

# ASK AND TASK

*PHOTOCOPIYABLE*

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES  
FOR COMMUNICATION PRACTICE  
REVISED EDITION



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our objective is to foster an approach  
to learning and teaching that we call  
interplay, the interaction of language  
learners and teachers with their materials,  
with the language and culture,  
and with each other in active, creative,  
and productive play.*

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This book was set in Palatino, designed originally in 1948 in Frankfurt by Hermann Zapf for the Linotype foundry. Although a modern, easy-to-read, calligraphic typeface, it is based on Renaissance designs typical of the Palatinate area of Germany. It was said to be the most widely used, and pirated, face of the twentieth century. This book was printed and bound by Gasch Printing in Odenton, Maryland. Cover art: green background © Vladamir Assylov, photo © Dmitriy Shironosov / Dreamstime.com. Title page © Imagincy / Dreamstime.com. Book design RC Clark with AA Burrows. Cover AA Burrows.

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# User's Guide

This book is divided into two parts: Questions and Activities (Tasks). There are 40 topics with two or four pages of Questions and one page of Tasks for each topic. All the material is presented as sheets of photocopyable cards. The material is intended for use with English language learners at intermediate proficiency level, and it is best used with high school and adult groups. With some adaptation, however, the book can also be used with middle school students or with any groups who want conversation practice.

Both the questions and the tasks can be used in a wide variety of ways to facilitate learning. The questions are to prompt thought and conversation; the tasks are to promote language use while accomplishing some kind of project. You can use these cards cold, first going over the meaning of the question and any new vocabulary, or you can discuss each card to gauge the level of the students' ability to respond. Alternatively, you can introduce the topics using a separate related reading for each; this will help the students focus on the topic and give the students background to help form an opinion or carry out a task.

Prior to giving out the questions, you may prefer to present common vocabulary in the context of the topic, and have students create appropriate sentences using the new words. The students can then use this vocabulary while answering questions or completing tasks and can respond and perform better.

You will find different ways to use this book based on your own approach to teaching and your students' needs. To get you started, here are some ways I have used the cards:

## Question Cards

1. Choose a topic and copy the two question sheets. Divide the students into pairs and give each student an A or B sheet. Have each pair ask and discuss their questions. You can listen in on groups and help the students or write down errors to be used in class at a later time.
2. Cut up a sheet and make a pile of cards. Put the students into small groups. One student in each group takes a card and asks the question; the students in the other group answer it. Alternatively, a student takes a card and answers the question, and the other students try to guess what the question is.
3. Put the students into small groups. One student silently reads a question card and whispers the question to the next student in the group as in the game “Telephone.” The last person in the group announces the question.
4. Have the students prepare short individual speeches or presentations to the class based on their favorite question from the topic.
5. You or one of the students can dictate questions, and the students can discuss the questions in groups.
6. You can introduce vocabulary pertinent to the topics, and students in groups prepare answers to each question using the vocabulary. The group using the most new vocabulary wins.
7. You can use each question as a five-minute writing warmup before introducing the topic, or as a wrap-up at the end of the topic.

8. Have each student choose a question. Then have each student lead the class in a discussion of that question.
  
9. Hand out one question card to each student. On another blank card, each student write an answer to the question they were given. Divide the students into groups. Have all cards, questions and answers, turned face down and mixed, and the students play the matching game, finding the answers that match the questions.
  
10. Read some or all of the questions to one topic and have the class try to guess the topic until one student guesses the exact wording. Continue that on a daily basis for all the topics in the book. The student who guessed the most topics wins.

## Task Cards

1. Many of these activities, called tasks, can be worked on as individual homework assignments. The students can present their tasks to the class and explain how they found their information and why they chose to include it.
2. Several students can be assigned the same task to do at home. During class they will work as a team and prepare a presentation explaining all their work.
3. You can divide the students into groups of three or four and have the students work on a specified part of a task either in class or at home. They can present their findings to the class as a team project.
4. You can choose one task and have all the students work together to complete it.
5. You can bring to class a completed task to use as a sample for the students. The students can decide what could be improved.
6. You can ask the students to create their own tasks. You can have the students work on these tasks at home and present them to the class.
7. The students can make up their own tasks, and you can write them separately on small folded papers. The students can then pick out a task and figure out what to do.

8. You can have a “fair” where tasks from the units are displayed for other classes or parents to view. Students can explain their tasks and what they learned.
9. You can display tasks and the class can guess which students completed which tasks.
10. Assign students a task and have the students make a presentation only explaining the steps they would take to do the task. The rest of the class can follow the steps and bring in their completed tasks.
11. Have the students look at the questions for the unit that corresponds to the tasks. Which questions can be used to complete a task?
12. Have the students make up a task and assign a student to complete it and then present it to the class.

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