

Conversation Questions for Secondary 4



A collection of conversation questions centered on a topic to develop Competency 1: Interacts orally in English

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Instructions for teachers

Choose one of the topics listed in the table of contents. Read over the questions for that topic. Add or change the questions according to your students' needs.

SUGGESTIONS FOR HOW TO USE THE CONVERSATION QUESTIONS

- Give one sheet of questions to each student in a group of four. Students decide who is Student A-B-C-D and take turns asking the questions.
OR
- Create stations around the classroom and place a different handout (topic) at each station. Students spend 15 minutes at each station asking and answering the questions on the handout.
OR
- Place several conversation topic handouts on the wall around the classroom. Count to five and ask the students to line up in front of one topic (maximum 4 students per topic). Students take turns asking and answering questions until you give the signal to move on to a different topic.

Be sure to provide functional language posters or other prompts to encourage interaction. As some of the questions may have short answers, teach students functional language necessary to maintain the conversation, e.g. *What do you think? Do you agree with that? I'm surprised by your answer. I agree except for ...* .

SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

- Ask students to brainstorm ideas and vocabulary about the topic before you give them the conversation questions handout;
- Inform students about how much time they will have for each topic;
- Establish a signal to indicate when time is almost over and a final signal when time is up;
- Use talking chips to ensure equal participation among students in a group;
- Ask students to complete a self-evaluation sheet at the end of each topic.

EVALUATION

Use the appropriate rubric for C1 oral interaction.

Self-evaluation: see Annexe 1

ADVERTISING

STUDENT A

1. What is the most shocking advertisement you have seen? Describe it.
2. Do you buy products because of advertising?
3. Why is it necessary to advertise?
4. Do people use coupons where you live?
5. Do you sometimes want very expensive things which you or your parents can't afford?

STUDENT B

1. What is the funniest advertisement you have seen? Describe it.
2. Should advertisers be allowed to advertise to children?
3. What is the most advertised product in your country?
4. Do you think the government has the right to ban advertising for junk food and soda during children's TV programs. What do you think about this?
5. What brand is the toothpaste you or your parents buy? Why do they/you buy that one?

STUDENT C

1. What makes an ad memorable?
2. Which celebrities advertise which products?
3. Do you think there are too many ads in newspapers? Why/why not?
4. Should alcohol or tobacco companies be allowed to advertise?
Why or why not?
5. Do you think there are too many ads in magazines? Why/why not?

STUDENT D

1. What are the different types of advertising?
2. Is there truth in advertising?
3. What are some effective adverts you have seen lately (on TV, newspaper, etc.)?
4. Does it give status to wear particular brands like Nike or Lacoste?
5. How would you advertise something you wanted to sell?

ADVICE

STUDENT A

1. I want to quit smoking. What should I do?
2. My brother doesn't want to go to school. He says that his teacher and all other students hate him. What should I do?
3. I want to protect the environment but I don't know how. What should I do?
4. I am new in this city. I would love to meet some people. What should I do?
5. My girlfriend/boyfriend left me. I feel depressed. What should I do?

STUDENT B

1. I won 100,000 dollars and I don't know how to spend it. What should I do?
2. I have a headache. What should I do?
3. I am always late. What should I do?
4. I want to get rich quickly. What should I do?
5. If you have a lot of things to get done in one week, how do you manage?

STUDENT C

1. I gained a lot of weight in the last few years. I want to lose at least 5 kg. What should I do?
2. I don't like my part time job. What should I do?
3. I keep losing my credit card. What should I do?
4. What advice would you give someone who is very busy?
5. My girlfriend/boyfriend is seeing someone else. I saw a message in his/her mobile phone. What should I do?

STUDENT D

1. I found a wallet which had 2,000 dollars in it. What should I do?
2. I feel sad. What should I do?
3. I have a cough and a runny nose. What should I do?
4. I see a friend cheating during a math exam. What should I do?
5. I want a car but I don't have enough money. What should I do?

ANNOYING THINGS

STUDENT A

1. What annoys you most about living at home with your family?
2. What are some new pet peeves you have as a result of recent technology (i.e. cell phone use)?
3. What is the most annoying thing for you?
4. Who is the most annoying celebrity? Why?
5. What annoys you about yourself?

STUDENT B

1. Do you think you have habits that annoy other people?
2. What annoying habits does your best friend have?
3. If something is annoying you, what do you usually do?
4. Do you think it is annoying if people can't or don't speak your language?
5. What do people do on the bus that annoys you?

STUDENT C

1. Does it annoy you when people kiss in public?
2. Does smoking bother you?
3. What is something that your parents do that annoys you?
4. What do people do on the street that annoys you?
5. How do you inform someone they are being annoying?

STUDENT D

1. Do you get annoyed when someone cuts in front of you when you are waiting in line?
2. Do you get annoyed when other people display bad manners?
Give some examples.
3. Can you think of some things children do that annoy adults around them?
4. Why do people get annoyed?
5. Do you think other people find you annoying? Why?

BEAUTY AND PHYSICAL ATTRACTIVENESS

STUDENT A

1. Who do you think is the most beautiful person alive today?
2. Is it better to be physically attractive or wealthy?
3. Do you think people should have cosmetic surgery to enhance their looks?
4. What personality trait is the most important for inner beauty?
5. Would you ever date someone who was not attractive?

STUDENT B

1. Who is the most attractive in your family?
2. Is beauty related to power?
3. How important is beauty in your daily life?
4. How do you define beauty, using your own words?
5. What makes one person more attractive than another?

STUDENT C

1. Does beauty affect one's success in life?
2. Do people spend too much time and money on beauty?
3. What are some beauty tips that you could share?
4. Are beauty pageants good or bad? Why?
5. Can you think of anyone who is in a position of power that is not physically attractive?

STUDENT D

1. Is it better to be physically attractive or intelligent?
2. Who would you say is beautiful that others maybe wouldn't?
3. Do you think people with many tattoos can be beautiful?
4. Would you want your children to be beautiful or talented?
5. What are some of the drawbacks of being beautiful?

CELEBRITIES

STUDENT A

1. Have you ever seen a celebrity in person? Who was it?
2. What do you think of the paparazzi?
3. Why do you think adolescents need to have heroes?
4. Are famous people happy?
5. Do you approve of people who become famous as a consequence of appearing again and again in the media and not because of having an artistic career?

STUDENT B

1. Which celebrity would you like to meet? What would you do if you could spend a day with this person?
2. Why do you think there is such a high demand for gossip magazines and gossip TV programs?
3. If you could influence people like a celebrity does, how would you use it for the benefit of the planet?
4. What do you think of fans and fan-clubs?
5. Who would you rather meet film or sports celebrities?

STUDENT C

1. Do you think famous people have the right to have a private life?
2. What are the pros and cons of being a celebrity?
3. Do you think there is a relationship between beauty and celebrity?
4. Would you like to be famous? Why or why not?
5. Do you think celebrities write their own music?

STUDENT D

1. Do you think it's moral to sell your private life to the media?
2. Do you know personally someone famous?
3. Should celebrities be role models?
4. If you were a celebrity, would you take advantage of it?
5. Are you a member of any fan clubs? Which ones?

CONFLICT

STUDENT A

1. What is conflict?
2. How can conflicts be resolved?
3. What conflicts are going on around the world?
4. What should neighbours do to avoid and solve conflicts?
5. What kind of conflicts appear at school?

STUDENT B

1. When you see the word "conflict", what do you think of?
2. Is conflict always negative?
3. What conflicts exist in your life?
4. Do you experience any kind of conflict in your family?
5. What should teachers, parents and pupils do to avoid and solve such conflicts?

STUDENT C

1. What causes conflict?
2. Does there have to be a winner and a loser of a conflict?
3. Can violent conflicts be solved with violence?
4. How can conflicts in the family be solved?
5. Is it possible to avoid conflicts?

STUDENT D

1. Is conflict inevitable?
2. How do you deal with conflicts?
3. How can the world be peaceful when other countries are not trying to bring peace?
4. What conflicts could happen in a neighborhood?
5. Should a conflict be solved straightaway or when we calm down?

HOMELESS AND BEGGARS

STUDENT A

1. What do you know about being homeless?
2. Do you think your town or city should make a place for beggars and homeless people to go, like a homeless shelter?
3. Do you think it would reduce the amount of beggars and homeless people on the street to have a homeless shelter?
4. How do you know if a beggar is a real beggar?
5. Would you rather give money to beggars or buskers? (Buskers are people who entertain you on the street for money, e.g. musicians)

STUDENT B

1. Has someone you know been homeless?
2. If your town or city was to have a homeless shelter, who should run this place?
3. Have you done volunteer work in your community?
4. If you give money to beggars or homeless people, about how much do you give?
5. Would you rather give money to beggars who have a disability, older beggars, beggars with babies or child beggars? Why?

STUDENT C

1. Does your country have many homeless people?
2. Do you think the government should give money to homeless people?
3. What are some reasons that some people would not want to use a homeless shelter?
4. Do you think beggars should work?
5. Does it make you feel good to give money to beggars?

STUDENT D

1. What do you think can be done to help homeless people?
2. If the government gave money to homeless people do you think it would encourage people to be lazy?
3. Would you offer a beggar a job to help you around your house?
4. Do you or parents give money to beggars or homeless people? Why or why not?
5. Do you give money or do you give things to beggars, e.g. clothes, food, etc.?

JOB INTERVIEW

Find a company + job position and answer the following questions having in mind those 2 elements (company and position).

E.g. McDonald's + cashier

STUDENT A

1. Can you tell me something about yourself?
2. Why should we hire you?
3. Your resume suggests that you may be over-qualified or too experienced for this position. What's your opinion?
4. Why are did you leave your last job?
5. Can you tell me about your family?

STUDENT B

1. Why do you want to work for us?
2. What do you look for in a job?
3. What is your management style?
4. Tell me about your last job you had.
5. What do you do in your free time?

STUDENT C

1. What can you do for us that someone else can't?
2. Please give me your definition of the position for which you are being interviewed.
3. If you had to fire someone, how would you proceed?
4. What are your long-term goals?
5. What would you like to do in the future?

STUDENT D

1. What do you find most attractive about this position? What seems least attractive about it?
2. How long would you stay with us?
3. What do you think is the most difficult thing about being a manager or executive?
4. What is a good working environment for you?
5. Tell me about the high school you attend.

JOBS AND OCCUPATIONS

STUDENT A

1. At what age do people usually begin to work in your country?
2. How much money do you think you need to retire?
3. Do you think women and men should be paid the same for the same job?
4. How much do you think a doctor should be paid a month?
5. If you could own your own business, what would it be?

STUDENT B

1. At what age do people usually retire in your country?
2. Do you think people over 65 should be made to retire?
3. Do you think women are good bosses?
4. How much do you think a secretary should be paid a month?
5. What are some jobs that you think would be boring?

STUDENT C

1. At what age would you like to retire?
2. Do you think it's acceptable for women to be in the military?
Why/why not?
3. How have working conditions changed in recent years?
4. How much do you think a truck driver should be paid a month?
5. What are some jobs that you think would be fun?

STUDENT D

1. What do you think you will do after you retire?
2. Do you think it is more important to make a lot of money or to enjoy your job?
3. Should teenagers work and go to school? Explain.
4. Is it easy to find a job in Canada?
5. If you had to choose between a satisfying job and a well-paid one, which would you choose?

DISABILITIES AND HANDICAPS

STUDENT A

1. Do you know anyone with a handicap?
2. How are handicapped students treated at school?
3. What are some types of disabilities?
4. Do disabled people have anything of value to add to society?

STUDENT B

1. What are some handicaps that people have?
2. What do you feel when you see a handicapped person?
3. How would you feel to find out your best friend was _____? (going blind, going deaf, losing their legs, etc.)
4. If you see or meet a disabled person, what actions should you take?

STUDENT C

1. Have you ever parked in the handicapped parking area?
2. What can you do to help handicapped people?
3. How would you feel to find out you were _____? (going blind, going deaf, losing their legs, etc.)
4. What are ways that disabled people can compensate for their weakness?

STUDENT D

1. How are handicapped people treated in general?
2. Does your country have special training facilities for handicapped people?
3. How would you feel to find out a member of your family was _____? (going blind, going deaf, losing their legs, etc.)
4. Can you think of any disabled people who have made a difference in the world? Who are they? What did they do?

DRUGS

STUDENT A

1. Do you think alcohol is a drug?
2. Is alcohol addictive? What about tea, coffee, and chocolate?
3. Which is worse, a peaceful drug addict or a violent non-addict?
4. Do we use too many prescription drugs?
5. Why do you think people start using drugs?

STUDENT B

1. Do you know of any alcoholics?
2. Why do you think that tobacco is a legal drug?
3. Should women be prevented legally from drinking any alcohol or smoking when pregnant?
4. What are natural remedies?
5. What should happen to babies who are born addicted to drugs?

STUDENT C

1. How do you stop being an alcoholic?
2. Should there be punishments for dealing drugs?
3. Cancer patients find that marijuana stops their pain. Should it be legal for them?
4. Do we give too many prescribed drugs to children?
5. If you are addicted to drugs, what should you do?

STUDENT D

1. What are some of the characteristics of drunk people?
2. Should drug dealers get the death penalty?
3. At what age should it be legal to drink and smoke?
4. What else can people become addicted to?
5. Should employers be allowed to "drug test" their employees?

ENTERTAINMENT

STUDENT A

1. Do you like to watch cartoons?
2. Have you ever been to Disneyland?
3. How often do you visit museums? When was the last time?
4. What are some things you can do without spending a cent?
5. What is your favourite board game? Why?

STUDENT B

1. What did you watch on TV yesterday?
2. Have you ever tried water skiing? Were you successful?
3. Should gambling be illegal?
4. What games are popular in your country? Why are they popular?
5. What are some of your favourite magazines?

STUDENT C

1. What is one of your favourite TV shows? Why do you like it? When is it on?
2. How far in advance do you begin planning a vacation?
3. Should books be censored?
4. What's the most popular holiday in your country? When is it?
How is it celebrated?
5. What is the most popular drama/comedy/game show in your country, and
what is the story-line (drama) or format (game show)?

STUDENT D

1. Have you ever been to a play? If so, when was the last time?
2. How often do you read comic books?
3. Why are movies rated? Explain.
4. When do you usually listen to the radio? What do you listen to?
5. What are some of the most popular amusement parks in your country?

EYE CONTACT

STUDENT A

1. Do you make eye contact while you are speaking English?
2. Can you think of some situations where eye contact should not be made?
3. When you are telling someone something that you feel is important, what should your eye contact be?
4. If you make too much eye contact what does that mean?
5. If you were giving a speech or talking with a crowd what would your eye contact be like?

STUDENT B

1. Why is making eye contact important?
2. What is the difference between staring and making eye contact?
3. Is it OK if someone looks at something else while you are talking?
4. If you were in love what kind of eye contact would you make?
5. If you are talking with a child and you think they are lying, do you think you could tell by looking at their eyes?

STUDENT C

1. Is making eye contact important in your culture?
2. Why is making eye contact important in a job interview?
3. Are there different rules for eye contact when you are addressing a person of higher status? Like the President or an elder?
4. If you were ashamed, what kind of eye contact would you make?
5. How about an adult that you think is not telling the truth, could you tell by their eyes?

STUDENT D

1. What can you learn about a person by making eye contact?
2. Are people in North America aware there are "rules" about eye contact?
3. If you do not make eye contact what does that mean?
4. If you were lying, or not telling the whole truth, what would your eye contact be like?
5. If a woman looks directly at a man is she being too forward or aggressive?

FAD* AND TRENDS

***Fad:** a temporary fashion, notion, manner of conduct, etc., especially one followed enthusiastically by a group. An intense but short-lived fashion.

STUDENT A

1. Do you pay attention to fads?
2. How do you learn about current trends?
3. Are there any current trends you don't like?
4. Name a trend that you have followed.
5. What media influences how fads evolve?

STUDENT B

1. What are some fads in high school?
2. What are the current trends in fashion?
3. Are there any trends from the past you hope come back?
4. Do your parents talk about fads "in their days"?
5. If you wanted to start a trend, how would you go about it?

STUDENT C

1. What are some fads in daily life today?
2. What are the current trends in electronics?
3. Are there any trends from the past you hope never come back?
4. What fads or trends do you know from the 80's, 90's or any other time period?
5. How long does it take for a fad to die out?

STUDENT D

1. How do fads start and who starts them? Today? In the past?
2. What are the current trends in music, books, or movies?
3. What sorts of trends do you think will develop in the near future?
4. Why do you think people pay attention to fads?
5. What fad influences your life the most?

GOSSIP AND RUMOURS

STUDENT A

1. Do you like to gossip?
2. What are some ways which gossip can be harmful?
3. What is your attitude to gossip newspapers?
4. Would you say that people who like gossiping do it because their lives are empty or because it is just a way of entertainment?
5. Have you ever told a rumour that got someone into trouble?

STUDENT B

1. Why do you think people like to listen to gossip?
2. Do you think gossip can be used for something good?
3. If no-one at your high school ever gossiped, how would it be different?
4. Do you think that a friend who gossips or starts rumours will ever gossip or start a rumour about you?
5. Have you ever spread a rumour that got someone in trouble?

STUDENT C

1. Why do people like to gossip about the rich and famous?
2. Why is it considered that women gossip more than men?
3. If you discovered that someone had been gossiping about you, would you confront them?
4. What are some of the things you like to gossip about?
5. Has someone ever spread a rumour about you?

STUDENT D

1. What are the most common themes for gossip?
2. Where are some places where people like to gossip?
3. Have you ever had problems because of gossip?
4. Who gossips more: men or women?
5. Has spreading rumours ever got you in trouble?

HABITS

STUDENT A

1. What are some of your bad habits?
2. Do you eat late at night?
3. What are good study habits? What are bad study habits?
4. Name different bad habits people have. E.g. spitting in the street
5. Which good habit do you think would be the most difficult to develop? Why?

STUDENT B

1. Do you bite your nails?
2. What are some good habits to have?
3. Where do we learn our habits?
4. What bad habits get on your nerves?
5. Which habit is the most important for parents to set as an example of for their children?

STUDENT C

1. Do you over sleep?
2. What are healthy eating habits?
3. Do children learn bad habits at school or at home?
4. Is it easy or difficult to get rid of a bad habit?
5. Are we born with our bad habits? Or do we acquire them from the environment surrounding us?

STUDENT D

1. Do you sleep on the sofa?
2. What are bad eating habits?
3. How can you develop a good habit?
4. Which bad habit do you think would be the most difficult to get rid of? Why?
5. Have you been successful in getting rid of a bad habit?

HAVE YOU EVER...

STUDENT A

1. Have you ever been a guest at a surprise party?
2. Have you ever done something silly that you wish you had not done?
3. Have you ever given a false excuse to get out of something you didn't want to do? If so, tell us about it.
4. Have you ever received a present that you really hated? What was it? Why did you hate it? Who gave it to you?
5. Have you ever told a big lie to someone you love?

STUDENT B

1. Have you ever been in a fist fight? Explain.
2. Have you ever eaten something that you thought you wouldn't like, but found out that you actually liked it? Explain.
3. Have you ever played a joke on one of your teachers? Tell us about it.
4. Have you ever talked to a famous person? Who was it? How long did you talk? What did you talk about?
5. Have you ever been to a funeral?

STUDENT C

1. Have you ever broken a bone? Explain.
2. Have you ever fallen asleep and forgotten where you were?
3. Have you ever had a Deja Vu experience?
4. Have you ever been outside your comfort zone? How did you feel?
5. Have you ever eaten horse meat?

STUDENT D

1. Have you ever cried in public and embarrassed yourself? Explain.
2. Have you ever fallen down the stairs?
3. Have you ever gone to greet a friend or family member then noticed it was someone else?
4. Have you ever eaten frog legs?
5. Have you ever fallen or stumbled in front of others.

Name : _____

Group : _____

C1 – Oral Interaction Self-Evaluation

5 4 3 2 1
+ -

Did I listen to others in the group?	5 4 3 2 1
Did I extend the ideas of others/build on what others said?	5 4 3 2 1
Did I participate actively?	5 4 3 2 1
Did I speak English consistently?	5 4 3 2 1
Did I react to what others said?	5 4 3 2 1

What I need to improve

What I am good at

Name : _____

Group : _____

C1 – Oral Interaction Self-Evaluation

5 4 3 2 1
+ -

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What I need to improve

What I am good at
