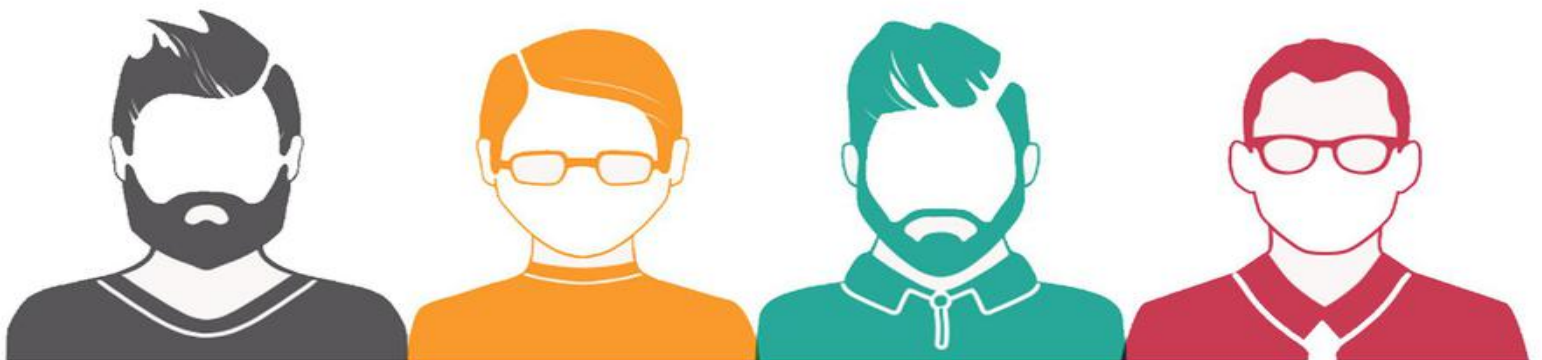
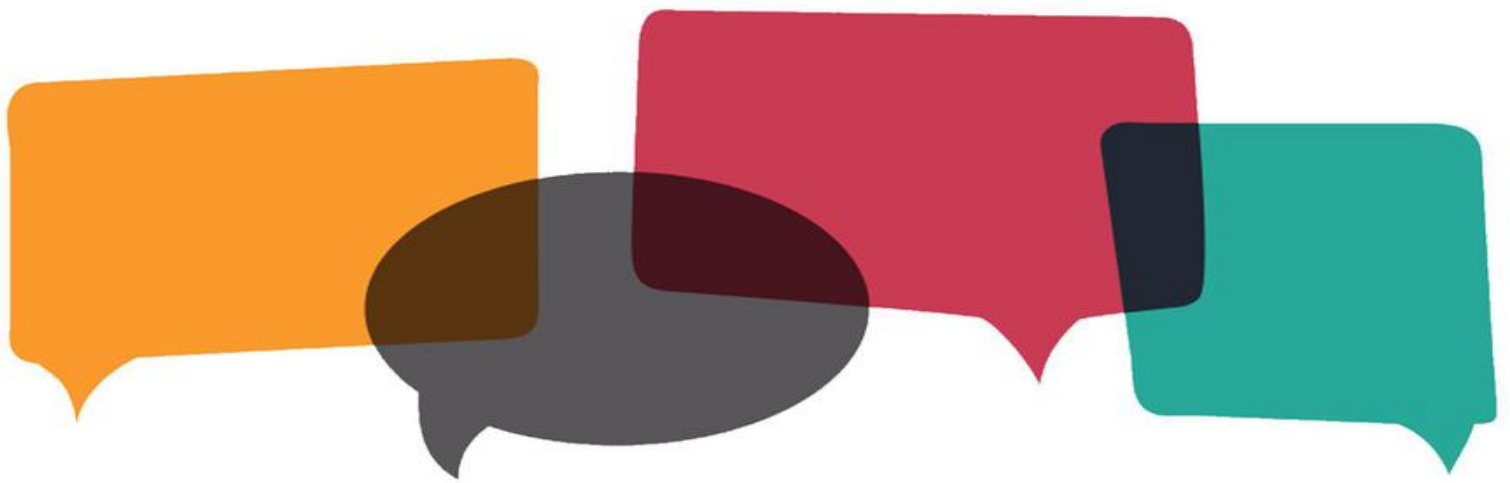


# 67 ESL CONVERSATION TOPICS WITH QUESTIONS, VOCABULARY, WRITING PROMPTS & MORE

For Teenagers and Adults



JACKIE BOLEN

67 ESL Conversation Topics with Questions,  
Vocabulary, Writing Prompts & More:  
For Teenagers and Adults  
Jackie Bolen

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## **About the Author: Jackie Bolen**

I taught English in South Korea for a decade to every level and type of student and I've taught every age from kindergarten kids to adults. Most of my time centered around teaching at two universities: five years at a science and engineering school out in the rice paddies of Chungcheongnam-Do, and four years at a major university in Busan where I taught high-level classes for students majoring in English. These days, I live in Vancouver, Canada where I teach privately as well as in English language academies. In my spare time, you can usually find me outside surfing, biking, hiking, or on the hunt for the most delicious kimchi I can find.

In case you were wondering what my academic qualifications are, I hold a Master of Arts in Psychology. During my time in Korea, I've successfully completed both the Cambridge CELTA and DELTA certification programs. With the combination of almost 15 years teaching ESL/EFL learners of all ages and levels, and the more formal teaching qualifications I've obtained, I have a solid foundation on which to offer teaching advice. I truly hope that you find this book useful and would love it if you sent me an email with any questions or feedback that you might have—I'll always take the time to personally respond.



# Jackie Bolen around the Internet

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Also be sure to check out my other books wherever you like to buy them. Some of the most popular titles include:

*101 Activities and Resources for Teaching English Online: Practical Ideas for ESL/EFL Teachers.*

*39 No-Prep/Low-Prep ESL Speaking Activities: For Teenagers and Adults*

*39 Awesome 1-1 ESL Activities: For Kids (7-13)*

*Side Gigs for Teachers: Ways to Actually Make Money*

If you can't get enough ESL conversation questions in this book, you can get even more goodness delivered straight to your inbox every week. I promise to respect your privacy—your name and email address will never be shared with anyone for any reason. [Sign-up here.](#)

# How to Use this Book

These conversation lessons are designed for teenagers, university students, or adults. They do assume a basic knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary so are best suited for intermediate or advanced students.

The main purpose of these lessons is to get students talking about a certain topic and can be used for classes of 30 minutes to two hours. There are 67 different topics in total and each lesson includes the following:

- warm-up question
- vocabulary challenge (5 scrambled words from the conversation questions)
- idioms and phrases related to the topic (5)
- 14 conversation questions
- 2-3 writing prompts suitable for class time or homework

For smaller classes of less than three students, it's possible to work through each lesson together as a class. It's also possible to use these conversation lessons for 1-1 or private tutoring. However, for larger classes of four or more, I recommend putting students into pairs and letting them work through the lesson together to make classes more student-centered.

# Age and Aging

## Warm-Up

What's been the best age in your life so far? Why?

## Vocabulary Challenge

t u u l e r c — a way of life shared by a group of people

t e r e i t m r n e — when someone stops working, usually due to reaching a certain age

o m m e y r — something remembered from the past

p a p i c l a t n — someone who is applying for something, usually a job

d e l y r e l — older people

## Idioms and Phrases

*settle down, retirement homes, act her age, getting on in years, of age*

His daughter picked him up to take a look at potential \_\_\_\_\_.

His mom wants him to \_\_\_\_\_ and have kids now that he's in his thirties.

She can vote now that she's \_\_\_\_\_.

Her dad told her to grow up and \_\_\_\_\_.

Now that he's \_\_\_\_\_, he has to be more careful about what he eats.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What is the best age to be? Why?
2. Do you have any fears about getting older? What are they?
3. Who is the oldest person that you know? Are you close to him/her?
4. Is age important in your culture?
5. Can people of different ages be friends?
6. Are you friends with someone much older or younger than you?
7. What are some of your earliest memories?
8. What was the hardest part about growing up for you?
9. What advice would you give to your younger self?
10. What do you think of retirement homes (nursing homes)? Are they a nice option for older people or should they live with family members?
11. What is a good age to "settle down" and get married?
12. Should younger people respect the elderly? Why or why not?
13. Where you're from, is it okay to ask people about their age?
14. Should job applicants be required to disclose their age to potential employers?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Think about getting older. What are some things you're excited about? What are some things that you're not excited about?
- B. What is a good memory that you have from when you were a child?

# Animals

## Warm-Up

Do you like animals? Which ones?

## Vocabulary Challenge

h s a k r — a kind of animal that lives in the ocean

h c m i a z p e n e — a kind of animal that is closely related to humans

x e i t n t c — when there are no more of that living thing left on Earth

v e l o t u i n o — gradual changes over time

l a e t n r t a i e v — another choice or option

## Idioms and Phrases

*factory farms, plant-based, one-trick pony, the cat's meow, cold turkey*

Have you tried any of the new, \_\_\_\_\_ meats yet?

I love that new TV show so much. It's just \_\_\_\_\_.

I tried to quit smoking \_\_\_\_\_ but I found it too difficult.

I prefer to not eat meat that is raised on \_\_\_\_\_.

My uncle is a \_\_\_\_\_. He always tells the same joke over and over again.

## Let's Talk!

1. Do you have any pets?
2. Did you have any pets when you were younger?
3. Some people spend thousands of dollars on their pets, especially when they get sick. What are your thoughts about this?
4. Do you have a favorite animal?
5. Are you afraid of any animals?
6. Why do you think so many people are scared of sharks? Should they be scared of them?
7. Have you seen any movies or read any books lately that featured animals in them?
8. What do you think about zoos?
9. What are your thoughts about eating meat raised on factory farms?
10. Should people be allowed to eat wild animals like snakes, whales, etc.?
11. Have you ever tried any of the new, plant-based meats like the *Beyond Burger*? What did you think about it?
12. Is it necessary to use animals in product testing? Or, are there other alternatives?
13. Should humans be doing more to ensure that animals don't become extinct?
14. Do you think humans evolved from animals like chimpanzees?

## Writing Prompts

- A. Zoos should be banned. Do you agree or disagree with this?
- B. Would you ever consider adopting a vegan or vegetarian diet? Why or why not?

# Appearance

## Warm-Up

How much time do you spend getting ready for work or school? What are the things that you do?

## Vocabulary Challenge

e p i r d u c e —beauty treatment for the feet

a m n c i u e r —beauty treatment for the hands

a w i x n g — getting hair removed, the painful way!

e m k u a p —what people wear on their face to try to enhance their appearance

c t o l e h s — what people wear on their bodies so that they aren't naked.

## Idioms and Phrases

*hair cut, job application, dressed to kill, looks like a million bucks, five o'clock shadow*

Fingers crossed! I just mailed off my \_\_\_\_\_.

She looks \_\_\_\_\_ after her vacation.

I have an appointment for a \_\_\_\_\_ at 3:00 today.

He was \_\_\_\_\_ for his work Christmas party.

My husband has a \_\_\_\_\_ when he gets home from work.

## **Let's Talk**

1. What is the first thing you notice when you meet someone?
2. What are some factors in judging someone's appearance?
3. What are some different types of hairstyles for men and women that are popular in your country?
4. How often do you get your hair cut?
5. Have you ever had a pedicure or a manicure?
6. What do you think about waxing? Have you ever done it?
7. Do you take pride in your appearance or not worry too much about it?
8. What would you do if you noticed someone had food in their teeth or their "fly" was undone?
9. What kinds of clothes do you like to wear?
10. Do you have a favorite article of clothing?
11. How much money do you spend on clothes and shoes each month?
12. What do you think about young girls wearing makeup?
13. What about makeup for men?
14. What are your thoughts about photos on job applications?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. You can't judge a book by the cover. What does this mean with regard to appearances?
- B. Describe your style.



# Around the Neighborhood

## Warm-Up

Would you like to move somewhere else? Or, are you happy with where you live?

## Vocabulary Challenge

a f o m s u —something or someone that is widely known

e r n s t u t r a a —a place to eat outside the home

o c e v e n i t n n — something that is easy to access

e w k d e n e — Saturday and Sunday

e n h r g i o b s — people that live near you

## Idioms and Phrases

*public transport, city slicker, concrete jungle, grow up, middle of nowhere*

My brother is a serious \_\_\_\_\_. He never wants to go camping or hiking with me.

I hated taking \_\_\_\_\_ so I bought a car.

He didn't \_\_\_\_\_ here, unlike most of the people that live here.

That place was in the \_\_\_\_\_. I had to keep driving and driving!

New York is mostly a \_\_\_\_\_, except for Central Park.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What do you like about where you live?
2. What do you dislike about where you live?
3. What are some reasons that people might move to your neighborhood?
4. Are there any famous areas or sights near where you live?
5. What are some things to do around your house?
6. What are some of your favorite restaurants near your house?
7. If you want to get a cheap, quick lunch near your home, where do you go?
8. Can you walk to do shopping or do you have to drive to pick up most things?
9. Do you need a car to get around your town or is the public transport system adequate?
10. What are five adjectives you'd use to describe your neighborhood (busy, quiet, etc.)?
11. Do you know your neighbors? What are they like?
12. What are three things you'd like to do to improve your neighborhood?
13. Did you grow up where you live now? If not, how do they compare?
14. When you go out at night or on the weekend, do you stick close to home or do you travel to another part of your city?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Describe where you live.
- B. Compare your neighborhood with another one in your city.

# Art

## Warm-Up

Do you paint, draw, or take pictures (or do some other kind of art)?

## Vocabulary Challenge

i p t c e r u — another word for photo

a m d n t y a r o — not optional

u m e s m u — a place people go to look at things

n i l n f c e u e — to cause something to change their way of thinking or acting

c t s u l r u e p — similar to a painting, but multi-dimensional

## Idioms and Phrases

*taking pictures, work of art, millions of dollars, down to a fine art, elementary school*

If I had \_\_\_\_\_, I would definitely buy a fancy house.

He really enjoys \_\_\_\_\_ of birds every weekend.

My son is graduating from \_\_\_\_\_ next month.

That YouTuber has it \_\_\_\_\_.

I'm hoping to create a \_\_\_\_\_ but I'm not sure it's possible!

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Did you enjoy art class in school when you were a kid?
2. Should things like art class be mandatory until the end of high school?  
In most countries, it's optional after elementary school.
3. Is art important to you? Why or why not?
4. Should artists be funded by the government?
5. Why do you think people pay millions of dollars for some famous paintings or sculptures?
6. If you had lots of money, would you spend it buying expensive pieces of art?
7. What would you think if you had a son or daughter who wanted to go to art school instead of university?
8. Can art teach us things about life?
9. Have you ever been influenced by a piece of art?
10. Do you think movies and TV shows are a form of art?
11. Is graffiti "real" art?
12. Is fashion/clothing art?
13. When was the last time you went to a museum?
14. Do you generally like going to museums? Why or why not?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Artists should be supported by the government. Do you agree or disagree with this?
- B. Describe a piece of art (or book, TV show, movie, etc.) that has influenced your life.

# Birthdays

## Warm-Up

Are birthdays important to you? Why or why not?

## Vocabulary Challenge

*e c e l e r t b a* — to have a party or other special event for a significant occasion

*u s r r e p s i* — something unexpected

*e m m a r e o l b* — something that is easy to remember

*r o g a z i e n* — to plan

*l e a o t r e a b* — very detailed

## Idioms and Phrases

*surprise party, birthday party, family members, blow out the candles, party animal*

My \_\_\_\_\_ was much smaller than usual this year due to Covid-19.

My friend is a serious \_\_\_\_\_. He usually goes out most nights of the week.

What do you think about throwing a \_\_\_\_\_ for Tim's birthday this year?

\_\_\_\_\_ and make a wish!

I like to have all my extended \_\_\_\_\_ at my birthday parties.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. How are birthdays usually celebrated in your country?
2. How do young kids celebrate their birthday at school in your country?
3. Have you ever thrown a surprise party or had one thrown for you?
4. Have you ever forgotten an important birthday of someone close to you?
5. Do you have a memorable past birthday memory? What made it memorable?
6. Do you have any bad birthday memories? What happened?
7. Do you prefer to organize your own birthday party or have someone else organize it for you?
8. Are birthdays in your family important? How do you celebrate them?
9. What do you think about elaborate, expensive birthday parties for little kids (1-5 years old)?
10. Do you think turning 40, 50, or 60 is exciting or depressing? Or, some other adjective?
11. What are some memorable birthday presents that you've received?
12. How much do you usually spend on a birthday present for a family member?
13. What do you think about birthday cards? Nice, or a waste of money?
14. Does anyone famous have the same birthday as you? Or a friend or family member?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Talk about a memorable birthday party that you can remember.
- B. What is your ideal way to spend your birthday?

# Books

## Warm-Up

How do you choose a book to read?

## Vocabulary Challenge

*l i b r a r y* — a place where you can borrow books

*g e n r e* — a type of book, movie, TV show, music, etc.

*f i c t i o n* — a made-up story

*h o l i d a y* — January, March, and July are examples

*u r a o h t* — a person who writes books

## Idioms and Phrases

*non-fiction, watching TV, book signing, closed book, bad books*

Last year, I went to a \_\_\_\_\_ event and met my favorite author.

I generally prefer reading \_\_\_\_\_ books to fiction ones.

He's such a \_\_\_\_\_. I find him very hard to get to know!

I spent way too much time \_\_\_\_\_.

Don't get in Santa's \_\_\_\_\_ or you won't get any presents this year!

## **Let's Talk!**

1. On average, how many books do you read in a month?
2. Do you usually buy books or go to the library?
3. When do you usually read?
4. What is your favorite genre of books?
5. Do you prefer fiction or non-fiction?
6. Is there a book that has had a big impact on your life?
7. Are there any books or authors that you'd recommend?
8. Do you like watching TV or movies more than reading books?
9. Have you ever been part of a book club? What was that experience like?
10. Did you like reading books for school?
11. Have you ever been to a book signing event or met an author?
12. Have you ever thought about writing a book? What about?
13. What do you think about books made into movies? Which version is usually better?
14. Did you have any favorite books from when you were a kid that you can remember?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Write about a memorable book. Why did you like it (or not like it)?
- B. How do you usually choose a book to read?



# Business

## Warm-Up

Have you had any bad customer service experiences? Talk about 1-2 of them.

## Vocabulary Challenge

o c p y m n a —a business

u c r t e s m o —a person who buys a product or service

b n o i d r o o e h g h —the area around where you live

l s g n o a — a saying

c r s n e o i s e — an economic slump

## Idioms and Phrases

*customer service, gig economy, bail out, big picture, get down to business*

What a terrible \_\_\_\_\_ experience! I was on hold for 45 minutes.

I always remember to focus on the \_\_\_\_\_ instead of getting caught up in the small details.

I disagreed with the big government \_\_\_\_\_ package for big businesses during Covid-19.

No more chit-chat, let's \_\_\_\_\_.

One of the disadvantages of the \_\_\_\_\_ is a lack of benefits and stability for workers.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Are there any companies that you love to support? Why?
2. Are there any companies that you choose not to support? Why?
3. Do you like to support small businesses?
4. Are there any new businesses in your neighborhood that you've noticed lately?
5. Do you know anyone with their own business? Describe it.
6. What are some advantages and disadvantages of working for yourself?
7. Is the "gig economy" (freelance or contract work) a big thing in your country?
8. Would you rather work for someone or work for yourself?
9. Should the government "bail out" big business during a recession? Why or why not?
10. Together, name 5 slogans from companies that you know (Just do it!).
11. Does every business need a website these days?
12. If you could work abroad, would you choose to do it?
13. What are some qualities of a good company CEO or owner?
14. What businesses do well during a recession? Which ones struggle?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Would you prefer to work for someone else or work for yourself? Why?
- B. Describe the ideal boss.

# Cars and Driving

## Warm-Up

What are some advantages and disadvantages to having your own car?

## Vocabulary Challenge

r s t n n o r i a a t t o p — a way to get around

a a v t d a n e g — something positive

e l c i n e s — a document that allows you to do a certain thing like drive

c a e c n d i t — a crash, usually between cars

d m n y a t o a r — not optional

## Idioms and Phrases

*gas guzzler, public transportation, driver's license, emissions testing, driver's seat*

I decided to sell my old \_\_\_\_\_ and get something more fuel-efficient.

She has to wait until she's 18 to get her \_\_\_\_\_.

His company is really in the \_\_\_\_\_ during this negotiation.

The South Korean government has an \_\_\_\_\_ program to ensure low levels of air pollution.

I can't wait to get my license so that I don't have to take \_\_\_\_\_ anymore!

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What are some advantages and disadvantages to public transportation?
2. How do most people get to work or school in your country?
3. How do you get to work or school?
4. Do you have a driver's license?
5. When did you start driving?
6. Have you ever been in a car accident?
7. How would you describe yourself as a driver? (aggressive, cautious, etc.)
8. When do you usually drive?
9. Is there a certain car that you'd like to buy in the future?
10. Have you ever considered buying an electric car?
11. Do you have any predictions for what cars will look like in the future?
12. Should the government ban "gas guzzlers?"
13. Should there be mandatory emissions tests on cars every few years?
14. Will the use of cars increase or decrease in the future? Why?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. All new cars should be electric. Do you agree or disagree with this?
- B. Do you think a car is necessary where you live? Why or why not?

# Childhood

## Warm-Up

Do you have any brothers or sisters? What did you like to do together growing up?

## Vocabulary Challenge

r e r o h t b — a male sibling

c s e t u j b — English, math, and science are examples

a t v i c o a n — a trip or holiday

i m e r s e o m — things you remember

r s e i t s — a female sibling

## Idioms and Phrases

*growing up, field trip, best friend, ankle biter, new kid on the block*

My \_\_\_\_\_ this year was canceled due to Covid-19.

My brother was always mean to me when we were \_\_\_\_\_.

That \_\_\_\_\_ who lives next door is always causing trouble.

I'm still in touch with my \_\_\_\_\_ from elementary school.

I still feel like the \_\_\_\_\_ after 6 months here.

## Let's Talk!

1. What are some of your favorite memories from childhood?
2. Do you remember any teachers from when you were younger? What were they like?
3. What was your favorite subject in school?
4. What was your least favorite subject in school?
5. What was a memorable field trip you took when you were young?
6. What was a memorable vacation you took with your family when you were younger?
7. What was your favorite food growing up?
8. Were there foods you didn't like when you were younger? Do you still dislike them?
9. Did you have a best friend growing up? Are you still in touch?
10. What was the house you grew up in like?
11. Did you move during your childhood? Was that a difficult experience?
12. Did you play any sports or do any activities during childhood?
13. Do you have mostly positive or negative memories from when you were a kid?
14. Did you spend most of your time playing inside or outside when you were young?

## Writing Prompts

- A. Describe a favourite vacation or other memory from childhood.
- B. Kids spend too much time on electronic devices these days. Do you agree or disagree?

# Chores

## Warm-Up

Name 10 chores around the house.

## Vocabulary Challenge

l t e c a k —take on

n p s a r o t c r e i a t — delay as long as possible

d l n a y u r —dirty clothes

u v a u m c — device used to clean floors

r b a m o t o h — where the toilet, shower, and sink are found

## Idioms and Phrases

*don't mind doing, wash the dishes, clean up the kitchen, throw in the towel, everything but the kitchen sink*

My kids usually \_\_\_\_\_ after dinner since our dishwasher broke.

I was so tired that I wanted to \_\_\_\_\_ on that last project.

I honestly \_\_\_\_\_ the laundry. I can't say that about the dishes though!

My sister brought \_\_\_\_\_ last time we went camping.

Whoever cooks at my house doesn't have to \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What chores did you have to do when you were a kid?
2. Did you get paid for doing chores or did you have an allowance?
3. What chores do you spend a lot of time doing these days?
4. What are some chores that you don't mind or enjoy doing?
5. What are some chores that you hate?
6. Is there a way to make chores fun?
7. Do you tackle things quickly to get them over with or procrastinate for things you don't want to do?
8. Do you have kids? If yes, what chores are they responsible for?
9. Do your kids get to choose what chores they do?
10. Do you prefer doing laundry all at once or a load every few days?
11. Do you wash your dishes and clean up the kitchen after every meal?
12. How often do you vacuum and clean the floors at your house?
13. How often do you clean the bathroom at your house?
14. How often do you wash and clean your car?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. What's your style for doing chores? A little bit every day or all at once?
- B. Kids should be required to do chores. Do you agree or disagree with this?



# Clothes and Fashion

## Warm-Up

Where do you usually buy clothes?

## Vocabulary Challenge

*c l o s t* — what you wear on your body

*t h r* — a kind of shop where you can buy used things

*p e r i* — how much something costs

*o e n l* — not in person, but instead over the Internet

*n t r d e* — something that is currently popular

## Idioms and Phrases

*thrift stores, afford it, online shopping, fashion trends, wear my heart on my sleeve*

I'm on a tight budget so I usually shop at \_\_\_\_\_.

I'm not someone who is up to date on the latest \_\_\_\_\_.

You never have to guess how I'm feeling; I \_\_\_\_\_.

My friend prefers \_\_\_\_\_ because she hurt her knee and has a hard time getting around.

That bag is so nice! I just wish I could \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Is how you dress important to you?
2. Do you like shopping at thrift stores for clothes? Why or why not?
3. What are 2-3 of your favorite articles of clothing?
4. Have you ever made your own clothes?
5. How often do you go clothing shopping?
6. In one year, how much do you think you spend on clothes and shoes?  
Would you spend more if you could afford it?
7. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of shopping online?
8. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of shopping in stores?
9. What do you think about the price of designer clothes, shoes, and bags?
10. What's the most you've ever spent on a single article of clothing?
11. Do you follow clothing trends?
12. What are some strange fashion trends that you've seen?
13. How would you describe your fashion sense and style?
14. What do you think about people dressing up their dogs in cute outfits?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Job applications should require a photo. Do you agree or disagree with this?
- B. Do you prefer buying clothes online or in stores? Why?

# Communication

## Warm-Up

What are 10 forms of communication?

## Vocabulary Challenge

t e x e i d s — had been invented

m s c e l a t s a s — people you go to school with

k c o e w s o r r — people you work with

h s s m o e a r n t p — new style of cell phones that are always connected to the Internet

i s o e s r u — important

## Idioms and Phrases

*stay in touch, in-person, face to face, give me a ring, out of the loop*

I find it difficult to \_\_\_\_\_ with my grandma because she doesn't have a smartphone.

I prefer to talk about serious things \_\_\_\_\_ instead of via email.

I sometimes think my coworker purposely keeps me \_\_\_\_\_ about important meetings.

Can you \_\_\_\_\_ later to discuss your proposal?

Covid-19 changed dating because it made meeting \_\_\_\_\_ far more difficult.

## Let's Talk!

1. Which forms of communication existed 50 years ago?
2. How do you usually stay in touch with friends?
3. How do you stay in touch with family members?
4. How do you communicate with classmates, teachers, or coworkers?
5. Do you consider yourself to be a "techie"?
6. Has communication changed between people 50 years ago compared to now?
7. Do you generally chat with people you don't know (taxi driver, shop keeper, etc.)?
8. Where are some good places to meet new people in your country?
9. Do you prefer meeting people in-person or online?
10. Do you have some online-only friends?
11. Do you know anyone who doesn't have a smartphone? What is their reason for this?
12. What do you think communication will look like 50 years from now?
13. Do you think we can communicate with people from the past (ghosts, spirits, etc.)
14. If you have a serious thing to talk about with someone, do you prefer sending them an email (or other written thing) or talking face to face?

### Writing Prompts

A. It's possible to have "real" friends that you only talk to online. Do you agree or disagree with this?

B. Make some predictions about what communication will look like in the future.

# Community

## Warm-Up

How would you describe where you live?

## Vocabulary Challenge

o b n e h o i g r h o d — the area where you live

o o p u y p r t t n i — the possibility of doing something

u c o t m m e — get to work

f i u d i l f c t — not easy

b n e o i g r h — someone who lives next door

## Idioms and Phrases

*recreational opportunities, community life, job opportunities, make friends, pillar of the community*

I decided to move to Vancouver because there are so many \_\_\_\_\_ with the mountains and oceans so close by.

It can be a bit more difficult to \_\_\_\_\_ the older you get.

An important factor in deciding where to live is \_\_\_\_\_.

My uncle is a \_\_\_\_\_ with all the volunteering that he does.

The \_\_\_\_\_ is so vibrant in my neighborhood.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What are 10 adjectives to describe communities?
2. Is there anything you would like to see change in your neighborhood or city?
3. What are the things you like most about where you live?
4. Are there mostly older or younger people where you live?
5. Are there lots of recreational opportunities where you live?
6. Are there lots of job opportunities in your community or do people mostly commute somewhere else?
7. Have you done something recently to help one of your neighbors?
8. How well do you know your neighbors?
9. What different communities are you a part of? (work, family, friend group, neighborhood, clubs, etc.)
10. Which of those communities is most important to you?
11. Which one do you spend the most time with?
12. Where do you find it easiest to make friends?
13. Have you found it difficult to make new friends where you live compared to other places?
14. Is community life important to you when choosing a new place to live?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. If you could change one thing about where you live, what would it be?
- B. What advice would you give someone new to your city about making friends?

# Controversial Things

## Warm-Up

Are there any controversial things in the news lately?

## Vocabulary Challenge

i e m a g r a r — a legal union between two people

n d n b a e — not allowed

s r c i e g t a t r e — what people smoke

n e i x v s p e e — not cheap

c f u e r w — time you must be inside your house

## Idioms and Phrases

*animal testing, gay marriage, designer clothing, luxury items, death penalty*

With the advancements in science these days, I don't think that \_\_\_\_\_ is necessary.

Many people think that the \_\_\_\_\_ is the appropriate punishment for murder.

I think that \_\_\_\_\_ is such a waste of money.

I don't understand why \_\_\_\_\_ isn't legal in all countries around the world.

I always like to bring a few \_\_\_\_\_ when I go camping.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What do you think about animal testing on cosmetics or new medicines?
2. What do you think about gay marriage (also known as marriage equality)?
3. Should women be paid the same amount as men for the same job?
4. Should smoking be banned in this country?
5. Should the government increase taxes on "luxury items" like cigarettes, alcohol, expensive cars, or designer clothing?
6. Should marijuana or other recreational drugs be legalized?
7. Should teenagers have strict curfews and other rules?
8. Should elementary school students be given homework?
9. Assisted suicide should be legalized for the terminally ill. Do you agree or disagree?
10. Do you think video games contribute to violence in society?
11. Should guns be banned?
12. Should the death penalty be allowed?
13. What do you think about religion? Helpful or harmful?
14. Do you think it's better for women to not get married?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. There is no reason for women to get married these days. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. Gay marriage should be legal in this country. Do you agree or disagree?
- C. The death penalty should be abolished. Do you agree or disagree?



# Cooking at Home

## Warm-Up

Do you enjoy cooking at home?

## Vocabulary Challenge

f b r a e s a k t — the first meal of the day

e m a l — breakfast, lunch, or dinner

g v e n a — someone who doesn't eat any animal products

u y l n t h e a — something harmful for the body

i i n e v t — to ask someone to do something

## Idioms and Phrases

*eat out, take out, dietary restrictions, kitchen appliances, cooking with gas*

I want to save some money so I need to stop ordering \_\_\_\_\_ all the time.

This weekend, my family is going shopping for some new \_\_\_\_\_ like a blender and a toaster.

The new procedures mean that we're \_\_\_\_\_ now at my company.

My family likes to \_\_\_\_\_ for birthdays.

My brother has a ton of \_\_\_\_\_ so it's difficult to cook for him.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. In one week, how often do you eat out?
2. In one week, how often do you get take-out?
3. Would you consider yourself to be a good cook?
4. What are some of the meals you regularly eat?
5. Do you like cooking with meat? Are you a vegan or have any other dietary restrictions?
6. Do you have any favorite kitchen appliances?
7. Do you do anything special for weekend breakfasts?
8. What are some special things you cook if someone is coming over for dinner?
9. How often do you invite someone over for a meal at your house?
10. Do you enjoy cooking a big holiday or family meal or do you find it stressful?
11. What are some of the first things you learned how to cook when you were a kid?
12. Would you say that most of your meals are healthy or unhealthy?
13. Who does most of the grocery shopping and cooking at your house?
14. What do you think about meal prep boxes where you get all the ingredients and a recipe but have to cook it yourself? Are they popular where you live?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Describe some of the meals that you regularly eat at home.
- B. How did you learn to cook?

# Christmas

## Warm-Up

Do you celebrate Christmas?

## Vocabulary Challenge

e p r n e s t — gift

n a S a t — a mystical person who brings gifts at Christmas

g r o e l u i i s — related to religion

o c l a r s — Christmas songs

a d i e o c t o n r — thing that looks nice but serves no practical purpose

## Idioms and Phrases

*Christmas party, get together, Christmas tree, Christmas decorations, stocking stuffers*

I have a really big family so it's quite difficult for all of us to \_\_\_\_\_.

Do you prefer a living or fake \_\_\_\_\_?

I'm terrible at getting \_\_\_\_\_. I always forget about them until the last minute!

It's important to go to my work \_\_\_\_\_ so I can socialize with my boss and coworkers.

I like putting up \_\_\_\_\_ but hate taking them down.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Is Christmas a popular holiday in your country?
2. Do you enjoy giving or getting Christmas presents?
3. Does your family get together at Christmas?
4. Do you like to eat any sort of special food for Christmas?
5. Did you believe in Santa Claus as a kid?
6. Is Santa Klaus an innocent tradition or harmful in some way?
7. Do you celebrate the religious aspect of Christmas?
8. Does it usually snow where you live at Christmas?
9. Do you know any Christmas carols? Do you enjoy singing them?
10. Do you send Christmas cards?
11. Did you have any memorable Christmas parties or traditions at school when you were young?
12. Does your school or workplace have Christmas parties? What are they like?
13. Do you put up Christmas decorations at your house?
14. What do you think about cutting down living trees for Christmas trees in houses?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Write about some of the Christmas (or other holiday) traditions your family has.
- B. Christmas parties, including work, or school ones are fun! Do you agree or disagree?

# Countries

## Warm-Up

Is your country known for anything special?

## Vocabulary Challenge

d h y o a l i — a special day

o f s a u m — something that most people know

i a l e l s — to join together formally, usually countries

a v n a o c i t — when you don't have to go to work or school

m s O p l c y i — worldwide sports even

## Idioms and Phrases

*world tour, length of time, go Dutch, all Greek to me, strong allies*

I'm so excited! My favorite band just announced their upcoming \_\_\_\_\_.

The USA and Canada are \_\_\_\_\_.

Learning Mandarin is \_\_\_\_\_.

My boyfriend and I always \_\_\_\_\_ on dates.

I think the ideal \_\_\_\_\_ for a vacation is around 2 weeks.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What are 15 ways to describe a country?
2. How would you describe your country?
3. What are the major holidays in your country?
4. Are there any famous foods from your country?
5. Does your country have any strong allies?
6. Have you ever visited another country? How did it compare to yours?
7. Is there a country you want to visit in the future?
8. If you could take a world tour for 6 months, where would you visit and what would you do?
9. What do you think is the perfect length of time for a vacation?
10. Is there another country that you'd like to live in?
11. What's one of the best countries to live in? Why?
12. What is a country that you wouldn't want to live in? Why?
13. Are there some countries that are better than others or are they just different?
14. Do you feel pride in your country during things like the World Cup or the Olympics?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. What are some things that you appreciate about your country? What are some things you don't like?
- B. What is the best country to live in? Why?

# Current Events

## Warm-Up

Where do you get information about what's happening in the world?

## Vocabulary Challenge

r c e u t r n— recent or lately

t p a o d s c — a new kind of media, similar to music in some ways but with people talking

p n a e e w p s r — a kind of print media that's usually released daily

r c o e d n e s — controlled, usually by the government

z m i a e g n a — a kind of print media, usually released monthly

## Idioms and Phrases

*doom and gloom, current events, dying industries, hot off the press, behind the times*

Covid-19 was a difficult time but it wasn't all \_\_\_\_\_ for me.

Did you hear the latest gossip about Tiger Woods? It's \_\_\_\_\_.

Some people think that books, magazines, and newspapers are \_\_\_\_\_.

My mom's style is so embarrassing! She's seriously \_\_\_\_\_.

I find it difficult to keep up with \_\_\_\_\_. There are just so many things happening in the world these days.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Do you like to follow what's happening in the news?
2. How many hours a week do you spend following current events?
3. Is keeping up with current events important or not?
4. Are there any podcasts that you like to listen to?
5. Do you think that the media reports too much "doom and gloom" and not enough of the good things?
6. Do you think that there's a difference between news and current events?
7. Is there any current event that you're particularly interested in right now?
8. Do you think that newspapers are a dying industry?
9. Should anyone be allowed to publish whatever they want on the Internet?
10. If you go away for a few days and don't follow the news, is that a big deal to you?
11. Do news and current events affect your mood?
12. Did Covid-19 affect your life in any way?
13. Do you think the news is censored where you live?
14. Do you ever buy or read magazines?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Covid-19 changed the world. Do you agree or disagree with this?
- B. Newspapers aren't necessary these days. Do you agree or disagree?



# Dating and Marriage

## Warm-Up

How do young people usually meet in your country?

## Vocabulary Challenge

n o i n l e — not in real life

i d g a n t — spending time with someone as more than friends

n p e a r r t — husband/wife/boyfriend/girlfriend, etc.

e a g r n r a d — organized

a e t g x a t r n a v — fancy, over the top, costing a lot of money

## Idioms and Phrases

*online dating, getting married, arranged marriage, red flags, divorce rate*

From the first time I tried \_\_\_\_\_, I was hooked! There are just so many choices.

He was so cute that I overlooked so many \_\_\_\_\_ on our first date.

An \_\_\_\_\_ certainly isn't for me! I want to be able to choose who I marry.

The \_\_\_\_\_ is around 50% in the USA.

My cousin is \_\_\_\_\_ next month to her high school sweetheart.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Have you ever tried online dating? How did it go?
2. Is dating common among your friends?
3. At what age do people usually get married where you live?
4. Do you have any interesting experiences with dating?
5. If you have a partner, how did you meet them?
6. What are your thoughts about arranged marriages?
7. What are some first date "red flags?"
8. Do you want to get married (if you're not already)?
9. What are the positives and negatives of marriage in your opinion?
10. Do you know what the divorce rate is in your country? Do you think it's high or low?
11. Should people just stay together for their kids and not get divorced, even if they're unhappy?
12. What are your thoughts about gay marriage?
13. Is marriage a thing of the past?
14. What do you think about people spending thousands of dollars on an extravagant wedding?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. There is no reason for people to get married these days. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. Online dating is very popular these days. What do you think about it?

# Drinking Alcohol

## Warm-Up

What was your first experience with drinking alcohol?

## Vocabulary Challenge

l p e y n t a — negative consequence for bad behavior

h h a s r — severe

i l e t n n e — not severe

o h r a v n e g — bad feeling the next morning after drinking

h a o l c l o — beer, wine, and vodka are examples of this

## Idioms and Phrases

*drinking age, social pressure, drinking and driving, drinks like a fish, hangover cure*

The \_\_\_\_\_ is 18 where I live.

The best \_\_\_\_\_ is not drinking too much in the first place!

The penalty for \_\_\_\_\_ should be getting your driver's license taken away for at least 5 years.

I think \_\_\_\_\_ causes teenagers to do a lot of bad things they normally wouldn't consider doing.

I have an uncle who \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What is the legal drinking age in your country?
2. Is the drinking age too young, too old, or just right?
3. Is there social pressure for people to drink alcohol in your country?
4. Do you think the penalties for drinking and driving are too harsh or too lenient?
5. In your opinion, how many drinks can someone have and still drive?
6. If you drink, what do you enjoy drinking?
7. Who do you usually drink with?
8. When do you usually drink alcohol?
9. Have you ever had a hangover?
10. What are some good hangover cures?
11. What do you think about alcohol being served at a work party?
12. Do you think alcohol helps people get to know each other?
13. Do you think drinking alcohol on a first date is a wise decision?
14. What are some reasons that people drink too much?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. The drinking age in my country should be increased. Do you agree or disagree with this?
- B. What is the drinking culture like in your country?

# Eating Out

## Warm-Up

When you eat out, what's your motivation? (Don't like doing dishes, not enough time, it's delicious, etc.)

## Vocabulary Challenge

u r e r n s a t a t — place to eat a meal outside the home

n i e n d t d e n p e — not part of a chain or a big company

s e v x i p e e n — not cheap

e p g n e t r a c e — %

p t i n i p g — the practice of giving extra money to a server, someone who cuts your hair, a taxi driver, etc.

## Idioms and Phrases

*eating out, chain restaurant, chew the fat, too expensive, cup of tea*

I'm not \_\_\_\_\_ these days since I'm saving money to buy a new car.

That restaurant is really good but I think it's far \_\_\_\_\_.

My coworker loves to \_\_\_\_\_ so it's hard to get work done when he's around.

Everyone loves that new band but they're not my \_\_\_\_\_.

McDonalds is an example of a \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. How often do you eat out?
2. What's your favorite restaurant?
3. Where do you go for a cheap, quick meal?
4. What do you think about fast-food restaurants?
5. What are some ways that fast-food restaurants market to kids?
6. Do you prefer chain restaurants or independent ones?
7. Do you think restaurants are quite cheap, too expensive or just right?
8. Is tipping at restaurants common where you're from?
9. What percentage do you usually tip?
10. If there's a hair in your food, what do you do?
11. If you asked for a steak cooked medium-rare and it's well done, what would you do?
12. Does your family like to eat out to celebrate special occasions like a birthday?
13. Is there a certain kind of restaurant that you wish were closer to your house?
14. When you eat out, do you ever make a reservation?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Write about one of your favorite restaurants.
- B. Describe some of the restaurants around your school or workplace.

# The Environment

## Warm-Up

Are you concerned about environmental issues? Why or why not?

## Vocabulary Challenge

i d n u d i a v l i — person

t p e t r c o —keep safe

n s b e u s s i — company

p c o m o n s i u t n — use of a resource like electricity

a v n e g — someone who doesn't eat any animal products

## Idioms and Phrases

*environmental issue, energy consumption, protect the environment, global warming, fossil fuels*

The using up of fossil fuels is the most pressing \_\_\_\_\_ of our time in my opinion.

Don't forget to turn off the lights when you leave the house to reduce \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ means that the Earth is getting generally hotter.

Some examples of \_\_\_\_\_ are coal, oil, and natural gas.

There are lots of simple things even kids can do to \_\_\_\_\_.

## Let's Talk!

1. Which environmental issues are most worrying?
2. Name 10 things people can do to help the environment.
3. What do you regularly do to help the environment?
4. Is it mostly up to individuals, the government, or businesses to protect the environment?
5. What do you think about your government's environmental policies?
6. Have you ever considered energy consumption when buying an electronic device?
7. Did you consider gas consumption the last time you bought a car?
8. Do you think global warming is a serious issue?
9. Can science prevent global warming in the future?
10. What are some examples of fossil fuels?
11. What are some examples of renewable energy sources?
12. Going vegan can save the world. Do you agree or disagree with this?
13. If the oceans die, we die. Do you agree or disagree with this?
14. What do you think about environmental activists like *Greenpeace* or *Sea Shepherd*?

## Writing Prompts

- A. The government in my country should be doing more to protect the environment. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. Do you think that you should do more to care for the environment?



# Exercise

## Warm-Up

What kinds of exercise do you like?

## Vocabulary Challenge

*vascular* — related to the heart and circulatory system

*exercise* — a sport or activity that gets the body moving

*individual* — 1 person

*benefit* — positive thing, an advantage

*obesity* — excess body fat/weight

## Idioms and Phrases

*professional sports, healthier lifestyle, gym class, in bad shape, back on my feet*

I spend most weekends watching \_\_\_\_\_ on TV.

Ugghhh...I'm \_\_\_\_\_ and get tired from walking up the stairs at school!

\_\_\_\_\_ was my favorite thing about elementary school.

I'm trying to get \_\_\_\_\_ after a car accident last year.

I'm planning on making a few changes this year to have a \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. How often do you exercise?
2. What are some examples of cardiovascular exercises? Which ones do you like?
3. When you were a kid, did you like to exercise?
4. Do you prefer team or individual sports and activities?
5. Do you prefer to exercise indoors or outdoors?
6. Name five benefits of exercise.
7. Which one of these is the most important to you?
8. What do you think about professional sports? Do you like to watch or have a favorite team?
9. Do you think you have a healthy lifestyle?
10. Is obesity a problem in your country?
11. How often should kids have gym (physical education) classes in school?
12. Did you learn to swim when you were a kid?
13. Did you learn to ice skate when you were young?
14. What are some reasons that people don't exercise?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. What are some things you could do to be healthier?
- B. Obesity is a big problem in my country. Do you agree or disagree with this?

# Family

## Warm-Up

Do you live alone or with your family?

## Vocabulary Challenge

t b h e r r o — male sibling

t s i e s r — female sibling

l e u q a — the same

s c i o n u — son or daughter of an aunt or uncle

n e d x e d t e — wider

## Idioms and Phrases

*extended family, the apple doesn't fall far from the tree, only child, follows in my footsteps, runs in the family*

I always hated being an \_\_\_\_\_ growing up.

We get together with my \_\_\_\_\_ almost every weekend for a birthday or other celebration.

Cancer \_\_\_\_\_ so I have to be careful about what I eat and make sure I get enough exercise.

His behavior doesn't surprise me because \_\_\_\_\_ usually.

I hope my daughter \_\_\_\_\_ and becomes a doctor.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Who are the people in your family that are important to you?
2. Is family important to you?
3. Do you have any friends who you'd consider to be family?
4. Did you get along with your brothers and sisters growing up? Or, are you an only child?
5. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of being an only child?
6. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of having many siblings?
7. Did your parents treat all children equally in your family when growing up?
8. Were you pressured by your parents to act in any certain way when you were a child?
9. Did you have any chores growing up?
10. Did you have to keep your room clean when you were a child?
11. Did you use to spend a lot of time with your grandparents?
12. Do you have lots of cousins? Did you spend time with them when you were young?
13. What do you think is the best way to discipline children?
14. Do you have lots of extended family in the city where you live? Is this a positive or negative thing?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Family is the most important thing in my life. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. What are some advantages and disadvantages of having a really big family?

# Food

## Warm-Up

What are some of your favorite foods?

## Vocabulary Challenge

l h t e y h a — good for you

a r r e r t s n a t — a place to eat outside the home

n r d e i n — evening meal

d h a o l y i — Christmas and Thanksgiving are examples

i g c o k o n — making food

## Idioms and Phrases

*couch potato, a piece of cake, smart cookie, bread and butter, in a pickle*

That test was so easy. It was \_\_\_\_\_.

That kid next door is such a \_\_\_\_\_. I heard he won a big scholarship to Yale.

That bad business deal left me \_\_\_\_\_.

When playing tennis, drop shots are my \_\_\_\_\_.

My boyfriend is such a \_\_\_\_\_. He just likes to play video games all the time.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What are some foods that you dislike?
2. Name 10 very healthy foods.
3. Name 10 very unhealthy foods.
4. What do you usually eat for breakfast?
5. What do you usually eat for lunch?
6. What do you usually eat for dinner?
7. Does your family usually eat dinner together?
8. Who cooks most of the food that you eat?
9. Who did most of the cooking at your house growing up?
10. How often do you eat out?
11. What's your favorite kind of food? (Italian, Chinese, Korean, etc.)
12. What's your favorite restaurant?
13. Is there any food that you can't stop eating once you start and that you eat too much of?
14. What does your family eat for special meals or holidays?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Are you generally healthy or unhealthy? Give some examples.
- B. Describe a typical holiday meal in your country.

# Free Time

## Warm-Up

How do you spend your free time?

## Vocabulary Challenge

d w e a y k e — not the weekend

l p a o r p u — something that many people do

t o v e i e m r — working after regular work hours

t m o a y n r d a — required or obligatory

n p r a e r t — husband, wife, boyfriend or girlfriend

## Idioms and Phrases

*shoot some hoops, free time, paint the town red, hang out, catching some rays*

If there's one thing I'd change about my life it's that I'd have more \_\_\_\_\_.

If there's one thing I love, it's \_\_\_\_\_ at the beach.

I can't wait for our trip to Las Vegas. We're going to \_\_\_\_\_ in a big way!

My friends and I like to \_\_\_\_\_ at the mall.

Are you free tonight? I'd love to \_\_\_\_\_ at the park.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. How much free time do you usually have on weekdays?
2. Is that enough for you? Or, would you like to have more?
3. Do you ever have to work late? Or, study late into the night?
4. How much free time do you have on weekends?
5. Is that enough? Or, would you like to have more?
6. Do you like to sleep in on weekends?
7. Do you like to hang out at home or go out when you have free time?
8. What are some popular activities in your city that people do on the weekends?
9. Do these activities change depending on the season?
10. If you have kids, did the amount of free time you have drop significantly when you had them?
11. What do you think about mandatory 4-day work weeks?
12. Should employees be forced to work overtime (with extra pay) or should it be optional?
13. Do you, "work to live," or, "live to work?"
14. If you have a partner, do you spend your free time differently now than when you were single?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Write about what you like to do in your free time.
- B. The government should implement a 4-day workweek. Do you agree or disagree with this?



# Friends

## Warm-Up

Are friends important to you?

## Vocabulary Challenge

l a t d s u — not children

e l o n n i — not in real life

i c r e s a t l i — similar to real life

e n d f i e f r t — not the same

a f l e m e — girl or woman

## Idioms and Phrases

*best friend, close-knit, joined at the hip, stay in touch, two peas in a pod*

My \_\_\_\_\_ and I are like \_\_\_\_\_.

My family is very \_\_\_\_\_ and we spend most holidays together.

I like to \_\_\_\_\_ with my friends via Facebook.

Jenny and Susie are \_\_\_\_\_ and I never see them apart from each other!

## Let's Talk!

1. Are friends or family more important in your life?
2. It's not easy for adults to make new friends. Do you agree or disagree?
3. Did you have a best friend when you were growing up? Describe them.
4. Have you ever made a new friend online?
5. Can you have online friends that you've never met in real life?
6. Have you ever made a new friend through a sport or club?
7. How do you like to stay in touch with friends?
8. Good friends can help improve your health. Do you agree or disagree with this?
9. Have you seen the TV show *Friends*? Is it realistic?
10. What do you like to do with your friends?
11. Can males and females be good friends? Or, is this impossible?
12. Would you rather have one best friend or many different connections?
13. Are you friends with any of your ex-boyfriends or girlfriends?
14. At what age are friendships most important?

## Writing Prompts

- A. What advice would you give someone new to your country about making friends?
- B. Male and females can't be friends. Do you agree or disagree?

# Future

## Warm-Up

What are 1-2 of your plans for the future?

## Vocabulary Challenge

o s r c e o t — method of transportation with two wheels

e s d r s r i e v l — a car that moves without a person driving it

r n g e a o n e t i — people born and living within a certain period of time

c s t c i a r y — lack of something

t l i e m f i e — birth to death

## Idioms and Phrases

*big scale, grow up, food scarcity, flying cars, driverless cars*

Do you think that \_\_\_\_\_ are safe? I'm not sure I'd trust a computer for this.

My city has installed new solar panels on a \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ will be a bigger and bigger problem as the world's population increases.

I love watching my nieces and nephews \_\_\_\_\_.

I wonder if I'll be able to see \_\_\_\_\_ before I die?

## Let's Talk!

1. What will the world look like in 10 years from now?
2. What will the world look like in 50 years from now?
3. When do you think flying cars or scooters (or something similar) will happen on a big scale?
4. What do you think about driverless cars?
5. Do you think robots will ever take over the world?
6. What did you want to be growing up? Did that work out?
7. Do you think it's helpful or harmful to tell kids that they can be anything they want to when they get older?
8. Do you think life will be better or worse for the next generation?
9. Do you think life was better for your parents or you?
10. Are you worried about the future of the Earth when you consider the environment?
11. Will the Earth continue to get warmer (global warming)? Or, can we reverse the trend?
12. Do you think humans help or harm the Earth in general?
13. Do you think that food scarcity will become a problem within your lifetime?
14. People keep living longer. Is there a limit to this?

## Writing Prompts

- A. Do you think the future will be better or worse than now? Why?
- B. There is a limit to the number of people who can live on Earth. Do you agree or disagree?

# Gender Roles

## Warm-Up

What was life at your house like growing up? Did your parents stick to specific chores or gender roles?

## Vocabulary Challenge

i s f p c i e c — not general

t e t x a p o e i c n — a belief that someone will do something

i t a y c p l — normal or usual

a m t a r n o y d — required or obligatory

f s u g c n o i n — not clear

## Idioms and Phrases

*glass ceiling, stay home, military service, first dates, gender fluid*

That was one of the best \_\_\_\_\_ that I've ever been on.

After I had a child, the expectation was that I'd \_\_\_\_\_ to care for him.

I'm thinking about changing jobs because my current company has a serious \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ means not strictly identifying as either male or female.

In South Korea, males generally have to do two years of \_\_\_\_\_ in their 20's.

## Let's Talk!

1. Do you think there are some jobs that men are better at than women?
2. Are there some jobs that women are better at?
3. Are there specific expectations of men and women in your country?
4. Have you ever heard of the "glass ceiling"?
5. Is this a problem in your country?
6. Do you see yourself as a "typical" man or woman?
7. Do you have children? Who is mostly responsible for caring for them?
8. A man and woman are married but the woman makes more money at her job. Should the man stay home to care for the children?
9. Are there different expectations for boys and girls growing up in your country?
10. Is there a mandatory military service in your country? Is it equal for both genders?
11. Who should pay for a first date?
12. Can a man and woman be just friends or is it always confusing?
13. Is it okay for a man to cry?
14. Is it okay for a woman to cry?

## Writing Prompts

- A. Men are better at some jobs than women (and vice-versa). Do you agree or disagree?
- B. Do you think there is gender equality in your country? Why or why not?

# Getting a Job

## Warm-Up

Name at least 5 ways that people get jobs in your country.

## Vocabulary Challenge

r c e u n r t — now, latest

m o c o n m — usual or normal

v i w n t e e r i — formal questions and answers, usually for a job

l u n e o n e y m p m t — the state of not having a job

i i d i o s n c n r a i m t — unfair treatment based on something like gender, skin color, etc.

u e r e s m — document listing skills and job experience

## Idioms and Phrases

*part-time jobs, job application, job interview, leg up, job market*

I just submitted a \_\_\_\_\_. Fingers crossed for a good result!

Being fluent in English can give people a \_\_\_\_\_ for jobs at Samsung in South Korea.

I just heard! I have a \_\_\_\_\_ on Friday at 9:00.

Covid-19 led to a tough \_\_\_\_\_ in the USA, particularly for people just graduating.

I'm hoping my \_\_\_\_\_ during university help me land a paid internship after I graduate.

## Let's Talk!

1. Did you have any part-time jobs in school? How did you get them?
2. How did you get your current job?
3. What is the most common way to get a job in your country?
4. What do you think about places that require you to put a photo on a job application?
5. What are five very common job interview questions?
6. Have you ever been to a really difficult job interview? What happened?
7. Is it easy or difficult to get a job in your country?
8. Is youth unemployment a problem?
9. Do you have any tips on how someone should dress for a job interview?
10. Do you think discrimination about people because of their age, gender, skin color, etc. is a problem when applying for jobs in your country?
11. What information do you have to include on a resume?
12. Think about where you work. If you were in charge of hiring, how would you go about this?
13. Is English important for getting a job where you live?
14. What other kinds of things can give you a "leg up" on the competition in the job market in your country?

## Writing Prompts

- A. Is it easy or difficult to get a job in your country?
- B. If you could hire someone, who would your ideal employee be?



# Getting to Know Someone

## Warm-Up

What do you like to do in your free time?

## Vocabulary Challenge

i f a y m l — mother, father, sister, cousin, etc.

o r f i a t v e — something you love

a v o n a t c i — a period of time when you don't have to go to work or school

o c r h e — cleaning, cooking, doing laundry, etc.

u r n e a s r t t a — place to eat outside the home

## Idioms and Phrases

*growing up, spend time, cook at home, build bridges, man's best friend*

I'm trying to save money so I generally try to \_\_\_\_\_.

When I was \_\_\_\_\_, I used to spend a ton of time outside.

I'm hoping to \_\_\_\_\_ at the conference and hopefully win some contracts for my company.

Dogs are certainly \_\_\_\_\_ but these days, I prefer cats.

I like to \_\_\_\_\_ working on my photography.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What do you do for work?
2. What did you want to be when growing up?
3. Where did you grow up?
4. Tell me about your family.
5. What's your favorite restaurant?
6. When you spend time at home, what do you like to do?
7. Have you learned anything new lately?
8. If you could live anywhere, where would you live?
9. If you could have any job, what would you do?
10. What was your favorite vacation?
11. What was the last thing you watched on TV?
12. What's your favorite meal to cook at home?
13. What's your favorite chore? Your least favorite one?
14. Do you have any kids?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Introduce yourself.
- B. What are some of your hopes or dreams for the future?

# Going to a Party

## Warm-Up

Do you generally like going to parties? Why or why not?

## Vocabulary Challenge

o s o c l h — a place someone studies

p w l o c r a k e — a place someone works

y g a e l n l e r — usually or normally

i s u s r e p r — something unexpected

g a n t d t i e n — going

## Idioms and Phrases

*surprise party, birthday present, potluck party, dance parties, let their hair down*

Don't forget to bring the \_\_\_\_\_ to Kim's party!

My friends threw me a \_\_\_\_\_ last weekend. I had no idea!

The work Christmas party is a good chance for everyone to \_\_\_\_\_ after a long, hard year.

I'm planning on bringing something vegan to the \_\_\_\_\_.

I usually hate \_\_\_\_\_ but the music was so good that this one was surprisingly fun.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What was the last party you went to?
2. What was the last party held in your honor?
3. Did your school or workplace have any parties this year?
4. Do you prefer big or small parties?
5. Do you like to meet new people at parties or do you generally talk to people you already know?
6. Do you generally bring a gift to the host of the party?
7. Have you ever thrown a surprise party (or had one thrown for you)?
8. Do you think you'd be happy if someone threw you a surprise party?
9. How much do you generally spend on birthday gifts for someone?
10. How were birthdays celebrated when you were growing up?
11. What kind of food do you usually bring to potluck parties?
12. Would you rather have a party at your house or go to someone else's house for a party?
13. Is it impolite to click attending on Facebook for a party but not go?
14. Do you enjoy dance parties?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. What are some etiquette rules for parties in your country?
- B. Think about the last party you went to. Did you have fun? Why or why not?

# Habits

## Warm-Up

Have you tried to change any of your habits lately? How did it go?

## Vocabulary Challenge

l h e h a y t — good for the body

t h i a b — something that is done regularly

c e i x s e r e — moving the body

o a d n y n e — feeling angry or slightly irritated

i c n h g e w — using lips and teeth to process food

## Idioms and Phrases

*healthy habits, sleep in, cold turkey, quit smoking, bad habits*

I've tried to \_\_\_\_\_ in the past but I've only succeeded for a few weeks.

Do I have any \_\_\_\_\_? Just a few but my worst one is eating potato chips.

My New Year's resolution is to hopefully start some new \_\_\_\_\_.

On the weekends, I love to \_\_\_\_\_ until at least 10:00.

I tried to quit sugar \_\_\_\_\_ but that only lasted for a few days.

## Let's Talk!

1. Name five healthy habits.
2. What are some of your healthy habits?
3. Name five unhealthy habits.
4. What are some of your unhealthy habits?
5. Do you ever sleep in?
6. What are some good study habits?
7. What are some bad study habits?
8. Is it better to gradually stop something like smoking or to quit "cold turkey" (all at once)?
9. Would you be motivated to do something like quit smoking, drink less, or exercise more if someone offered you money to do it?
10. Are you annoyed by other people's bad habits?
11. What would you do if someone was chewing gum loudly next to you on the bus or train?
12. Do you think people should be allowed to smoke inside?
13. Should people be allowed to drink in public?
14. What habits should parents teach their children?

## Writing Prompts

- A. Taxes on cigarettes and alcohol should be raised. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. What is the best way to get rid of an unhealthy habit?

# Happiness

## Warm-Up

Do you consider yourself to be a happy person?

## Vocabulary Challenge

e m y o n — currency

g s l i n e — no boyfriend, girlfriend, husband or wife

n p e a r r t — boyfriend, girlfriend, husband or wife

t c r o i u e n s — Canada, the USA, Korea, etc.

n f s r d i e — people that you enjoy spending time with

## Idioms and Phrases

*feels happy, money can't buy happiness, period of time, over the moon, on top of the world*

I was \_\_\_\_\_ because of my recent promotion at work.

My brother only \_\_\_\_\_ when he's playing video games.

That was a difficult \_\_\_\_\_ for me.

I was literally \_\_\_\_\_ after climbing that mountain!

Some people say that \_\_\_\_\_ but I disagree! It's really difficult being poor.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What are some things that make you feel happy?
2. What are some things that make you feel unhappy?
3. Do you think you're happier than most of your friends?
4. What do you do when you feel a bit sad?
5. What was the happiest time in your life?
6. Can money buy happiness?
7. Do you think someone can be happy if they're poor?
8. Do you feel happiest when you're single or have a partner?
9. Is being happy the goal of life?
10. Do you think people in some countries are happier than others?
11. Does the weather affect your mood? How?
12. Have you ever worked really hard for a period of time so that you could be happier later?
13. Were/are you happy being a student? Or do you prefer working?
14. Will you be happier when you retire?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. People in my country are generally happy. Do you agree or disagree with this?
- B. The main purpose of life is to be happy. Do you agree or disagree?



# Hobbies

## Warm-Up

What are some of your favorite hobbies?

## Vocabulary Challenge

u i n i d a i v l d — 1 person

l p e p o e — more than 1 person

s e i x p v e n e — not cheap

s d r a o n u g e — not safe

u p l o a r p — something that many people do

## Idioms and Phrases

*make money, would you rather, how often do you, have you ever, do you wish*

\_\_\_\_\_ been bungee jumping?

\_\_\_\_\_ play tennis or watch a movie tonight?

I have to \_\_\_\_\_ for my upcoming trip!

\_\_\_\_\_ you had more time for playing tennis?

\_\_\_\_\_ get to do your favorite hobbies?

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What hobbies are very popular where you live?
2. What kinds of hobbies do you dislike?
3. How often do you get to do your hobbies?
4. Do you wish you had more time for your hobbies?
5. Have you ever made money from a hobby of yours?
6. What kinds of hobbies did you enjoy when you were a kid?
7. Do you still do any of those things?
8. Do you enjoy the same hobbies as your partner (if you have one)?
9. Do you prefer hobbies that are individual or with other people?
10. Why do people have hobbies?
11. Do you have any expensive hobbies?
12. Do you have any free or cheap hobbies?
13. What are some dangerous hobbies?
14. Would you rather have 1 or 2 hobbies or many?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Write about 1-2 new hobbies that you'd like to start in the future.
- B. Write about your current hobbies. Why do you like doing them so much?

# Holidays

## Warm-Up

What are the most important holidays in your country?

## Vocabulary Challenge

c s a p i e l — not usual

r d t e a c o e — to make something look nice

e m i e m o s r — things you remember from the past

i c d o a m l m i e r c e z — primarily for financial gain

a C i h m r t s s — a holiday that happens on December 25<sup>th</sup>.

## Idioms and Phrases

*original meaning, stocking stuffers, white Christmas, holiday blues, good things come in small packages*

I've done all my shopping except for a few \_\_\_\_\_.

I always get the \_\_\_\_\_ around this time of year.

I just checked the forecast and it looks like it'll be a \_\_\_\_\_.

My Christmas presents look quite small this year! Here's hoping that \_\_\_\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_ of Christmas is lost for most people I think.

## Let's Talk!

1. What are some special foods that are eaten during holidays in your country?
2. Is gift-giving a part of any of these holidays?
3. Do people decorate their houses during any of these holidays?
4. What's your favorite holiday? Why?
5. What was your favorite holiday when you were a kid?
6. What are some of your good memories of past holidays?
7. Do you spend most holidays with your family?
8. Have you ever done anything unusual for a holiday (that wasn't what you usually do)?
9. Do you think some holidays are overrated?
10. Do you think many holidays are too commercialized?
11. Have some holidays like Christmas or Easter lost their original meaning?
12. Are there enough national holiday days in your country where you don't have to work?
13. Have you ever hosted a big holiday dinner or party before? How did it go?
14. What new holiday would you propose in your country?

## Writing Prompts

- A. Holidays are too commercialized in my country. Do you agree or disagree with this?
- B. What's your favorite holiday? Why do you like it so much?

# Home

## Warm-Up

Name 10 adjectives that could be used to describe a home.

## Vocabulary Challenge

o b n o e r d i o g h h — the area around where you live

h n b e i o g s r — the people who live near you

n r e y t c l e — lately

v n r e i n o a o t s — improvements, usually in a house

y b a a r c d k — area, usually grassy, behind a house

## Idioms and Phrases

*growing up, live alone, home renovations, apartment complex, home is where the heart is*

I didn't like \_\_\_\_\_ in Edmonton so I moved to Vancouver for university.

There are lots of young families in my \_\_\_\_\_.

I didn't realize that \_\_\_\_\_ until I moved away to another country.

I'm just getting started with extensive \_\_\_\_\_. It's going to be a long process!

I prefer to \_\_\_\_\_ as compared to having roommates.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Describe where you live.
2. What was your home like growing up?
3. Are you happy living there or would you prefer to live somewhere else?
4. Describe your neighborhood.
5. Do you know any of your neighbors? What are they like?
6. Do you live alone or with other people?
7. Is this what you'd prefer?
8. What are some of your favorite things to do at home?
9. Do you like to meet friends out or do you invite them over to your house?
10. Have you recently done any home renovations? What did you do?
11. Do you have any pets?
12. Do you have a backyard? What are some advantages and disadvantages of this?
13. Would you prefer living in a house or a big apartment complex?
14. Would you prefer to live in the city or country? Why?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Would you rather live in the city or country? Give some reasons why.
- B. What are some of the positives and negatives about where you live?

# The Internet

## Warm-Up

Name 10 reasons people use the Internet.

## Vocabulary Challenge

f h a l r u m — not good for

i o n n e l — on the Internet

t n i e e g v a — not positive

d a c d t d e i —unable to stop doing something

t b r a t e y — the power source for a cellphone

## Idioms and Phrases

*running low, work from home, security issues, text messages, Internet provider*

I'm honestly just so tired of my \_\_\_\_\_. They're one of the most expensive companies but the download speeds are so slow.

I want my kids to be able to access things on the Internet but I'm also worried about \_\_\_\_\_.

Maybe it's weird but I don't get that stressed out when my phone is \_\_\_\_\_ on battery.

I started to \_\_\_\_\_ during Covid-19.

I think only old people send \_\_\_\_\_ these days!

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Name 5 ways in which the Internet can be harmful.
2. How do you spend most of your time on the Internet?
3. How many hours a day are you online?
4. How do you usually access the Internet? (kind of device)
5. Do you need to use the Internet for school or work?
6. If you could, would you choose to work (do school) from home, or would you rather go into the office (school)?
7. Has the Internet had any negative impacts on your life?
8. What are some security issues to consider when using the Internet?
9. Are you addicted to being online or do you find it nice to unplug for a while?
10. Do you remember life before the Internet? What was different? Or, imagine what was different if you don't.
11. How nervous do you feel if your phone is running low on battery?
12. Do you like to instantly check text messages or is your phone usually on silent?
13. Have you ever used the Internet to help you learn English?
14. Which company is your Internet provider? How did you choose them?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Do you think the Internet is generally a positive thing? Why or why not?
- B. Kids these days spend too much time online. Do you agree or disagree?



# Jobs

## Warm-Up

What are some of the most coveted jobs in your country?

## Vocabulary Challenge

y e u r n s i v t i — where some students study after high school

r e d e g e — a kind of certificate

n k e w e d e — not Monday-Friday

e a d t n t — go to something

u m i m n i m — the lowest possible

## Idioms and Phrases

*university degree, work at night, growing up, work overtime, minimum wage*

I considered becoming a police officer but I didn't want to \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_, I thought I'd like to be an astronaut!

My company makes me \_\_\_\_\_ during the holiday season.

At \$15 per hour, the \_\_\_\_\_ is quite high in my state.

These days, you need a \_\_\_\_\_ for most white-collar jobs.

## Let's Talk!

1. Name 10 jobs for which you need a university degree.
2. Name 10 jobs for which you don't need a university degree.
3. Name 10 jobs where people have to work at night or on the weekend.
4. What did you want to be growing up?
5. Describe your job now (or plan for after graduation).
6. What's a typical day at your job like?
7. Do you have to attend a lot of meetings or check lots of emails for your job? What do you think about these things?
8. How often do you work overtime?
9. Do you ever work on weekends or holidays?
10. Did you have any interesting part-time jobs when you were a student?
11. At what age do people usually retire in your country?
12. Would you retire early if you could?
13. What do you think about a 4-day work week for everyone?
14. What's the minimum wage in your country? Should it be higher or lower?

## Writing Prompts

A. The minimum wage in my country should be increased. Do you agree or disagree?

B. People should be allowed to work as long as they want to instead of being forced to retire. Do you agree or disagree?

# Laws

## Warm-Up

Name 10 things that are against the law in your country (for example murder someone).

## Vocabulary Challenge

e d o d a t u t — old fashioned, obsolete

a i m t p n o r t — vital, necessary

i p t d r e e n s — leader of a country or company

a c r l i m s i n — people who break the law

a m a n r i a j u — kind of recreational drug that is legal in Canada, parts of Europe and some US states

## Idioms and Phrases

*recreational drugs, drinking alcohol, capital punishment, turn a blind eye to, take the law into our own hands*

Some people think that \_\_\_\_\_ like marijuana should be made legal.

The police in my city often \_\_\_\_\_ people drinking beer in parks.

\_\_\_\_\_ is suitable for people who commit murder.

\_\_\_\_\_ is legal at age 18 in many parts of Canada.

The police didn't do anything so we need to \_\_\_\_\_.

## Let's Talk!

1. Do you know of any laws that are outdated where you live?
2. Why are laws important in society?
3. If you were president, what are some things that you would change in your country?
4. Should people be allowed to own guns?
5. Should recreational drugs like marijuana be legalized?
6. At what age should people be allowed to drive?
7. At what age should people be allowed to smoke or drink alcohol?
8. Have you ever broken any laws? (even small ones)
9. What are some laws that people often ignore?
10. Are the laws in your country similar to other countries that you know about?
11. Do you think the laws are enforced equally for everyone in your society?
12. Do you respect copyright laws or do you download things illegally?
13. Is capital punishment legal in your country?
14. Do you think capital punishment might deter criminals in your country?

## Writing Prompts

A. "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." Do you agree or disagree with this?

B. Someone who is convicted of drinking and driving should get their driver's license taken away permanently. Do you agree or disagree?

C. Do you think marijuana should be legalized in your country? Why or why not?

# Learning English

## Warm-Up

Name 10 reasons why someone might be studying English.

## Vocabulary Challenge

a m n o t t i v o — reason for doing something

a m y a t n o d r — required

f i d c t i f l u — not easy

r e s i m i s i l a t — things that are almost the same

n f t y l u e l — can speak or write easily

## Idioms and Phrases

*learning English, first language, bite the bullet, cutting corners, no pain no gain*

My \_\_\_\_\_ is Korean.

It's time to \_\_\_\_\_! My TOEFL test is coming up in less than a month.

I prefer \_\_\_\_\_ to studying math or science.

My personal trainer always tells me, "\_\_\_\_\_." I think it's the same for learning languages.

\_\_\_\_\_ when studying English will only just hurt you in the long-run.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What's your motivation for learning English?
2. How long have you been studying English?
3. Is studying English mandatory in schools in your country?
4. What do you find easy about learning English?
5. What do you find difficult about learning English?
6. Are you studying any other languages?
7. What are some similarities and differences between English and your first language?
8. Do you prefer studying alone, with a partner, or in a class?
9. Do you prefer studying with a native English speaking teacher or someone who speaks your first language fluently?
10. Do you prefer speaking/listening or reading/writing?
11. Do you enjoy watching English TV shows or movies?
12. Do you ever read English newspapers, books, or magazines?
13. Think about someone you know who speaks English fluently. How did they get so good at English?
14. What are your plans for studying English in the future?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. What are some of the best ways to learn English?
- B. English should be mandatory in schools from grade 1 to grade 12 in my country. Do you agree or disagree?

# Manners

## Warm-Up

What advice would you give someone new to your country about manners?

## Vocabulary Challenge

t a r u e a s r t n — place to eat outside the home

e u e t i t q t e — manners

d c e h r i l n — kids

y u s n s n e r c e a — not needed

i a c f t f n e o — hugging, kissing or touching

## Idioms and Phrases

*public displays of affection, good manners, bad manners, first date, table manners*

Children should have good \_\_\_\_\_ and be able to use their fork and knife by the time they're 10 years old.

I hate \_\_\_\_\_ and would never do it when I'm out with my girlfriend.

It's \_\_\_\_\_ to leave you ringer on during a movie.

I think that people should split the bill on the \_\_\_\_\_.

It's \_\_\_\_\_ to hold the door open for the person after you.

## Let's Talk!

1. What are some examples of good manners in a restaurant?
2. What are some examples of bad manners in a restaurant?
3. What is good etiquette in a movie theater?
4. What are examples of good manners on a first date?
5. Do you think a man should pay the bill on a first date?
6. What are some general etiquette rules for cell phones?
7. Should children be expected to have good table manners?
8. What are some good ways to teach manners to children?
9. Are there some things that are considered to be "good manners" that annoy you or that you think are unnecessary?
10. Do you know some examples of things that are good manners in one country but bad manners in another country?
11. Are there any countries that have a reputation for being very polite?
12. What do you think about PDA (public displays of affection—kissing, hugging, etc.)?
13. Are you a polite driver?
14. Do you ever honk your horn at people when you drive? What for?

## Writing Prompts

- A. A man should always pay for a woman on a first date. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. What advice would you give to someone new to your country about manners?



# Meeting People

## Warm-Up

Have you made any new friends recently? Where did you meet them?

## Vocabulary Challenge

n c r o t u y — Canada is an example of one

i o n e l n — not in real life

s i o m i p n r e s — first opinion about someone or something

a e n x g c e h — give and take

e c e o n n c f e r — a meeting of lots of people

## Idioms and Phrases

*online dating, in real life, hang out, small talk, first impressions*

My mentor always talks about how important \_\_\_\_\_ are.

I prefer to \_\_\_\_\_ with friends instead of looking after my kids!

My sister has had lots of luck with \_\_\_\_\_ but it just hasn't worked out for me.

I much prefer deep conversations to \_\_\_\_\_.

It's been difficult to meet \_\_\_\_\_ due to Covid-19.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Where are some of the best places to meet people in your country?
2. Do you have any online-only friends?
3. Have you ever met someone online that eventually became a friend in real life?
4. Have you ever tried online dating?
5. Do you think it's easier to meet people for dating online, or in-person where you live?
6. Where do you like to hang out with your friends?
7. What do you think about going to a big party where you don't know many people?
8. What are some topics to talk about when meeting someone for the first time?
9. Do you make small talk with taxi drivers or shop keepers?
10. Do you remember peoples' names easily?
11. Is it okay to ask for someone's age in your country when you meet them?
12. How important do you think first impressions are?
13. Do business people exchange cards in your country?
14. Do you ever go to conferences or networking events for your work or school?

## **Writing Prompts**

A. What advice would you give someone new to your city about making friends?

B. Online dating is the best way to meet a potential partner. Do you agree or disagree with this?

# Money

## Warm-Up

Are you a saver or a spender?

## Vocabulary Challenge

o a r c s t — people in movies or TV shows

a s r a y l — amount of money someone gets paid for a job

e u r n a i s v l — for everyone

a g e l n y e l r — usually

p t g i i n p — giving some extra money for good service

## Idioms and Phrases

*universal basic income, compare prices, saving up, stock market, cash cow*

That rental property my parents have is a real \_\_\_\_\_.

Living in Vancouver is expensive! I've been \_\_\_\_\_ for 10 years for a down payment on a house.

There are a growing number of people in Canada who believe that everyone should receive a \_\_\_\_\_.

I like to \_\_\_\_\_ online before buying things in stores.

My friend invested lots of money after the latest \_\_\_\_\_ crash and has now doubled her money.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Money can't buy happiness. Do you agree or disagree with this?
2. Do you think that actors and sports players are overpaid?
3. Would you work more hours if your salary was increased too?
4. What do you think about a universal basic income?
5. Should rich countries do more to help poorer countries?
6. How much money do you generally spend each day?
7. How much do you spend on presents?
8. Do you compare prices when you go shopping?
9. Have you ever bought something used? What was it?
10. Where can you haggle for prices in your country?
11. Are you saving up to buy something?
12. What is tipping like in your country? How much and where?
13. Is there a sales tax in your country?
14. Do you invest in the stock market? How do you do this?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Money can't buy happiness. Do you agree or disagree with this?
- B. In general, people are willing to help the poor in my country. Do you agree or disagree?
- C. What do you think about increasing the minimum wage or introducing a universal basic income in your country?

# Movies

## Warm-Up

What are 2-3 of your favorite movies of all time?

## Vocabulary Challenge

o a t c r — male movie or TV star

r a s c e t s — female movie or TV star

b c y r e i l e t — famous person

s g p o s i — talking about private details about someone's life behind their back. Usually unkind.

x n p v e i e s e — not cheap

## Idioms and Phrases

*celebrity gossip, first language, foreign languages, movie theater, watch movies*

My boyfriend loves to \_\_\_\_\_ but I prefer to do more active things outside.

Knowing at least three \_\_\_\_\_ is usually necessary to be a diplomat.

My sister loves to stay up-to-date with the \_\_\_\_\_ but I think it's just so boring and most of it isn't even true!

My \_\_\_\_\_ is English.

I don't watch movies often but when I do, I like to go to the \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What was the last movie you saw?
2. Are there any movies that you've watched more than once?
3. Do you have any favorite actors or actresses?
4. Do you ever follow celebrity gossip like who is dating or getting divorced?
5. Do you watch the Academy Awards?
6. Do you prefer watching movies in your first language or foreign language movies like ones in English?
7. Where do you like to watch movies?
8. Do you think movie theaters are a bit expensive or are you willing to pay for the experience?
9. How often do you watch a movie?
10. Are there any certain snacks you like to eat while watching a movie?
11. What do you think about documentaries?
12. Has a movie you watched ever changed your thinking about something?
13. Do you have a Netflix or Amazon Prime subscription? (or something similar)
14. Have you ever left a movie theater before the movie was finished because it was so terrible?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Describe a movie you like. Why did you like it so much?
- B. Watching movies or TV is a waste of time. Do you agree or disagree?

# Music

## Warm-Up

What kind of music do you like?

## Vocabulary Challenge

c p a t o s d — digital audio file about a certain topic that people can download and listen to

f r p e r e — like better

n r l e a a b s o e — appropriate

u i n m s e t t r n — piano, flute, and guitar are examples

o k k a e r a — singing to music with the lyrics removed

## Idioms and Phrases

*face the music, read music, music concert, listens to music, elevator music*

My son \_\_\_\_\_ far too loudly!

It's time to \_\_\_\_\_ for my lack of studying for this test.

The first \_\_\_\_\_ I went to was MC Hammer.

My pet peeve is having to listen to \_\_\_\_\_ when I'm put on hold on the phone.

I learned how to \_\_\_\_\_ when I took piano lessons as a kid.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Who are you listening to these days?
2. How often do you listen to music?
3. When do you listen to music?
4. Have you ever listened to any podcasts? What are some of your favorites?
5. Do you prefer podcasts to music?
6. Do you like listening to music at a reasonable volume or too loud?
7. Have you ever played in a band of some kind?
8. Do you play an instrument?
9. Do you know how to read music? How did you learn?
10. Have you ever been to a music concert? How was it?
11. Do you ever watch music videos on YouTube?
12. Do you prefer English music or music in your first language?
13. Have you ever done karaoke before?
14. What are some traditional instruments in your country?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Music is like a religion for some people. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. Think about a concert you've been to. Describe that experience.



# Mysterious Things

## Warm-Up

Do you think there are unexplained things in the universe?

## Vocabulary Challenge

a d s r m e — something that happens when you're sleeping

d p t i r c e — to make a guess about the future

c h e o r o o s p — a prediction about the future, based on the stars and planets

z c i e t s i n — people in a country

i t n w s — two people born at the same time from the same mother

## Idioms and Phrases

*fortune-teller, predict the future, déjà-vu, god works in mysterious ways, aliens among us*

In my opinion, any attempt to \_\_\_\_\_ is a complete waste of time.

I experienced some serious \_\_\_\_\_ this morning. It felt like I had met that person before even though I'm sure we hadn't.

Any time something unexplained happens, my grandma says, "\_\_\_\_\_."

Some people are convinced that there are \_\_\_\_\_. I think they just watch too many science fiction movies!

My friend organized a trip to a \_\_\_\_\_ for her birthday.

## Let's Talk!

1. Have you ever been to a fortune-teller?
2. Do you believe that dreams are designed to tell us something?
3. Is it possible to predict the future in some way?
4. Do you ever check your horoscope?
5. Has anything ever happened to you that you can't explain?
6. Do you think the government sometimes hides things from citizens?
7. Do you think aliens and UFOs are real?
8. Do you think life can exist on other planets?
9. Do you think that houses or places can be haunted?
10. Have you heard of the Bermuda Triangle?
11. What do you think happens after death?
12. Do you think there are rewards for people who live good lives and punishments for people who live bad ones after they die?
13. Have you ever experienced "*déjà-vu*."
14. Do you think twins have some sort of special connection?

## Writing Prompts

- A. There is life after death. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. Do you think there is life on other planets?
- C. People should live a good life now for a reward after life. Do you agree or disagree?

# Pets

## Warm-Up

Name 10 kinds of animals people might have as pets.

## Vocabulary Challenge

n a g d t v a e a — positive thing

v t d i e s a a d a n g — negative thing

e c l r u — mean

t C s h m r i a s — major holiday in many parts of the world

n e c x t t i — animals that don't exist anymore

## Idioms and Phrases

*growing up, endangered species, seeing eye dog, product testing, man's best friend*

I wish the government would do more to protect \_\_\_\_\_.

You shouldn't pet or interact with a \_\_\_\_\_.

With advances in science, I don't think that \_\_\_\_\_ on animals is necessary these days.

I totally understand the saying, "\_\_\_\_\_." My dog is the best company I could wish for!

When I was \_\_\_\_\_, I wasn't allowed to have any pets.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Do you have any pets?
2. Did you have any pets growing up?
3. If you could have a pet in the future, what kind would you like to get?
4. Do you think it's cruel to keep a pet like a cat inside all the time?
5. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of having a pet?
6. If you were getting a pet, would you consider getting it from a pet store?
7. Have you ever seen a "seeing eye dog" for a blind person before?
8. Pets for a Christmas present is a terrible idea. Do you agree or disagree with this?
9. Are you afraid of any animals?
10. Do you kill bugs inside your home or take them outside?
11. Do you know of any endangered or extinct species?
12. Have you ever ridden a horse?
13. Should it be illegal to use animals for product testing?
14. Are there certain animals like dogs that should be illegal to eat?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. The government should do more to protect endangered species. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. Pets are like family members. Do you agree or disagree?

# Plans for the Future

## Warm-Up

What will you do this weekend?

## Vocabulary Challenge

i v t a o c n a — a period of time free from work or school

i o s p t t c i m i — having a positive outlook about the future

l g y a e l n e r — usually

u f u r t e — not past or present

e s n e c i c — school subject

## Idioms and Phrases

*fossil fuels, climate change, global warming, take over the world, for a rainy day*

My mom always told me to save \_\_\_\_\_ but honestly, I just like take-out coffees and food too much!

\_\_\_\_\_ is a serious issue that means the Earth is getting hotter. It requires us to act now.

\_\_\_\_\_ is causing more extreme weather around the world.

Since \_\_\_\_\_ are a limited resource, scientists are developing more renewable energy sources.

I think that artificial intelligence programs or robots will one day \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Do you have any plans for the upcoming vacation?
2. Do you have any plans to move or change jobs?
3. Do you have any plans for next year?
4. What do you want your life to look like in 5 years from now?
5. What do you want your life to look like in 20 years from now?
6. Are you generally optimistic about the future?
7. Do you think life was better for you or your parents?
8. Do you think life will be better for you or your kids?
9. Do your plans usually work out? Why or why not?
10. How will you use English in the future?
11. Do you think the world will eventually run out of fossil fuels? What will happen?
12. What do you think about climate change?
13. Will science find solutions for problems like global warming?
14. Do you think computers will ever take over the world?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Climate change is a big problem. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. English will be the global language of the future. Do you agree or disagree?
- C. Life will be better in the future than now. Do you agree or disagree?

# Politics

## Warm-Up

Name the major political parties in your country. Do you know their basic policies?

## Vocabulary Challenge

i p d r n e t s e — the leader of a country

i p c o a l l i t — related to government

t s m y e s — a way of organizing something

t e l i e o c n — where people vote on new leaders

g j e u d — a person who makes rulings or decisions in a court

## Idioms and Phrases

*prime minister, political system, European Union, politically correct, toe the line*

In Canada, most people are very conscious of being \_\_\_\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_ has brought prosperity to many of the poorer countries in Europe.

Canada's \_\_\_\_\_ is Justin Trudeau.

Every country has a slightly different \_\_\_\_\_.

I hated my last job because everyone was required to just \_\_\_\_\_ and we didn't have to think for ourselves.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Which party is in power now in your country?
2. Who is the president or prime minister of your country?
3. What kind of political system does your country have?
4. What are some other types of political systems around the world?
5. Do you generally follow politics?
6. From where do you get your information about politics from?
7. Have you ever voted in an election? How did you decide who to vote for?
8. Have your political views changed as you've gotten older?
9. Do you think elections are fair in your country?
10. Do you think too much money is spent on elections?
11. Do you follow US politics?
12. What's your opinion of Donald Trump?
13. How do judges get their jobs in your country? Are they appointed, elected or is there some other way?
14. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of the EU (European Union)?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Elections are generally corrupt in your country. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. Voting in elections should be mandatory. Do you agree or disagree with this?
- C. Who do you generally vote for in elections? Why?



# Possessions

## Warm-Up

What are some things that make you happy?

## Vocabulary Challenge

n e i x s p e e v — not cheap

h k e i n t c — room in a house

k l e o r c — a place to put things, common in schools

a m l i n i i s m t — person who doesn't have a lot of things

r e e x e t m — the most, highest, utmost

## Idioms and Phrases

*storage locker, extreme minimalism, sports equipment, money can't buy happiness, possession is nine-tenths of the law*

I don't think I could ever do \_\_\_\_\_. I just like my toys too much.

\_\_\_\_\_ but it can get you a lot of fun experiences!

My \_\_\_\_\_ takes up so much space in my garage that I had to get a \_\_\_\_\_.

I had a recent court battle that reminded me that \_\_\_\_\_ in a big way.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Do you have something expensive that you don't need?
2. Can you remember a gift that you enjoyed getting?
3. What is something in your kitchen that you use all the time?
4. Do you have any kitchen things that rarely get used?
5. What is something in the rest of your house that you use almost every day?
6. Are storage lockers common in your country?
7. What are some things that you don't enjoy taking care of?
8. Do you have lots of things or would you consider yourself to be a minimalist?
9. What do you think of extreme minimalism?
10. If you needed a new car, would you pay cash for it or make payments for a few years?
11. Would you rather have a big house that took 25 years to pay off or a smaller house that only took 15 years to pay off?
12. Do you generally spend money on disposable things (take-out coffee, magazines, etc.) or things that'll last a long time like a piece of sports equipment?
13. Would you rather have experiences or things?
14. Do you lend money to family or friends? Why or why not?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. You should never lend money to friends. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. Do you prefer having lots of things or only a few things? Why?

# Retirement

## Warm-Up

What age do you think is good to retire?

## Vocabulary Challenge

a m t a y o n r d — required, necessary

i p n e o n s — money received monthly, usually for life

p s o t u r p — help

n c r o t u y — Korea, France and Canada are examples of

i e r e t r — stop working

## Idioms and Phrases

*mandatory retirement age, government pension, retire early, pension plan, retirement community*

I decided to take the job with company ABC because of the excellent \_\_\_\_\_.

My grandparents recently moved to a nice \_\_\_\_\_.

I think that my company should get rid of its \_\_\_\_\_. There are lots of older people who could do a great job.

I became a firefighter because of the excellent \_\_\_\_\_ that comes along with it.

I'm saving a ton of money because my goal is to \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Is there a mandatory retirement age in your country?
2. Do you think that there should be a mandatory retirement age?
3. At what age can someone receive a government pension in your country?
4. Should the age of this be raised now that people are living longer?
5. Have you heard about the FIRE movement (financial independence retire early) where people sometimes retire when they're 30?
6. Would you consider retiring earlier than normal if you could afford it?
7. What are some of the positive things about working?
8. What do you think you'll spend your time doing when you retire?
9. Would you ever consider moving to a "retirement community" with only older people?
10. Do you plan to move after you retire?
11. Do you enjoy your job?
12. Do you have a pension plan at work?
13. Do you think children should help their parents out financially when they get jobs?
14. Do you think parents should support their children financially for as long as they need help?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. The official retirement age in my country should be increased now that people are living longer. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. How do you think your life will change after you retire?

# School Days

## Warm-Up

Do you mostly have positive or negative memories from your time in school?

## Vocabulary Challenge

o m r e y m — something you remember

d m e l i d — in between

c t e h e r a — someone who works in a school

j e s t u c b — English, math, and science are examples of

o u r n m i f — specific clothing worn for school or a job

## Idioms and Phrases

*school uniforms, elementary school, education system, vacation time, homeschooling*

In \_\_\_\_\_, children get lots of time to play during recess.

The \_\_\_\_\_ in my country is terrible and many parents send their kids to private schools.

\_\_\_\_\_ is not a very popular option because it requires one parent to be home full-time.

While I do agree that \_\_\_\_\_ have some benefits, I always hated wearing them.

My new job has a month of \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What's a favorite memory from elementary school?
2. What's a favorite memory from middle school?
3. What's a favorite memory from high school?
4. What sports did you play or clubs did you join in school?
5. Tell me about your favorite teacher growing up.
6. What was your favorite subject when you were a kid?
7. What are some qualities of a good teacher?
8. What are some qualities of a bad teacher?
9. Have you ever thought about being a teacher for your job?
10. If you could change something about the education system in your country, what would you change?
11. What do you think about parents who choose to home school their children?
12. What's the purpose of school and education?
13. Do you think students should have more or less vacation time in your country? Or, is it just about right?
14. What are some positives and negatives about school uniforms? What's your personal experience with them?

## **Writing Prompts**

A. Describe a memory from your school days.

B. Homeschooling should be illegal in my country. Do you agree or disagree?

# Seasons

## Warm-Up

What are the main seasons in your country? What's the weather like during each of them?

## Vocabulary Challenge

i s g p n r — the season with warmer temperatures and lots of rain

t w r i e n — the season with the coldest temperatures

m s e u r m — the season with the hottest temperatures

h c t e l s o — pants, shirts, and socks are examples of

h w e e a r t — rain, snow, and wind are examples of

## Idioms and Phrases

*spring cleaning, global warming, raining cats and dogs, under the weather, on cloud nine*

On my last vacation, it was \_\_\_\_\_ the entire time.

My parents always made me deep clean my bedroom during their annual \_\_\_\_\_.

I was feeling \_\_\_\_\_ yesterday so didn't go to work.

\_\_\_\_\_ has resulted in more extreme weather these past few years.

I was \_\_\_\_\_ after that great first date.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What kinds of clothes do people wear during each season?
2. What kinds of activities do people do during each season?
3. What's your favorite season? Why?
4. What are some activities that you do during your favorite season?
5. What's your least favorite season? Why?
6. What are some of the activities you do during your least favorite season?
7. Have your favorite and least favorite seasons changed from when you were a kid?
8. What color do you associate with each season? Why?
9. Are there any special festivals or celebrations related to the seasons where you live?
10. Are there any special foods related to a season?
11. Do you think global warming is a real thing? Have you noticed any season getting hotter where you live?
12. Why do you think people do "spring cleaning" instead of at some other time?
13. Have you ever done spring cleaning?
14. Would you ever consider moving to another country because of better weather?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Write about your favorite and least favorite season.
- B. Global warming is a big problem. Do you agree or disagree?



# Shopping

## Warm-Up

What are 1-2 of your favorite stores?

## Vocabulary Challenge

i o n n e l — not in person

r s e t o — place to buy something

e g r e r o i c s — food bought from a store

t C a h m r s i s — major holiday in many parts of the world

b d t e — money that you owe

## Idioms and Phrases

*window shopping, shop till you drop, online shopping, grocery shopping, Christmas present*

The best \_\_\_\_\_ I ever received was a new cellphone.

I generally prefer \_\_\_\_\_ these days because of Covid-19.

My boyfriend does most of the cooking at my house so he generally does the \_\_\_\_\_ too.

\_\_\_\_\_ is such a waste of time. Why go if you don't have money to spend?

My friend regularly does the \_\_\_\_\_ thing but I've never joined her.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. How often do you go shopping?
2. What do you most like shopping for?
3. Do you generally like or dislike shopping?
4. What are your thoughts about online shopping?
5. Did you start buying more things online during Covid-19?
6. Will physical stores ever become a thing of the past?
7. Who goes grocery shopping at your house?
8. Where do you buy groceries from?
9. "Shop till you drop." Have you ever done this?
10. Do you ever go "window shopping" just for fun?
11. What was the last big thing that you bought?
12. What was the last small, inexpensive thing that you bought?
13. Do you enjoy buying presents for people?
14. What do you think about people going into debt to buy Christmas presents for example?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Physical stores will be obsolete in 20 years from now. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. What are some big things you plan to buy in the next few years?

# Sleep

## Warm-Up

What's an average night's sleep for you?

## Vocabulary Challenge

a r e r y g l u l — happens often

i r o e n u t — what usually happens

i m n o g r n — not evening or afternoon

p s g l i e n e — what people are usually doing at night

s f h t i — a period of time, usually related to working

## Idioms and Phrases

*night shift, how long, what time, light sleeper, sleeping the day away*

My son can usually be found \_\_\_\_\_ on the weekends.

I'm a \_\_\_\_\_ and the slightest noise wakes me up.

I'm on the \_\_\_\_\_ this week but working days later this month.

\_\_\_\_\_ do you usually sleep for?

\_\_\_\_\_ do you normally wake up?

## **Let's Talk!**

1. How long did you sleep last night?
2. What time do you usually go to bed?
3. What time do you usually wake up?
4. Do you regularly have to wake up before you want to?
5. Do you have any bedtime routines?
6. Do you have any morning routines?
7. Do you usually sleep on trains, planes, or cars when you're not driving?
8. Do you have trouble sleeping when you're not in your own bed?
9. Have you ever worked the night shift?
10. What are some jobs that require people to work overnight?
11. What are some advantages and some disadvantages to working at night?
12. Do you consider yourself to be a light sleeper?
13. Do you snore?
14. What are some things that prevent you from sleeping at night?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Do you think you would enjoy working at night? Why or why not?
- B. Write about your ideal sleeping environment.

# Smoking

## Warm-Up

Do you smoke? How often?

## Vocabulary Challenge

t n i e g v a e — not positive

c t i g e a s r e t — things that people smoke

o d u i r s g a c e — create a difficulty; trying to prevent someone from doing something

t r i n r e i s c t o — to limit/control someone or something

i q t u — to stop

## Idioms and Phrases

*smoker's cough, cold turkey, quits smoking, smokes like a chimney, smoking gun*

My attempt to stop smoking \_\_\_\_\_ didn't work at all.

My grandfather \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm worried about his health. He also has a bad \_\_\_\_\_. I hope that he \_\_\_\_\_.

The police eventually found the \_\_\_\_\_ that helped convict him.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Have you smoked previously but not don't?
2. Do you have any friends or family members that smoke?
3. What are some of the negative effects of smoking?
4. Are there any advantages to smoking?
5. How much do cigarettes cost in your country?
6. Do you think the government should increase taxes on cigarettes to discourage people from smoking?
7. At what age can people buy cigarettes in your country?
8. Is this too high, too low, or just about right?
9. Are cigarette companies allowed to advertise in your country?
10. Can people smoke anywhere in your country or are there restrictions?
11. Should smoking be allowed in bars or restaurants?
12. Have you ever heard a "smoker's cough?"
13. Why do you think it's so difficult to quit smoking?
14. Do you think it's easier to quit smoking by gradually reducing the number of cigarettes per day or to just go "cold turkey."

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Taxes on cigarettes should be raised. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of smoking?

# Social Problems

## Warm-Up

What are some of the social issues in the news lately?

## Vocabulary Challenge

n h e o m s e l e s s — the state of not having a home

o r n e s s e p — answer or reaction to something

r u n l s i v a e — for everyone

i r a s c m — discrimination based on someone's race

u m a a a r i n j — drug that is legal in some countries but not others

## Idioms and Phrases

*social safety net, homeless people, universal basic income, nursing home, illegal drugs*

There are many supporters of a \_\_\_\_\_ for all Canadians.

My grandmother just moved into a \_\_\_\_\_.

I wish there were a better \_\_\_\_\_ in my country. There are just so many poor people who are struggling.

Lots of \_\_\_\_\_ live near the train station in my city.

Some people think that some \_\_\_\_\_ should be legalized.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Does your country have a strong or weak "social safety net?"
2. Would you be willing to pay higher taxes to have more services for people that need help?
3. What do you think about the response of your country to Covid-19?
4. Is homelessness a problem in your country?
5. What do you think when you see a homeless person?
6. What are some of the reasons why someone might become homeless?
7. What are your thoughts about a universal basic income for everyone?
8. Is racism a problem in your country?
9. What are the attitudes towards older people in your country?
10. Do older people generally live with children or in places like nursing homes?
11. What kinds of drugs are legal and illegal in your country?
12. What are some reasons that people use illegal drugs?
13. Do you think that some drugs like marijuana should be decriminalized?
14. Do you think the police generally do a good job maintaining order in a fair, peaceful way in your country?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. My country has a good social safety net. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. The government should provide housing for all homeless people. Do you agree with this?
- C. Illegal drugs should be made legal. Do you agree or disagree?



# Sports

## Warm-Up

What's your favorite sport? Why?

## Vocabulary Challenge

d i n u l d i a v i — only 1 person

p o i l c y s m — worldwide sports event

m s e u r m — season with hot weather

d m l i e d — in between

s e x e i p v e n — not cheap

## Idioms and Phrases

*summer Olympics, winter Olympics, team sports, sports teams, high school*

Some sports in the \_\_\_\_\_ are skiing, bobsled, and curling.

I prefer \_\_\_\_\_ to individual ones.

Some sports in the \_\_\_\_\_ include swimming, diving, and soccer.

I played on the basketball team in \_\_\_\_\_.

My middle school was mostly focused on academics and we didn't have many \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Do you like to play sports?
2. How often do you play sports?
3. Do you prefer individual or team sports?
4. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of team sports?
5. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of individual sports?
6. Do you ever watch sports on TV?
7. Are you interested in the summer or winter Olympics?
8. Do you have a favorite sports team?
9. Do you think athletes are overpaid for what they do?
10. Should college athletes be paid?
11. Did your high school or middle school have any sports teams?
12. Have you tried any new sports lately?
13. What do you think about extreme sports?
14. What are some expensive sports? What are some that you can mostly do for free?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. All kids should play team sports. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. Professional athletes make way too much money. Do you agree or disagree?
- C. Write about an experience you've had playing a sport.

# Stress

## Warm-Up

What are 10 things that can cause people stress?

## Vocabulary Challenge

u r c e d e — to make less

l h n a i n d g — dealing with

f s t s u r e s l — causing stress

t i m k u a l g t s i n — doing more than 1 thing at the same time

l p p e o e — more than 1 person

## Idioms and Phrases

*reduce stress, waiting in line, at the end of my rope, has a lot on her plate, gets on my nerves*

I always avoid the bank at lunch because I hate \_\_\_\_\_.

Last year, I was \_\_\_\_\_ with my situation at work.

My boss \_\_\_\_\_ in a big way. Thankfully, I can usually avoid her.

My sister \_\_\_\_\_ with 3 kids and a full-time job.

I find that meditation is the most effective way to \_\_\_\_\_ for me.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What are 10 things people do to reduce stress?
2. How much stress do you have in your life?
3. What causes you stress?
4. What do you do to reduce stress?
5. Do you ever have so much stress that it affects your sleep?
6. Do you consider yourself to be good at handling stress?
7. What are some of the most stressful jobs?
8. Some people think that multitasking makes them more effective. Do you agree or disagree with this?
9. Do you find waiting in line stressful?
10. Do you find tests stressful?
11. Do you ever think that stress can be a good thing?
12. Is your home a relaxing or stressful place? Why?
13. Do you sometimes feel like you're too busy to enjoy life?
14. When you feel stressed about something, do you like to talk to other people about it?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Do you think multitasking is an effective way for you to get things done?
- B. Is your life stressful? Why or why not?

# Technology

## Warm-Up

Name 10 kinds of technology that you interact with daily.

## Vocabulary Challenge

i t h e e c — person who is good with technology

e l t a s t — most recent

e r e s v r e — change directions; go backward

n o r i g a c — something that is grown or made without added chemicals

a t i n c o t i e r n — communication or involvement with something or someone

## Idioms and Phrases

*early adopter, global warming, artificial intelligence, face-to-face, bells and whistles*

I don't care about all the latest \_\_\_\_\_. I just want something easy to use.

\_\_\_\_\_ has the potential for a lot of good but also a lot of harm too.

My brother is an \_\_\_\_\_. He loves to try out all the new things.

In my opinion, \_\_\_\_\_ is the most serious threat to our world.

Maybe I'm old-school, but I generally prefer \_\_\_\_\_ interaction with people and I hate those self-checkouts.

## Let's Talk!

1. What are some interesting new technologies you've heard about lately?
2. Do you consider yourself to be a techie?
3. Have you heard the term, "early adopter?" What does it mean?
4. Are you the kind of person who loves getting the latest cell phone every year or two?
5. How much influence does technology have on your daily life?
6. Do you think that technology can reverse something like global warming?
7. What are the negative effects of technology on our lives?
8. Do you think that robots or artificial intelligence will one day take over the world?
9. Do you think face-to-face interaction has been reduced because of technology in our lives?
10. What is the difference between technology and science?
11. What are three of the most important inventions of all time?
12. Do you think people should be allowed to clone themselves?
13. What are some advantages and disadvantages of GMOs (genetically modified food)?
14. Are you willing to pay more for organic food?

## Writing Prompts

- A. GMOs are dangerous. Do you agree or disagree?
- B. What do you think is the most important invention of all time? Why?
- C. Robots will take over the world one day. Do you agree or disagree?

# Things that Annoy You

## Warm-Up

What are some of your pet peeves?

## Vocabulary Challenge

o s o c l h — a place people go to learn

p w l o a c r k e — a place people work

l r a e r g e u l y — often or usually; most days

n t r t a n a s o p t o r i — cars and trains are examples

u c t o m e m — going to work

## Idioms and Phrases

*family members, listening to music, public transportation, public displays of affection, cuts in line*

My pet peeve is when someone \_\_\_\_\_.

I don't mind some \_\_\_\_\_ like holding hands but something like kissing is too much.

My \_\_\_\_\_ love to play practical jokes on each other.

\_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ without headphones is generally considered to be very rude.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What are some things that annoy you about where you live?
2. What are some things that annoy you about your school or workplace?
3. What are some things that annoy you about your family members?
4. Do you do anything regularly that might annoy other people?
5. Your friend is always at least 30 minutes late. How do you feel about this?
6. Your bank always has a line of at least 20 minutes. Would you consider changing banks because of this?
7. What do you think about someone listening to music on public transportation without headphones?
8. If someone cuts in line in front of you, what do you do?
9. If someone does something that annoys you, do you tell them or keep it to yourself?
10. How long is your commute? How do you feel about this?
11. What do you think about PDA (public displays of affection)?
12. Do people smoking in public annoy you?
13. Does it annoy when people use emojis or abbreviations when texting?
14. Do you find any famous people annoying?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Write about some things that annoy you. It's your chance to complain!
- B. Would you rather live in a nice place far from work or a less nice place closer?



# Time

## Warm-Up

How do you spend most of your time?

## Vocabulary Challenge

a e r x t — in addition, also, besides

x r g e n l a i — peaceful; not stressful

c t l y a p i — usual or normal

a m s e s i n g t n — something that you have to do, usually for school

e b o d r — a feeling, the opposite of excited

## Idioms and Phrases

*free time, day of the week, school assignments, work project, time is money*

I require that my son finishes his \_\_\_\_\_ before going out to play with his friends.

My favorite \_\_\_\_\_ is Sunday.

That \_\_\_\_\_ is probably going to take at least a few months.

My dad always used to say, "\_\_\_\_\_."

I loved being a student because I always felt like I had lots of \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What do you like to do in your free time?
2. Do you feel like you have enough free time?
3. What would you do if you had an extra 5 hours each day?
4. What does your work or study time look like?
5. What's your busiest day of the week?
6. What's your most relaxing day?
7. Do you usually feel like time moves slowly or quickly?
8. What time do you usually get up?
9. What time do you go to bed at night?
10. What was the best time in your life so far?
11. Describe your typical day.
12. Are you ever late for things? What usually causes this?
13. Have you ever turned in a school assignment or a work project late?
14. Do you get bored easily?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. What would you do if you had more time in each day?
- B. Do you want time to move more slowly or more quickly? Why?

# Travel

## Warm-Up

Describe your last vacation.

## Vocabulary Challenge

r m e a e m l o b — something that's easy to remember

t v a i c n a o — not working or studying

i t o s u t r — a visitor to a place for the purpose of fun and leisure

o p a r s t s p — an official government document that you need to travel outside your country

l e w t a l — a place to keep money, credit cards and ID

## Idioms and Phrases

*dream vacation, tourist destination, lost my passport, studying abroad, learn English*

I wish that my husband would \_\_\_\_\_ so that it'd be easier for us to travel outside our country.

I'm planning on \_\_\_\_\_ next year in Canada.

My \_\_\_\_\_ involves a beach and lots of drinks!

A popular \_\_\_\_\_ in South Korea is Jeju Island.

It was a great trip, except for when I \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. Have you ever taken a trip outside your country?
2. What was a memorable vacation from childhood?
3. What was the best vacation you've ever taken?
4. Do you have any future travel plans coming up?
5. What would your dream vacation look like?
6. Did you go on an interesting school trip when you were a kid?
7. What are some of the popular tourist destinations in your country?
8. When you travel, do you like to stay close to home or go to other countries?
9. Do you like lounging on the beach or do you prefer to be more active?
10. Do you prefer summer or winter vacations?
11. Have you had any travel nightmares?
12. Have you ever lost or had your passport, phone, or wallet stolen when traveling?
13. What do you think about kids studying abroad to learn English?
14. Could you live in another country for the rest of your life?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Write about your dream vacation.
- B. Studying English abroad is a waste of money. Do you agree or disagree?
- C. Would you ever live in another country? Why or why not?

# TV

## Warm-Up

Name 10 TV show genres.

## Vocabulary Challenge

l n y o r l m a — usually, most of the time

a o c r t — male TV or movie star

e a s c t s r — female TV or movie star

i d c e e v — computer, phone, and tablet are examples of

p s u t b o s i c r i n — something you pay for each month

## Idioms and Phrases

*idiot box, feature films, showstopper, stealing the show, TV dinners*

My brother is super lazy and usually just eats \_\_\_\_\_.

When I was growing up, my mom always said that the TV is an \_\_\_\_\_ and instead, she made my sister and I play outside.

Wow! That performance was a real \_\_\_\_\_.

I usually end up watching \_\_\_\_\_ months after they come out.

That sweet little kid ended up \_\_\_\_\_.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What kinds of shows do you normally enjoy?
2. What are 1-2 shows that you watch these days?
3. What's your favorite TV series of all time?
4. Do you have any favorite TV actors or actresses?
5. How often do you watch TV?
6. When do you watch TV?
7. Do you think you watch too much TV?
8. On what kind of devices do you watch TV?
9. Do you have a Netflix or Amazon Prime subscription (or something similar)?
10. What do you think about downloading TV shows for free from a Torrent site?
11. Do you think you're influenced by TV commercials?
12. What do you think about young kids watching TV?
13. What are some reasons people watch lots of TV?
14. What are the disadvantages of watching TV?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. What are some positive and negative things about watching TV?
- B. TV commercials have a big influence on consumer spending. Do you agree or disagree?

# Weather

## Warm-Up

What kind of weather do you like best? Why?

## Vocabulary Challenge

m s e u r m — the season where you might go to the beach

t w r i n e — the season where you might go skiing

e a v a e g r — central or typical value in a set of numbers

r t e t m p u e e r a — Celcius and Fanrenheit are units of this

a b a l r i z d — a very bad snowstorm

## Idioms and Phrases

*raining cats and dogs, extreme weather, got wind of it, on cloud nine, saving for a rainy day*

Global warming is a likely reason that we're getting more \_\_\_\_\_ lately.

I tried to plan a surprise party for my wife but she \_\_\_\_\_.

My grandparents are always \_\_\_\_\_.

I'm going to stay inside and read a book because it's \_\_\_\_\_.

I was \_\_\_\_\_ after seeing my test score.

## **Let's Talk!**

1. What's the weather like in summer in your country?
2. What the weather like in fall?
3. What's the weather like in winter?
4. What's the weather like in spring?
5. What is the average temperature in each season?
6. What are some activities that people do in each season?
7. What's your favorite season? Why?
8. What's your least favorite season? Why?
9. Which season is the most beautiful?
10. What kind of weather do you hate?
11. Would you rather live in a place that's always hot or always cold?
12. Do you think we're getting more extreme weather lately because of global warming?
13. Has extreme weather like a tornado, blizzard, or earthquake ever impacted your life?
14. What kind of weather do you prefer when choosing a vacation?

## **Writing Prompts**

- A. Describe your ideal day in terms of weather.
- B. Global warming is changing weather patterns in my country. Do you agree or disagree?



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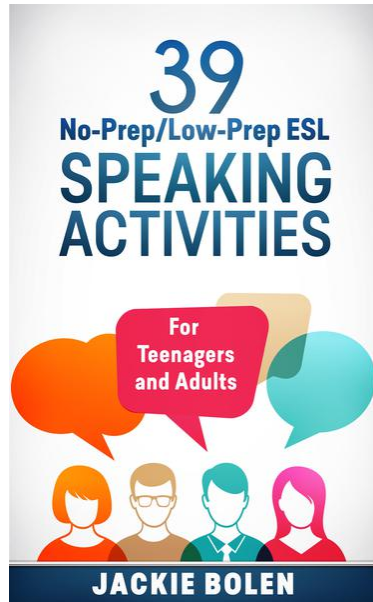
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