

Asking Questions

This guide will help you use questions to make your English conversations more interesting and fluent.

Think about your English...

What are the 5 main skills to English Conversation?

V _____

G _____

L _____

P _____

F _____

What are your strong points and weak points?

My weak point in English conversation is _____

My strong point in English conversation is _____

Fluency

Fluency is one of the most important skills to learn while studying English conversation. Even if you have low vocabulary skills, it is possible to build a good conversation by using the “**Answer +**” technique.

When you are asked a question, you can help expand the conversation by giving an **answer, plus** extra information.

We can also ask a return question:

1. Answer plus **EXTRA INFORMATION**

Question: How was your weekend?

Answer +: Great! *I had a soccer game in Saitama...*

2. Answer plus **RETURN QUESTION**

Question: How was your weekend?

Answer +: Great! *How about yours?*

When you are asked a question in a casual conversation, it is usually a good idea to give **EXTRA INFORMATION**, **then** ask a **RETURN QUESTION**.

A: *How was your weekend?*

B: *Great! I had a soccer game in Saitama. What did you do?*

The importance of questions

Questions will be very important in our lessons this year. The purpose of this guide is to give you practice asking and answering two kinds of questions...

Return Questions

Asking Return questions is very easy to do. Maybe the easiest return question is:

How about you?

But try not to use this same follow-up question too much! If you ask the same return question every time, the conversation will become boring!

Follow-up Questions

Another kind of question that is important for English conversations is a FOLLOW-UP question.

After you ask a simple question and receive an answer, ask more detailed questions to show that you are interested.

Simple question:

Have you ever been to Kyoto?

Answer:

Yes I have.

Follow-up questions:

When did you go?

Who did you go with?

What did you do there?

How long did you stay?

Cultural differences

In Japanese classrooms, students don't usually ask many questions or speak out very often. In western style classrooms, students are expected to speak out more and to ask the teacher many questions.

In our classroom, we are trying to use western style learning habits.

Ask lots of questions and speak out as much as you can, and Fraser will think you are a good student!

Follow-up Questions

Besides asking return questions, asking follow-up questions is an important part of an English conversation. Below are some examples of follow up questions:



First Question: *What did you do last weekend?*

Answer: *I saw a movie.*

Follow-up questions: *What movie did you see?
How was it?
Where did you see it?
Who did you go with?
Who starred in the movie?*

Now ask a classmate the following question and write down their answer:

What did you do last weekend?

classmate's answer: _____

Now write down three follow-up questions you can ask your partner:

LET'S PRACTICE FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS!

Meet your classmates. Ask other students the questions. When someone says, "yes," write the name on the line. Ask one follow-up question for each. After you each say "yes" once, change partners.

- 1) _____ **has visited another country.**
Have you ... ? When ... ?
- 2) _____ **is crazy about music.**
Are you ... ? What kind ... ?
- 3) _____ **has a pet.**
Do you ... ? What kind ... ?
- 4) _____ **wants to visit another country.**
Do you ... ? Where ... ?
- 5) _____ **has met someone famous.**
Have you ... ? Who ... ?
- 6) _____ **has an older brother.**
Do you ... ? What ... ?
- 7) _____ **has a part-time job.**
Do you ... ? Where do you ... ?
- 8) _____ **feels really happy today.**
Do you feel ... ? Why do ... ?
- 9) _____ **is unhappy today.**
Are you ... ? Why?
- 10) _____ **can say "thank you" in three languages.**
Can you ... ? Which languages ... ?
- 11) _____ **thinks morning is the best part of the day.**
Do you think ... ? What time ... ?
- 12) _____ **likes to read.**
Do you like ... ? What kind ... ?
- 13) _____ **likes to study English.**
Do you ... ? How do you like to study?