

Parent-Teacher Conference

9:30-9:45 Ice Breaker

- What was the best thing that happened this last week?
- What was the worst thing that happened this last week?



A **parent-teacher conference** is a short meeting or conference between the parents and teachers of students to discuss a child's progress at school. The conference supplements the information on students' report cards. A parent-teacher conference is a time when important people in a student's life can talk about how that student is doing in school. It's a chance for you to ask questions about the class or your child's performance. It is also a time for you and the teacher to work together as a team to

discuss ways you both can help your son or daughter be more successful in school. Students do better at school when their parents take an active role in their education.

9:45-10:10 Conversation

Practice this conversation at least twice. The second time, take a different role.

- Parent: Good morning Mrs. Reed. How is my daughter/son, Brian doing?
- Mrs. Reed: Good morning Mrs. (name of parents). Before I talk about your child, I would like to hear from you. Do you have any questions or concerns about Brian?
- Parent: Well, in preparation for this conference, I asked Brian how he thinks he's doing in class. He mentioned problems in spelling. Brian has always been weak in spelling. We have tried at home to help him. His sister, Kathy, often spends time with him, testing him on words that he often gets wrong. I'm sure that's helpful, isn't it?
- Mrs. Reed: Oh, yes, without a doubt. There's a good website I recommend for students who are having difficulty with spelling. It's a computer game that students really like – and it gives them immediate feedback on their answers. I'll write down the name for you. I also think that monitoring his progress would be good for him, for example, ask him to print out and show you the results of the online spelling exercises.

- Parent: Okay. Is there anything else we can do to help Brian be more successful in school?
- Mrs. Reed: I would like to see him participate more in class, especially when we have group work. He can be very quiet. And I think he would benefit from having a tutor help him with his English homework. We have an English tutor here at school if you're interested.
- Parent: Yes, certainly. Does he have homework every night?
- Mrs. Reed: He has homework every night but Friday. There is never any homework over the weekend.
- Parent: Thank you for your time and suggestions. I am available any time to discuss my child's learning. Is it okay if I email you about any questions I have in the future?
- Mrs. Reed: Of course! Here's my email and that website I told you about. Here's the name of one of the school's tutors. You can contact her at this number. Thank you for coming to the Parent-Teacher Conference. Brian is a good student because you are an interested parent.

10:10-10:25 Discussion

Here are some questions about parent-teacher conferences. Discuss them together as a group. It's not necessary to discuss all the questions; choose the ones that are most interesting to you.

1. Have you ever attended a parent-teacher conference? When was it?
2. What did you and the teacher talk about?
3. Do you think the conference was helpful? Did the teacher have any good suggestions for your son or daughter?
4. Do you maintain a relationship with your child's teacher beyond the parent-teacher conference?
5. What are some ways you can prepare for a parent-teacher conference?
6. Do you tell the teacher about anything that is happening at home that may affect your child's behavior?
7. Does your spouse (husband or wife) attend the conference with you?
8. Can you think of a good teacher you had? What made that teacher good?
9. Can you think of a bad teacher you had? What made that teacher bad?
10. How are you a teacher to someone else?
11. Would you rather learn from a young teacher or an older teacher?

12. Can you compare the teachers in the United States with the teachers in your country?
How are they the same? Different?

10:25-10:40 Grammar: Asking questions

Before the parent-teacher conference, it is a good idea to prepare questions to ask the teacher about your child's progress. You can also ask the teacher to suggest ways in which you can help reinforce strengths and work on weaknesses at home.

Directions: With your tutor, review the form for asking questions below. Then, prepare at least five questions you can ask your child's teacher.

1. The basic rule for asking questions in English is simple: Invert the order of the subject and the first helping verb.
 - It **is** snowing. = **Is** it snowing?
 - He **can** speak German. = **Can** he speak German?
 - They **have** lived here a long time. = **Have** they lived here a long time?
 - She **will** arrive at ten o'clock. = **Will** she arrive at ten o'clock?
 - He **was** driving fast. = **Was** he driving fast?
 - You **have** been smoking. = **Have** you been smoking?
2. If there is no helping verb, use a form of the verb "do".
 - You speak fluent French. = **Do** you speak fluent French?
 - She lives in Brussels. = **Does** she live in Brussels?
 - They lived in Manchester. = **Did** they live in Manchester?
 - He had an accident. = **Did** he have an accident?
3. Most questions with question words are made in the same way:
 - How often **does** she use it?
 - Why **don't** you come?
 - Where **do** you work?
 - How many **did** you buy?
 - What time **did** you go?
 - Which one **do** you like?
 - Whose car **were** you driving?

Five questions to ask my child's teacher:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4. _____

5. _____