

## DEVELOPING CONVERSATIONS

There are three main ways of contributing to a conversation:

1. Making statements (ordinary sentences)
  2. Asking questions (new or follow-up questions)
  3. Responding to what the other person says
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1. Making a collection of statements is similar to making a presentation. In order to expand the number of things you can say, think about combining different sorts of statements. For example, you can:
    - start a topic with an opening sentence
    - follow it up with further detail
    - give an opinion about it
    - give reasons for the opinion
  2. New questions prompt the other speaker to start new topic or sub-topic.  
(e.g. *Tu as un frère?*)  
Follow-up questions prompt the other speaker to add something more to the topic he/she has already started to talk about already started. They often involve using pronouns.  
(e.g. *Quel âge a-t-il? C'était intéressant?*)
  3. You can respond to what the other person has said by expressing your reaction to what has been said. This can take many forms. For example, you could
    - encourage him/her to continue (e.g. *Ah oui? C'est intéressant. Et alors...?*)
    - express agreement (*Ah oui, c'est essentiel!*)
    - express amazement or incredulity (e.g. *Dis donc! C'est vrai? Sans blague! Mais ça alors!*)
    - express approval or disapproval (e.g. *C'est une bonne idée! C'est impossible!*)
    - express sympathy (e.g. *Ah oui, c'est difficile ça.*)
    - say it's the same for you (*Ah oui, moi aussi.*)

Notice how many of these are exclamations, beginning with *c'est*, and followed by an adjective. It's a good idea to make a collection of these and get used to using them in conversation.

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### Practice games

1. To show how it's done, teacher makes a presentation on a familiar topic, but keeps being interrupted by questions.
2. If presentations have already been prepared, invite a confident pupil to come up and play the teacher played before. This time the teacher joins in the questions, demonstrating other possibilities.

3. Select two reasonably confident pupils to conduct the presentation as an interview, then to change roles and do a second interview.
4. Ask the same pupils, or different ones, to MIX their roles, thus turning the interviews into a conversation.
3. Another set of pupils. This time the teacher plays the clown, making asides to the audience as the dialogue takes place.
5. Groups of three, with instruction to prepare a conversation on a recent topic. Pick one of three roles (could be drawn as lots). Each person has counters of a different colour.
  - One speaker (could use presentation text)
  - One questioner (turns presentation into an interview)
  - One observer/commentator

Each person has counters of a different colour. The task is to see how many contributions you can make to the conversation, while staying with your role. Keep count of the contributions by putting a counter in the centre.

### **Variations**

Change roles.

Total the counters for each group, see who was able to spin out the conversation for longest.

Change the topic.

Set a time limit.