conversation topics

1 A Complete the tips for talking to strangers with the topics in the box. You do not need two of the topics.

> clothes and fashion   food and eating out
> hobbies and free time activities   holiday experiences
> the news   politics   sport or music event
> the weather   work or studies

Making small talk

Talking to people we've only just met can be enjoyable, but it can also be difficult. One thing that we all have in common is [1]................................., so an easy way to start a conversation is to say what a lovely, warm or cold day it is. Of course, this only works if you live in a country where there are seasons. If not, try talking about something that's happened recently. It could be a national [2]................................ like a football match or a festival. You might want to avoid talking about [3]............................. because the stories we read and see every day can often be sad. It's also best not to discuss [4]............................... with someone you've just met. People have different ideas on how to run the country and it might start an argument. You could ask if the person can recommend any good restaurants. This can lead to a discussion about [5].............................. I'm sure you'll both have lots to say about that. You could also say you like what someone's wearing, to bring in [6].............................., but that's a topic you should take care with, too. People don't always want to focus on how they look. Perhaps a safer option is to ask what a person does. Then you can chat about your [7]............................., Most of us have a lot to say about that.

B 📰 Complete the conversation using words from the box.

> clothes   eating   event   experiences   hobbies
> news   studies   weather

A: What did you talk to Dave about?

B: He told me about his university [1]............................ in business, a music [2]............................ he went to, his recent holiday [3]............................ abroad, his thoughts about the sports [4]............................ stories today, and why the [5]............................ is so wet at the moment.

A: More listening than talking, then!

How to ...

start and end a conversation; keep a conversation going

2 A 🔊 **1.05 |** Listen to three conversations. Match the conversations (1–3) with the situations (a–c).

a someone wants a new job
b someone wants to watch a presentation
c the speakers know each other

B 🔊 **1.06 |** Match the sentence halves. Then listen to conversation 1 again and check.

1 Excuse me, do you mind	**a** at all.
2 No, not	**b** meet you.
3 Is it your first	**c** to go.
4 Help	**d** if I sit here?
5 I'm sorry, but I've got	**e** yourself.
6 Nice to	**f** time here?

4 A Complete the conversation with one word in each gap.

A: Excuse me, is [1]............................ sitting here?

B: No, go [2]............................,

A: It's a lovely morning, [3]............................ it?

B: Beautiful!

A: Are you here for the interview?

B: Yes. How [4]............................ you?

A: I'm here for the interview too. What time's yours?

B: Ten thirty. I'm early. [5]............................ about yours?

A: Mine's at eleven. I'm Matt, by the [6]............................,

B: I'm Carrie. Nice to [7]............................ you.

A: Oh ... the person on reception just called your name.

B: Oh yes, thanks. I've [8]............................ to go.

A: Good luck!

B 🔊 **1.08 |** Listen and check.