

Interview Script

Hi, _____. My name is Tim and I'm going to be walking you through this interview session today. I'm conducting interviews to better understand how people approach learning vocabulary. This session should take 15-20 minutes.

The first thing I want to make clear right away is that this is not a test. You can't do or say anything wrong here. In fact, this is probably the one place today where you don't have to worry about making any mistakes. If you have any questions as we go along, just ask. If you need to take a break at any point, just let me know.

Okay, let's get started.

Bio

Name: Tammy

Age: 35

Profession: Neuroscientist

Demographics: Puerto Rican,
Female

Tammy Interview Notes

1. Tell me about your daily responsibilities, routines, and obligations.
2. Do you enjoy learning new words? Why or not?
3. When was the last time you had to learn a good deal of new vocabulary? Why did you or didn't you succeed?
4. Tell me about a time where learning new vocabulary was difficult.
5. When studying vocabulary, where do you study, with whom do you study, and how long are your study sessions?
6. What methods/strategies have you used to learn new vocabulary?
7. If you chose to use an app to learn new words, what features would you like to see included?

1. "I work 12+ hour days. When I'm at work, I do customer support on new technology. When it comes to new technology, there are always new terms that I have to know." When not at work, she states she tries to make time for the gym and to do things for enjoyment."
2. (Smiling) "I really do. I find that the more I know, the better I'm able to do my job and the more satisfied I am." She talked about how she uses a dictionary app for a "word of the day" that she then tries to use in context everyday.
3. "In my job, with technology, terms that I know often have different meaning in my work. For example, a sandbox is not something you play in but rather means something else. I have to learn a lot of new terms all the time at work. When I was working on my PhD, I had to learn a lot of neuroanatomy which was a great deal of memorization." She states she is successful in learning vocabulary because of her motivation and her persistence.
4. "Learning vocabulary is always challenging for me, especially when there is a large amount of it to learn at the same time. It was particularly difficult when I had textbooks of information I had to learn fairly quickly."
5. (Enthusiastically) "I usually study by myself but then try to use the terms with colleagues and friends. I practice my words at work but also investigate them at home. When I study, it is usually short periods of time. When there is a lot to learn at the same time, I would study for hours at a time."
6. (used hand gestures to describe) "I read the words, I say them, I write them. When I'm taking notes, I use a pen that has multiple colors. (laughing) I write in black, when it's important to learn, I write in blue, if it's particularly important, I do it in red."
7. "It would be awesome if there was an app that helps with pronunciation."

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Bio

Name: Ariella

Age: 36

Profession: College Mental Health Counselor

Demographics: White, Female

Ariella Interview Notes

1. Tell me about your daily responsibilities, routines, and obligations.
2. Do you enjoy learning new words? Why or not?
3. When was the last time you had to learn a good deal of new vocabulary? Why did you or didn't you succeed?
4. Tell me about a time where learning new vocabulary was difficult.
5. When studying vocabulary, where do you study, with whom do you study, and how long are your study sessions?
6. What methods/strategies have you used to learn new vocabulary?
7. If you chose to use an app to learn new words, what features would you like to see included?

1. (Smiling) "I work in a college counseling center from 8:30 to 4:30 Monday-Friday. I am currently a doctoral student so I study everyday. I walk my dog about 3 miles per day for exercise. I also spend time with my husband, family, and friends."
2. (Enthusiastically) "I really do. I find that I really enjoy using new words in context because I am always looking for new ways to express what I'd like to say."
3. "I have to learn new terms all the time because of my classes. I am successful because I practice them and try to use them in context in my papers and with my classmates." "When I'm not successful, it's because there are so many terms, I feel overloaded."
4. (Grimaced) "Whenever I learn new vocabulary, it is difficult when there isn't enough context to really understand how to use the words, especially when words can be used in several different ways."
5. "I study at home most of the time. I usually study at home but I also study with a classmate for about 30 minutes per week. My study sessions are several hours long, but the vocabulary part isn't constant, it's sprinkled throughout."
6. "I google terms to better understand them. I also highlight and use post-it notes. I make notes in my own words which helps me better understand it."
7. "It would be great if I could get premade flash cards tailored to my specific class. I would like to see multiple contextual examples for the terms. I would like to be able to learn the pronunciation. I would like it to be easy to use and be able to input terms simply and quickly."

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Bio

Name: Kristen

Age: 36

Profession: Middle School English Teacher

Demographics: White, Female

Kristen Interview Notes

1. Tell me about your daily responsibilities, routines, and obligations.
2. Do you enjoy learning new words? Why or not?
3. When was the last time you had to learn a good deal of new vocabulary? Why did you or didn't you succeed?
4. Tell me about a time where learning new vocabulary was difficult.
5. When studying vocabulary, where do you study, with whom do you study, and how long are your study sessions?
6. What methods/strategies have you used to learn new vocabulary?
7. If you chose to use an app to learn new words, what features would you like to see included?

1. "I get up way too early, go to work, go home, try to exercise or relax, talk to my family, talk to my boyfriend or my best friend, and try not to stay up too late on my phone."
2. (Smiling) "Yes! I love learning new words because I believe language is how we get to understand others and their thoughts. Even after a person is long gone, their thoughts live on through their written words which is a form of immortality." She stated that she loves learning new words because it is a uniquely human endeavor that lets others know you and you know others.
3. "I typically learn new vocabulary when I am learning new content or a skill. For the last year I have been using the app DuoLingo to learn French so I'm learning new words everyday. For learning English, I learn new words through things that I read. I find I am successful when I can pair the topic with my interests."
4. (Enthusiastically) "I recently read Steven Pinker's book 'Enlightenment Now' which I discovered through another author I love. It was very difficult because I don't know a lot of math or science. To be successful, I had to reread, pause to think, look for examples, and now I think I could actually teach it to someone else."
5. "I would love to have a study buddy but I don't. I learn vocabulary in context when I'm reading. As I go along, I take notes and look things up. I usually do this at home in the evening or on the weekends when I have time."
6. "Vocabulary is all about context for me. When I find a topic that interests me, I read up on it, I find experts on social media who post about it, sometimes I watch a video about it." I usually learn new words by learning new information."
7. (Excitedly) "Absolutely a pronunciation feature. As someone who learns their vocabulary through reading, it's not always easy to know if I am pronouncing it correctly. I would also like a feature that helped me to understand shades of words for example, the difference between distressed, upset, and annoyed."

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Bio

Name: Katrina

Age: 36

Profession: Children's Librarian

Demographics: White, Female

Katrina Interview Notes

1. Tell me about your daily responsibilities, routines, and obligations.
2. Do you enjoy learning new words? Why or not?
3. When was the last time you had to learn a good deal of new vocabulary? Why did you or didn't you succeed?
4. Tell me about a time where learning new vocabulary was difficult.
5. When studying vocabulary, where do you study, with whom do you study, and how long are your study sessions?
6. What methods/strategies have you used to learn new vocabulary?
7. If you chose to use an app to learn new words, what features would you like to see included?

1. "I work full time as a children's librarian. In my daily life, I run programs for children up to age 12, I maintain a collection of materials, I supervise staff, and I promote the library on social media. In my personal life, I maintain an apartment, pay bills, run errands, and care for my pets."
2. (Smiling) "I love learning new things in general and I enjoy learning new words. I think learning new words and methods of communication make me more connected to the world from my own little corner of it."
3. "When I was in graduate school, I was overwhelmed by the amount of vocabulary I learned. I succeeded because I wanted to do well and I enjoyed the subject matter."
4. (Looked frustrated thinking about this) "When I was in college, I was trying to learn Italian. The professor was from Italy and she didn't realize she had to explain a lot of rules to students who had no knowledge of the language at all. I memorized as much as I could but it was difficult without context."
5. "I learn at work and at home. I usually study at home. I study by myself. I study a little bit here and there."
6. "I try to incorporate new words into my existing knowledge base. It helps to use them in a sentence and really understand them rather than just memorizing them. It is easier for me to remember them if I can use them. I use flash cards, sentences, small illustrations or cartoons, and mnemonic devices."
7. (Smiling) "I would like to see an option to flag a word that I am having trouble with so that it appears more frequently."