

CREATING Compelling Conversations

REPRODUCIBLE SEARCH AND SHARE ACTIVITIES FOR ENGLISH TEACHERS



Featuring select Search and Shares from all thematic units

SAMPLE ACTIVITIES

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EDITED BY *Andrea Schmidt*



Finding English Pronunciation Tips on YouGlish

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Do you know **YouGlish.com** yet? Go to the impressive pronunciation site. Put in a word that you have trouble saying clear enough in English. Listen to five different authentic speakers use the word. Read the pronunciation tips listed on website. Now compare that word to a similar, but different word. Repeat this activity for a phrase, an academic term, and a minimum pair (sea/she, sink/think, live/leave). Listen carefully, take notes, and share the pronunciation tips with your classmates.

- 1 What word did you first choose? Why?
- 2 What was the first video shown? Who was the speaker?
- 3 What pronunciation tips did YouGlish.com provide for this word?
- 4 What were some similar words? List a few.
- 5 Which word from your list did you choose to compare with the original word?
- 6 What phrase did you choose? Why?
- 7 What academic term or specialized word did you choose? Why?
- 8 Which minimal pair did you choose? Why?
- 9 What pronunciation tips did you learn?
- 10 How can you use YouGlish.com to improve your pronunciation?

“The bold adventurer succeeds the best.”
– Ovid (43 B.C.E. – 17 C.E.), Roman poet





Understanding Plagiarism

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

What do you know about plagiarism? How is it seen in your country? Plagiarism is a common educational concern, and many English teachers stress the importance of understanding how to use/reference another's work appropriately. Search for a recent article or brochure that describes and discusses plagiarism. After, answer the following questions:

Title: _____

Web address: _____

Author: _____ Length: _____

Publication: _____ Publication date: _____

- 1 How does the article/brochure describe plagiarism?
- 2 What is the author's opinion about plagiarism?
- 3 According to the article, what are three (3) practices considered to be plagiarism?
 - a
 - b
 - c
- 4 According to the article, what are three (3) ways one can avoid plagiarism?
 - a
 - b
 - c
- 5 Based on what you read, when is it considered plagiarism to use someone's ideas? Why?
- 6 What did you learn from the article that you did not know before?
- 7 In your opinion, is it possible to plagiarize unintentionally? Why or why not?
- 8 How would you feel if someone plagiarized your work? Why?
- 9 Do you think plagiarism is a major problem? How widespread do you think it is in your school?
- 10 How would you rate the article/brochure on a scale of 1–5, with 5 being the highest? Why?

“
‘Fine words! I wonder where you stole them?’
—Jonathan Swift (1667–1745) - Anglo-Irish satirist and essayist
”



Celebrating Birthdays

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Everyone has a birthday. The day you came into this world marked a significant change for those around you.

Do you know what the world was like the day you were born? Do you know how life changed for your family that day? Conduct an Internet search and talk to a relative to find out what life was like when you were born. Take notes and answer the following questions. Discuss your findings with your classmates.

- 1 Where were you born? Describe the place where you were born.
- 2 Who was present at your birth?
- 3 What were some surprises surrounding your birth?
- 4 What was happening in the world when you were born? What were some major news stories at this time?
- 5 What songs were popular when you were born?
- 6 What were some popular movies that year?
- 7 Who are some famous people who share your birthday?
- 8 Who do you typically celebrate your birthday with? Why?
- 9 Do you have any special plans to celebrate your next birthday? Why?
- 10 What has been the best year of your life so far? Why?

“The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate.”

—Oprah Winfrey (1954–), American star and philanthropist



Reducing Stress and Increasing Happiness

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

We live in stressful times. How can we reduce our stress? How can we increase our happiness?

A. Take the following five-minute online quiz: “True Happiness Compass.”

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

- 1 What did you think of the quiz? How many questions were asked?
- 2 Can you recall two of the questions from the quiz?
- 3 How would you rate the online quiz, on a scale of 1–5, with five being the highest? Why?

B. Find a recent article about how to cope with stress and increase happiness.

Title: _____ Publication/Website: _____

Author: _____ Publication Date: _____

- 1 What’s the main idea?
- 2 How many sources were quoted?
- 3 How reliable were the sources quoted? Why?
- 4 What was the strongest part of the article? Why?
- 5 How would you rate the article on a scale of 1–5, with five being the highest? Why?

BONUS: What are your best tips for a happy, healthy life?

“For fast acting relief, try slowing down.”
—Lilly Tomlin (1939–), American comedian





Collecting Advice on Writing Professional Emails

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Please find a short article that helps professionals successfully write emails – in English. You might search the Harvard Business Review, The Economist, the New York Times, and other appropriate sources. Read the article, take notes, summarize, and review it for your classmates.

Title: _____

Web address: _____

Author: _____ Length: _____

Publication: _____ Publication date: _____

- 1 Please describe the article. What's the main idea?
- 2 What writing tips did the article provide?
- 3 How practical did you find the advice? Why?
- 4 What was the strongest part? Why?
- 5 How could the article have been improved?
- 6 Who do think is the target audience for this article? Why?
- 7 Why did you choose this particular article?
- 8 Based on what you've learned, what makes an effective email? Why?
- 9 How many articles (a, an, the) appeared in the article? Circle and count them. Write an original sentence with each below.
a: _____
an: _____
the: _____
- 10 How would you rate the article on a scale of 1–5, with 5 being the highest? Why?

“I do love email. Wherever possible I try to communicate asynchronously. I'm really good at email.”
—Elon Musk (1971-), American entrepreneur and TESLA founder



Responding to Yelp! Reviews

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Bad reviews aren't all bad; sometimes they provide valuable feedback for businesses that want to improve. Find a negative review of a hotel, restaurant, or other business that describes a negative customer experience in detail. Then answer the following questions.

- 1 What is the name of the business?
- 2 What type of business is it? What services do they provide?
- 3 What complaints are made in the review? Are they related to service, efficiency, or something else?
- 4 What is the tone of the review? Does the reviewer come across as reasonable or rude? Why?
- 5 Is the criticism in the review constructive/helpful? Why or why not?

Now, imagine you are the owner or manager of this business. How would you respond to this customer's complaints and concerns? Write a brief response to the reviewer below.

“The details are not the details. They make the design.”
—Charles Eames (1907-1978), American designer





Looking at Languages

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

All of the world's languages, estimated at least 6,000, have stories. English, for example, has become the world's most influential language in business and science over the last 50 years.

Besides English, what language are you curious about? Can you tell us more about another language? Go to to Wikipedia to gain more information about another language spoken on planet Earth. Take notes and answer the following questions. Discuss your research with your classmates.

- 1 What language did you choose to study today? Why did you pick it?
- 2 Where is this language usually spoken? How many people, approximately, speak it?
- 3 Can you tell me a bit more about this language?
- 4 Where is this language an official language?
- 5 Is this an ancient or modern language? How do you know?
- 6 What are five words that English borrows from this language?
 - a
 - b
 - c
 - d
 - e
- 7 Who are some famous people who speak this language?
- 8 What music or movies are created in this language? Can you give some examples?
- 9 How similar is this language to English? In what ways?
- 10 In what situations would knowing how to speak this language be helpful?

“The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate.”

—Oprah Winfrey (1954–), American star and philanthropist



Exploring Art at a Museum

Student Name: _____ Date: _____

Browsing art collections at a museum can lead to many exciting discoveries. Choose an art museum that you are curious about and browse its collection online. Then, select one piece from the collections, take notes, and answer the questions below. Be prepared to share your answers with your classmates.

Museum suggestions:

- The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, USA)
- The Getty Center (Los Angeles, USA)
- The Louvre (Paris, France)
- The Tate Modern (London, England)
- Museo del Prado (Madrid, Spain)
- The Uffizi Gallery (Florence, Italy)
- The Hermitage Museum (St. Petersburg, Russia)
- The National Palace Museum (Taipei, Taiwan)
- National Museum of China (Beijing, China)
- The National Art Center (Tokyo, Japan)

Title of artwork: _____

Artist: _____

Medium used: _____ Date: _____

- 1 Describe the museum you chose.
- 2 Have you ever visited the museum you chose? If not, why would you like to visit this museum?
- 3 Which collection on display at this museum interests you the most? Why?
- 4 Describe the artwork you chose. What is the subject matter?
- 5 What do you know about the artist?
- 6 Does the artist have other works on display at the museum? If so, what are they?
- 7 What do you like most about this piece of art?
- 8 What emotion(s) do you feel while looking at the artwork? Why? What about it makes you feel that way?
- 9 Would you put a poster of it on display in your home? Why or why not?
- 10 If you could ask the artist one question, what would it be?

“Art is not for the cultivated taste. It is to cultivate taste.”
—Nikki Giovanni (1943-), American poet, author and lecturer

Extension Activities

REVIEWING PRONUNCIATION TIPS ON YUGLISH (PG. 1)

- a) What are some important English words in your field or major? Watch 3 clips from YouGlish featuring the word. Select one to explain to your classmates in a 60 to 90-second video. Send your video to your instructor for feedback.
- b) What other minimal pairs (ex: sat vs. sit, buy vs. boy, trip vs. tip) can you think of? Choose a minimal pair you sometimes have trouble pronouncing. Make a 60 to 90-second video of yourself using the pronunciation tips you discovered on YouGlish with these minimal pairs. Send your video to your instructor for feedback.

UNDERSTANDING PLAGIARISM (PG. 2)

How can one avoid plagiarism? Create a handout explaining what plagiarism is and how to avoid it. Cite at least three sources.

CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS (PG. 3)

What was life like the week you were born? Interview a family member about the week you entered the world. Write a letter summarizing your interview to another relative.

REDUCING STRESS AND INCREASING HAPPINESS (PG. 4)

How can people live happier, healthier lives? Create a three to four-minute video providing your best tips for living a happier, healthier life and how to apply them. Upload your video to the class blog and help others learn how to reduce their stress and increase their happiness!

COLLECTING ADVICE ON WRITING PROFESSIONAL EMAILS (PG. 5)

Are you confident in writing professional emails? Compose and send an email to your teacher asking about your performance in the class so far and how you can further improve.

RESPONDING TO YELP! REVIEWS (PG. 6)

How would a concerned, savvy business-owner reply to critical Yelp reviews? Roleplay being a concerned, savvy business-owner and write a longer, more detailed response to your negative Yelp review. Consider the multiple audiences: the dissatisfied customer; the many loyal customers; potential customers on Yelp; and your staff.

Extension Activities

LOOKING AT LANGUAGES (PG. 7)

How similar is the language you chose to English? Compare and contrast English with this language with a chart. Be prepared to give a brief presentation to your classmates explaining your reasoning.

WEXPLORING ART AT A MUSEUM (PG. 8)

What would you ask the artist on display in an interview? Write a short, imaginary mock-interview of 5-10 questions between the artist and you.

Student Name: _____ Date: _____
Home Country: _____ Best Language: _____
Field: _____ Future Job Title: _____

- 1 Why do you want to speak better English? Give three reasons.
 - a
 - b
 - c
- 2 How can speaking better English help you?
- 3 What activities or methods have you found most helpful in improving your English? Why?
- 4 What is the most helpful English class that you have had? Tell us more about that class.
- 5 What are some reasons some people sometimes dislike English class?
- 6 How else could speaking more fluent English change your life outside of school?
- 7 Can you list three topics that you would like to discuss with your classmates this semester?
 - a
 - b
 - c
- 8 What are your strengths as an English language learner?
- 9 What are some challenges that you want to work on this semester?
- 10 What three things can you do this semester to improve your English?

CONTENTS

FOREWORD **i**

GIVING STUDENTS MORE CHOICE AND A STRONGER VOICE **ii**

UNIT A: STUDYING ENGLISH **1**

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Getting to Know Each Other: Ice Breakers | 2 |
| 2. Listening to the Radio and Podcasts to Learn English | 3 |
| 3. Discussing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Dream | 4 |
| 4. Becoming an Independent Reader | 5 |
| 5. Learning English Through Songs | 6 |
| 6. Finding English Pronunciation Tips on YouTube | 7 |
| 7. Reviewing Pronunciation Tips on YouGlish | 8 |
| 8. Reviewing Stress Patterns in English | 9 |
| 9. Mirroring: A Pronunciation Technique | 10 |
| Extension Activities | 11 |

UNIT B: PREPARING FOR COLLEGE LIFE **13**

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Collecting Academic Advice on the Internet | 14 |
| 2. College Expectations | 15 |
| 3. Choosing an American University | 16 |
| 4. Navigating an American Classroom | 17 |
| 5. Preparing for the IELTS - Speaking Section | 18 |
| 6. Preparing for the IELTS - Writing Section | 19 |
| 7. Preparing for the SAT - Writing Section | 20 |
| 8. Preparing for the TOEFL - Speaking Section | 21 |
| 9. Preparing for the TOEFL - Writing Section | 22 |
| 10. Understanding Plagiarism | 23 |
| Extension Activities | 24 |

UNIT C: CREATING A HOME **26**

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Designing My Dream Home | 27 |
| 2. Searching for My Dream Vacation Home: Airbnb | 28 |
| 3. Talking About Love | 29 |

CONTENTS

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| 4. Parenting Today | 30 |
| 5. Loving Pets | 31 |
| 6. The Cat's Out of the Bag! | 32 |
| 7. This I Believe | 33 |
| 8. Exploring New Holidays | 34 |
| 9. Celebrating Birthdays | 35 |
| 10. Becoming Yourself | 36 |
| Extension Activities | 37 |

UNIT D: MODERN LIVING 39

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Appreciating Your Style! | 40 |
| 2. Exploring American Social Etiquette | 41 |
| 3. Handling Culture Shock | 42 |
| 4. Reducing Stress and Increasing Happiness | 43 |
| 5. Examining a TED Talk | 44 |
| 6. Taking Public Transportation | 45 |
| 7. Researching Natural Disasters | 46 |
| 8. Preparing for Natural Disasters | 47 |
| 9. Going Green | 48 |
| 10. Talking About Taxes | 49 |
| Extension Activities | 50 |

UNIT E: EXPLORING NEW CAREER OPPORTUNITIES 52

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Collecting Advice on Writing Professional Emails | 53 |
| 2. Mastering Email Etiquette | 54 |
| 3. Collecting Resume Advice on the Internet | 55 |
| 4. Collecting Advice on Writing Compelling Cover Letters | 56 |
| 5. Sharing Best Practices for Job Interviews | 57 |
| 6. Sharing Best Practices for Skype Job Interviews | 58 |
| 7. Conducting Effective Informational Interviews | 59 |
| 8. Exploring Engineering in Daily Life | 60 |
| 9. Learning More About a Famous Person You Admire | 61 |

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| 10. Exploring New Career Opportunities | 62 |
|--|----|

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| Extension Activities | 63 |
|----------------------------|----|

UNIT F: ENJOYING AND KEEPING MONEY 65

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| 1. Building a Better Budget | 66 |
|-----------------------------------|----|

| | |
|---------------------------|----|
| 2. Reviewing Movies | 67 |
|---------------------------|----|

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| 3. Choosing a Local Restaurant | 68 |
|--------------------------------------|----|

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| 4. Eating Out in L.A. | 69 |
|----------------------------|----|

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| 5. Buying a Car | 70 |
|-----------------------|----|

| | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| 6. Should You Buy It? | 71 |
|-----------------------------|----|

| | |
|--|----|
| 7. Giving to Charities and Good Causes | 72 |
|--|----|

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| 8. Writing an App Review | 73 |
|--------------------------------|----|

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| 9. Responding to Yelp! Reviews | 74 |
|--------------------------------------|----|

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| Extension Activities | 75 |
|----------------------------|----|

UNIT G: TRAVEL 77

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Talking About My Hometown | 78 |
|------------------------------------|----|

| | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| 2. Being at the Beach | 79 |
|-----------------------------|----|

| | |
|---|----|
| 3. Sightseeing Through Social Media | 80 |
|---|----|

| | |
|--|----|
| 4. Tripadvisor: Exploring a New City | 81 |
|--|----|

| | |
|-------------------------------|----|
| 5. Looking at Languages | 82 |
|-------------------------------|----|

| | |
|-----------------------------|----|
| 6. Touring California | 83 |
|-----------------------------|----|

| | |
|--------------------------|----|
| 7. Visiting Brazil | 84 |
|--------------------------|----|

| | |
|--------------------------|----|
| 8. Visiting France | 85 |
|--------------------------|----|

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| 9. Visiting Japan | 86 |
|-------------------------|----|

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| 10. Visiting Vietnam | 87 |
|----------------------------|----|

| | |
|----------------------------|----|
| Extension Activities | 88 |
|----------------------------|----|

UNIT H: ENJOYING FREE TIME 90

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| 1. How do you spend your time? | 91 |
|--------------------------------------|----|

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| 2. Sharing Musical Tastes | 92 |
|---------------------------------|----|

| | |
|---|----|
| 3. Sharing Restaurant Recommendations | 93 |
|---|----|

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| 4. TV or not TV (Is that a question?) | 94 |
| 5. Enjoying a Great Game | 95 |
| 6. Exploring The Smithsonian | 96 |
| 7. Exploring Art at a Museum | 97 |
| 8. Watching the News | 98 |
| 9. Documenting Moments in Time | 99 |
| 10. Chatting in Person and Online | 100 |
| Extension Activities | 101 |

APPENDIX 103

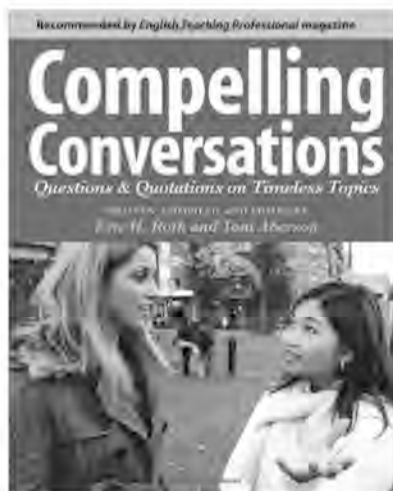
| | |
|---|-----|
| English Learning History and Survey | 104 |
| Hedging Language: Poetry vs. Accuracy | 105 |
| Student Presentation: Instructor Evaluation | 107 |
| Student Presentation:Peer Response and a Question | 108 |
| Student Presentation:Presentation Checklist | 109 |
| Link Index | 110 |
| Quote Index | 116 |
| Recommended Websites | 117 |
| Recommended Supplemental Apps | 119 |

AUTHORS & CONTRIBUTORS

| | |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Eric H. Roth | 120 |
| Teresa X. Nguyen | 121 |
| Andrea Schmidt | 122 |
| Toni Aberson | 123 |
| Hal Bogotch | 123 |
| Trinity Bustria | 124 |
| Shiggy Ichinomiya | 124 |
| Yuka Kuroda | 125 |
| Tuanni B. Vasconcelos | 125 |
| Brent Warner | 126 |

ABOUT CHIMAYO PRESS 127

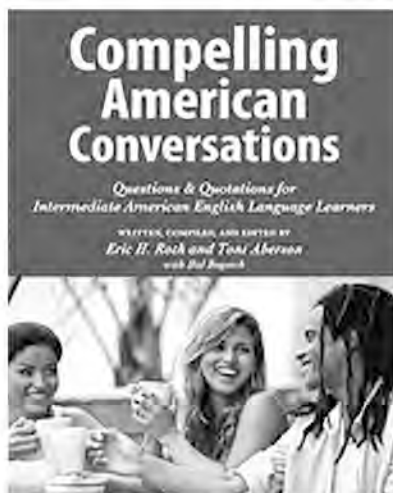
Critical Praise for the Compelling Conversations Series



Compelling Conversations

"In my own teaching, I have found questions and quotations to be highly effective in promoting student discussion. Questions are useful in that they require a response from the listener. Asking them also helps students master the tricky rules of the interrogative. Quotations are brilliant flashes of wit expressed in the shorest space possible, often just a sentence or two. The authors have compiled a formidable collection of quotations by famous people. The authors also add some wise proverbs here and there. My two favorites were 'Recite patience three times and it will spare you a murder' and 'When money talks, truth keeps silent,' which are from Korea and Russia. In sum, *Compelling Conversations* is a recommended resource for teachers who want to make their conversation classes more learner-centered. It should be especially appealing to those who wish to escape the confines of the Presentation-Practice-Production approach and do without a formal grammatical or functional syllabus. It reflects the authors' considerable professional experience, and would be a notable addition to any English teacher's bookshelf."

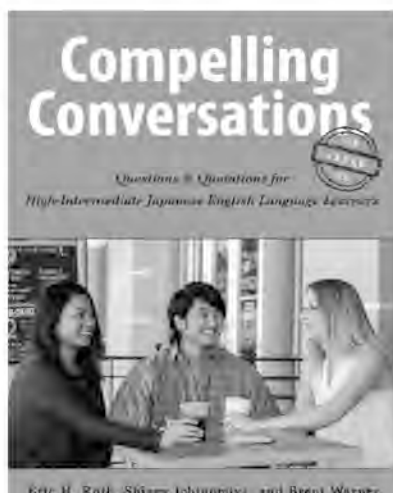
—Hall Houston English Teaching Professional magazine (January 2009)



Compelling American Conversations

"How can so much learning be in just one book? *Compelling American Conversations* is all that an ESL teacher or student needs to use in their course. With clear, easy-to-follow directions, students learn necessary details about American English and culture, practice critical thinking, and expand vocabulary and idioms as they converse in real, natural adult English. Included in the "Search and Share" component are marvelous lessons on using the Internet. An extra bonus is that any of the conversations, quotes, etc. can be used as writing prompts. The book is fun and stimulating and, fortunately, very accessible for the intermediate learner."

—Planaria Price, author of *Life in the USA*



Compelling Conversations - Japan

"As an ESL teacher and accent reduction coach, I regularly encounter frustrated students from Japan who don't feel comfortable speaking English. *Compelling Conversations - Japan* will prove very useful to Japanese English Language Learners ... It's more than just a conversation book; it's also a cross-cultural awareness book, filled with proverbs and cultural insights. In addition, it features valuable English pronunciation exercises focusing on the sounds that are difficult for native Japanese speakers. It also contains numerous fun and thought-provoking conversation topics relevant to a person from a Japanese cultural background."

—Lisa Mojsin, Author, *Mastering the American Accent*



About Chimayo Press

Sophisticated English for Global Souls

CHIMAYO PRESS is an independent educational publishing company committed to publishing niche books that create compelling conversations, deepen relationships, and celebrate the human spirit. We launched in 2005 with one advanced level English as a Second Language (ESL) title—Compelling Conversations: Questions and Quotations on Timeless Topics—from authors Eric H. Roth and Toni Aberson. This fluency-focused English textbook has blossomed into a series that meets the varying needs of English language learners and teachers in over 50 countries.


Compelling Conversations has also become the foundation for an expanding number of ESL and EFL (English as a Foreign Language) titles. The Compelling Conversations: Questions and Quotations series includes national versions for Vietnamese learners of American English (2011), American immigrants and refugees (2012), Japanese English language learners (2015). In 2012, we also published It's a Breeze: 42 Lively Lessons on American Idioms. In 2016, Compelling Conversations Vietnam - Speaking Exercises for Vietnamese Learners of English (Teresa X. Nguyen and Roth) took the series to a new level.

Janet Levine and Laurie Selik expanded the series to include professional books for native English speakers. Compelling Conversations for Fundraisers: Talk Your Way to Success with Donors and Funders (2016) continues the focus on building stronger relationships through better conversations. Future titles will include Compelling Conversations for Call Center Professionals and Compelling Conversations for Global Business Professionals.

As a small publisher, we are grateful for each purchase of our books. We have a growing list of both nonfiction and fiction titles—our authors include working English teachers, radio professionals, and screenwriters. Each distinctive book reflects the passion and perspectives of the authors. Visit www.ChimayoPress.com to see our growing catalog. English language teachers, tutors, and students are also invited to visit www.compellingconversations.com for more conversation materials and teacher tips.

Chimayo Press is named for our amazingly communicative, talented, and loving first border collie. We met Chimayo soon after a visit to the inspirational New Mexico town on a cross-country trip from Chicago to Los Angeles back in the 20th century. That's Chimayo's image in our logo. Would you like to review this book? We'd love to receive your feedback, read a positive review on Amazon, and start another new conversation!

Ask more. Know more. Share more.
Create Compelling Conversations.

 www.CompellingConversations.com

How do we create more compelling conversations in our English classroom? Why not give English students both a choice and a voice in their learning materials?

A staple of the Compelling Conversations series, the “Search and Share” activity asks students to take a more active role in their English classes. Designed primarily for intermediate and advanced English learners, these popular, adaptable speaking activities allow students to research and share their personal interests with classmates in a safe, focused manner on chosen themes. Result? Students bring authentic materials into our English classrooms, creating unique and memorable class discussions.

This extensive collection of reproducible Search and Share lessons encourages curiosity, deepens research skills, expands vocabulary, and sparks group discussions. What will your students choose? What will they share? Let’s find out!

PRAISE FOR SEARCH AND SHARE ACTIVITIES

“The questions asked are both information-based and open-ended, providing ample opportunity for challenging and meaningful conversation practice. Any EFL instructor.... is sure to find Roth’s latest work an invaluable resource.”

— **Carl W. Hart**, EFL Instructor, author of *Secrets of Teaching ESL Grammar*

“I have been using the Compelling Conversation Series for the last ten years in my college classes.... Most other ESL books are not geared towards relevant conversations that encourage students to talk. Our students love the series to the point that the conversations spill over into their breaks and lunchtime.”

— **Mark Treston**, Director, Global Innovation Schools
www.globalinnovationus.com

“A valuable addition to the English classroom.... Empowering students to discuss topics and points they themselves find interesting is a sure fire way to improve recall.”

— **Ben Worthington**, IELTSpodcast.com

“The activities that are included in this book are all easy to understand and do, and what I love about them the most is that they make the learning experience personalized, so students can focus on learning what is most important to them....Creating Compelling Conversations: Reproducible Search and Share Exercises for English Teachers is spot on.”

— **David Stevens**, Director of The Language School
www.thelanguageschool.us



Eric H. Roth teaches international graduate students the pleasures and perils of academic writing and public speaking in English at the University of Southern California (USC). For the last 20 years, he has taught English and writing to high school, adult, community college, and university students. He has also taught citizenship classes and directed an adult education center in Los Angeles that assisted over a thousand refugees become naturalized American citizens. Roth has also taught in France, Spain, and Vietnam, and traveled to over 40 countries. Finally, Roth has co-authored four English language training (ELT) textbooks in the Compelling Conversations series.



Teresa X. Nguyen is a core faculty at Golden West Community College teaching English to adult immigrants and international students. She has spent over ten years teaching English to Vietnamese learners, both abroad in Southeast Asia and locally in southern California. Her thirst to sharpen her teaching skills led her to seize opportunities teaching a wide variety of English language learners in four countries, including classes on business English and American culture. In 2016, Nguyen created Youtube Channel, ESL Garage, to share her experience as an ELT professional. She is the co-author of *Compelling Conversations – Vietnam* (2016).



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