

CHAPTER 2: MAKING SMALL TALK

**CONVERSE LIKE A NATIVE ENGLISH
SPEAKER**

FINDING COMMON GROUND

- The goal of small talk is to find common ground.
- **FORD**
- Family
- Occupation
- Recreation
- Dreams

Elise: Hiya Julie, how's things, it's good to see you.

Julie: Hey! long time no see. How've you been?

Elise: Yeah, I've been pretty good thanks. You?

Julie: Yeah, good, good.

Elise: This is my friend Simon.

Simon: Hey.

Julie: Hey Simon, I'm Julie. It's nice to meet you.

Simon: Nice to meet you too.

Julie: And what do you do Simon?

Simon: I'm student at Walailak University.

Julie: Oh, cool. Where's that?

Simon: It's in Nakhon Si Thammarat. In southern Thailand.

Julie: So what are you doing here in Bangkok?

Simon: I just came to meet Elise and show her around.

Julie: Well that's nice of you. So what are you studying at Uni?

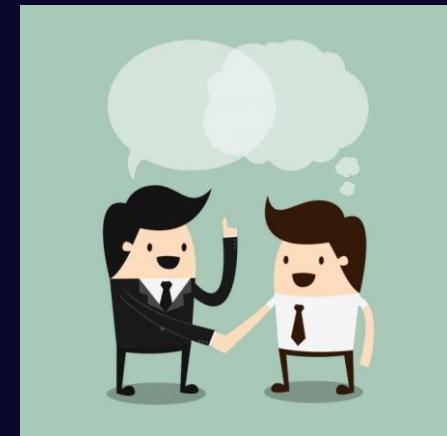
Simon: I'm studying English. I want to be an English teacher.

Julie: Oh, how great? I'm a teacher.

Simon: Really? And what do you teach?

EXAMPLE CONVERSATION

Here is an example conversation when meeting someone for the first time.



Julie: I teach History.

Simon: Oh, cool. Ancient or modern?

Julie: I teach both. But I prefer teaching Ancient history.

Simon: My brother's really into Ancient history. You two would get along well.

Julie: That's great. You will have to introduce me to him some time.

Simon: Sure.

Julie: I wish my brother was into history. All he likes to do is play games so we don't really have a lot in common.

Simon: How many years apart are you?

Julie: 3 years. But it feels like so much more. He's so immature.

Simon: Haha. Yeah my brother can be pretty immature sometimes too.

Julie: So what do you like to do?

Simon: I like drawing. It's something that I have done since I was a kid. I mainly like drawing landscapes but I also enjoy drawing people as well.

Julie: Awesome. I always wished that I could draw but sadly

I suck at it and I don't have the patience to learn. Did you ever consider being an artist instead of a teacher?

Simon: It's definitely crossed my mind but I really want to be a teacher like my mother.

Question

1. What are the things Julie and Simon have in common?
2. What four topics do Simon and Julie talk about?

COMMON QUESTIONS

QUESTION

1. What's your name?
2. What do you do?
3. What do you do for work?
4. Where do you work?
5. Where are you working?
6. What do you do for a living?

RESPONSE

1. Sylvia. And you?
2. I'm a student at Walailak University. How about yourself?
3. I don't work because I am studying full time at Uni.
4. I work at my parents store on the weekend. During the week I go to Uni.
5. I'm not working at the moment, I'm studying at University.
6. I'm a teacher. I'm a nurse. I'm an engineer.

COMMON QUESTIONS

QUESTION

1. **What** do you like to do?
2. **What** are your interests?
3. **What** are your hobbies?
4. **What** do you like to do in your free time?
5. **What** do you like to do on the weekend?
6. **What** do you usually do on the weekend?
7. **What** do you usually do after work?
8. **Do** you like (sports/music/games)?
9. **What** kind of (sport/music/games) do you like?
10. **What** do you enjoy doing?
11. **Do** you enjoy (travelling/singing/listening to music)?

RESPONSE

1. I like to travel.
2. Travelling, surfing and playing games.
3. Eating and reading fantasy books.
4. Hang out with my friends.
5. Meet up with my friends.
6. Study for Uni.
7. Relax and watch T.V.
8. Yes.
9. I like jazz music.
10. I enjoy playing with my nephews.
11. Yes.

COMMON QUESTIONS

QUESTION

- **What are** you getting up to today?
- (what are you (going to do/doing) today?)

- **What did** you get up to yesterday?
- (What did you do yesterday?)

- **What are** you getting up to this weekend?
- (What are you going to do this weekend?)

- **What did** you get up to on the weekend?
- (What did you do on the weekend?)

RESPONSE

- Not much. Just going to sit at home and relax. How about yourself?

- Not a lot. Just went to Uni. What about you? What did you get up to?

- Not sure yet. I will probably go see my mum and dad if I have the time.

- I just stayed at home and done some cleaning around the house.

COMMON QUESTIONS

QUESTION

1. **How was** your day?
2. **How was** your weekend?
3. **How was** last night?
4. **How was** your breakfast?
5. **How was** your sleep?
6. **How was** your last class?
7. **How's** your brother (going/doing)?
8. **How's** your family (going/doing)?
9. **How's** your job (going)?

RESPONSE

1. Yeah, not bad. A bit boring. Yours?
2. Pretty good. I went out to the beach. What did you get up to?
3. It was a good night. I got a bit too drunk though.
4. Good/okay/not bad. I didn't have breakfast.
5. Not long enough. Too short. Okay.
6. Good/okay/great/fun/boring.
7. He's going alright. What about your sister?
8. They're going well. How's your family.
9. It's going alright. Keeping me busy. Yours?

Jarred: Hey. How are ya? What's been happening?

Rachel: Hey. Not much. Yourself?

Jarred: Yeah, not a lot. How has your week been?

Rachel: It's been alright. What have you been up to?

Jarred: Just working. Been under the pump all week. Can't wait for the weekend. How's your job going?

Rachel: It's good. The same as usual. What are you getting up to this weekend? Got any plans?

Jarred: Not at the moment. Not sure if I just want to relax or if I want to go out. What about you? You doing anything?

Rachel: I'm just staying at home. It's my mum's birthday next week so we will probably do something for that.

Jarred: Sounds good. How is your mum? I haven't seen her in a while. Hope she's going well.

Rachel: Yeah she's going okay. She's turning 50 so she's always complaining that she's getting old.

EXAMPLE CONVERSATION

Here is an example conversation with someone that you already know.



CONVERSATION TIPS

- Give genuine compliments
 - I really like your dress, it's so sparkly.
 - That's a cool hat. Where did you get it?
 - I love your shirt. Hello kitty is adorable.
- Use your environment
 - What do you think of this song?
 - Do you come here often?
 - That guy reminds me of my brother. He loves to dance.

SCENARIOS

1. You are waiting in line for coffee and the girl in front of you says hello. She is wearing a shirt with the name of a band you like on it. She looks about the same age as you. Write a list of questions you could ask her.
2. You are at a party and your friend introduces you to one of her friends. He is a doctor and likes to exercise. Write a list of questions you could ask him.
3. You go to your friends house after work. You have not seen them for a week and are not sure what they have been doing. You have heard from another friend that they have a new job. Write a list of questions you could ask them

