

# Speak English With Vanessa

Free PDF Worksheet

Speak With Me About Everything!

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Dear English Learner,

Get ready to speak confidently with these common English phrases and questions. I recommend reading this worksheet out loud and using the blank space on the last page to answer my challenge question using the vocabulary. [Click here to study the free English lesson!](#) Thanks so much for learning English with me. You rock!

Your teacher,

Vanessa

## SPEAK ABOUT WEEKEND PLANS

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### Common vocabulary about weekend plans

**Brunch:** *breakfast + lunch = brunch; a long social event, often with friends and alcohol*

My friends and I are meeting at our favorite **brunch** spot on Saturday.

**Social Butterfly:** *someone who loves being with other people*

My friend is a **social butterfly**--she has invitations to 3 brunches and 2 afternoon teas this weekend!

**Homebody:** *the opposite of a social butterfly; someone who likes to stay home*

My friend is a social butterfly but I am a **homebody**, so we usually have dinner and game night at my house.

**Stay in:** *when you don't go out, you stay in (stay at home)*

It is supposed to be cold and rainy this weekend, so I think I will just **stay in** and read a book.

**Binge-watch:** *when you watch many episodes of a TV show or movie for hours without stopping*

Last weekend my husband and I stayed in and **binge-watched** the Star Wars movies.

**Catch up on some chores:** *to do some cleaning that you didn't do during the week*

I was so busy all week, and finally this weekend I can **catch up on some chores** around the house.

## Common questions about weekend plans

***What are you up to this weekend?***

*What're you up to?*

*Watcha'p to?*

***What have you got going on this weekend?***

*What've you got goin' on?*

*Whadayagot goin'on?*

***You doing anything fun this weekend?***

*Ya doin' anything fun?*

## Common replies about weekend plans

*That sounds like fun!*

*How interesting!*

*Nice!*

*Sometimes it's nice to do nothing.*

*Enjoy your weekend!*

*Have a good weekend!*

## Sample conversation

1: Hey! **What are you up to this weekend?**

2: Nothing much, I am going to **stay in** and **catch up on some chores** on Saturday, but Sunday I am meeting some friends for **brunch**.

1: *That sounds fun! Where is your favorite brunch spot?*

2: I usually go to Sunny Morning Cafe. What about you? **What have you got going on this weekend?**

1: *I'm kind of a **homebody**, so I'll probably just read a book in my hammock.*

2: That sounds nice! Well, have a good weekend, enjoy your book!

1: *Thanks, you too! Have a good weekend!*

## Let's speak together!

Vanessa: Hey! What are you up to this weekend?

You: \_\_\_\_\_

Vanessa: How interesting! How often do you do that?

You: \_\_\_\_\_ + How about you?

Vanessa: Oh, me? I'll probably go hiking since the weather is going to be so warm. Well, enjoy your weekend!

## Vanessa's Challenge Question

*Use the space below to write a few sentences answering this question.*

**Whatcha got goin' on this weekend?**

*(Sample answer: I was going to have brunch with some friends, but it's been a busy week, so I think I'll just stay in and catch up on some chores. I can go to brunch with them next weekend.)*

# SPEAK ABOUT RESTAURANTS

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## Common questions about restaurants

Wanna **eat out**? / Do you **eat out** often? / I want to **eat out** tonight.

*"To eat out" is a more common phrase than "go to a restaurant/ eat at a restaurant"*

**Where ya wanna go?**

Full phrase: *Where do you want to go?*

**Should we order in/ pick up/ take out/ take-away/ carry out?**

*These are regional expressions. You can use any of them!*

**Whatcha in the mood for? / Wha'ya in the mood for?**

Full phrase: *What are you in the mood for?*

Answer: *I'm in the mood for tacos.*

## Common answers about restaurants

**How about...? / How 'bout...?**

*a polite suggestion*

**How about** if we order in tonight. I'm not in the mood for cooking.

**How 'bout** pizza?

**I'm feelin'... How'zat sound? / Zat sound okay?**

Full phrase: *I'm feeling (tacos). How does that sound? / Does that sound okay?*

**Is \_\_\_\_ open?**

**Is** Ted's Cafe **open**? I'd love to go there!

**Let's grab a bite at...**

*when you want to eat something quickly, usually lunch or a snack*

**Let's grab a bite** at Louie's. They're open for lunch.

**I know a place/ spot that...**

*an restaurant that not many people know about*

**I know a place** that has great pasta.

**I know a spot** with a great view of the city.

Wanna eat pasta? Come with me. **I know a place.**

### Sample conversation

Vanessa: Hey, you **wanna grab lunch**?

Dan: Sure, but I only have time for **a quick bite** before my soccer game. **What sounds good?**

Vanessa: Hmm... **How about** pasta?

Dan: That sounds great. How about I **call it in**, you **pick** it up, and we'll picnic in the park before my game starts.

Vanessa: That sounds great. **I know a place that's** close by and has great tomato sauce.

### Let's speak together!

Vanessa: Hey, I'm hungry. Let's grab lunch. Whatcha in the mood for?

You: \_\_\_\_\_.

Vanessa: Oh, that sounds good. Do you know a good place?

You: \_\_\_\_\_.

Vanessa: Oh, that sounds good. Do you wanna eat there or get take-out?

You: \_\_\_\_\_.

Vanessa: Great! Let's go.

## Vanessa's Challenge Question

*Use the space below to write a few sentences answering this question.*

**Do you wanna grab a bite to eat?**

*(Sample answer: I'd love to grab some lunch. I know a spot just down the street that has quick service and great sandwiches. How about if we go there right now?)*

# SPEAK ABOUT VACATION

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## Common questions about vacation

**Do you have plans to go anywhere this summer?**

*Where ya goin' this summer?*

*Whatcha got goin' on this summer?*

**Are you doing anything fun for vacation?**

*Y'doin'nything fun for vacation?*

**Where are you headed for vacation?**

*Where ya headed this summer?*

## Common answers about vacation

***"I'd like to... but..."***

*I'd like to go to Europe, **but** I think I'll take a road trip around the US instead.*

*I'd like to go to a family reunion, **but** we've had to postpone it for now.*

***"I wish that I could... but"***

*I wish that I could go on a cruise, **but** that's not happening now. I guess I'll order a pizza and sit by the pool.*

*I wish that I could go to that music festival, **but** it's been canceled. I guess I'll make a playlist and have my own music festival in my backyard.*

***"I was going to... but"***

*I was going to take my family on a trip to New York City, **but** we decided to go camping instead.*

*I was going to backpack across Italy, **but** I guess I'll stay home and learn to cook some Italian dishes instead.*



## Sample conversation

Dan: Hey! Y' doin' anything fun this summer?

Vanessa: Well, **I was going to** backpack across Europe, **but** instead, I think I am going to go camping at some of the local state parks. **How about you?**

Dan: That sounds like fun! **I was going to** meet my family in Florida for a family reunion, **but** that's been canceled. So now I think I am going to have a socially-distanced outdoor movie night in my backyard. **Do ya wanna come?**

Vanessa: Sure, that sounds great! Text me the details and I'll be there.

Dan: Great! I'll see you around, enjoy your camping trip!

Vanessa: Thanks. I'll see you at movie night!

## Let's speak together!

Vanessa: Hey! Do you have plans to go anywhere this summer?

You: \_\_\_\_\_.

Vanessa: That sounds like fun! Have you ever done that before?

You: \_\_\_\_\_ + **what about you?**

Vanessa: **I wish I could** take my family to Switzerland, **but** with the travel restrictions, we are going on a road trip instead.

## Vanessa's Challenge Question

*Use the space below to write a few sentences answering this question.*

**Are you doing anything fun for vacation?**

*(Sample answer: I wish I could take a few months off of work and fly to Brazil to visit my grandma, but the flight is just too expensive. So instead, I think I'll probably go to the beach for a week.)*

# SPEAK ABOUT YOUR CITY

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## Common vocabulary about where you live

**Busy:** *loud and a lot of activity*

The streets of New York are **busy** all day and all night.

**Crowded:** *a lot of people or buildings in one place*

Tokyo, Japan is an incredibly **crowded** city.

**Relaxed:** *calm or easy*

Stockholm, Sweden is a very **relaxed** city.

**Quiet:** *low level of noise or no noise; few people or traffic*

Edisto Island is a **quiet** place to take a vacation.

**City/Urban:** *an area with a large population; a city is often described as “urban”*

Delhi, India is the second largest **urban** area in the world.

**(In the) Country:** *“country” means a nation or territory, but “in the country” is used by Americans to mean countryside, outside of a city*

I used to live in the city, but now I live **in the country** because I want a big garden.

**Off the beaten path:** *a place takes effort to get to; not a lot of people know about it*

The Galapagos Islands are **off the beaten path** but a great destination for nature lovers.

**Up and coming:** *a place that is quickly developing and likely to be very popular*

Botswana is one of the world’s biggest **up and coming** tourism destinations.

**Tourist trap:** *a place that attracts a lot of tourists*

Hollywood, California is a popular American **tourist trap**.

**Must-sees:** *the most popular places or things to see*

Some of the **must-sees** of Istanbul include the Hagia Sophia, the Blue Mosque, and the Grand Bazar.

## Common questions about where you live

### Where are you from?

*I am from Asheville, North Carolina. It's a pretty quiet place, but it's definitely up and coming!*

### What is it like there?

*It's pretty chill and not very busy until the fall season when all the tourists come to see the fall leaves.*

### What is the weather like?

*Most seasons are pretty mild. We're in the south, but also in the mountains, so it's never too extreme.*

### When is the best time to visit?

*The fall is the perfect time to visit, but that's also when everyone else wants to visit, so it can be crowded.*

### What is it known for?

*A lot of people visit to go to the mountains. Plus, we have really good food and tons of breweries with local beer.*

### What is your favorite thing to do or see there?

*You definitely need to take a drive on the Blue Ridge Parkway! I can show you some awesome views.*

### What do you recommend?

*Come visit in the fall when the weather is nice. You can go hiking and camping and try some of our best local restaurants and breweries.*

## Sample conversation

Vanessa: Hey Dan!

Dan: Hey Vanessa! Are you excited for your trip to Rome?

Vanessa: I am excited! It's so full of history. Are there any **tourist traps** I should avoid?

Dan: Yeah, avoid all the gelato shops except for this one. It's **off the beaten path** but trust me, you don't want to miss it.

Vanessa: Good to know! Any other "**must sees**"?

Dan: The Colosseum is great, but my favorite thing to do is wander around and see all the little chapels. It's usually more **relaxed** and less **crowded** that way.

Vanessa: That does sound nice, thanks for the tip!

Dan: No problem, enjoy your trip!

## Let's speak together!

Vanessa: Hi! I am taking a vacation to your city and I am trying to figure out what to pack--what is the weather like in the summer?

You: \_\_\_\_\_.

Vanessa: Good to know! And what is your favorite thing to do or see in your city?

You: \_\_\_\_\_.

Vanessa: Wow, that sounds interesting! Are there any "must-sees" or tourist traps I should avoid?

You: \_\_\_\_\_.

Vanessa: Thanks for the tip, I look forward to visiting. See you soon!

## Vanessa's Challenge Question

*Use the space below to write a few sentences answering this question.*

**Can you tell me about where you live?**

*(Sample answer: I live in Tokyo, one of the biggest cities in the world. Sometimes it's way too busy and crowded, but there are plenty of parks to visit if you want some fresh air and a bit of calm. There are quite a few must-see attractions, but make sure to stay away from any restaurant that has a sign in English. Those are usually tourist traps. If you want authentic food, I can give you some good recommendations.)*

# SPEAK ABOUT BIRTHDAYS

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## Common Birthday Vocabulary

### *Types of birthday parties*

**Birthday bash:** *a big party*

We're having a big **birthday bash** this weekend for my niece's 10th birthday.

**To throw a party:** *to have a party or plan a party*

My family is **throwing a party** for my grandma because she's turning 90 this week!

**A gathering or get-together:** *a small group of people, not a fancy party*

I'm not a big fan of parties, so we're just having a small **gathering/get-together**.

**A surprise party:** *when the birthday person doesn't know about the party*

We're throwing a **surprise party** for my sister, so don't tell her!

### *Birthday Expressions*

**RSVP:** *please respond; please let me know if you are coming; written on the invitation*

**RSVP** by June 30th.

**BYOB:** *"bring your own beer/booze" (alcohol); written on the invitation*

Dinner and cake provided. **BYOB**.

**Make a wish!:** *the traditional activity after blowing out the candles; but don't tell anyone or your wish won't come true!*

After we sing "Happy Birthday," you blow out the candles and **make a wish!**

**Goodie bag:** *little gifts given to guests at children's birthday parties; also called "party favors"*

I'm not a big fan of **goodie bags** because they're usually filled with junk.

## ***Important Birthdays***

**Sweet 16:** *special 16th birthday party; almost always for girls only*

I can't believe your daughter is already old enough to have her **Sweet 16!**

**21st birthday:** *the age when Americans can legally drink alcohol and feel like "an adult"*

It's your **21st** birthday... let's go to the bar!

**Over the hill:** *40th birthday; half-way to death; usually said as a joke about getting old*

On his 40th birthday, he said, "Wow, I'm already **over the hill**. I don't feel that old!"

**Another trip around the sun:** *another year older*

Congrats on taking **another trip around the sun!**

## **Common Birthday Questions**

**Any plans for your birthday?**

*Yeah, I'm planning a big bash this weekend!*

**What do you wanna do for your birthday?**

*I want to have a cookout and get together with some friends.*

**A little bird told me it's your birthday... What would you like?**

*Yes! My birthday is coming up. Instead of a gift, I am asking everyone to bring their favorite food or drink to the party.*

**How old will you be?** \*\*NOTE: Only ask children how old they are. Don't ask adults!

*I'll be over the hill!*

**Is it a surprise party?**

*It is, so don't say anything!*

**Do you need me to bring anything? or What can I bring?**

*Yeah, can you bring some candles? I forgot to buy them!*



## Sample Conversation

Vanessa: Hey Dan!

Dan: Hey Vanessa! **You have a birthday coming up**, don't you?

Vanessa: Yeah, pretty soon! **Another trip around the sun.**

Dan: Cool, **do you have any plans** for your birthday?

Vanessa: I do! I am going to have a big **birthday bash**. I would love for you to come. I'll send you an invitation!

Dan: That sounds fun! **Do you need me to bring anything?**

Vanessa: Sure, bring your favorite game to play and a big appetite for cake. All the other details will be on the invitation.

Dan: Sounds great, I'll be there!

Vanessa: See you then!

## Your Conversation

Vanessa: Hey, a little bird told me your birthday is coming up. What do you wanna do for your birthday?

Student: [Your response] \_\_\_\_\_

Vanessa: That sounds like fun! Is that a birthday tradition or something new?

Student: [Your response] \_\_\_\_\_

Vanessa: Cool, I would love to come. Can I bring anything?

Student: [Your response] \_\_\_\_\_

Vanessa: Great, I'll be there! I can't wait to celebrate another trip around the sun.

## Vanessa's Challenge Question

*Use the space below to write a few sentences answering this question.*

**What did you do for your most recent birthday?**

*(Sample answer: I'm not a fan of big birthday bashes, but my friends threw a surprise party for me because I'm over the hill! They had a big cake, tons of presents, and even made a little slideshow with pictures and videos. I feel so lucky that they put together that special event for me!)*

# SPEAK ABOUT PETS

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## Common Vocabulary About Pets

### Describe Yourself

**Animal lover:** *someone who loves all animals*

Ever since I visited the zoo as a child, I have been an **animal lover**.

**Cat/dog/etc. Person:** *someone who specifically likes cats more than dogs or dogs more than cats*

I am a **cat person**, but I like to play with my friend's dog.

**Allergic:** *if your eyes get red, you have difficulty breathing, and your nose starts to run when you are around cats, you are allergic to cats*

My friend is **allergic** to dogs, but she takes medicine so that she can still be around them.

### Describe Your Pet

NOTE: *In English, we refer to a pet as "he" or "she" if the animal is a pet. Sometimes we say "it," but it sounds more like a wild animal. If you don't know if the pet is male or female, you can just say "he."*

**Breed:** *the specific type of cat/dog/horse/etc.*

The Maine Coon is a large **breed** of domestic cat.

**A Rescue:** *pets that are adopted from the animal shelter*

My cats are both **rescues**. We got them from the animal shelter.

**Mutt:** *when you don't know what mix of breeds an animal is; usually for dogs*

The dog we adopted is a **mutt**. He's one-of-a-kind!

**Fur/Coat:** *the hair of animals*

My cat's **fur** is so soft!/ After a bath, my dog has a silky **coat**!

**Wild:** *animals that exist free in nature, they aren't kept as pets*

Lions, tigers and bears are **wild**.

**Stray:** *living on the street with no home*

He was **a stray** before we got him.

**Domesticated:** *animals that are kept as pets or are used by humans in some way*

Horses, cows, chickens, cats and dogs are all **domesticated** animals.

**Friendly:** *the temperament or attitude of a pet*

My cat is very **friendly**, she loves to meet new people!

## Describe Pet Care

**Cage/Crate/Kennel:** *the structure used to keep an animal contained*

My sister keeps her ferret in a **cage** in her room.

**Collar and Tag:** *a strap or band that goes around an animal's neck*

The **tag** on my dog's **collar** has my phone number on it, so that if he runs away, whoever finds him can call me.

**Lead/Leash:** *a rope or other material used to keep an animal from running away*

I saw a woman at the beach who had her cat on a **leash**!

**Vet (Veterinarian):** *a doctor who takes care of animals*

My friend took her sick hamster to the **vet**, but now he's all better.

**Fetch:** *when you throw something and an animal brings it back for you to throw again*

My sister's cat loves to play **fetch** with a toy mouse.

**To Pet:** *to stroke an animal softly*

The pets at the animal shelter love to be **pet**./ The dog likes when you **pet** his tummy.

## Common questions about pets

**Do you have any pets?**

*When I was a kid we had a dog, but now I have a couple of cats.*

**What kind is he?**

*He's a lab mix. We got him from the shelter. [lab = labrador retriever]*

**What's his name?**

FEMALE: *Bella, Luna, Lucy, Daisy, Coco*

MALE: *Max, Buddy, Teddy, Rocky, Duke*

**Is he friendly?**

*Yes, you can pet him.*

*He's kind of sensitive right now, so it would be best not to pet him.*

**How long have you had him?**

*I've had Max for about ten years.*

**What made you decide to get that breed?**

*I know that labs are family-friendly dogs.*

## Sample conversation

Vanessa: Hi, Dan! Is that your dog? I thought you were a **cat person**.

Dan: Hey, Vanessa. I'm an **animal lover**, but Fluffy's not mine. I'm walking him for my friend.

Vanessa: Oh, I gotcha. Is he **friendly**? Can I pet him?

Dan: Yes, he's very friendly! You can pet him, but watch out--he drools.

Vanessa: Good to know. I've never had a dog but I think I'll stick with my non-drooling cats. Good boy, Fluffy!

Dan: I'm gonna walk him to the park to play **fetch**, wanna come?

Vanessa: Sure!

### Let's speak together!

Vanessa: Hi! I didn't know you had a pet! What kind is he?

You: \_\_\_\_\_.

Vanessa: Interesting! How long have you had him?

You: \_\_\_\_\_.

Vanessa: That's so nice! I've been thinking about getting one, too. What do you like to do with him?

You: \_\_\_\_\_.

Vanessa: Thanks for your help and good talking to you!

## Vanessa's Challenge Question

*Use the space below to write a few sentences answering this question.*

Can you tell me what kind of pet you have (or want to have)?

*(Sample answer: I have two cats. They used to be indoor cats, but when we moved to our new house, they love to go on the deck and watch birds in the sun! Whenever I'm feeling stressed, I pet them. Immediately, I feel more relaxed. Even if you think you're not a cat person, I recommend petting a friendly cat when you're feeling stressed.)*

# SPEAK ABOUT JOBS

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## Common Vocabulary About Jobs

### Employment

**My day job:** *a full-time job*

**My day job** is in an office but I am taking night classes to become a nurse.

**My 9 to 5:** *your full-time job, possibly one that you don't like*

**My 9 to 5** is in project management for an engineering firm.

**Gig/side-gig**

**Hustle/ side-hustle**

**Side job/ do it on the side:** *a project or job that isn't your main job*

I work in an office but my **side hustle** is being a fitness instructor.

I work in an office but I have a catering **gig** on the weekends.

**Part-time:** *a job with less than 40 hours per week*

When I was a student in university, I worked **part-time** at the fitness center on campus.

### Unemployment

**To be laid off:** *to lose your job because of changes in the company*

When the pandemic hit, a lot of people were **laid off**.

**To get fired:** *to lose your job because you did something wrong*

He **got fired** because he was late too many times.

**To lose your job:** *to be fired or to be laid off*

If I'm late one more time, I'm going to **lose my job**!



## How you feel about your job

**It's just a job:** *not a job you love*

Eh, my server job is **just a job** until I can find something that pays better.

**It's my dream job:** *a job you love*

Working at the zoo is **my dream job**. I love working around so many interesting animals!

**Work/life balance:** *the amount of time working VS living your personal life*

I didn't have a good **work/life balance** at my last job. I worked a lot of overtime and was always exhausted.

**Burnout/ I'm burnt out:** *when you work or study so hard that you lose your passion*

A lot of nurses are facing **burnout** because they work so many hours under such challenging conditions.

## Describing your job

**I am a** \_\_\_\_\_

+ *your specific job or role*

**I am a...** teacher, student, manager, business owner, office worker.

**I work in** \_\_\_\_\_

+ *the industry or sector you work in*

**I work in...** education, business, the healthcare industry, the nonprofit sector.

**I work for** \_\_\_\_\_

+ *a well-known company or organization*

**I work for...** Google, Amazon, NASA, Doctors Without Borders.

**I run** \_\_\_\_\_

+ *the business that you own or are in charge of*

**I run...** an online business, a bed and breakfast, a school for service animals

## Common questions about jobs

### What do you do?

*My 9 to 5 is working in a doctor's office, but my side-hustle is photography. I'm building my own business!*

### What's that like?

*I like the doctor I work for, but the job is just a job. I really want to grow my photography gig into a full-time business.*

### Where are you working these days?

*I work for Google in Information Technology.*

### How's work going?

*It's interesting work, but I don't have much work/life balance, and I'm afraid I'm going to burn myself out soon.*

## Sample conversation

Dan: Hey Vanessa. **Where are you working these days?**

Vanessa: Hi, Dan. **I run** an online business, so I can work from anywhere! It's pretty great.

Dan: Wow! **What's that like?**

Vanessa: Well, I help people learn to speak English with confidence. **It's my dream job!** But I have to be careful not **to burn out**.

Dan: That sounds awesome, but I understand.

Vanessa: What about you?

Dan: Well, unfortunately, I got **laid off** when the coffee shop closed, and I've been working **part time** at a hotel for the past few months.

Vanessa: Oh no! That's a bummer. Have you ever **worked in** marketing? If you're looking for **a side-gig**, I need someone to help behind-the-scenes.

Dan: Wow, that would be great! Tell me more about it...

## Let's speak together!

Vanessa: So tell me, what do you do?

You: \_\_\_\_\_.

Vanessa: And what is that like? Do you enjoy your work?

You: \_\_\_\_\_ + How about you?

Vanessa: Oh, me? I run an online English teaching business where I help students around the world to speak English confidently. ...Well good luck with your work, it was nice to meet you!

## Vanessa's Challenge Question

*Use the space below to write a few sentences answering this question.*

**Have you ever lost your job? Tell me about it.**

*(Sample answer: I used to live about 30 minutes outside of the city, and there was always terrible traffic to get into the city. I was late to work two times, and my boss gave me a warning that if I was late again, he would fire me. Can you guess what happened? Traffic was bad again, and I was late. I got fired!)*

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