- predator
- roar
- endangered
- stray

SENTENCES AND IDIOMS
What do these expressions mean? Discuss with your group.
- Shh! Shh! Don’t let the cat out of the bag.
- Has the cat got your tongue?
- She made a very catty remark about you.
- He has the heart of a lion.
- There’s more than one way to skin a cat.

PROVERBS AND SAYINGS
Circle the proverbs that you have heard before. Add another.
- A cat has nine lives.
- While the cat’s away, the mice will play.
- Even a cat is a lion in her own lair.—Indian
- When the mouse laughs at the cat, there is a hole nearby.—Nigerian
- Even the lion has to defend himself against flies.—German

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES...
1. Do large cats like lions or jaguars roam wild in your native country?
2. Can you make the sound of a roar of a lion?
3. Why do you think a lion is called the “king of the jungle”? Which animal would you consider the peasant?
4. Have you ever hunted for a large cat? Would you like to? Why?
5. Have you seen large cats in zoos? Which zoos? Which cats?
6. Have you seen large cats in a circus? Which cats? What did they do?
7. Why do you think someone might become a lion tamer?
8. What is a predator? What animals are natural predators? Is man?
9. What are some ways that cats, big or small, are used as symbols?
10. What does “endangered” mean? What are some endangered animals?
11. Is it okay to kill endangered animals? Why or why not?
12. Can you think of anyone who had a lion, tiger, or other exotic animal as a pet?
13. Do you think a lion or tiger can really be a trustworthy pet?
14. What are animal sanctuaries? Why are they expanding?
15. What are some ways that people can help protect lions, panthers, and tigers?
16. What books, movies, paintings, etc. have been inspired by cats?
17. Why do both wild cats and domesticated pets fascinate humans?

QUOTATIONS

Pick your three favorite quotations. Memorize one of the three.

1. “An oppressive government is more to be feared than a tiger.”
   —Confucius (551–479 B.C.E.), China’s most influential philosopher
2. “I was not a lion, but it fell to me to give the lion’s roar.”
   —Winston Churchill (1874–1965), British orator and prime minister
3. “I’m like a lion—I roar. If someone betrays me, I won’t be a victim. I don’t sulk. I get angry.”
   —Lisa Marie Presley (1968–), daughter of Elvis Presley
4. “When a man wants to murder a tiger, he calls it sport; when a tiger wants to murder him, he calls it ferocity.”
   —George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950), playwright
5. “Women and cats will do as they please, and men and dogs should relax and get used to the idea.”
   —Robert A. Heinlein (1907–1988), science fiction writer
6. “Lettin’ the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier ‘n puttin’ it back in.”—Will Rogers (1879–1935), American entertainer
7. “I know a good game we could play,’ said the cat. ‘I know some new tricks,’ said the Cat in a Hat.”
   —Dr. Seuss (1904–1991), author of children’s books
8. “The tigers of wrath are wiser than the horses of instruction.”
   —William Blake (1757–1827), English poet and artist
9. “One of the striking differences between a cat and a lie is that a cat has only nine lives.”
   —Mark Twain (1835–1910), American writer and humorist
10. “With cats, some say, one rule is true: Don’t speak till you are spoken to.”—T.S. Eliot (1888–1965), British poet

ON YOUR OWN

In the Word Search, find and circle the following 10 words: KITTENS, TABBY, ROAR, LION, CLAW, TIGER, SIAMESE, MEOW, CAT, and MEW. The words may be across, up and down, or diagonal.

| K | L | C | C | L | A | W |
| S | I | A | M | E | S | E |
| R | O | T | A | B | B | Y |
| O | N | I | T | M | Z | K |
| A | S | G | W | E | C | W |
| R | M | E | W | O | N | R |
| X | B | R | I | W | A | S |
“If you haven’t anything nice to say, come sit by me.”

Alice Roosevelt Longworth (1884–1980), icon and Theodore Roosevelt’s daughter

PET PEEVES

SHARING COMPLAINTS
Sometimes things annoy us, and that’s okay. Share your complaints and pet peeves with your partner. Laughing and sighing can help.

1. What annoys you? Do you have any pet peeves?
2. Do you prefer sales pitches in person, by phone, or on TV? Why?
3. How can salespeople be annoying? Can you give some examples?
4. Have you ever had serious email problems? How did you respond?
5. What technology or gadget bothers you? Why?
6. Do you quickly figure out how new appliances work?
7. What common behavior do you often find offensive? Why?
8. What are some things that you find impolite? Give examples.
9. What is litter? Have you seen any litterbugs? Where does litter bother you most?
10. What do you consider bad cell phone manners or habits?
11. When, or where, do you most often see people stressed?
12. What behavior might be considered irritating in a neighbor? Have you ever had a noisy neighbor? Can you give an example of a difficult neighbor?
13. Is there a difference between assertive and aggressive? How do aggressive people make you feel? How do you tend to respond?
14. Are there many aggressive drivers in your area? Is “road rage” a problem?
15. What behavior would be strange for a man, but normal for a woman?
16. What behavior might seem odd for a woman, but normal for a man?
17. Is there a double standard for men and women? How? Is this fair?
VOCABULARY

Please circle the words that you know. Use them to write three questions.

- annoy
- rage
- peeve
- bother
- polite
- impolite
- offended
- courtesy
- litter
- litterbug
- obnoxious
- toxic
- profanity

PROVERBS

Read the common sayings and proverbs below. Can you add two more?

Recite “patience” three times and it will spare you a murder.—Korean
This is done and I’m to blame
Therefore, know that I’m in shame.—Persian
Control yourself; remember anger
is only one letter short of danger.—School poster
Love makes a good eye squint.—English
The reputation of a thousand years may be
determined by the conduct of one hour.—Japanese

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES...

1. What table manners or eating styles make you frown or annoy you?
2. When, if ever, does snoring, sneezing, or coughing bother you?
3. Where do you find adults generally act their worst? Why?
4. How does a polite child act? How does a rude child behave?
5. Where do people learn good manners? What are good manners?
6. What do you dislike about living here?
7. Can you describe a polite boss? A very difficult boss?
8. How have co-workers annoyed you? What did they do?
   How did you handle difficult co-workers?
9. How have you handled working with rude customers? Are you able to keep your cool?
10. Does foul language, or profanity, upset you? When?
11. What obnoxious ads have you had a strong negative reaction to?

REMEMBER...

Be yourself
Be honest
Make good mistakes
12. Have you ever walked out of a movie? Were you bored or offended? Why?

13. Are there personality traits that you find extremely disagreeable?

14. How can someone really make you “blow your lid” or explode? What brings out the worst in you? A family relative? A good friend?

15. What is something that once annoyed you that you have, over time, come to tolerate?

16. Have you seen any changes in what are considered good manners in your life? What?

17. Do you have any advice for dealing with difficult, moody, or “toxic” people?

QUOTATIONS

Read aloud all the quotations. Pick your favorites and discuss.

1. “If you empty a cup of wine in one gulp, you are a drunkard.”
   —Talmud

2. “The test of good manners is to be patient with bad ones.”
   —Solomon ibn Gabrioil (1021–1051) Hebrew poet

3. “Good manners are made up of petty sacrifices.”
   —Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882), writer

4. “Be polite; write diplomatically; even in a declaration of war one observes the rules of politeness.”
   —Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898), German Chancellor

5. “Never treat a guest like a member of the family—treat him with courtesy.”
   —Evan Esar (1899–1935), American humorist

6. “My dad was the town drunk. Usually that’s not so bad, but New York City?”—Henry Youngman, comedian

7. “Isn’t it monstrous the way people go about saying things behind other people’s backs that are absolutely and entirely true?”
   —Oscar Wilde (1854–1900), playwright

8. “In the first place, God made idiots; this was for practice. Then he made school boards.”
   —Mark Twain (1835–1910), humorist

9. “The best way to be successful in Hollywood is to be as obnoxious as the next guy.”
   —Sylvester Stallone (1946–), actor and director

10. “Being a star has made it possible for me to get insulted in places where the average Negro could never hope to get insulted.”
    —Sammy Davis, Jr (1925–1990), American entertainer

11. “When you’re down and out, something always turns up—usually the noses of your friends.”
    —Orson Welles (1915–1985), actor and director

12. “Earthquakes bring out the worst in some guys.”
    —George Kennedy in Earthquake

ON YOUR OWN

Give a one-minute presentation to the class on your biggest pet peeve.