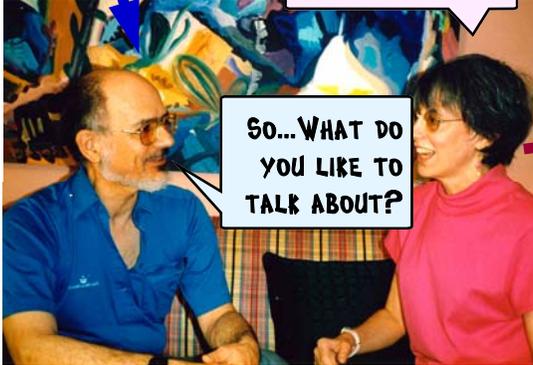


ARE YOU A GOOD CONVERSATIONALIST?

SURE...AT LEAST I THINK I AM.

SO...WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO TALK ABOUT?



# SAMPLE CONVERSATION 1-A

FORM: *Short Talk*

TOPIC: *Good Conversation?*



OH... JUST ABOUT ANYTHING. I LIKE TO TALK ABOUT MY WORK—MY EXPERIENCES, MY GOALS... AND OF COURSE, THERE'S MY FAMILY—MY BRILLIANT HUSBAND, MY WONDERFUL CHILDREN. I HAVE SO MANY FASCINATING FRIENDS, TOO. AND THEN THERE ARE MY TRAVELS AROUND THE WORLD... I'VE SEEN SO MANY PLACES, HAD SO MANY EXPERIENCES. I ALSO HAVE A LOT OF INTERESTS AND HOBBIES—AND FAVORITE THINGS... THE SPORTS I ENJOY, MUSIC I LIKE TO LISTEN TO, THE MOVIES I PREFER. OF COURSE, I LOVE GIVING MY OPINIONS ON CURRENT EVENTS—ISSUES IN THE NEWS—POLITICS—I HAVE VIEWS ON EVERYTHING. SO WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO TALK ABOUT FIRST?



HEY! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?



# SAMPLE CONVERSATION 1-B

FORM: *Short Talk*

TOPIC: *Good Listening?*



ARE YOU A GOOD LISTENER?



ELENA: Are you a good listener?

ARTURO: Sure I am. Uh huh...

ELENA: I mean, do you *really* know how to listen when someone is telling you her opinions, her ideas, her feelings...?

ARTURO: Um...Yup.

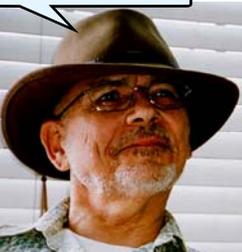
ELENA: What I'm trying to ask is... how are your listening skills? Do you acknowledge what your conversation partner says? Do you ask questions if you don't understand? Do you show interest and make encouraging comments?

ARTURO: Huh? Oh... yeah. Sure.

ELENA: My point is... do you follow the *rules* for effective listening? Do you listen for more than just the *words*? Do you notice the speaker's facial expressions? Do you get the *real* message? Do you...

ARTURO: Mmm...What?

SURE I AM. UH HUH...



# SAMPLE CONVERSATION 1-C

FORM: Short Talk

TOPIC: The Culture of Conversation

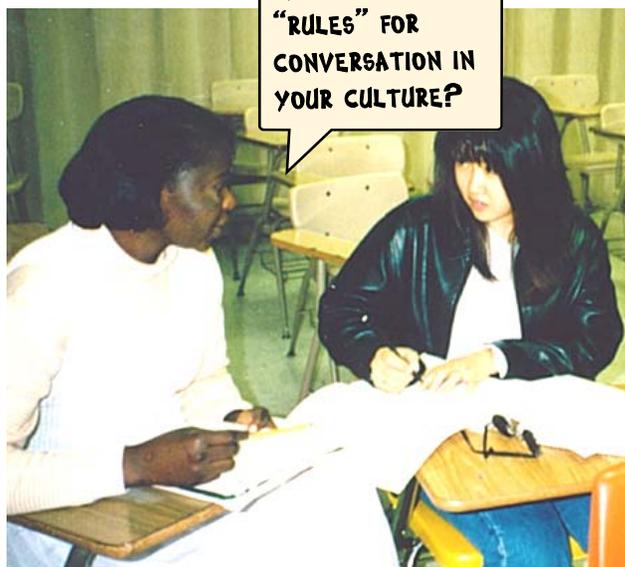


SARA: What are the “rules” for social conversation in *your* culture?

RYOUNG: Well, in *my* culture people don’t often have long social conversations—at least not loud, excited ones. Especially when we are with people older than us—or people in positions of authority—we don’t make small talk. And we rarely ask personal questions about somebody’s feelings or opinions. I guess...we don’t believe people should talk much—unless they really have something important to say. So...how about conversation in your culture?

SARA: We usually *hate* silence. Especially with family and good friends, we talk a lot...about anything and everything. We talk over meals...long lunches and dinners. We talk at parties and other social events. We talk on the phone. We even talk to each other during lectures—while the teacher is trying to speak. The subject doesn’t usually matter. We love to “discuss”—even to argue. Lots and lots of words—in our beautiful language.

WHAT ARE THE “RULES” FOR CONVERSATION IN YOUR CULTURE?



WE USUALLY HATE SILENCE.

I GUESS... WE DON'T BELIEVE PEOPLE SHOULD TALK SO MUCH....



**COMPREHENSION CHECK:** Did you get the main points of the *Sample Conversations 1-A, 1-B, 1-C*? Then answer these questions about each of the exchanges:

1. What is the relationship of the speakers? (Are they sister and brother, mother and daughter, partners, friends, colleagues, classmates, or what?) Why do you think so?
2. What is the topic of the conversation? (What are they talking about?)
3. What’s the point of the exchange? (What can we listeners learn from it?)

# MINI-SPEECH 1

**FORM:** *Answering an Open-Ended Question*

**TOPICS:** *Social Conversation Subjects*



**I**NSTRUCTIONS: Are you a skillful conversationalist? Can you think of interesting or amusing things to say on the spur of the moment? Can you get others to contribute helpful info, imaginative ideas, or spontaneous thoughts? To practice asking and answering *Open-Ended Questions*, try these steps:

1. Each participant in this activity gets a card with an *Open Ended Question* on it.<sup>1</sup> You'll have only a short time to think about your answer.<sup>2</sup> The instructor or group leader lists the names of the speakers in order on a board.
2. When it's your turn to speak, read your question aloud clearly—twice. Then give your answer in one to two minutes. Include as much info as you can within your time limit.
3. When you're in the "audience," encourage each speaker through your *facial expressions* (*smiling, interest, agreement, understanding, etc.*) and *body language* (*nodding, leaning forward, etc.*). If there's time, make comments or ask further questions that will keep the speaker talking for another minute or so.
4. Your instructor or leader may want to check the audience's understanding by having each listener fill out a chart with these headings. (This chart has some sample notes in it.)
5. After everyone has had a chance to speak, tell the class or group your reaction to, comments on, or questions about *one person's* answer.

Name of Speaker	Notes on the Main Points of the Presentation	My Comments or Questions
Tina	Prefers listening to speaking— hates being the center of attention. Feels embarrassed. Wants to <i>learn</i> , not teach. Would rather <i>get</i> than <i>give</i> .	To learn and help others, we have to take both roles in conversation. Isn't it <i>selfish</i> not to participate?
Yuhin	His best friend never stops talking but doesn't have much to say. He can't get a word in edgewise.	Why doesn't he insist she let him talk too?

NOTES: <sup>1</sup>So that everyone in the "audience" participates in active listening when others are speaking, your instructor or group leader won't give you your question card until a few minutes before it's your turn to talk. He/She may ask you to pick a card from the back—without reading the questions first. You might get to choose from 2 or 3 cards, but no more than that.

