GCSE questions

This document contains some questions you might consider using with students in the conversation task (task 3). The list is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive. The conversation must be conducted entirely in the target language, so questions must be translated into the relevant target language prior to use.

The conversation should be a spontaneous interaction: teacher-examiners must NOT prepare a specific list of questions with their candidates in advance of the speaking assessment for task 3. Questions asked should flow naturally and follow logically from the content that arises. The conversations must not be a set of standardised questions and answers.

Theme: Identity and culture

Who am I?

Foundation

How many people are there in your family?

Give me a physical description of…

Describe your physical appearance. How would you describe your personality?

Do you have a best friend? Who is it? What is your best friend's name?

What do you like to do with [your family / your friends]?

Higher

Tell me a little bit about [you and your family / your friends / your interests].

What do you plan to do with your [family / friends] next weekend?

What things are you passionate about? Why?

Daily life

Foundation

What do you like to [drink / eat / do with your friends]?

What do you use the internet for?

What do you think of new technology such as mobile phones?

What did you do yesterday [on the internet / with your best friend]?

What would you like to do this evening [on the internet / with family / with friends]?

Higher

Describe to me a typical [day / weekend] at your house.

What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of modern technologies?

How would you change the way in which we use modern technologies?

How easy do you think it would be to live without [television / a mobile phone]?

Cultural life

Foundation

What do you normally do with [your family / your friends] to celebrate your birthday?

What did you do last year to celebrate [e.g. Christmas]

What is your favourite book and why?

What film would you like to see and why?

Higher

How important are [Christmas / birthdays / family celebrations] to you?

Tell me about [a book you have read / a film you have seen / a concert you have been to] recently. What did you think of it?

If you had the choice, how would you like to spend your next [weekend / birthday]?

Theme: Local area, holiday and travel

Holidays

Foundation

What [do / don't] you like to do normally on holiday and why?

How did you spend your holiday last year? Where did you go? What did you do?

Where would you like to spend your next holiday and why?

Higher

How do you normally spend your holidays?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of holidays [with family / with friend / at the beach / in the countryside]?

What would your ideal holiday be and why?

Travel and tourist transactions

Foundation

Do you prefer to stay in a hotel or camp when you are on holiday? Why?

What did you [eat / buy / do / drink / visit] on your last holiday?

What did you think of your [hotel / camp site] and why?

[Where / What] would you like to visit during your next holiday and why?

Higher

What do you think about [holidays in a hotel / camping holidays / beach holidays]?

Tell me about a problem you have had on holiday.

What would you do if you [fell ill / lost your money / lost your luggage] on a holiday abroad?

Town, region and country

Foundation

What can young people do in your [town / village / city]?

What can you do in your [town / region] [when it rains / in summer / in winter]?

What do you think about [your town / the area you live in] and why?

What would you like to change in [your town / the area you live in] and why?

What did you do last weekend in [your town / the area you live in]? How was it?

Higher

What are the advantages and disadvantages of [your town / the area you live in]?

What has changed recently in [your town / the area you live in]?

What would you change in your town to improve it?

Theme: School

What school is like

Foundation

What facilities are there in your school?

What do you [like / dislike] about your school and why?

Describe your school uniform.

What do you think about your [uniform / teachers / subjects]?

What are your favourite subjects and why?

What would you like to change in your school and why?

Higher

What do you think about your [school / uniform / teachers] and why?

What would you like to change in your school and why?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of [your school uniform / the school rules]?

Tell me about a school competition you have taken part in. Did you win?

School activities

Foundation

What did you do on the school visit to [*details of visit*]? Did you enjoy it?

[Where / What] would you like to visit with your class and why?

Would you like to take part in a cultural exchange to [*country*]? Why or why not?

Higher

What do you think about the [activities / trips / exchanges] offered by your school?

Tell me about a trip you went on recently. What did you think about it?

If you had the choice, what sort of trip would you like to take part in and why?

Do you think it is important to do exchange trips with foreign schools? Why or why not?

Theme: Future aspirations, study and work

Using languages beyond the classroom

Foundation

What do you think of [*language*]?

Is it important to you to study a language? Why or why not?

Do you think languages are more useful for holidays or work?

Higher

What is the importance of learning languages in today's society?

Do you think it is important to be able to speak another language? Why or why not?

How have you used your [*language*] outside of the classroom?

Ambitions

Foundation

What would you like to do after school?

What subjects would you like to study next year? Why?

Would you like to do voluntary work? What kind of voluntary work would you like to do?

Higher

What do you intend to do once you have finished school?

Do you find it [easy / difficult] to make these decisions? Why?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of doing voluntary work?

Work

Foundation

What job would you like to do and why?

What job would you prefer not to do and why?

What job does [your mother / your father] have?

What do you think about working in [a hospital / with animals / a school / a factory]?

Higher

What job do you think you might do and why?

What do you think about your parents' jobs?

What would your ideal job be?

Theme: International and global dimension

Bringing the world together

Foundation

What do you think about [sporting events / music events] like [the Olympics / Glastonbury]?

Have you watched any [sporting events / international music events] on the television? What was it? How was it?

Which [sporting event / regional music event] would you like to go to and why?

What do you think about organisations such as [Oxfam] which help people with problems?

Is it important to help people [with problems / who are homeless]?

Higher

Tell me about a [regional / national] music festival you know about. Would you like to [take part in it / attend]?

What do you think about international sporting events?

Have you been to a big [sporting / music] event? Tell me about it.

Tell me about a humanitarian organisation you know about. Would you like to volunteer for them? Why or why not?

What do you think about international aid? Is it important to help other countries?

Environmental issues

Foundation

What is the most important problem we face?

What do you do to protect the environment?

Do you often [recycle / save water / save electricity / walk or use public transport instead of going in a car]?

What have you done to protect the environment recently?

What would you like to do to protect the environment?

Higher

What do you think about protecting the environment?

What environmental problem worries you the most and why?

What do you do to protect the environment? Do you think that is enough?

How [easy / difficult] is it to protect the environment these days?

What should the government do to encourage people to be more environmentally friendly?