

# Promoting Connection in the Zoom Environment

Montgomery College AELG Spring Conference

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May 15, 2021

It's all about

...friendship!!!



*“How do you know each other?”*  
*“We met in English class.”*

# 2-Minute Question:

When do students make friendships in in-person classes?



When do students make friendships in English class?



Before class/After Class



Downtime



During breaks



Group projects



During class celebrations

How can we create these opportunities in zoom classes?



# Friendship poll!!!



I'm surprised what a difference these make...

- Zoom settings
  - Same/similar-culture connection
    - Extended group work
      - Feedback
        - WhatsApp
          - Conversation groups

# Zoom settings make a difference!!

- Open classroom
- Gallery view
- Mute/unmute
- Breakout room settings
- Screen-sharing



Allow participants to choose room

Allow participants to return to the main session at any time

Automatically move all assigned participants into breakout rooms

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Auto close breakout rooms after  minutes

Countdown after closing breakout room

Set countdown timer:   seconds

**Screen sharing**

Allow host and participants to share their screen or content during meetings

**Who can share?**

Host Only  All Participants

# Same/similar cultural connections

- Surprise your students with same/similar groups 👍



- Ask students to team up to present something from their country



# Dance Party on Friday

Celebrate our last day...!!!



Choose a short (20-25 seconds) clip of your favorite song  
or a song that represents your country to share.

*People from the same country can coordinate and present together.*

# Extended group work—just like in person!



# Extended group work—just like in person!

- Group projects
- Acting
- Decision Dramas



**The Scenario:**  
Barbara owns a small home goods boutique that has been open for several years. Soon, she won't be able to spend as much time in the shop because of family concerns. Now she must choose between her top 3 associates to take on a new role as a manager.

**The Roles:**  
The 4 roles required for this are The Shop Owner, The Well-Known Designer, The Top Salesperson, and The Former Shop Manager. Print out each of the following role cards and give them to members of the group.

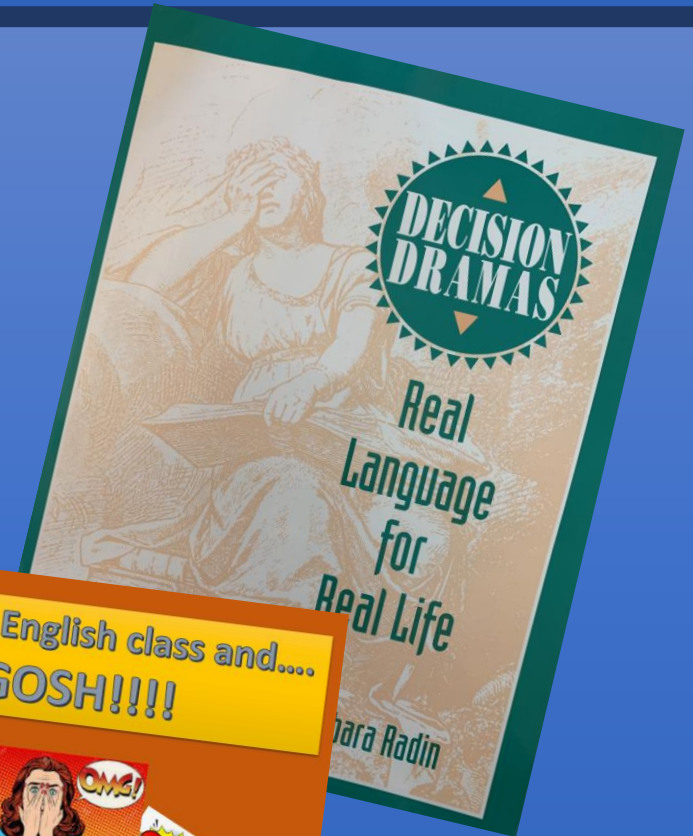
**The Well-Known Designer:**  
You are a well-known interior designer with many high-profile clients. You believe you should be the manager because you have more connections than any of the other associates. These connections can bring more business into the shop.

**The Top Salesperson:**  
Since the first day the shop has been open, you have been the top salesperson. You have shown that you have the ability to work well with customers. You believe that you can train the other associates to sell as good as you can.

**The Former Shop Manager:**  
You are the newest employee in the home goods industry. In the past, you were the store manager. You believe you should choose you as the manager.

**The Shop Owner:**  
Make a list of 3-5 questions each person is speaking. At least one person will be the best choice to the group. There are no right or wrong answers. You have the most experience in the industry. You believe you should choose you as the manager. This is the main reason to choose you as the manager.

From: <https://www.ahs.com>



# Feedback, feedback, feedback!

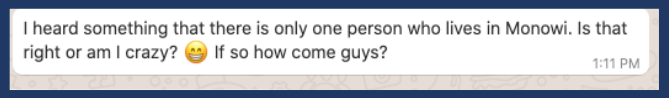
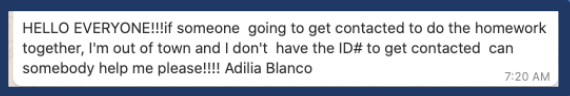
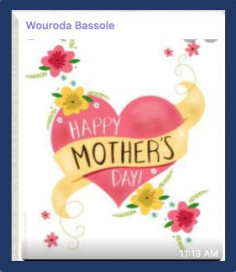
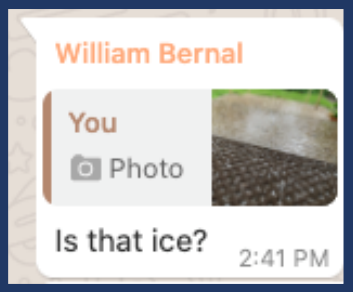
- Positive comments in the chat box
- “Tell the story”
- Message



Using WhatsApp



# Constant connection through WhatsApp



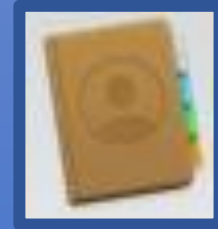


Summer I 2021 7am

Adilia, Aissatou, Aligda, Boub

# WhatsApp Tips

- Most students are familiar with WhatsApp
- You need at least one student contact to start a group
- Add your students as contacts after they join the group
- Choose a class icon and label each group clearly
- <https://faq.whatsapp.com/iphone/chats/how-to-create-and-invite-into-a-group/?lang=en>



Add to contacts

- Post homework, community resources, comments related to class...
- Places to visit in the area (cherry blossoms...)
- On the weekends: “Post a picture of...”



Food



Pets



Flowers

*Don't delete the group after the class ends--students will continue to communicate with each other here!*

# Conversation Groups

## Welcome to conversation groups!

You will meet:

- once a week in class for about 20 minutes during our warmup time
- once a week outside of class at a time that works for everyone in your group for 30 minutes or more.

Leader responsibilities:

One of you should be the leader for each meeting. Everyone should have a chance to be the leader. The leader will....

- create the meeting (Zoom, Skype, WhatsApp Video call, etc)
- be responsible for keeping the conversation going by
  - preparing topics ahead of time
  - encouraging each person to talk
  - asking questions
  - wrapping up the conversation at the end

Requirements are:

- to communicate with each other about timing if you need to change the time or you cannot come.
- to always be respectful (obviously) :)

First meeting (today, now):

- introduce yourselves
- create a WhatsApp group
- choose your meeting time outside of class
- decide how you will meet outside of class

\*\*\*Conversation topics might be related to your country, your culture, jobs, covid, living away from your country, advice on how to do something, places you have visited in the area, and where you would like to visit after covid... You can find a lot of conversation topic ideas on Google. There are a lot of ideas here:

<https://www.gifts.com/blog/conversation-starters>

\*\*\*The objectives of our conversation groups are:

- to increase fluency by engaging in conversation in a friendly, safe environment
- to improve all aspects of English through language negotiation when there is language breakdown including pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and comprehension skills
- to increase camaraderie in the class, and decrease the "affective filter"
- to build lasting, supportive friendships in the class and beyond


https://www.gifts.com/blog/conversation-starters

Apps WhatsApp Get Involved - CO... BurlingtonEnglish Home | Edmodo Products | Pearso... Outlook email - mo... My Profile - Zoom

gifts.com

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BIRTHDAY OCCASION RECIPIENT CATEGORY SPECIAL FINDS PERSONALITY **BLOG**



*225 Conversation Starters for Any Situation* Last Updated: February 25, 2021

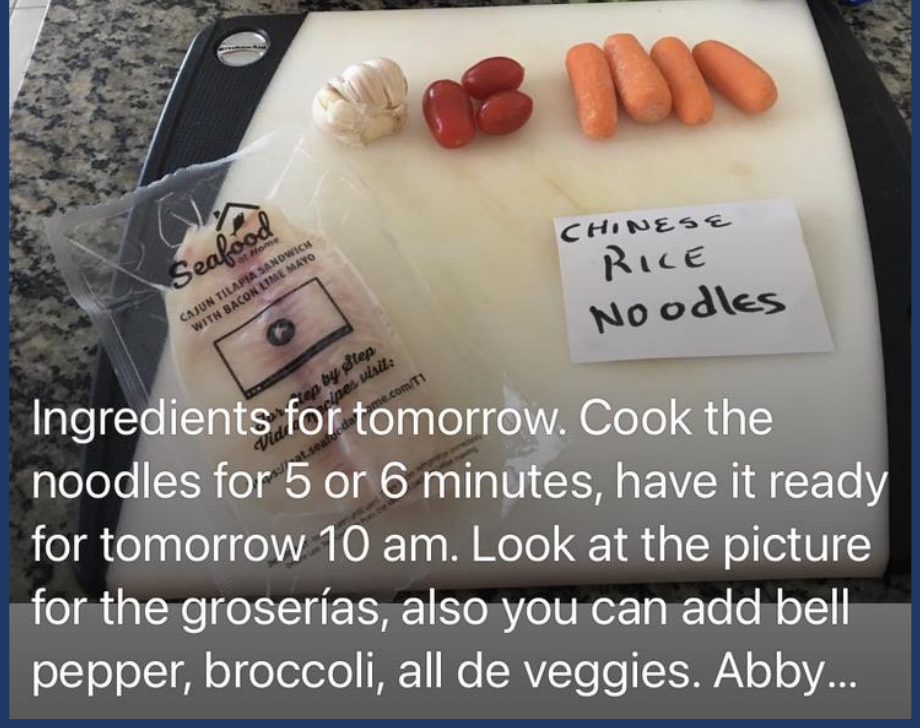
All > [Printables and Coloring Pages](#) > 225 Conversation Starters for Any Situation

## Conversation Starters For A Casual Get-Together

A casual get-together with friends is a good place to ask quirky questions. Find out fun information about your friends and acquaintances that you may have never known otherwise!

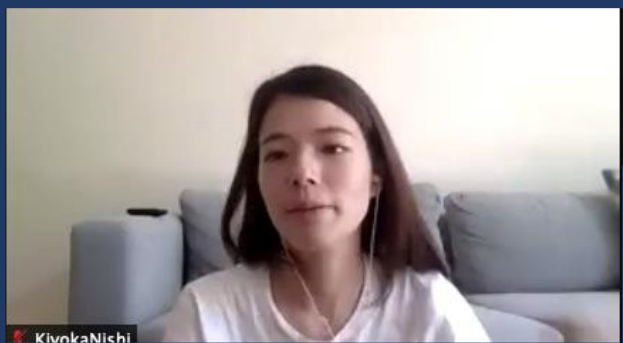


- How long can you go without checking your phone?
- Have you ever really kept a New Year's resolution?
- What bad habits do you wish you could stop?
- Do you have a morning ritual?
- Have you ever been stalked on social media?
- Can you tell when someone is lying?
- Are you a jealous person?
- Do you prefer polaroid or digital cameras?
- If someone offered to tell you your future, would you accept it?
- Who's your biggest hero?
- Have you ever stolen anything?
- If you were to remove one social media app from your phone, which would it be and why?
- What is your most embarrassing moment?
- If you were on death row, what would your last meal be?
- If you could only pack one thing for a trip (besides clothing) what would it be?
- What makes you really angry?
- What is your spirit animal?
- What would be the title of your memoir?
- What's your guilty pleasure?
- What would your theme song be if you had your own show?
- What bores you?
- What would you do if you were home alone and the power went out?
- What's the weirdest dream you've ever had?
- If your plane was going down, who would you call?



Ingredients for tomorrow. Cook the noodles for 5 or 6 minutes, have it ready for tomorrow 10 am. Look at the picture for the groserías, also you can add bell pepper, broccoli, all de veggies. Abby...

# Friends on zoom...



Diana Paredes

My group is the best

3:47 PM

Yuri: I would like to share my experience taking online classes for 1 year. To date, I have contact with several classmates, especially with my last conversation group. We have organized a couple of times to see each other, share typical recipes from our countries of origin, and it is very nice to know that this encounter that we make with them through the screen has become a beautiful friendship.





*Worth quarantining for!!*



*Covid pod*

More Student Quotes

Senaida Ruiz to Me (Direct Message)

8:18 AM

thanks teacher for this group conversation class it is the best idea from you. Really good for me.

Sann: This is really helpful to us in order to build communication and conversations .👍

**Nadia:**

For me, my conversation group was an excellent activity, our group was always very kind and friendly, we were able to get to know each other more, we will surely talk after these classes. I hope to see you again next year!

Quattara Fatouman:

I also appreciated our conversation group; it was helpful. It allowed us to know each other even though we weren't face to face.

**Kalpana Pandey**

Nice to meeting you all please keep and touch I will miss you all.

8:54 AM

# What do you think???



- How can you use these ideas in your classes?
- What ideas can you add?
- Any questions?

# Thanks for coming to my session!

