

## 10 Questions in One Minute!

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The **aim** of this activity is to get participants to effectively interact in a realistic setting: a radio programme during which a guest must answer 10 questions in just one minute.

This idea can be used to practise:

- **SYNTAX:** asking questions; auxiliaries; question words; answering yes-no questions; any given tense; indirect questions;
- **LEXIS:** any given lexical area;
- **PHONOLOGY:** intonation of short and wh-questions; weak and strong forms (auxiliaries and pronouns);
- **SKILLS:** listening and speaking

Also, if you are applying **content-based learning or CLIL**, the guest can play the role of an “expert”, and be asked simple questions so as to introduce the audience into a topic (if answers require some development, you may want to reduce the number of questions, but the idea is to always limit time to a minute).

### RESOURCES:

**In the classroom:** any device that records voice in digital formats (students may be asked to share their MP3s, MP5s or mobile phones). Paper and pencil.

**For publication:** a computer with access to the Internet (less than half an hour).

**Software required:** Web browser<sup>1</sup>. Depending on the format you record files in, you may need an audio converter<sup>2</sup> (recommended: convert audio files to .mp3 before you start publishing files). An HTML Online Editor<sup>3</sup> is advisable if you plan to beautify your entry. To check your final product is OK, the computer you’re using should be able to reproduce audio (i.e. you’ll need speakers or headphones too!). For the extension, if you are opting for CDs, you will need a CDburner<sup>4</sup>.

**For the extension:** pendrives or CDs + audio player in the classroom. Alternatively, if you have access to a computer lab, students could listen to their products directly on the computers.

### DESCRIPTION:

1. **Preparation:** In pairs, students plan 10 questions (personal, or on a given topic) that can be answered briefly. Alternatively, the teacher may draft the questions themselves (suggestion: allow for, at least, some personalization). Then students rehearse as if one was the radio speaker and the other the special guest.



<sup>1</sup> Mozilla Firefox, Internet Explorer, Opera, Safari, etc.

<sup>2</sup> You may want to try <http://www.zamzar.com> to get your files converted for free. Or you may download any audio converter of the many available on the Web as freeware.

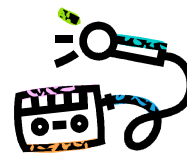
<sup>3</sup> My favourite one is RealTime HTML Editor, at <http://htmledit.squarefree.com/>

<sup>4</sup> E.g. Nero® - A free version for evaluation can be downloaded from: <http://nero.softonic.com/descargar>

NB: Make sure the questions follow some thread, and the whole thing sounds more like a radio programme than a test on questions!

**TIMING:** In class or at home, between 5 and 20 minutes (depending on how much thought is given to the questions, and how much they need to rehearse).

2. **Recording:** using MP3s, MP5s or even their mobile phones students record their interviews.



**TIMING:** 2 minutes at the most (NB: recording students need to be “isolated” so that audio quality can be ensured).

2. **Publishing:** get the recordings uploaded to a school/class podcast or blog<sup>5</sup>. Tag the entry in ways that can attract potential listeners.



Post a poster in the classroom (or just give them the link on a slip of paper), and share the news via institutional sites you may have available. Use your networks (Facebook, Twitter, communities of practice you belong to, email) to promote it. Invite your students to re-post your entry at their sites. Encourage everybody to comment!

**TIMING at the computer:** (assuming you had created the podcast beforehand) 15 minutes to post the episode to the podcast (make sure your recording is in the right format before you get started, and if you want to beautify your entry with some glitter text, images or bold/italic fonts, prepare your HTML in advance, to avoid frustration). Remember you can ask volunteer students or parents to do it all for you (just make sure they all have posting privileges at the podcast or blog in advance, or get them to email converted files and HTML-coded texts to you, so that you just copy and paste.)

<sup>5</sup> You can create your own podcast for free at Podomatic (<http://www.podomatic.com>) or Podbean (<http://www.podbean.com>).



4. **Extension:** download a couple of recordings onto your pendrive (if you have a recorder with a USB port in class, or the plug-ins to connect them to the TV or player in your room) and play them in your class or to other classes. (NB: you can also ask your techie students to take over at this stage). Recordings may also be burned onto a CD. You can give the class a listening task (e.g. anticipate the answers / complete the questions / “TRUE or FALSE” statements) or just do it for fun! (and ask them to rate the programme, or whether they’d like to be the next guests!)

5. **Variation:** students may prefer to video-record themselves, using their MP5s, mobile phones or digital cameras. The radio programme would thus be turned into a TV clip! Notice, however, that in this case, the time required for preparation might be much longer, as they might get really interested in “details” such as their make-up or the stage!

**Resources:** a video recorder (MP5 or video camera), plus a video player for the extension. A DVD burner might be necessary as well (if your video player has no USB port).

### **CONCLUSION:**

It has often been said that technology-integration into the English lesson should always be aimed at enhancing language learning. In this activity presented, the “natural” integration of digital recorders and the publication on the Web allow the teacher to turn what once was a mechanical and possibly meaningless activity into a real-life task. Students talk so that others listen, and get feedback from their audience. The fact that “technology-wizards” in the class can be appointed as task leaders at different stages (e.g. conversion of files, posting them to the Web) also fosters the teaching of autonomy and is bound to boost motivation as learners take pride in a collectively created product. The development of computer skills is also likely to be appreciated by many students (and their families) as a further benefit.

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You can see an example of this task published at:

<http://andreabelen.podbean.com/2009/04/09/10-questions-in-a-minute/>

If you have any questions, either email me or leave a comment at:

<http://gladysbaya.edublogs.org/2009/04/10/1-minute-recording-lots-of-learning-and-fun/>

If you have already tried something like this, or if you try it after reading this, please leave a comment at the URL above too!