

*No memoirs. I have nothing to say,
and what I could say, I cannot say.*

Karl Lagerfeld

Sincerity



When two dogs meet for the first time, they usually sniff and check each other out. This helps them learn about the other dog's personality and what they might want.

1. Think of a time when you met someone new recently and answer the questions below.
 - ◆ What did you talk about during your first meeting?
 - ◆ What kind of information about yourself do you usually share when you first meet someone?
 - ◆ What would you hesitate to reveal in a first-time meeting and why?

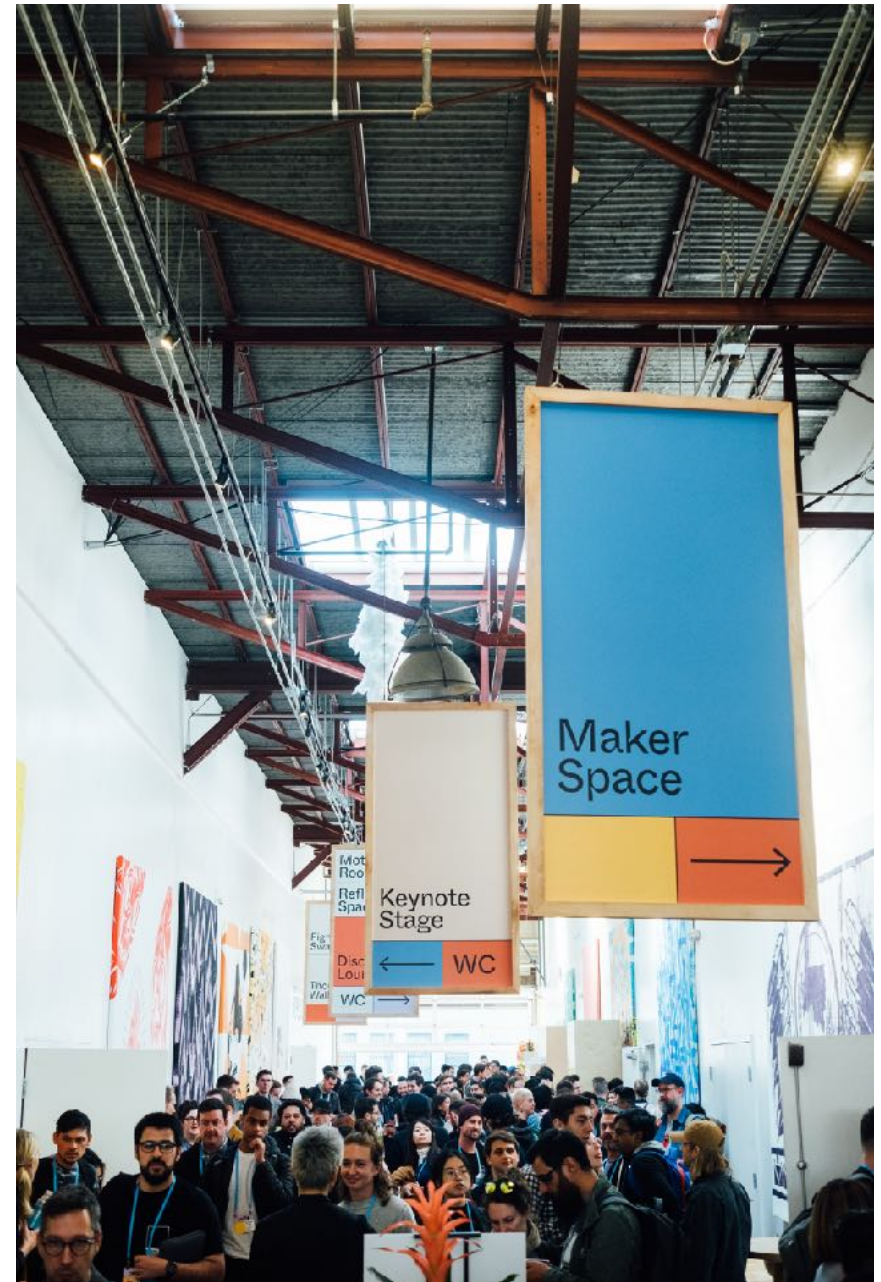
2. You meet some new people at an industry conference. Which of the topics below are:

interesting? boring? safe? risky? taboo?

books	business	career paths
climate change	family	fashion
food and drink	gadgets	gossip
holiday plans	immigration	LGBTQ+ rights
local attractions	music	pet stories
politics	projects at work	religion
salaries	the news	tv shows and movies
weather	your country	

3. How would you feel about discussing the above topics in the following situations?

- ◆ Barbecue party at a friend's place
- ◆ First day in a new job
- ◆ Family get-together
- ◆ Your English course





4. Think carefully about your answers to the questions below.

- ♦ What are your favourite topics of conversation?
- ♦ What topics do you dislike?
- ♦ Are there any questions you don't like answering?
- ♦ Have you ever been asked an inappropriate question? How did you react?
- ♦ Have **you** ever asked an inappropriate question by accident? What happened?

5. For each question below, think of one situation where it would be appropriate to ask the question, and one situation where it would be considered inappropriate.

- ♦ *How old are you?*
- ♦ *Are you planning to have children?*
- ♦ *How much money do you make?*
- ♦ *What's your sexual orientation?*
- ♦ *Have you ever taken drugs?*
- ♦ *How many people have you slept with?*
- ♦ *Have you ever been in trouble with the law?*
- ♦ *When was the last time you cried?*

6. Pick a question from the previous list to ask your teacher. Introduce the question with one of the phrases below?

Can I ask you a personal question?

I'd like to discuss something personal with you.

I know this is a sensitive topic, but ...

Mind if I ask ...

7. If your teacher asked you the same question, how would you react? Would you answer or would you choose a response from the list below?

That's a bit personal, isn't it?

I'd rather not answer that, if you don't mind.

I think I'll keep that part of my life private for now.

I'd prefer not to go into detail about that.

Mind your own business!

8. Who is more sensitive to personal questions: you or your English teacher? Take turns asking and responding to private questions. Use the phrases from tasks 8 & 9.





9. Below are some personal questions? You can either answer them or react with a phrase from the previous page.

1. When was the last time you lied?
2. Do you think it's OK to tell a **white lie** sometimes?
3. Do you tend to **exaggerate** when describing things?
4. How would you react if you found out that someone was **spreading rumours** about you?
5. Is it possible to live a life without ever telling a lie?



10. What is the difference between ...

a **white lie** and a **scam**?

a **rumour** and a **fairy tale**

a **bluff** and a **fraud**?

an **impostor** and a **copycat**?

exaggeration and **fabrication**?

11. Do you agree or disagree with the statements below? Why? Why not?

1. Rumours spread faster than facts.
2. When negotiating, it's essential to bluff to get the best deal.
3. Impostor syndrome is a common experience.
4. People who fall for scams are too gullible. They should be more cautious.
5. Exaggeration is an essential element of humor and storytelling.
6. Most fairy tales promote outdated stereotypes and gender roles.

12. Do you know these fairy tales? What's the importance of lie and deception in the stories?

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

Little Red Riding Hood

Puss in Boots

Sleeping Beauty

Cinderella

The Emperor's New Clothes





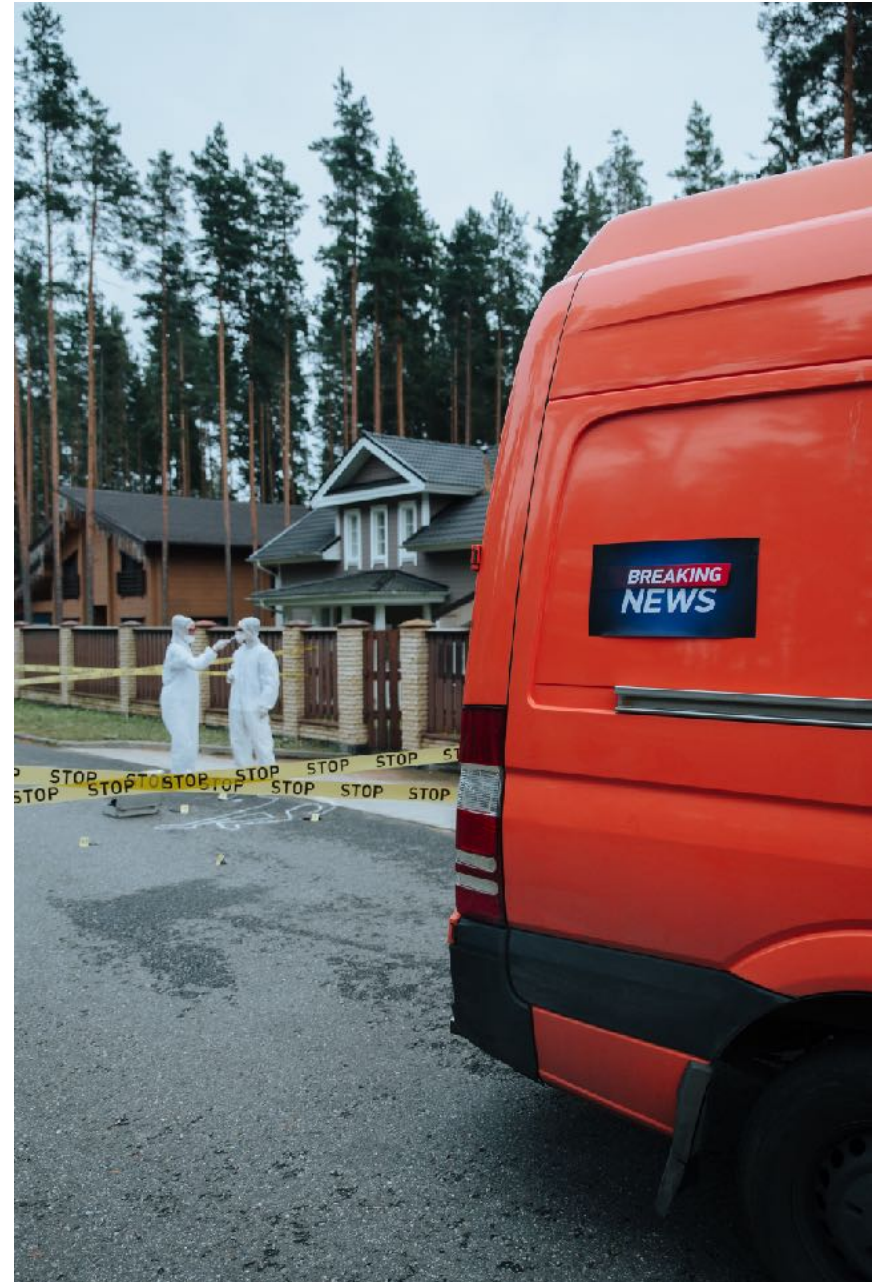
13. Imagine the following situations. How would you behave?

1. It's Christmas time. Everybody's unwrapping their presents. You open your box and discover it is an ugly toilet paper roll holder. What do you say?
2. You're at a party, and someone asks about your weekend. You had a relaxing time at home, but you want to sound more exciting. What do you say?
3. You're chatting with a friend who's showing you an outfit they bought. They ask for your opinion, but you don't really like it. What do you say?
4. It's a job interview. You're asked about your experience with a certain software you're not very familiar with. What do you say?
5. You're at a class reunion, and someone asks about your career. You're not exactly where you want to be professionally. What do you say?
6. You're pulled over by the police for speeding and they ask if you knew the speed limit. What do you say?
7. You're in a relationship, and your partner finds out you've been texting an ex. What do you say?

14. Below are some reactions of people who discovered they have been lied to. Can you guess what happened and why the lies were told?

- ◆ *But you said you loved it!*
- ◆ *Unbelievable! You told us you were already on your way.*
- ◆ *I'm so disappointed. You told me you hadn't been in touch with your ex!*
- ◆ *Why did you say you were familiar with this software?*
- ◆ *I can't believe it! You suggested that she was secretly dating our boss to move up the ladder.*
- ◆ *You claimed you had heard the suspect arguing with the victim just before the incident.*
- ◆ *Incredible! Your company stated that the product was 100% eco-friendly.*
- ◆ *Why did you assure the public that your policies would lead to economic prosperity for all? We've been fooled!*

15. Look back at the sentences in exercise 14. Can you recreate the exact words of the people who lied?





16. You are going to tell a personal story about a time you were lied to. Think of your answers to these questions.

Who was it?

When did it happen?

Where did it happen?

What happened first ?

What were the exact words of the person who lied?

How did you react when you found out it was a lie?

That's Conversation! - Sincerity

B1-C1

First-time meetings, Lies

Vocabulary related to lying

Asking and responding to personal questions

Reported Speech

Teacher's Notes

This MiniEbook can be used in first lessons with new students at B1, B2, C1 levels in order to find out their specific interests and preferences.

8. This is a great (and safe) way to test your students for controversial topics which you might both enjoy discussing in your course.
10. Refer to a dictionary for definitions.
15. Direct speech: *I love it. I'm already on my way. I haven't been in touch with my ex. I'm familiar with this software. She is secretly dating our boss to move up the ladder. I heard the suspect arguing with the victim. The product is 100% eco-friendly. Our policies will lead to economic prosperity for all.*

Exercise 15 might serve as an introduction to your Reported Speech revision.

Topics for possible research/students' projects

- The Impostor Syndrome
- Famous Scams
- Fairy Tales
- Truth or Dare

Videos to watch:

- Small Talk - Campus Movie Fest
https://youtu.be/PNTCM7cbrsc?si=GUoiXfl_SEMX2tHp
- Ryan Gosling Answers Personal Questions for Charity - TheEllenShow
<https://youtu.be/soMbQWhyoDo?si=lEnECCbIUIHD9CZ2>
- Jordan Meets Donnie - The Wolf of Wall Street
<https://youtu.be/iG66PtE4psk?si=Jzu2DpoxrzPSglOA>
- 73 Questions With Reese Witherspoon - Vogue
<https://youtu.be/QYB6Ad3hIX4?si=FTmFDQPdC9FNrbgp>
- How To Be Honest - Awkward Puppets
<https://youtu.be/XJK8GXVvKkA?si=QaLxmO2bTDUMoBEa>
- Couples Therapy (Ep. 5) - Awkward Puppets
<https://youtu.be/TNsftFw67S8?si=SFgKjILEINGfUcSr>
- Jen's job interview - IT Crowd
<https://youtu.be/NuPolrd9yuo?si=79gxNda2lbBb29cw>
- Painkiller - Netflix
- The Tinder Swindler - Netflix

Reading suggestions:

- 50 Small Talk Topics To Help You Build Authentic Relationships - Indeed
<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/small-talk-topics>
- People Shared the White Lies They Believed In Blindly as Kids - Bright Side
<https://brightside.me/articles/15-people-shared-the-white-lies-they-believed-in-blindly-as-kids-805320/>
- Woman, conned out of £165k by Tinder swindler - The Sun
<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/9646122/woman-conned-hundreds-thousands-tinder-conman-prince-diamonds-psychiatric-hospital/>
- 15 Biggest Lies Told By Celebrities - Chillopedia
<https://chillopedia.com/biggest-lies-told-by-celebrities/>
- How to Start a Rumour - WikiHow
<https://www.wikihow.com/Start-a-Rumor>
- 10 Things to Know About the Psychology of Lying - Online Psychology Degree Guide
<https://www.onlinepsychologydegree.info/psychology-of-lying/>

MiniEbooki "That's Conversation!" podlegają ochronie na mocy prawa autorskiego. Fotografie: Pexels, Unsplash.

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