

SEARCH AND SHARE EXERCISES*

11-15

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

Reducing Stress and Increasing Happiness

Student Name: Date:

Class: Teacher:

We live in stressful times. How can we reduce our stress? How can we increase our happiness? Take the five-minute online quiz called “True Happiness Compass” at:

<http://apps.bluezones.com/happiness>

Answer the questions, read your evaluation, and be prepared to discuss stress management tips with your classmates.

What did you think of the quiz?

How many questions were asked?

Can you recall two of the questions from the quiz?

- 1.
- 2.

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

Next, find a recent article about how to cope with stress and increase happiness.

Title:

Author: Length:

Publication: Publication date:

What’s the main idea?

How many sources were quoted?

How reliable were the sources quoted? Why?

How could the article be improved? Why?

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

“For fast-acting relief, try slowing down.”

Lily Tomlin (1939–), American actress

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Finding Advice on Job Interview Techniques

Student Name: Date:
Class: Teacher:

Please find a video clip (in English) that you would like to share with your classmates from **YouTube.com**, **hulu.com**, or **Monster.com** that helps people successfully interview for jobs. Watch the video, take notes, and review it for your classmates.

Video title:

Web address:

Length: Creator:

Describe the video.

What interview tips did the video provide?

How practical was the advice? Why?

What do you think was the strongest part? Why?

What was the weakest part? Why?

Who do you think is the target audience for 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?

“Hiring is a manager’s most important job.”

Peter F. Drucker (1909–2005), American management consultant and author

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Building a Better Budget

Student Name: Date:

Class: Teacher:

Where would you like to live in the United States? What would it cost to live your American dream in California, the “Golden State”? The cost of living often depends on location so you need to consider many things when creating a realistic budget.

The California Career Resource Network has created an interactive website called www.CaliforniaRealityCheck.com to help estimate budgets. Check it out.

Were you able to successfully complete the budget process? If not, why not?

Did you find any surprises? What?

Where does most of your money go?

Where would you like to spend more? Why?

Where would you like to spend less? Why?

What’s your second choice for a possible home in California?

Can you compare the two locations? How are the costs similar? Different?

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

Why did you give it that rating?

What do you think are some advantages to living in California? Why?

“California is America – only more so.”

—Wallace E. Stegner (1909–1993) American historian

SEARCH and SHARE

Explore a New American City!

Student Name: Date:

Class: Teacher:

Let's go explore a new city. Select one of the ten cities that you would like to visit. Now go find an article – in English – about the American city that you selected and have not yet visited. Read the article and answer the questions below. Be ready to share your research about an American city with your classmates. Your teacher may ask for volunteers to speak in front of the class.

Title:

Author: Length:

Publication: Publication date:

What's the main idea?

How many sources were quoted?

Were there any illustrations? What kind?

What did you learn from this article?

What was the most interesting part for you? Why?

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?

“A great city is that which has the greatest men and women.”

—Walt Whitman (1819-1892), American poet

SEARCH and SHARE
Documenting Moments in Time

Student Name: Date:
Class: Teacher:

Documentary photographs capture important moments in time. Visit the Library of Congress collection at www.loc.gov/pictures to find a special historical photograph that captures your imagination. Print it out and share it with your classmates.

Title:
Photographer:
Historical Context: Date:

Describe the photograph. What is going on?

How did the photographer compose his picture? Where are your eyes drawn?

What historical moment does it capture? Does it do it well?

Why do you think the photographer chose to take this picture?

Why did you choose this photograph?

What did you learn from it?

Do you think a photograph like this would still be taken today? Why? Why not?

On a scale of 1–5 with five being the highest, how would you rate the photograph? Why?

“There are always two people in every picture: the photographer and the viewer.”
—Ansel Adams (1902-1984), American photographer and environmentalist

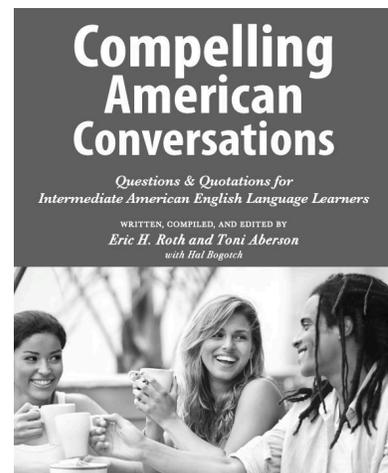
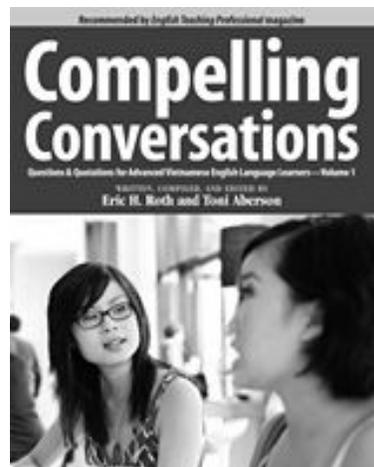
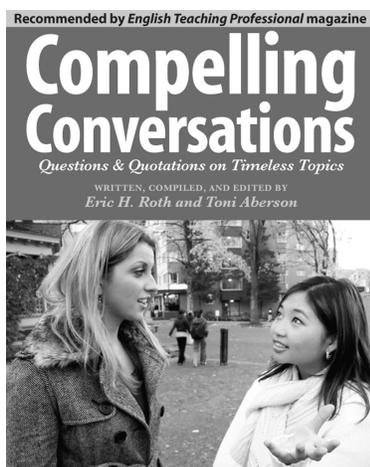
ABOUT THIS BOOK AND THE COMPELLING CONVERSATIONS SERIES

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 to find more tips on fluently speaking English, to suggest conversation topics, or to contribute your favorite proverbs and quotations.

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