

# Conversation Topics and Activities

## **Food and Meals**

Topic/Activity:

- Family Meals – What meals are usually served with the whole family present? What food is eaten, the seating arrangement, the method of serving dishes and the general conversation
- Teach your conversation partner to cook a dish that is popular in your country and learn how to cook a dish from their country

## **Magazines, Newspapers and Books**

Topics/Activity:

- Discuss famous authors in your home country. What types of books, poetry, etc. are these authors known for? Who is your favorite author?
- What types of reading material do you enjoy – newspapers, magazines, or books?
- Bring in a magazine or book written in another language. Discuss your reading material.

## **Photos:**

Activity:

- Devote one session to sharing and discussing personal photographs. This is an excellent activity for getting to know each other better!

## **Language Lesson**

Topic/Activity:

- What languages do you speak? What languages do you want to learn?
- Try teaching your partner some words, numbers, or phrases in another language.

## **Geography, Maps and Vacations**

Topics:

- What is the weather like in other places you've lived? How does it compare to Minnesota? What sort of adjustments do people need to make for the weather in Minnesota?
- Compare rural life to urban/suburban life. What are some differences in dwellings, clothing, family structure, etc.?

## **Competitions and Sports**

Topics:

- How important is competition in school, personal life, and in the business world?

- What organized and professional sports are most popular? Does the public watch these sports? Where are they played?

## **Music**

Topic/Activity

- How does popular music differ from traditional music
- Listen to music from each other's country/culture.

## **Dating, Marriage, and Gender**

Topics:

- Discuss your ideas about marriage. How do couples generally meet? How do people decide whom they will marry or commit to?
- What are some gender differences you've noticed in the U.S. vs. other parts of the world?

## **Communication**

Topics:

- How do you greet others? A handshake? Bow? Hands together? How might you greet someone from another culture?
- How is eye contact viewed in your country? How is eye contact different between workers/supervisors, for example? Or, between sexes?

## **Holidays and Celebrations**

Topics:

- What days of the year are officially designated as national holidays or festivals? What are the central themes of these occasions and how are they celebrated?
- What's your favorite holiday/celebration? Why?

## **Government and Politics**

Topics:

- What system of government does your birth country have? What are its basic tenants?
- What do you feel are the most positive aspects of each system of government?

## **Education**

Topics:

- Are you comfortable challenging your professor's ideas in class? Why or why not?
- Is the level of respect for teachers/professors different? How?

## **Friends and Partners**

Topics:

- How did you meet your friends?
- Do you have a partner (spouse)? If so, how long have you been together?

## **Goals**

Topics:

- Have you decided on specific goals to accomplish while you are at Anoka-Ramsey Community College? What are they?
- What will your life be like 5 years from now? Professional life? Marriage? Children?

## **Foods and Culture**

Topic/Activity:

- Discuss what food is served during a typical/traditional breakfast, lunch and dinner from your culture
- Eat at the campus café or meet at an ethnic restaurant.

## **Careers**

Topic:

- What is your dream job? What do you need to do to get there?
- What do you want to do after college?

## **Student Life**

Suggested exercise: Attend one of student Life's events together. A schedule is available at the Student Life desk in the Campus Center. After the event have a brief conversation about it

## **Adventure**

Topics:

- Who is the most adventurous person in your family? Describe what they do.
- What is the most adventurous thing that you have done or that you would like to someday do?

*Discussion Topics Courtesy of North Hennepin  
Community College Conversation Partners Program*