

# SEARCH AND SHARE EXERCISES\*

1-5

## COMPELLING AMERICAN CONVERSATIONS

Questions & Quotations  
for Intermediate American English Language Learners

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\*reproducible for classroom use

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# SEARCH and SHARE

## Watching the News

Student Name: ..... Date: .....  
Class: ..... Teacher: .....

“Search and Share” exercises ask you to find information on your own and bring the information back to your classmates to discuss in small groups. This homework exercise helps you use real English materials, and bring your voice into the classroom.

For homework, watch a news report in your best language for 5-10 minutes. You can use the TV or the Internet to find a video in which a news announcer is sitting in the studio presenting the news.

First watch the news with the sound “muted,” or with the volume turned all the way down, so you can focus on the presenter’s body language. As you watch, look at the speaker’s face (especially on his or her mouth) and on the speaker’s hand and body movements.

Video (non-English): .....  
Source: ..... Topic: .....  
Captions or descriptions: .....

Next, find another 5-10 minute news report on TV or on the Internet in English. Like before, watch it with the volume as low as possible or on the “mute” setting. While you watch, again pay close attention to the person’s mouth, face, hands, and gestures.

Video (English): .....  
Source: ..... Topic: .....  
Captions or descriptions: .....

Here are a few places to search for news videos: <http://www.youtube.com/education> and **hulu.com**.

Describe the person speaking your best language.

Describe the person speaking English.

Was the mouth of either announcer open wide more often?

What did you notice about the person’s face or hands?

What else did you see?

What do you think this means? Why?

**S E A R C H   a n d   S H A R E**  
**We're Talking About My Hometown!**

Student Name: ..... Date: .....  
Class: ..... Teacher: .....

All people are shaped by the place where they were born or grew up. Where were you born? What would you like to tell us about your hometown?

Please find a story on the Internet (in English) about your hometown or native land that you would like to share with your classmates. Read the article, print it out, and be prepared to discuss it.

Title: .....  
Author: ..... Length: .....  
Publication: ..... Publication date: .....

What's the main idea?

How many sources were quoted?

Were there any photos or illustrations? What kind?

What did you learn from this article?

What was the most interesting part for you?

Write five new vocabulary words, idioms, or expressions related to the article.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

How would you rate the article, on a scale of 1–5, with five being the highest? Why?

Why did you choose this article?

**“Light tomorrow with today!”**  
—Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806-1861), British poet

**SEARCH and SHARE**  
**How Do You Spend Your Time?**

Student Name: ..... Date: .....  
Class: ..... Teacher: .....

Enter the amount of time you spend on each of the following activities on a typical weekday. Use your best estimate or guess for each category.

	<u>hours / minutes</u>
sleeping	_____ : _____
eating and drinking	_____ : _____
housework/cleaning up	_____ : _____
attending classes	_____ : _____
working at a job	_____ : _____
commuting/driving	_____ : _____
playing sports and exercising	_____ : _____
watching TV	_____ : _____
attending religious services/praying	_____ : _____
socializing and relaxing	_____ : _____

For any of the above activities, would you say that you spend more or less time on it, compared to other students in your class?

To compare your results to those of the average Americans by groups, visit the following website:  
<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2009/07/31/business/20080801-metrics-graphic.html>

**“All the treasures of the earth cannot bring back one lost moment.”**  
*—French proverb*

## SEARCH and SHARE

### Finding English Pronunciation Tips on YouTube!

Student Name: ..... Date: .....

Class: ..... Teacher: .....

Find a YouTube (or Hulu.com) video clip that gives tips or suggestions on improving English pronunciation. Look for better ways to make certain sounds (example: the consonant blend, ‘str’ as in strong). You can also search for common word stress patterns in English. Watch the video, listen carefully, take notes, and share the pronunciation tips with your classmates.

Video title: .....

Web address: .....

Length: ..... Creator: .....

Describe the video. Who is the presenter? What happens?

What pronunciation tips did the video give?

Which words or sounds did the video focus on?

What was the strongest part? Why?

What was the weakest part? Why? What would you add?

Who do you think would be the best audience for this video?

What did you learn from this video?

Why did you choose this video?

How would you rate this video, on a scale of 1–5, with five being the highest? Why?

**“Fatherhood is helping your children learn English as a foreign language.”**

—Bill Cosby (1937–), American comedian and actor

## SEARCH and SHARE

### Always Be Yourself

Student Name: ..... Date: .....

Class: ..... Teacher: .....

Please find a video about being yourself on **Hulu.com** or **YouTube.com**.

What is the segment about?

Can you describe one or two of the characters?

Did the main character face a problem? What was it?

What was the main idea of this video?

What was the most interesting part for you? Why?

Write five new vocabulary words, idioms, or expressions related to the topic.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Do you think “being yourself” is always a good idea? Why? Why not?

How would you rate the video on a scale of 1–5, with five being the highest? Why?

**“This above all: to thine own self be true.”**

—*William Shakespeare (1564–1616), English playwright*

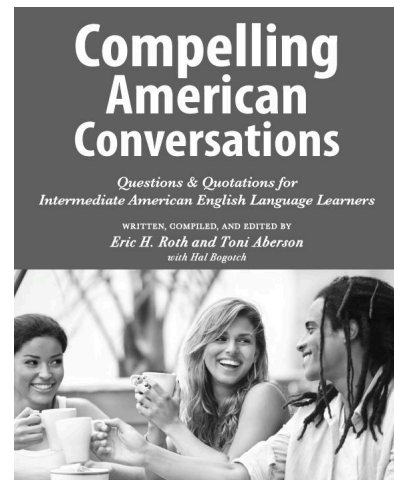
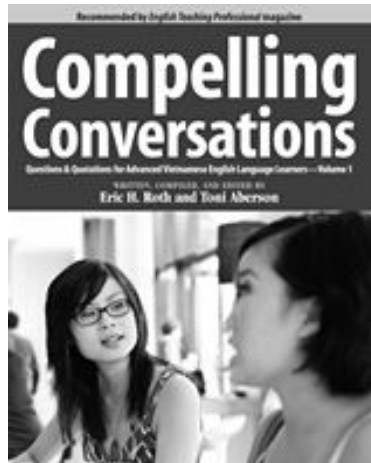
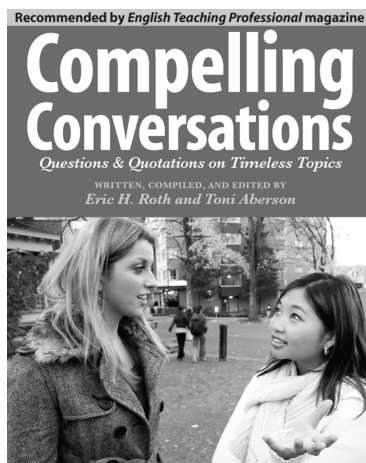
## ABOUT THIS BOOK AND THE COMPELLING CONVERSATIONS SERIES

*Compelling American Conversations: Questions and Quotations for Intermediate American English Language Learners* explicitly emphasizes American language, culture, and values.

The primary audience is newcomers to the United States, and recent and not-so-recent immigrants who may be studying at an American high school, adult school, community college, or university. The authors strongly believe that all immigrants deserve a quality education that allows them to express themselves, develop their English language skills, and deepen their critical thinking skills. A narrow, life-skills-only language program can sometimes reinforce the tyranny of low expectations. From our perspective, too many language programs too often teach students to mostly listen and seldom speak – and often underestimate the academic and professional abilities of many American immigrants.

Therefore, we deliberately chose to emphasize speaking skills and fluency. We also include academic vocabulary and more philosophical questions because American immigrants deserve the same level of sophisticated materials which international English as Foreign Language (EFL) students enjoy in the stronger international high schools. The authors hope American English language learners begin asking more questions, speak more in their workplaces, and create their own compelling American conversations.

Finally, the United States will be a better, stronger nation when we allow all our residents and citizens to realize their innate potential as human beings. We also believe that students choosing to seek U.S. citizenship are making a smart, sensible choice to join the American family. The United States, despite its current challenges and flaws, remains in the immortal words of President Lincoln, “the last, best hope for mankind.”



Visit us at [www.CompellingConversations.com](http://www.CompellingConversations.com) to find more tips on fluently speaking English, to suggest conversation topics, or to contribute your favorite proverbs and quotations.

1-855-ESL-Book (toll free)

1-855-375-2665