

Chapter 2

How to Get Information and Types of Questions and Answering Techniques

Objectives

1. To formulate questions in order to get information.
2. To use a variety of expressions as questioning strategies : opening expressions for questions, delaying answers and answering techniques.

In conversation, both statements and questions are used to get some pieces of information. Responses to them are answers to these statements and questions. Therefore, students must study different ways of formulating statements. In this chapter, several exercises are given to review types of questions and responses that you have already known so far. Try to ask as many questions as possible to get a fair amount of information. In addition, students should learn the many expressions being used as opening expressions for questions, delaying answers and answering techniques.

A. Review Types of Questions and Responses

A1. Presentation

Look at the pictures below. Do you see that the girl is greeting you? And she is also introducing herself. **WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO HER?**



Hi. My name is Mei.
I'm a fifth grade student.
I'm from Taiwan.

When Mei introduces herself, she usually gives background information, such as her name, education, and hometown.

Identifying these sentences below.

Her name : _____

Her education : _____

Her hometown : _____

Now, you've got some idea of how to greet her in return. Write down your background information in the given space below and then practice it with your friends.





Your name : _____




PASTE YOUR PICTURE HERE Your education : _____




Your hometown : _____

There are a lot more things to say when we happen to talk about people as shown in the exercise below.

Practice asking for information about Mei.

Topics	Examples	
Sex	 Sam	  

Name	 <p>Ed</p> <p>What's her name?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Is it her first name or last name?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>You</p>
Age	 <p>Paul</p> <p>How old is she?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>How old does she look to you?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>She isn't old, is she?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>You</p>
Occupation	 <p>Bob</p> <p>What does she do?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>She's a student, isn't she?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>You</p>

<p>Nationality</p>	 <p>What's her nationality?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Is she a Taiwanese or a Chinese?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>You</p>
<p>Address</p>	 <p>Where does she come from?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Where is she now?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>You</p>
<p>Description</p>	 <p>Is she wearing short hair?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>What does she have on her hair?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Does it help her look better?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Is she short-sighted already?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Are they eye glasses or sun glasses?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Mei is pretty.</p> <p>Really.</p> <p>You</p>

A1.1 Key to your pronunciation

Different types of questions are spoken with different types of intonation patterns. You should notice these differences while listening to your instructor's pronunciation. Study the examples below and then practice them. Note that

↗ means rising final pitch, where as ↘ means falling final pitch.

Types of questions	Final Pitch	Examples
Yes-no questions	Rising	Is she a girl?
Tag questions	Falling, Falling	She's happy, isn't she?
	Falling, Rising	She's happy, isn't she?
Wh-questions	Falling	What's her name?
Questions with alternative	Rising, Falling	Is it her first name, or her last name?
Question in statement form	Rising	She's pretty.

A1.2 Key to your answers.

Sometimes, it seems difficult to give the answers from just what you see from a picture. Thus, you might find the lists below useful for your answers. Study all the expressions from the lists, practice speaking them with your instructor and your friends.

(The following lists are adapted from *Functions of American English*, p. 10-12)

Some expressions for delaying answers:

Well, let me see _____.

Well now _____.

Oh, let me think for a minute. _____.

I'm not sure; I'll have to _____.

Now practice using some expressions of delaying answers with the following questions. The first one is done as example.

1. How old is she?

Well, let me see. She's about ten.

2. What does she do?

3. Where does she come from?

4. What does she have on her hair?

5. Does it help her look better?

Some expressions for giving negative answers or avoiding saying "No".

I'm not really sure.

I can't answer that one.

I'm sorry, I really don't know.

I've got no idea.

I'd like to answer you, but _____.

That's something I'd rather not talk about just now.

Now practice using some expressions for giving negative answers with the following questions.

1. What's her name?

I'm sorry, I really don't know.

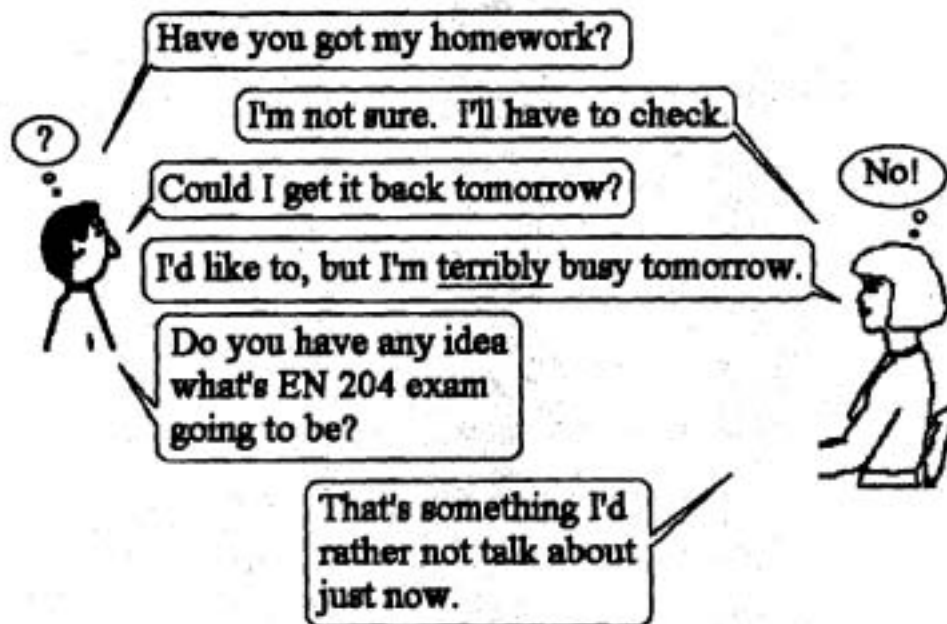
2. How old does she look to you?

3. What's her nationality?

4. Where does she come from?

5. What does she do?

Study the following conversation between an instructor and her student. Pay attention to the expressions for delaying answers and for avoiding saying "No".



You might find the above conversation useful. Practice it with your friends and try to use it.

A1.3 Explanation

How many questions did you practice asking with your friends? How many types of questions? Review these types of questions (A.1) and complete the table following. You must study the correct usage, particularly the attached speaker's attitude, belief, truth toward information contained in the types of questions and speaker's pronunciation.

Types of question	Examples	Explanation of speaker's attitude, belief, truth toward information
Yes-no question	1. Is she a girl? _____ _____	Neutral attitude as replies can be either positive or negative depending on the truth of the information
Tag question	1. She is happy, isn't she? _____ _____	Speaker's request for the confirmation of the truth of the statement. The answer expected is "Yes" if the statement is positive, and "No" if negative.
Wh-question	1. How old is she? _____ _____	Neutral attitude but unlimited replies so long as the given information required by wh-word : what, when, where, why, whom, whose and how.
Question with alternatives	1. Is it her last name, or first name? _____ _____	Speaker's expectation of only one answer if two or more alternatives mentioned in questions.
Question with positive	Is she short-sighted already?	Speaker's expectation of a positive answer to the question. The emphasis is on the word "already".
Question in statement form	Nancy is pretty.	Speaker's strengthening the positive bias of a question by putting it in form of the statement.

A1.4 Understanding characteristics of spoken forms

Question with alternatives can be regarded as reduced questions from more than one choice. Students should know how these types of question are derived. Study the examples following and then tell your friends what the original questions are.

Questions with alternatives

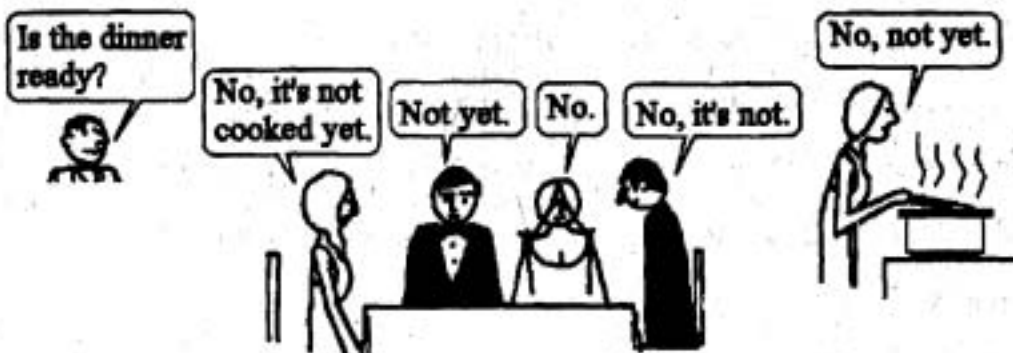
1. Would you like coffee, tea, or cocoa?
2. Shall we go by train or by bus?
3. Is she Taiwanese or Chinese?
4. Are they eye glasses or sun glasses?
5. Do you like her or not?
6. Is it her first name or last name?

Original questions

1. Would you like coffee?
2. Would you like tea?
3. Would you like cocoa?
1. _____?
2. _____?
1. _____?
2. _____?
1. _____?
2. _____?
1. _____?
2. _____?

A1.5 Understanding the types of responses

In spoken language, answers or responses are generally shortened by omitting some or all of the information already contained in the statement or the question. Study the example following and then do the task provided.



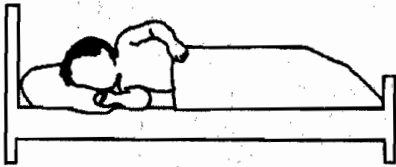
Questions	Positive responses	Negative responses
Is the dinner ready?	Yes, it's already cooked. Yes, it is. Yes.	No, it's not cooked yet. No, it isn't No, not yet. Not yet. No.

Negative answers to the yes-no question "Is the dinner ready?" can be at least 5 possible responses as shown above, whereas positive answers can be only three possible ones. Note that the shortened versions of the responses are the most natural.

Now practice the possible responses above with your instructor and friends and then complete the table below?



Questions	Responses
Is it 8 o'clock already?	_____
Has the girl finished reading yet?	_____



Has the child gone to bed already?



Is the baby ready for taking a bath?



Has she arrived at her university yet?



Has she got a balloon already?



Has he finished taking his vacation yet?

A2. Grammar practice

A2.1 How to make question-tags : Change the questions in A-5 into question tags. The first one is done for you as an example.

1. It's 8 o'clock, isn't it?

Yes, it is.

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

A2.2 How to make wh-questions : Use the given words and make questions about the picture in A-5. The first one is done for you as an example.

1. What / be / it

What time is it now?

It's about 8 o'clock.

2. Who / do / assignment

3. When / child / sleep

4. Why / baby / drink

5. Where / girl / go

6. Whom the dog / find

7. Whose / balloon / be

8. How / man / spend / vacation

A3. Listening and speaking practices

A3.1 Sentence Practice. Right to left drills. Listen and repeat after the instructor.

1. Is she / wearing / long / hair?
2. She's / wearing / long hair, / isn't / she?
3. What / does / she / have / on her hair?
4. Is / she / short-sighted / already?
5. That's / something / I'd rather / not / talk about / just now.
6. Let / me / think / for / a minute.
7. Is she / Taiwanese, / or / Chinese?
8. No, / it's / not / cooked / yet.

A3.2 Practice the following mini-talks. Pay attention to the stress groupings and the intonation patterns.

Mini-talk 1 :

A : Where are you ³ / from ₁?

B : I'm from ³ / Japan ₁.

Mini-talk 2 :

A : What do you ³ / want ₁?

B : I want a ³ / book ₁.

Mini-talk 3 :

A : Where are you going?

B : To the lecture.

Mini-talk 4 :

A : Are you a student?

B : Yes.

Mini-talk 5 :

A : Is that Robert?

B : Maybe. I'm not sure.

Mini-talk 6 :

A : Do you speak Thai?

B : A little.

Mini-talk 7 :

A : When do you have class?

B : On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

Mini-talk 8 :

A : Have you seen New York city?

B : No, I haven't. I've just seen Chicago.

Mini-talk 9 :

A : Do you want a cup of coffee?

B : That's a good idea.

Mini-talk 10 :

A : What is your favorite sport?

B : Football.

A3.3 Role playing

You interview your friends by asking them about the following topics :
name, age, nationality, address, study, favorite sport, TV program, and hobby.

A3.4 Dialogue Analysis

Read the dialogue below identify the information questions and responses in the dialogue. Complete the blanks.

Dialogue 1: Conversation between Pim and Anne about Mei.

Greetings

Pim (P) — Hi, Anne.

_____ — Hi, Pim. — Ann

Pim (P) — Well, Ann. Who's that girl?

_____ — Oh. She's Mei. — Ann

Pim (P) — I haven't seen her before.
Do you know her very well?

_____ — Oh! Yes, I'll introduce you to her. — Ann

Introduction

Ann (A) — Hi, Mei. This is Pim, my friend.
Pim, I'd like you to meet Mei.

_____ — Hello, Pim. — Mei

Pim (P) — Hello, Mei.

A3.5 Dialogue Practice

Practice speaking the above dialogue with your instructor and your friends and then dramatize it in class.

B. Question-Answering Techniques

In conversation, the one who asks the questions usually controls the conversation. Various techniques are used in order to keep conversation going and to get different kinds of information from the people. Students should learn these techniques which will be discussed in this text. Try to ask as many questions as possible and to answer them in long responses. **DO NOT JUST SAY "YES" OR "NO".**

B1. Presentation

Understanding opening question technique, delaying the answers and answering techniques.

Read the dialogue 2 following. It is the same as the one in A3.4 but it is more formal. Complete the analysis of the dialogue in the space provided below .

Dialogue 2 :

Pim (A) — Hello, Ann.

Ann (B) — Hello, Pim.

Pim (A) — Uh. Listen, I wonder if you could tell me who that girl is?

Ann (B) — Oh, let me think for a minute. Well, she's Mei.

Pim (A) — I haven't seen her before. I hope you don't mind my asking, but I'd like to know if you know her very well.

Ann (B) — Oh, yes. She's a nice girl. I'll introduce you to her.

Ann (B) — Hello, Mei. May I introduce you to Pim, my friend. Pim, I'd like you to meet Mei, my friend from Taiwan.

Mei (C) — How do you do?

Pim (A) — How do you do?

B1.1 Explanation

Did you notice the difference of the information questions in both dialogues? In the first dialogue, the information questions are in direct forms and there is no expression of opening question and no delaying answer. In the second dialogue, the information questions are in indirect forms and there is an expression of an opening question and a delaying answer.

Could you complete the expressions below?

Types of questions	Examples
Information question with an expression of opening	1. _____ 2. _____
Information question without an expression of an opening question	1. _____ 2. _____
Types of responses	Examples
Responses with expression of delaying answer	
Responses without an expression of delaying the answer.	

B1.2 Understanding the difference between direct and indirect questions.

Look at the pictures below and then study these two types of questions.

Focus on the positions of the verbs either before or after the subjects.



Where can I get a newspaper?

At the bookshop in front of the university gate.



Do you know where I can get a newspaper?

Well, you can get one at the bookshop in front of the university.



I wonder if you could tell me where I can get a newspaper.

Well, let me think a minute. Oh, you can get one at the bookshop in front of the university gate.



What John, Paul, and Mr. Smith said conveys the same meaning but different styles or different levels of usage. John's and Paul's questions are direct, but Paul's is more common; while Mr. Smith's is more polite. Now you can practice these questions with your instructor and friends. Make sure that your indirect question, the position of the verb is similar to that of the ordinary statement. You will study more of these two types of questions in the later chapters.

B2. Practice

B2.1 Listening / Speaking and writing practice

B2.1.1 Pairwork activity.

1. Ask your friend if he / she has a telephone? And what is his / her telephone number?

You : Do you have your telephone at home?

Your friend : Yes, I do.

You : What is your telephone number?

Your friend : Well, let me see ... it's 510-0566.

2. Ask your friend if he / she can lend you some money.

(Polite) You : _____

(Negative) Your friend: _____

3. Ask your friend if he / she can play basketball.

(Common) You : _____

(positive) Your friend : _____

4. Ask your friend if he / she has ever been in love.

(Polite) Your friend : _____

(Negative) Your friend : _____

B2.1.2 Dictation. Listen to what your instructor says and then fill in the blanks.

1. Let _____ for _____.
2. What _____ have on _____.
3. No, _____ isn't cooked yet.
4. Which _____ should I _____ to the _____.
5. I'm _____, I'll _____.
6. I'd _____, but _____ ten Baht left.
7. That's _____ I'd _____ talk about _____.
8. English _____, is it?

B2.2 Listening / speaking practice

B2.2.1 Substitution Drills. Substitute the given words or phrases to the underlined words.

1. I wonder which chairs I should sit in.

books I should read.

sport I should play.

courses I should register.

songs I should sing.

2. Do you know why you did so badly on the test?

Paul sat up late last night?

how we can get from the airport to the city?

how we can speak English fluently?

what is the name of a first-class hotel?

what is the name of a medium-priced hotel?

what is the name of an inexpensive hotel?

3. I would if you could tell me where I can get a book.

I can buy a ball-pointed pen.

I can spend my summer vacation.

I can stay while visiting Hong Kong.

B2.2.2 Dialogue Practice

Practice speaking dialogue 1 and dialogue 2 with your friends.

C. Application

C1. Practice answering questions : Talk about things that happened to you.

Talk about somewhere you went last year.

I went to London last year.

1. Talk about a place you visited last week.

2. Talk about something you enjoyed last week.

3. Talk about somebody you spoke to yesterday.

4. Talk about somebody you saw yesterday.

5. Talk about something you bought a few days ago.

6. Talk about something you ate this morning.

7. Talk about something you heard on the radio.

8. Talk about something you wore yesterday.

9. Talk about somebody you met last week.

10. Talk about somebody you love most.

C2. Practice answering questions

Tell me about yourself. Give me the answers orally first and then you may write them down later on.

1. What is your name?

2. Are you good at English?

3. How well can you speak English?

4. How many brothers and sisters do you have?

5. Which job would you like to apply for?

6. Have you ever had a bad accident?

7. Do you plan to go abroad ? _____
8. Who is your favorite English teacher? _____
9. What is your hobby? _____
10. Which English newspaper do you like to read? _____

C3. Practice making questions.

What do you say? What does he / she say?

Ask a friend what time the bank opens.

Do you know what time the bank opens?

1. Mary needs some money. She wants to ask where the bank is.

2. Ask politely where you can get some stamps.

3. Ask Peter where he get a ticket for the football match.

4. You want to know what time it starts.

5. You also want to know what time it finishes?

6. Your friend has a new wallet. You want to know where he got it?

7. And you also want to know how much he paid for it.

8. You have a meeting at 2 o'clock. You want to know the time now.

9. Ask your friend if he / she knows RU's telephone number.

10. If your friend failed the exam, what would you say to her?
