

SHOWING SURPRISE AND INTEREST

B2-C1 | Conversation practice examples for responding with engagement

Conversation: Restoring an old cinema

Alex	Our volunteer group has finally reopened the old cinema. The first screening sold out.
Sonia	That's remarkable. I remember seeing the building boarded up. How did you manage to fund the repairs?
Alex	A local builder donated his time, and residents sponsored individual seats.
Sonia	I had no idea people could sponsor a seat. Did that raise much?
Alex	Enough to repair the roof. The hardest part was finding replacement parts for the projector.
Sonia	That must have been frustrating, especially with an opening date announced.
Alex	It was. A retired projectionist found what we needed through an old colleague.
Sonia	I'd be interested to hear his story. It sounds as though the project brought a lot of people together.

Key phrases: That's remarkable. / How did you manage / I had no idea / That must have been / I'd be interested to hear

Conversation: An unusual research discovery

Mina	We found that the birds recognised individual gardeners, not just the food they carried.
Joel	That's fascinating. How could you tell they weren't responding to the clothes?
Mina	The volunteers swapped coats and hats. The birds still approached the people who usually fed them.
Joel	I'm intrigued by how long they remembered someone. Did you test that?
Mina	Yes. One volunteer returned after six weeks, and several birds came straight over.
Joel	Were you expecting that result?
Mina	Not at all. We had to repeat the test because we thought we'd missed another explanation.
Joel	I can see why. I'd love to read the report when you've finished it.

Key phrases: That's fascinating. / I'm intrigued by

Create your own conversation

Choose one prompt. Use at least two key phrases and include a natural response and follow-up.

Prompt 1: Ask someone how they completed a challenging community project. React to specific details.

Prompt 2: A researcher describes a surprising finding. Ask thoughtful questions about how it was tested.