

Preparing for a School Interview

with Enjoy Education

Enjoy's Top Tips



1. AN INTERVIEW IS AN OPPORTUNITY

This is the time for you to begin your relationship with the school you want to go to, it is a chance for the school to get to know you and for you to get to know them. Therefore, enjoy it! Keep in mind **it is a conversation** - not a test that you should arrive at with ready-made answers. **Ask yourself:** what do I want them to know about me? How can I find a balance between fully answering the questions put to me and using those questions as an opportunity to talk about what I want to talk about?

2. BE YOURSELF, BE POSITIVE

If an interview is about someone getting to know you, it's important to **be yourself**. It's also important to be positive. Having a positive attitude and a willingness to engage in an interview is crucial, because it allows you to properly understand and answer the questions you are asked. Think about how to **turn negatives into positives** - for example: if you're asked to say what you're not good at, be honest, but also say how you're trying to improve. This will make it easier to deal with questions you might find difficult.

3. LISTEN

If an interview is a conversation, it's crucial to **LISTEN** to the other person. It's very easy to get caught up in thinking about yourself, the impression you're making and what the 'right' answer is - so much so, in fact, that we can forget to properly listen to the questions being answered and end up giving a 'wrong' answer. Properly listening is a good way to relax and ease any nerves you might have, because you focus on the other person and genuinely involve yourself in the conversation that you're having, rather than feeling anxious about what sort of an impression you're making.

4. DON'T WAIT FOR WHY.

Don't wait for the interviewer to ask why, tell them, and, yes, tell them what you **KNOW**, but also what you **THINK** and **FEEL** about whatever it is you're talking about. What you know in relation to a given question is important, but expressing **what you think and what you feel** about something often leads to more interesting conversations, and allows the interviewer to **get to know you better**.

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5. DON'T LET BODY LANGUAGE GET IN THE WAY OF CONVERSATION

We are often told to be polite, to make eye contact, to shake hands... but why? Why is all this stuff so important? It is important because it allows us to communicate better, to feel comfortable in one another's company. If you sit there fiddling and fidgeting, or looking bored, yawning, your eyes drifting around the room, it is going to be harder for the interviewer to listen to what you are saying, and they'll be less willing to talk to you.

Equally if you sit perfectly still and stare at them intently the whole time, they will probably also feel uncomfortable. Finding the balance is key, if you remember that to make sure that your body language does not get in the way of the conversation, you will manage to.

6. BE PREPARED...

You will probably be nervous before the interview, so taking time to focus, be calm and remember all the important things written above before going into the room will be very helpful. Interviewing for schools is definitely not all about going in with ready-made answers that sound rehearsed, but it can be useful to have an idea of what you want to talk about and be prepared for the types of questions you'll be asked.

Questions loosely fall into the following categories:

- **The school you're applying for** (why do you want to come here)
- **Subjects and learning** (favourite, least favourite)
- **You and your family** (your hobbies, your beliefs, what your parents do)
- **What would you do if** (...you were stranded on a desert and island and you could only have one of the following..., I gave you £1000)
- **General knowledge and interest** (current affairs, geography, history etc.)
- **Do you have any questions for me?** (what do you genuinely want to know?)

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Ideas of what might be covered:



Current school

What do you enjoy doing? What are you best at? What do you like least?



New school

What are you looking forward to doing there? What specifically do you like about certain schools? Are there clubs or societies that you're looking forward to joining?



Beyond a new school

Do you know what you want to do when you grow up? Do any of your interests and/or hobbies now reflect that? What ambitions do you have?



Hobbies and sports

What are your hobbies? What sports do you play? What do you enjoy about them? How did you come to be interested in them? What skills do they give you that you could use elsewhere? What do you read? What do you enjoy about what you read? What makes it good?



Your life

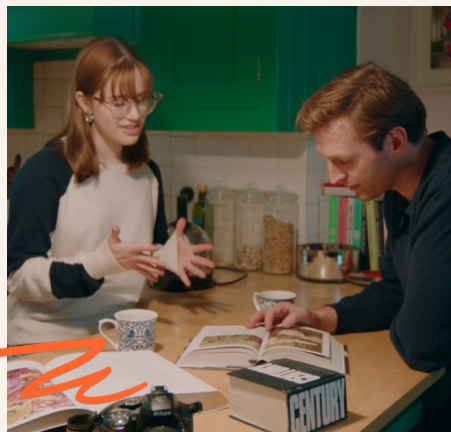
What about your family? Your friends? What do you enjoy doing? What are you proud of? Where have you been? Where do you want to go? Who are your heroes? What's been your story up to this moment? What do you want your story to be in the future?



The world

What interests you about the world? Do you read or watch the news? What do you think is wrong with the world? What do you think is right with it?

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Interview Practice Questions

1. What is / are your favourite subject[s]?
2. How would you describe your friends?
3. How would your friends describe you?
4. How do you get along with your teacher[s]?
5. Why would you like to come to this school?
6. What do you like / dislike about your current school?
7. Favourite television programmes? Life [David Attenborough] etc.?
8. Do you like to read newspapers?
9. General knowledge questions – Who is our Prime Minister?
10. Do you play any musical instruments? Favourite composer?
11. Favourite books / authors? Why?
12. What other schools are you applying for? (They may be asked about this)
13. Who is your role model?
14. What are your best characteristics?
15. What are your worst characteristics?
16. How do you feel when you are criticised at school?
17. How do you feel when you don't do as well as you hoped?
18. Can you give an example of helping others at school?
19. What kind of extra-curricular activities do you like to take part in?
20. What is your favourite possession?
21. What would you like to do after you finish school / university?
22. Have you been tutored for exams?
23. What has been your favourite holiday and why?
24. Where would you like to visit?
25. Do you have any brothers and sisters? How do you get along with them?
26. How do you feel about possibly starting at this school?