



Conversation Starter Worksheet

Here is a simple worksheet to help provide you with some topics to help initiate conversations with your homestay student. Especially when they first arrive, they may be quite shy and reserved. A lack of confidence in their English abilities can also lead to them only providing one word answers. Help build their confidence in communicating with them and getting them to try to elaborate when they can. Don't worry about language mistakes. Confidence is one of the most important things in learning a second language, and at times it is overlooked too much.

Conversations Starter Questions About School

What was the best thing that happened at school today?

What was the worst thing that happened at school today?

Tell me something that made you laugh today.

Tell me one thing that you learned today

How did you help somebody today? How did somebody help you today?

Tell me something good that happened today.

When were you the happiest today? When were you bored today?

What word did your teacher say most today?

What makes a good friend?

Conversation Starter Questions About Themselves

When is your birthday? How do you celebrate birthdays at home?

What do you do in you free time back home?

What do your parents do (for work)? – A lot of ESL students aren't familiar with What do you parents do, as well as the difference between, "What does your mum like," and, "What is your mum like?"

Do you have siblings? If so, how old are they? What are they like? What do they like? Etc.

What is something you like about yourself?

What is one of your earliest memories? What's one of your favorite memories?

What's the hardest part of your life right now? What do you worry about the most?

What helps you feel better when you're upset or stressed?

What can I do to help you when you're upset or stressed?

How often do you feel sad?

When have you felt angry recently?

When are sometimes you've felt worried?

What hurts your feelings?

What's the best compliment you've ever gotten?

What does your perfect day look like?

If you could be famous, would you? What would you want to be famous for?

Other Conversation Starter Questions

Have you travelled? If so where?

What is your favourite food?

Do you enjoy eating different types of food? What food do you want to try while you are in Canada?

Tell me about some big holidays in your country. How are they celebrated?

Would you prefer to go to the beach, the park, or a mountain? Why?

What was the last English language movie you saw?

What English TV Shows are you into? (INTO may be a newer phrase for some students)

After your student has gained confidence in speaking about these different topics, the roles could be reversed. They could ask you or other people in the household. That will help their listening skills and especially help in developing the ability to quickly form follow-up questions or to agree and disagree with the opinions of others in a natural way.

