
Conversation Questions for ESL Students



by roadtogrammar.com

Suggested Use

Each set of conversations contains six questions on a particular topic. Most topics are suitable for pre-intermediate through intermediate level classes (B1/B2). The topics can be discussed in pairs, small groups or large groups. You should set aside 5-10 minutes for the activity.

A good strategy for using these sorts of questions is as follows:

1 Run through the questions quickly to make sure the class understands them.

2 Model one or two answers yourself.

3 Tell the class how long you expect them to work on the activity.

4 Split the class into groups and let them begin.

5 Monitor the groups to:

- make sure they are sticking to English
- help with vocabulary
- ensure they are answering in full (in particular, some questions are framed as YES/NO questions, but fuller answers are expected)

6 After their time is up, ask each group to share an answer briefly with the class.

Online Version

There is an online version of these questions available here:

<http://www.roadtogrammar.com/conversationquestions>

The online version is formatted so that it can be used on a smartboard or can be viewed on a mobile device.

Usage

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Favorites

What is your favorite color and why?
What is your favorite food and why?
What is your favorite movie and why?
What is your favorite place and why?
What is your favorite song and why?
Who is your favorite celebrity and why?



Learning English

Is English an easy or difficult language to learn?
How long will it take to master English?
Which English skill is the easiest (reading, writing, speaking, or listening)?
Which English skill is the hardest (reading, writing, speaking, or listening)?
How is English different from your language?
Do you enjoy learning and speaking English?



Food

What is your favourite dish?
What is your favourite cuisine?
Do you have a 'sweet tooth'?
Do you know how to cook?
Do you eat healthily?
What do you like to snack on?



Family

How many brothers and sisters do you have?

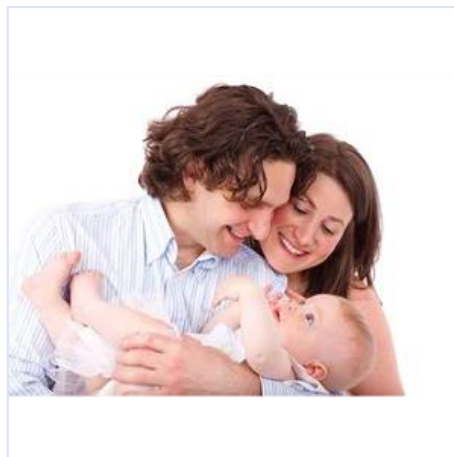
What does your father do?

Are you close to your family?

Do any of your relatives live far away?

What things do you do together with your family?

Do you ever squabble with members of your family?



Friends

Do you have a best friend?

What do you like to do when you hang out with friends?

Do you like to spend time by yourself?

What is your idea of a good friend?

Talk about a time when you helped a friend.

Talk about a time when a friend helped you.



Travel

Do you enjoy travelling?

What countries have you visited?

How often do you get to go on holiday?

What are some countries that you would like to visit and why?

What are some countries you would NOT like to visit and why?

Would you like to have a holiday on a cruise ship?



Daily Routines

- What time do you usually get up?
- How long does it take you to get ready in the morning?
- What time do you usually have dinner?
- What time do you usually go to bed?
- What is your daily routine?
- What do you do at the weekends?



Shopping

- Do you enjoy shopping?
- What is your favorite shop?
- Have you ever regretted buying something?
- Do you buy things online?
- What is your opinion of branded goods?
- What was the last item you bought?



Music

- What kind of music do you like?
- Who is your favorite singer?
- What is your favorite song?
- Is there a kind of music that you dislike?
- When do you like to listen to music?
- Have you ever been to a concert?



Free Time

What do you do in your free time?
Do you have any hobbies?
How do you relax when you are stressed?
Do you prefer to be alone or around people?
If you have a day off school or work, do you sleep in late?
What are some things that you consider to be a waste of time?



Scary Things

Are you scared of spiders?
Are you scared of snakes?
Are you scared of ghosts?
Are you afraid of heights?
What things are you afraid of?
Do you enjoy horror movies?



Social Media and Websites

What is your favorite website?
Do you use social media?
How many hours per day do you spend online?
Do you read the news online?
How do you know if a story online is true or fake?
What are some of the dangers of social media for young people?



Have you ever...?

Have you ever ridden a horse?

Have you ever seen a ghost?

Have you ever eaten sushi?

Have you ever done an extreme sport?

Have you ever visited another country?

Have you ever won a contest?



Jobs

What job would be perfect for you?

What is the easiest job?

What is the hardest job?

Which job pays the most?

What is the most dangerous job?

What is a job you could never do?



Would you like to...?

Would you like to be the president or prime minister of your country?

Would you like to be super-rich?

Would you like to have lots of children?

Would you like to be famous?

Would you like to be a hero?

Would you like to travel in space?



Bad Habits

What are some bad habits that people have?
Do you ever throw litter on the ground?
Do you ever lose your temper?
What are some bad habits people have while driving?
Why are some people rude to other people?
How can you get rid of a bad habit?



Sports

What sports do you enjoy playing?
What sports do you enjoy watching?
What sport is the best for keeping fit?
Do you enjoy watching or practicing martial arts?
What sport would you most like to try?
Do you enjoy watching the Olympics?



My Home

Do you live in a big or a small house?
How many rooms are there in your house?
Describe your garden or yard.
What do you like about your house?
What do you dislike about your house?
Describe your neighbourhood.



What makes you...?

- What makes you happy?
- What makes you sad?
- What makes you angry?
- What makes you embarrassed?
- What makes you laugh?
- What makes you hungry?



Animals

- Do you have any pets?
- What are the advantages of keeping a pet?
- What is your favorite animal?
- What is the cutest animal, in your opinion?
- What is the most dangerous animal, in your opinion?
- What is the most useful animal, in your opinion?



Money

- Are you good at saving money?
- Do you like to buy expensive things?
- What is the easiest way to become rich?
- Do you know any idioms about money?
- Do you budget your spending?
- How is life different for rich and poor people?



Are you good at...?

- Are you good at singing?
- Are you good at sports?
- Are you good at making friends?
- Are you good at maths and science?
- Are you good at planning your time?
- Are you good at using computers?



School

- What is/was your best subject at school?
- Who is/was your favorite teacher at school?
- Does/Did your school have good facilities?
- Do/Did you enjoy the food served at your school?
- What is the most useful school subject for you?
- Do you enjoy learning new things?



Fashion and Clothes

- Do you like fashion?
- Do you try to wear fashionable clothes?
- What is your favorite outfit?
- Do you like to wear jewelry?
- Do you prefer casual or formal clothes?
- Do you prefer to have long or short hair?



Motivation

How do you motivate yourself?
Do you ever feel demotivated?
Is success important to you?
How do you reward yourself when you do well?
Do you ever stay up late working or studying?
Describe a time when you overcame a challenge?



Health

Have you ever been very ill?
Are you generally a healthy person?
What do you do to stay healthy?
Do you have a healthy diet?
Do you have a healthy lifestyle?
Would you like to be a doctor?



Technology

What is your favorite modern technology?
Are you skilled at using a computer?
What problems does modern technology cause?
What would it be like to live in a time before modern technology?
Would you like to work for an IT company like Apple, Facebook or Google?
Do you think robots will one day be smarter than humans?



The Environment

What is the biggest environmental issue in your country?
What is the biggest environmental issue in the world today?
Do you try to be 'green'?
What do you think the effects of climate change will be?
Do you think people are too complacent about climate change?
How can you personally help the environment?



Happiness

How would you define happiness?
Do you think happiness is connected to wealth?
Do you think happiness is connected to love?
What things make you happy?
How do you cheer yourself up when you are down?
Why do some people find it difficult to achieve happiness?



Crime

Why do people become criminals?
Is there a lot of crime in your country?
Is there anything which is a crime but shouldn't be?
Is there anything which is not a crime but should be?
Some countries are legalizing drugs. Is this a good or a bad thing?
Do you think punishments for criminals in your country are too strict, too lenient or just right?



Improving Myself

What is something you would like to learn to do?

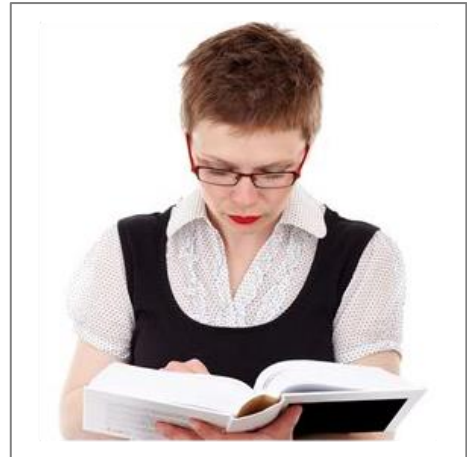
What superpower would you like to have?

Do you go to the gym?

Do you ever watch documentaries on television or the internet?

Would you ever have cosmetic surgery?

Talk about a time when you learned an important life lesson.



Social Problems

What are the main social problems in your country or neighbourhood?

What can be done to tackle these problems?

Is unemployment a problem where you live?

Is poverty a problem in your country?

Is crime a problem in your country?

Do you think the younger generation are better or worse behaved than the older generation?



The Unexplained

Do you believe in ghosts?

Are you afraid of ghosts?

What are some things that cannot be explained by science?

Do you believe that aliens exist and have visited Earth?

Are you superstitious?

Have you ever been to a fortune teller?



Charity

Do you donate to charity?

What are some good charities to get involved with?

What are some ways that you can help your community?

If you suddenly became rich, would you donate a chunk of your wealth to charity?

Are there any charities that you would not donate to?

Does your country have a welfare system?



A time when...

Talk about a time when you met someone interesting.

Talk about a time when you helped someone.

Talk about a time when you had an adventure.

Talk about a time when you changed your mind about something.

Talk about a time when you tried something for the first time.

Talk about a time when you went out of your comfort zone.



Giving and Taking Advice

Do you ever give people advice?

Do you ever take advice from people?

Whose advice do you trust the most?

Do you tend to follow your parents' advice?

Have you ever ignored someone's good advice?

Has anyone ever given you bad advice?



Time

Are you good at time management?
Do you generally arrive early or late to things?
Why?
Do you tend to finish work on time?
Do you often find yourself rushing?
Do you wish there were more hours in the day?
If days were 30 hours instead of 24, what
would you do with the extra time?



Changes

How has the world changed since you were
born?
How have you changed as you have grown
older?
What have been the major milestones in your
life?
What would you like to change about yourself?
Would you like to change your appearance?
What would you like to change about the world?



The Future

What do you think the world will be like 10
years from now?
What do you think the world will be like 100
years from now?
What do you think the world will be like 1000
years from now?
Are you an optimist or pessimist about the
future?
Do you think the world will ever be at peace?
What technology would you like to see in the future?



Holidays

What is your favorite holiday?
How do you celebrate your favorite holiday?
Do you like to stay at home or travel when you have a holiday?
Do you spend time with your family when there is a holiday?
Do you know very much about holidays from other cultures and countries?
How do you celebrate your birthday?



News

Do you follow the news?
How do you get your news?
How do you know whether to believe a news story on social media?
What was the biggest global news story of this year?
What was the biggest local news story of this year?
Talk about a recent news story that you were interested in.



Hopes for the Future

Do you have a long-term plan for your career?
What are your plans for the next five years?
What age is the best to get married and have kids?
If you have kids, what are your hopes for them?
Do you have plans to buy a house, a car or another major item?
What is on your 'bucket list'?



Love

Do you believe in love at first sight?
Is love more important than money?
Some people never want to get married. Why is this?
Is it easier to love someone similar to you or someone different?
Do you know any idioms about love?
Do you enjoy watching romantic movies?



If you could...

If you could turn into an animal, which animal would you choose?
If you could be a superhero, which would you be?
If you could meet a celebrity, which would you choose?
If you could travel in space, would you try it?
If you could live anywhere, where would you choose?
If you could be any age forever, which age would you choose?



Entertainment

How often do you go to the cinema?
What kind of movies do you like?
What kind of music do you like?
Do you enjoy live music?
Have you ever been to an amusement park?
Do you consider shopping to be a form of entertainment?



Cultures

Name a culture, apart from your own, that you find interesting. Explain why you find it interesting.

What do you like about your own culture?

What do you dislike about your own culture?

What is your opinion of American culture?

What is your opinion of Japanese culture?

Traditional culture is disappearing around the world. Is this a good or a bad thing?



Lateral Thinking Questions Set 1

Apart from humans, which animals can 'talk' and how?

Ants live in highly advanced social systems. How do they do this with their tiny brains?

What is the likelihood of intelligent life on other planets?

If you brought someone from 1000 years in the past to this age, would they like it?

If somebody is different, is that good or bad?

Does crime pay?



Lateral Thinking Questions Set 2

In the future, a computer might be President.

Would this be a good or a bad thing?

Do you think people are basically good or basically bad?

Why is it that some people like to dance and some don't?

Why do we need grammar?

Would it be possible to have a world without money?

What would happen to the world if everybody could live forever?

How and why do men and women communicate differently?



Debate-style Questions

Do you agree with capital punishment?
Do you think the internet should be censored in your country?
Do you agree with the concept of a four-day work week?
Do you agree that eating meat is cruel?
Do you think MMA should be banned?
Do you think the voting age should be lowered?



Interview-style Questions

What are your strengths and weaknesses?
Describe a time you overcame difficulties to achieve something.
Can you handle pressure well?
Are you able to work independently?
Are you able to work in a team?
Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

