

GET READY!

1- WHAT DO YOU TALK ABOUT WITH SOMEONE YOU DON'T KNOW WELL?

2- WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN A CONVERSATION IS GOING POORLY?

READING

Small Talk By Hugh Trenchard

It happens to everyone. Somebody introduces you to a friend and then walks away. Now you're standing with somebody you don't know. What do you talk about?

The **weather** is always a possibility. But there isn't always much to say. To make a conversation **flow**, it's better to ask questions. Ask the other person what they do for a **living**, and what their job **involves**. **Discussing** your own former jobs is a good option, too.

Other safe **topics** include your home town and your education. But **avoid** asking people about their **religion**, age and **marital status** until you know them better.

2 Read this extract from a blog, then complete the table using information from the passage.

When talking to someone you don't know ...	
talk about ...	1 _____
ask about ...	2 _____ what their job involves
discuss ...	jobs you did in the past 3 _____ 4 _____
don't talk about ...	religion 5 _____ marital status

VOCABULARY

3 Fill in the blanks with the correct words from the word bank.

Word BANK

avoid discuss flow involves living

- 1 What does Heidi do for a _____?
- 2 Graham's job _____ buying supplies.
- 3 _____ personal topics with strangers.
- 4 Helen's conversation with Rick didn't _____.
- 5 Fiona chose not to _____ religion with clients.

LISTENING

6 Listen to a conversation between a businessman and a colleague. Check (✓) the topics that are suggested to talk about.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1 ☐ age | 4 ☐ weather |
| 2 ☐ work | 5 ☐ marital status |
| 3 ☐ religion | 6 ☐ education |

7 Listen again and complete the conversation.

Businessman: Sarah, I have to take a phone call. Please make 1 _____ with Mr. Jensen until I'm free.

Colleague: But I don't know him! I have nothing to talk to him about.

Businessman: Just ask him what he does for a 2 _____.

Colleague: But I already know what his work 3 _____. After all, he's our consultant.

Businessman: Then why don't you 4 _____ the weather?

Colleague: It's not a very interesting 5 _____.

Businessman: Well, I'm sure you'll think of something. Just don't bring up his 6 _____.

Colleague: Good to know, thanks.