

Small talk on the news

Use questions and topics like those below to chat with your partner(s) about the news for about five minutes. You should try to keep the conversation as light as possible, so don't get into really heavy topics, and don't get stuck on one topic for too long.

Ask about any questions or topics which you are not sure how to use/ chat about, making related questions and discussing how suitable they are for small talk on news each time.

Without looking below, brainstorm possible starters to small talk questions on the news.

Compare your ideas with those below, then share any extra ones which are not below.

Are there any good small talk news topics which aren't on the next page?

Are there any recent news stories which are particularly good or bad to mention?

Change groups and have a similar chat without looking at the worksheet below.

Do the same, but smoothly moving between news and other good small talk topics.

Discuss what the best and worst topics are for small talk.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are you following/ interested in...? ● Are you worried about...? ● Did you hear (the good/bad news) about..? ● Did you know... (before...)? ● Did you read about/ see/ hear...? ● Do you believe...? ● Do you ever... in other languages? ● Do you ever kill time...? ● Do you follow...? ● Do you get (much/ the) news from...? ● Do you ignore/ skip/ avoid...? ● Do you (try to) keep up with...? ● Do you know (much about/ a lot about)...? ● Do you (often) read/ watch/ listen to...? ● Do you (often) share...? (How?) ● Do you spend much time...? ● Do you subscribe to.../ have ... delivered? ● Do you trust...? ● Do you understand...? ● Don't you find... boring/ depressing/...? ● Had you ever heard of... before...? ● Has your... ever been in the news? ● Have they found out... (yet)? ● Have you been following...? ● Have you heard if/ whether/ wh...? ● Have you seen... (yet/ today)? ● How do you find out...? ● How interested are you in...? ● How much attention do you pay to...? ● How often do you read/ watch/ listen to...? ● Is it important for you to stay up to date about...? ● Is there any (breaking/ latest/ more) news about...? ● Were you shocked/ surprised by/ that...? ● What are your predictions for...? ● What do you do when...? ● What do you think about...? ● What's the best (accurate/ unbiased) source for...? ● Which... do you read/ watch/ listen to? ● Where do you get your (...) news from? ● Why do you think...? ● Your company/ country/ hometown/ industry/ school/... was in the news. ...? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● bloggers/ citizen journalists ● breaking news/ rolling news ● (national/ public/ public service/ commercial) broadcasters ● business/ economics ● cancel culture ● celebrities/ celebrity gossip ● column/ columnists ● (BTL/ below the line) comments ● conspiracy theories/ theorists ● (violent/ organised/ financial) crime ● editorials ● the environment ● fake news ● front page ● hate speech ● headline ● health (news/ scares) ● interviews ● international news/ politics/ affairs ● investigative reporting/ scoops ● leaks/ whistleblowers ● left wing/ liberal...– right wing... ● lifestyle ● local news/ papers/ press ● local politics/ elections ● (news/ gossip) magazines ● (stock) markets ● (alternative/ mainstream) media ● national politics/ elections ● natural disasters ● ... News/ Times/ Post/ Daily ● (domestic/ international) news ● (broadsheet/ tabloid) newspapers ● online influencers ● paparazzi ● (talk/ local/ speech/ AM/ FM/ satellite/ pirate) radio (station) ● (financial/ sexual/ political) scandal ● social media ● society/ social issues/ problems ● sports (pages/ results)/ back pages ● technology ● (cable/ satellite/ 24-hour news) TV ● terrorism ● the weather
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