

## **What Do You Think?**

15 Topics for Discussion & Conversation

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by

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## **To the Students**

Welcome to “**What Do You Think?**”, a discussion and conversation book for intermediate-level students. “**What Do You Think?**” is a four-skills textbook (reading/writing/speaking/listening) with a strong focus on speaking and listening through discussion. You, the students, will have plenty of opportunities to express your opinions on a variety of topics and to share viewpoints through the various speaking activities and vocabulary-building exercises in the book.

Each lesson in the textbook begins with a **Main Discussion Question** where each student is asked to give their opinion on a topic. After listening to classmates’ viewpoints and discussing the topic, you are asked to reassess (restate) your initial (original) opinion on the topic by filling in a **Final Assessment** to see if your opinion has changed or stayed the same. Here you will give two reasons for your opinions. This process of learning more about a topic is part of making an “informed opinion” or “informed decision”. What students learn is that often an opinion changes when new ideas are introduced and discussed.

Throughout the 15 units, you will engage in many pair and group activities to make learning English more enjoyable. There is also a listening section in each lesson where you will hear three different opinions on the topic. The listening section introduces vocabulary but also is a model for a discussion between three people.

Discussion class can be a challenge for students but with practice, all students can become skilled at discussion. I’m sure **What Do You Think?** will help you improve your discussion skills and also provide plenty of enjoyment.

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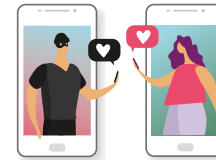
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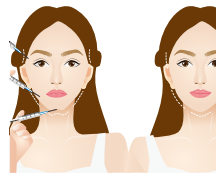
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## Working at a Convenience Store or a Restaurant?

### A Introducing the Topic

Read the passage. Answer the question.

**Q:** Why are restaurants and convenience stores common places to work for students?

**A:** They are common places to work for students because there are \_\_\_\_\_ and because many restaurants and convenience stores \_\_\_\_\_. Therefore, students have more chances to work after school.

### Where Should I Work?



Many students these days have part-time jobs. There are many different places where students work part-time but restaurants and convenience stores are common places to work because there are so many of them around the country. In addition, many restaurants and convenience stores remain open late so students have more chances to work after school or in the evening.

Although restaurants and convenience stores are both part of the service industry, working at a restaurant and a convenience store is a different experience. For some students, a convenience store is a better choice. Other students, however, prefer to work at a family restaurant.

#### Main Discussion Question:

If you had a choice between working at a convenience store or working at a family restaurant, which job would you choose?

I would choose

• a convenience store

• a family restaurant



### B Listening – Understanding Various Viewpoints

Listen and choose the answers you hear. More than one answer is possible.



- Chuck would rather work at a convenience store, but it would depend on
  - the hourly wage
  - his co-workers
  - the working hours
  - the location
- Cassandra would rather work at a family restaurant because
  - it would be exhausting
  - she thinks it's an interesting job
  - working at a convenience store would be boring
  - she wants free food
- Ayako would probably work at a convenience store because
  - serving food at a restaurant seems exhausting
  - she doesn't like talking to customers
  - she doesn't think she is strong enough to be a server in a restaurant
  - she wants an easy job

### C Q & A Write answers to the questions below.

**Q1:** What are some of the jobs you have to do at a convenience store?

**A1:** Well, you have to

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



**Q2:** What are some of the jobs you have to do at a family restaurant?

**A2:** Well, you have to

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



Ask your classmate the two questions. Do you have similar ideas? Add any new ideas.

## D Vocabulary

1 Choose **nouns** or **noun phrases** from the list and finish the sentences. If you do not know a word, check your dictionary.

- a) stamina    b) strength    c) patience  
d) \*good "people" skills    e) a good memory

\*good "people" skills = good communication skills or good at talking with people

1. I think if you work as a waiter or waitress, you **need** a.
2. I think working at a convenience store **requires** \_\_\_\_\_.

Go through 1 and 2 (above) with a classmate or in a small group. Give reasons for your answers.

**Example:** I think if you work as a waiter or waitress, you **need stamina** because waiting tables all day long is tough. You need a lot of \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Fill in this blank with your own word)

2 Choose the words from the box to complete the dialogs.

tough    tired    cash register    strength    dishes  
hourly wage    customers    great    a good memory

### Dialog 1

- A: Hi Aki. Wow, you look \_\_\_\_\_! Are you okay?  
B: Oh, hi Tenma. Yeah, I'm okay. I just got off work. I worked an eight-hour shift today at the store. We had so many customers — I worked the \_\_\_\_\_ most of the day. We had a sale on cigarettes. You really need \_\_\_\_\_. I mean, there are so many brands of cigarettes.

### Dialog 2

- A: What did you do yesterday?  
B: Me? Umm, I had to work at the restaurant.  
A: Oh, yeah, that's your new job, right? How's it going?  
B: Umm, it's a bit \_\_\_\_\_. I mean, it requires a lot of \_\_\_\_\_ because the dishes are heavy. But, the \_\_\_\_\_ is good so I don't mind it so much. It's good exercise, too.

## E Discussion Practice

Discuss these questions with a classmate or in a small group.

**Topic:** Working at a family restaurant or working at a convenience store

1. Which job is harder — working at a convenience store or a family restaurant?

A: I think working at a \_\_\_\_\_ is **harder** because \_\_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_. What do you think?

B: I agree. / I disagree. I think \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Which job is easier — working at a convenience store or a family restaurant?

A: I think working at a \_\_\_\_\_ is **easier** because \_\_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_. What do you think?

B: I agree. / I disagree. I think \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Which job is more interesting — working at a convenience store or a family restaurant?

A: I think working at a \_\_\_\_\_ is **more interesting** because \_\_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_. What do you think?

B: I agree. / I disagree. I think \_\_\_\_\_.

4. Which job is more boring — working at a convenience store or a family restaurant?

A: I think working at a \_\_\_\_\_ is **more boring** because \_\_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_. What do you think?

B: I agree. / I disagree. I think \_\_\_\_\_.

Change partners and try the dialogs again. Make notes of different responses.

**A** Introducing the Topic

Read the passage. Answer the question.

**Q:** Why does DeeDee Harris say it might be impossible to stop buying things if she had a credit card?

**A:** It's because she thinks credit cards \_\_\_\_\_.

**Cash or Credit?**

Are you the kind of person who uses a credit card to buy everything? Or, do you mainly use cash when you buy things? Most people probably use a combination of the two, but some people prefer to use cash as much as possible.

In a recent interview with two women about cash versus credit, Betty Lou Johnson said: "I use cash for everything because I always know how much money I have. If I use a credit card, it's easy to lose track of how much money I'm spending." DeeDee Harris said this: "I've never had a credit card in my life. I mean, I might buy everything I see, if I had a credit card. I mean, credit cards are addictive! It might be impossible to stop buying things."

**Main Discussion Question:**

If you had a choice between paying for most things with cash or paying for most things with a credit card, which would you choose?

I would choose

- paying with cash.
- paying with a credit card.

**B** Listening – Understanding Various Viewpoints

Listen and choose the answers you hear. More than one answer is possible.



- Cassandra thinks having a credit card is
  - unnecessary
  - necessary
  - risky
  - safe if you are careful
- Ayako thinks having a credit card is
  - too convenient
  - so convenient
  - not good because people spend too much online
  - vital
- Chuck thinks
  - cash is safer to use
  - a credit card is safer to use
  - people should try to pay with cash if possible
  - sometimes you need a credit card

**C** Q & A Ask and answer the questions below with a classmate or in a small group.

- Q1:** Do you have a credit card? How long have you had it?
- Q2:** If you do not have a credit card, do you want one? Is it necessary to have a credit card? Why or why not?
- Q3:** How often do you use your credit card? Do you think you use it too much?
- Q4:** What kinds of problems can you have with credit cards? Have any of these problems happened to you?
- Q5:** Are you **strictly** a "cash" person? If so, why?  
(only)
- Q6:** If you think having a credit card is vital, at what age would you recommend getting one?
- Q7:** Do you know any places that require a credit card?



**D Vocabulary**

1 Match the words on the left with the **BEST** meaning on the right.

This photo matches the word \_\_\_\_\_ from the list.

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| A) inconvenient means _____ | 1. it's not risky or dangerous                            |
| B) vital means _____        | 2. you need it; it's necessary                            |
| C) handy means _____        | 3. you can't stop using it                                |
| D) safe means _____         | 4. it's useful; it's convenient                           |
| E) risky means _____        | 5. it's not always useful or helpful                      |
| F) addictive means _____    | 6. it's too large and awkward or heavy; it takes up space |
| G) bulky means _____        | 7. it could be unsafe or dangerous                        |

2 With a partner, fill in the blanks in the dialogs. Use the words in the box **only once**. There are extra words!

enough sums handy addictive bulky money difficult many easy case

**Dialog 1**

A: I want to get a credit card, but I'm not sure if it's a good idea. What do you think?

B: Umm, I think a credit card **comes in** \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes.  
(is)

A: Do you think so?

B: Yeah, I mean, sometimes you don't have \_\_\_\_\_ cash on you. In that \_\_\_\_\_, a credit card is convenient.

**Dialog 2**

A: Do you have a credit card?

B: Me? Umm, no I don't. Those things are \_\_\_\_\_. I mean, some people can't stop using their credit cards. It's too \_\_\_\_\_ to buy things with a credit card.

A: Hmm, that's an interesting point. But I don't want to carry large \_\_\_\_\_ of cash in my wallet. It could be risky. Also, cash is \_\_\_\_\_. It takes up too much space.

**E Discussion Practice**

With a partner, fill in the blanks in the dialogs. Use words from the box for **RED blanks**. Use your own language for parts that require an explanation (or example). Your dialogs must make sense. After filling in the dialogs, practice them.

handy	risky	flexible	addictive	vital	inconvenient
bulky	safe	convenient	agree	disagree	overspend

**Dialog 1**

A: I'd rather use a credit card because carrying lots of cash is \_\_\_\_\_.  
I mean, \_\_\_\_\_ . (explain)

B: That's a good point, but I think a credit card can also be \_\_\_\_\_.  
I mean, \_\_\_\_\_ . (explain)

**Dialog 2**

A: I'd rather use cash because cash is \_\_\_\_\_. I mean \_\_\_\_\_ .  
\_\_\_\_\_ . (explain)

B: That's true, but I think a credit card can also be \_\_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_ .

**Dialog 3**

A: I think you should get a credit card. I mean, a credit card these days is \_\_\_\_\_ .

B: I completely \_\_\_\_\_. I mean, a credit card is \_\_\_\_\_ .  
because \_\_\_\_\_. (explain)

**Dialog 4**

A: I like using a credit card because it is so \_\_\_\_\_. I mean, sometimes cash is \_\_\_\_\_ because you might not have enough **on you** when you want to buy something.  
(on you = with you)

B: I \_\_\_\_\_ one hundred percent. A credit card is \_\_\_\_\_ sometimes. I Think everyone should have at least one credit card.