

Asking Open-Ended Questions

Why use open-ended questions?

- Require a person to provide a longer answer
- Easier to keep the conversation going
- Prevents the conversation from feeling like an interview

Example: What is the difference between “Are you having a good day?” and “What have you been up to today?”

Equation for Open-Ended Questions

A Good Question Starter

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An Interesting Topic

Good Question Starters:

Who
What
When
Where
Why
How

Avoid the Starters:

Are/Was
Did/Do

Topics:

Current Activity
Sports
Music
Books/Movies
Food/Restaurants
Recent Events
Looking Forward
Talents & Hobbies

Follow-Up Question Phrases:

“tell me about”
“describe”
“I would like to hear more about”

Activity: Grab two dice and practice coming up with some open-ended questions.

The Open-Ended Question Dice Game

Instructions:

- (1) Roll one die. Match the number on the die with the number in the Question Starters Box. This is the word you should start your question with.
- (2) Roll the second die. Match the number on this die with the number in the Topics Box. Your question should include this conversation topic.
- (3) You can practice using these open-ended questions with a friend or family member.



Example:

You roll a 3 first. This means your question should start with “When.” Then you roll a 6. The topic of your question should be “Talents and Hobbies.” Your question might be “When did you first start doing your favorite hobby?”

Question Starters:

1. Who
2. What
3. When
4. Where
5. Why
6. How

Topics:

1. Sports
2. Music
3. Arts & Entertainment
4. Food
5. Local Attractions
6. Hobbies

Reminder:

Some questions may feel or sound unnatural. That is okay! The goal of this activity is only to practice creating a variety of open-ended questions.