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speaking live in class. Give your teens time to think about and/or prepare their answers before asking them to speak in front of the class. They are less likely to make mistakes this way and less likely to freeze from embarrassment. Another significant factor in the psychology of teens is the importance of their peer group. The relationships teenagers have with their friends are arguably the most important relationships they have during their years of development. For that reason, encouraging small group interactions or peer-oriented talk can be extremely valuable to your teenage students and can make a big difference in how teens feel about themselves. When their peers accept them, they accept themselves, so you should encourage those relationships through small group interaction. As an ESL teacher, I've found one of the ultimate ways to engage teenagers in the ESL classroom is to teach with what they know. By working with technology and media with the FluentU program, you'll have immediate access to a large library of native English videos. By introducing this content, there is almost a rapid classroom environment change. Teenage ESL students become more confident and open when discussing their favorite TV series or music. Why not get started with a free trial of a FluentU teacher account to see if you notice a difference in your adolescent learners! I cannot say whether the days your students spend in your class will be the best ones of their lives or if you couldn't pay them enough to live them again, but I can tell you one thing: Your teens will appreciate the effort you give to make class the best it can be for them. And whether or not they remember the activities you did, they will most definitely remember that you cared. A Part of Conversation Questions for the ESL Classroom. Where did you go to kindergarten? Where did you go to elementary school? Where did you go to junior high school? Where did you go to college or university? Where did you go? What did you study? How many years did you go? Did you work while you went there? Did you enjoy going to elementary school? Does your country have middle schools? What is the age that children begin school? How old are students they when they graduate? Did you go to a good high school? What do you remember about your teachers? Who was your favorite teacher? What teacher impressed you the most? Do you still stay in touch with your teachers? Did you have any teachers you didn't like? How many students were in your high school? Describe the students who attended your high school. Did they have a good influence on you? Did they make your childhood and teenage years harder or easier? Were there cliques in your high school? Were there gangs? Did you make friends in high school that you still keep in touch with? What subjects were you good at? What subjects were you bad at? Did you study a foreign language in school? Was it taught well? Do you know anyone who attended a private school? Do private schools offer higher quality education or are they just prestigious? Did you attend college? If you did, what made you decide to go to the college you did? Was it a good school? How many students attended it? How many students were in your biggest class? How many in your smallest class? Did you prefer small classes or big classes? Was it harder to study in college than in high school? How does college compare to high school? What advice would you give a high school student who is about to go to college? What did you major in? Why did you choose the major you did? Did you live in a dormitory while you went to college? Were you your roommates? Does your country provide a good public school system? Does your country have good public universities? If not, why do you think there is a lack of funding for education in your country? What realistic changes would you make to your country's attitude toward education? What role do you think human capital plays in the development of countries? How many years did you attend college? Did you study abroad? Do the elite in your country attend one or two universities? Do elite universities help or harm your country? Where do we learn the skills necessary to become a good student - in elementary, middle or high school? What are the skills that separate good students from bad students? Were good grades important to you? Did teachers grade students fairly? Did you ever feel like you should have gotten a better grade than you did in a class? Did you procrastinate studying? Did you ever pull an all nighter? Did you study with other students? Did classmates talk to each other much before or after class? Did you skip class very often? Do college professors give students syllabuses at the beginning of term? Were you clear on what professors expected of you? Are college tuitions reasonable in your country? Is it easy to get scholarships or government grants? Are there good colleges in your country? Were there any subjects you wanted to study but they weren't available at your school? Are women encouraged to pursue education? Are straight-A students smarter than others or just better at memorizing things? Did you really learn in school or did you just memorize information and pass tests? Do you know anyone who does not know how to read or write? Do you think teachers are paid enough? Do you think teachers are well educated? Do you think your teachers gave too much homework? How much homework do you desire to learn? What do you think about a gap year, is this something you would consider? Should people go straight from school to University, or do something different? Do you think it is necessary that there are windows in the classroom to provide for a proper learning atmosphere? What do you wish your teachers understood about you? Do you think a person can become a genius, or are they just born that way? What do you consider to be a "smart" or "slow" person? Are things your school teaches that you think are not important? Are school uniforms good to have? Why/why not? Do prefer school uniforms or casuals better? Would you ever want to learn a third language? [To be "trilingual"] What do you consider "hardworking" or "lazy"? What is the role of schools in society? Do you enjoy going to school? If so, why if not why? What does your education mean to you? What do you think the advantages and disadvantages of state and private schools are? What would you do if you saw someone with a gun at school? Are college tuitions reasonable? Are foreign languages part of the curriculum? If so, which languages? Are most schools coeducational in your country? Are there any subjects/classes you wanted to study but they weren't available at your school/college? Do you have difficulty with school work? Do you think teachers are paid enough? Do you think your school is a good one? Why/why not? Do you think your teachers give too much homework? Do you think public speaking can improve your english? How can we improve our classroom? Why English is hard to learn at university level? How do you travel to school? How long must you go to college to get a degree? How much is too much homework? How should the homework load be managed? If you have not attended college, do you plan on doing so? What are some good ways to learn English? What are some important factors in determining which college to attend? What classes would you take? What do you study? What's your major? What is the average age of a high school graduate? What is your favorite class? What was (or is) your favorite subject? Why do you like it? Who selects the colleges you will attend - you or your parents? Why are you studying a foreign language? Why is it helpful to learn a Second language ? Why is it sometimes very difficult to speak another language? Would you consider studying abroad? Do parents home-school their children in your country? What do you think of home-schooling? Do you know anyone who was home-schooled? Do you think that most parents influence what university their child will attend? Once you graduate from a university should you stop learning? What are some ways a person can continue to learn? Which is more important, the essential skills in life you've learned to develop on your own or the artificial structure in college about the "real" life? Which high schools and colleges are the best in your country? Which high schools and colleges are not so good in your country? We should not just prepare for life, but live it. Do you agree? What kind of world do you think this would be if people never went to school? Should education be free? Do the elite in your country attend only one or two universities? Do your children attend US schools? If so, how do their schools differ from those your children attended back home? Does your country have good public universities? If not, why do you think there is a lack of funding for education in your country? Why do students cheat during tests and exams? How do they cheat? What is your attitude towards cheating? What are the dangers of cheating? How should parents react? How should teachers react? What is the role of school and decision makers? What skills separate good students from bad students? Should people go straight from school to university, or do something different? Do you think a person can become a genius, or are they just born that way? Are things that your school teaches you that you think are not important? Do prefer school uniforms or casuals clothes better? If you can think of another good question for this list, please add it. of these questions come from textbooks Copyright © 1962-2000 by Charles Kelly & Lawrence Kelly (Used by Permission) Copyright © 1997-2010 by The Internet TESL Journal Do you want your students to be excited to speak with you in English? Do you want to make sure you always know where the conversation is going and what to say next? You need engaging content, interesting conversation starters, and questions that really reel them in. This list of 150 ESL conversation starters will give you everything you need to make sure you always have something interesting to talk about and never run out of things to say! If you want to improve your student's speaking ability, you need to master the art of conversation. You have to know how to get your students speaking, move the conversation forward, provide feedback and make it all feel natural. You also need engaging topics, and that is where this guide comes in. One of the problems that can face a teacher is knowing what to talk about. What do you do when you've finished talking about work, the weather and then realize that only 5 minutes have passed? This guide has everything you need to make sure you never run out of topics and most importantly, you always have something interesting to say. It is a good idea to pick a particular topic for a class (or even have them student pick if you want more engagement from them). Once you have that topic, then move through the questions, trying to get to much from each one as possible. Browse our ESL teacher resources section for more tips and printable lesson materials. Adults and teens usually know more about advanced topics than children (politics, religion, etc.) That being said, knowing more on these topics doesn't necessarily translate to being able to speak about these things easily so don't assume they can do everything. Be aware of your student's level and be prepared to reframe a question if they are struggling to understand. Where do you work? Do you enjoy your job? Do you use English for your job? Tell me about your last job. What do you think is the most difficult job in the world? What do you think is the easiest job in the world? Where would you work if you could pick any job? Would you still work if you won the lottery? Do you think robots will replace all the jobs in the future? What kind of job should have the highest salary? In this post, you'll get 20 topics and activities for Business English lessons. Do you listen to music? When did you start listening to music? Do you play a musical instrument? What do you think the future of music will be like? If you could meet any musician, who would it be? Why do people like music? If you could erase a musical genre, which would it be? Do you think musical success comes from working hard or luck? What was the first album you bought? Have you ever downloaded music illegally? What is a holiday? Do you often go on holidays? Where did you last go on holiday next? Do you prefer relaxing or having an adventure on your holiday? Is it weird to go on holiday by yourself? What is the best food you've eaten while on holiday? Can you imagine what holidays 500 years ago were like? Would you like to go on holiday to space? What do you think the future of the holidays will be like? What is technology? What do you think of when you hear the word "technology"? How has technology changed in the past? How has technology changed your life? Could you live without technology? Find the full list of technology questions here To engage a child in conversation, you have to enter their world. What is fun for them? What do they like to do? Using words/phrases like "wow", "That sounds tasty", "Awesome" can show you are listening to them and make things more fun which will get them saying more! Do you have a pet? What do you think pets do in the day? What do pets eat? Are cats better or dogs? What is the best name for a pet? Would you like a pet spider? Would you like to be an animal? Which one? Why do we have pets? Do you prefer cute or fun pets? What is the best present for a pet? Do you like school? What is your favorite subject? What is your least favorite subject? Who is your favorite teacher? Why do people have to go to school? Do you like homework? What would you do if you were the headteacher? How could schools be more fun? How long are the summer holidays? Can you learn and have fun at the same time? What is your favorite movie? Who is your favorite character? Who is your least favorite character? Do you like Disney movies? What was the last movie you saw at the cinema? How often do you watch movies? Do you wish you could live in a movie? Why do you watch movies? Do you prefer reading books or movies? Do you watch any movies in English? Keeping the topics simple for beginners is a must at the start. Talking about their hobbies and family can help, as these are areas they may have already experience in talking about. If a student is really struggling, then giving them phrases to use such as "I like ..." can help get the ball rolling. What is your favorite food? Why do you like it? Do you like to cook? What dishes can you make? What foods are popular in your country? Do you prefer eating at home or at restaurants? Why? What is a typical breakfast in your home? Have you ever tried food from another country? Did you like it? Do you like spicy food? What spicy dishes have you tried? What foods do you dislike? Why don't you like them? What is a traditional holiday food in your culture? If you could only eat one food for the rest of your life, what would it be? What do you like to do? Do you do any sports? What types of movie do you like? Do you play video games? What do you usually do with friends? Is learning English a hobby or work? Do you have any unusual hobbies? Do you have enough time for your hobbies? What is a common hobby? What do you think is a boring hobby? Do you live with your family? How many people are in your family? Are you close with your family? How often do you see your family? What do you do with your family when you see them? Is your family important to you? Which is more important, friends or family? Who is the weirdest person in your family? Are families less important nowadays than in the past? What would happen if we didn't have families? Where do you live? What is there to do in your city? What is your place like? What is your neighbourhood like? Are there any parks near where you live? Have you ever lived elsewhere? How many rooms does your place have? If you moved, where would you like to live? Would you prefer to live in the city or country? Would you like to live abroad? Use information gap activities to help your students practice speaking: read our guide. Nobody wants to speak about the same mundane topics, especially if they're an advanced student. Being able to mix it up is a great attribute to have as a teacher. Not only will you have memorable lessons with these conversation starters, but it will really test the ability of the students to think about topics they aren't used to (instead of rolling off easy answers about familiar topics.) What's the most epic fail you've ever witnessed in person? Have you ever had a funny cooking fail? What happened, and how did it turn out? What's the most hilarious fashion fail you've ever seen or experienced? Have you ever had a technology fail at the worst possible moment? What was the situation, and how did you handle it? What's the funniest sports fail you've ever seen, either in person or online? Have you ever had a humorous translation fail when trying to communicate in a foreign language? What did you say, and what did you mean to say? What's the most amusing autocorrect fail you've ever experienced or seen? Have you ever had a funny fall while trying to impress someone you liked? What happened, and how did they react? What's the most comical pet fail you've ever witnessed or heard about? Have you ever had a hilarious DIY or home improvement fail? What went wrong, and how did you fix it? What is your zombie apocalypse plan? Who would you take with you? What would be your weapon of choice? What would you do if a friend got bitten by a zombie? What would you do if you got bitten by a zombie? What food would you take with you? Do you think governments should have a zombie apocalypse plan? Do you think everyone should have a zombie apocalypse plan? Is a zombie outbreak a likely scenario? Why do you think there are so many movies and TV series based on zombies? If you could have a superpower, what would it be? What do you think is the weirdest superpower in comic books? Are some superpowers too powerful? Would you like a superpower where you could turn things into gold by touching them? What is the weakest superpower in a comic book? Have we already seen every kind of superpower possible in a comic book? Are there some people in the real world that have superpowers? (doctors etc) Would you like a superpower where you could turn things into chocolate? Would it be better to be super strong or super smart? Would you like the power to travel through time? If you were granted 3 wishes, what would they be? Is wishing for more wishes cheating? Should there be any other rules for people granted wishes? Have you seen any movies with a magic lamp? Do you think there is a better object that could house a genie? Why are we interested in stories of people having wishes? Have any of your wishes come true in real life? Do you make a wish when you blow out the candles on a cake? Is it bad luck to tell someone what your wish is when blowing out the candles? What other ways do people make wishes? These are topics that you need to be careful with and use judgement based on the student's background. You need to wait until you know a student to find out what material is appropriate for them. That being said, if used correctly, then these can be really interesting and get the student thinking about "real issues". Do you think social media has had a positive or negative impact on society? Why? Should governments have the right to monitor citizens' online activities for security purposes? Is technology making people less social or more connected? Do you believe that artificial intelligence will eventually take over many human jobs? Should parents limit their children's screen time and use of technology? Is online privacy a fundamental human right, or should people accept less privacy in the digital age? Do you think technology is making people smarter or more dependent on devices? Should schools incorporate more technology in the classroom, or focus on traditional teaching methods? Is the rise of fake news and misinformation on the internet a serious threat to democracy? Do the benefits of technological advancement outweigh the potential negative consequences for society? Find more questions about social media and questions about technology here. What do you think about the death penalty? Do you know which countries still use the death penalty? Why do you think some countries use the death penalty? Do you know of any famous executions? Should the death penalty be outlawed? If we removed the death penalty then what punishment should replace it? What is the most humane form of execution? What would your "last meal" be? Does the fear of the death penalty reduce crime? How has execution changed over the years? What is abortion? Should abortion be legal? Why do you think some people are "pro choice"? Why do you think some people are "pro life"? What do you think of abortion in cases where the baby was conceived due to rape? What do you think of abortion in cases where the Mother's life is in danger (due to being pregnant)? Should the father "get a say" in the matter of abortion? What advice would you give to a family member who was thinking of getting an abortion? Should people be allowed to protest against abortion? What do you think the future laws on abortion will be? What is corruption? Is there corruption in your country? Why does corruption exist? Would you consider taking a bribe? Would you ever consider offering a bribe? Are some types of corruption better than others? Which courts have the most corruption? Which countries have the least corruption? Are there any stories of corruption that you can remember? Is it possible to get rid of corruption entirely? Get a list of 110 "Would you rather" questions for your conversation lessons. Here are some additional tips to make sure your students are getting the most out of their conversation lessons and will be excited about coming back for more. Some of these will take time to internalize and get right but be aware of them and experiment to get them just right. Don't feel like you have to stick rigidly to the list of conversation starters. If a question takes you down a different conversational thread then go with it. The important thing is that the student is talking, you can always return to "the script" later. Correcting a student immediately can often be useful, but in conversation, it can really kill the flow as well as a student's confidence if done too often. A good idea is to make notes of any major problems and then mention them after a particular section instead. On top of this, try not to interrupt a student once they are speaking. For each answer, try to milk everything out of them that you can before you have "your turn to speak". As well as the frequency of correction, consider the amount being corrected. Don't feel like you have to correct EVERYTHING. Especially if a student is starting out and is a bit nervous. Pick a few problems areas and focus on that, if you mention too many things at once it can be overwhelming and can really lower a student's confidence. Be strict when a student gives you short answers. If a student gives you an answer like "yes" then force more out of them with "yes... because" or "no... but". The idea is to get them using the language more. Try to inject some personality when using these ESL conversation topics. It should feel like a conversation rather than a robot giving an interview. Some students will struggle with certain subjects as they just don't know enough about the topic. If it's a bit of a challenge then push through but if they can't even talk about a topic in their native language then it may be an idea to move on to another subject. Allowing a student to pick a topic can be a great way of engaging them more. This also has the added benefit of helping a younger student (such as a teenager) feel more empowered as they can make their own decisions. Get 18 statesman tips on giving great conversation for teens and adults in this post. There you have it! All you need to make sure you never run out of things to say. Get these printed out as your go-to cheat sheets and bookmark this page so you can easily come back to them for future classes. Hopefully, these ESL conversation starters and questions will spark your own ideas for topics you can use in class. If you are teaching one-to-one, you could even write niche topics especially for that student's interests (e.g skateboarding, knitting or chess). Remember, match the topics to the student's level, keep it fun and once they start talking don't get in the way! This article presents an engaging collection of 50 ESL conversation questions designed for high school students. Each question stimulates meaningful discussions while encouraging language practice. Topics range from personal interests and future aspirations to social issues and health. Students can explore their views on friendship, technology, and cultural differences. These questions facilitate dialogue and improve communication skills. By checking out the full list, one can discover a wealth of conversation starters that inspire deeper interactions. What is your favorite color? My favorite color is blue because it reminds me of the sky. Do you have any pets? Yes, I have a dog named Max. What do you like to do after school? I like to play basketball with my friends. What is your favorite food? My favorite food is pizza because it is delicious and fun to share. Where do you live? I live in a small town near the beach. What is your favorite season? My favorite season is summer because I love going to the beach. What do you want to be when you grow up? I want to be a teacher because I like helping others learn. What is your favorite subject in school? My favorite subject is science because I enjoy experiments. Do you play any musical instruments? Yes, I play the guitar and I am learning new songs. What is your favorite movie? My favorite movie is "The Lion King" because it has great music and a good story. 11. What hobbies do you enjoy? - I enjoy painting and hiking during my free time. 12. How do you usually celebrate your birthday? - I usually celebrate with a party and invite my friends over. 13. What kind of music do you like? - I like pop music because it is upbeat and makes me happy. 14. What is a tradition in your culture? - In my culture, we celebrate New Year with fireworks and family gatherings. 15. How do you stay healthy? - I stay healthy by exercising regularly and eating fruits and vegetables. 16. What is your dream vacation destination? - My dream vacation is to travel to Japan to see the cherry blossoms. 17. What is the best book you have read? - The best book I have read is "Harry Potter" because it is magical and exciting. 18. How do you manage your time for studying? - I make a schedule and set specific times for each subject. 19. What skills would you like to learn? - I would like to learn how to cook different cuisines. 20. What is your favorite way to communicate with friends? - I prefer texting because it is quick and easy. 21. What technology do you use daily? - I use my smartphone and laptop for school and social media. 22. What is your favorite sport to watch? - My favorite sport to watch is soccer because it is exciting. 23. Who is your role model? - My role model is my mother because she is hardworking and kind. 24. What is your opinion on social media? - I think social media is useful for staying connected but can be distracting. 25. What do you think about climate change? - I believe climate change is a serious issue that we need to address urgently. 26. How do you feel about group projects? - I enjoy group projects because we can share ideas and learn from each other. 27. What is your favorite childhood memory? - My favorite childhood memory is going to the amusement park with my family. 28. How do you prepare for exams? - I review my notes, take practice tests, and study with friends. 29. What are your goals for the future? - My goals are to finish school and go to university. 30. What do you think is the most important quality in a friend? - I think loyalty is the most important quality because it builds trust. 31. How do you define success? - I define success as achieving personal goals and finding happiness. 32. What changes would you like to see in your community? - I would like to see more green spaces and activities for young people. 33. How does your culture influence your identity? - My culture shapes my values and traditions, which are important to me. 34. What role does education play in society? - Education is crucial for personal development and societal progress. 35. How do you think technology affects communication? - Technology can improve communication but may also lead to misunderstandings. 36. What are the benefits of learning a second language? - Learning a second language opens up job opportunities and cultural understanding. 37. How do you handle stress during tough times? - I handle stress by practicing mindfulness and talking to friends. 38. What are your thoughts on global issues like poverty? - I believe poverty is a complex issue that requires collaboration to solve. 39. How can individuals contribute to environmental protection? - Individuals can reduce waste, recycle, and support sustainable practices. 40. What impact does social media have on youth today? - Social media can influence youth positively and negatively, affecting self-esteem and relationships. 41. How would you describe your leadership style? - I would describe my leadership style as collaborative, as I value team input. 42. What is the importance of cultural exchange? - Cultural exchange fosters understanding and respect among different communities. 43. How do you envision your life in ten years? - I envision myself working in a fulfilling career and possibly starting a family. 44. What challenges do you think young people face today? - Young people face challenges like mental health issues and job market competition. 45. What is the role of art in society? - Art reflects culture and can inspire change and provoke thought. 46. How do you think education will change in the future? - I think education will become more personalized and technology-driven. 47. What is your perspective on globalization? - Globalization has benefits like increased connectivity but can also lead to cultural homogenization. 48. How do you approach problem-solving? - I approach problem-solving by analyzing the issue and considering various solutions. 49. What is the significance of volunteering in your community? - Volunteering fosters community spirit and helps those in need. Conclusion To sum up, the 50 ESL conversation questions for high school students serve as a valuable resource for fostering meaningful dialogue and enhancing language skills. While some may argue that conversation topics can be too simplistic, these questions encourage deeper thinking and personal expression, allowing students to connect their experiences with language learning. By embracing these discussions, educators can create an inclusive environment that not only builds vocabulary but also strengthens interpersonal relationships among students.

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