



Conversation Starters

“What was your favourite hobby or pastime when you were younger?”



Asking about hobbies or pastimes provides a window into their world, revealing what brings them joy, satisfaction, and a sense of accomplishment. These activities, whether they are gardening, knitting, painting, or playing a musical instrument, often hold cherished memories and stories of how they developed these interests over time.

“Do you have any favourite books or movies?”



This allows for a conversation about literature and film, possibly leading to a deeper conversation.



“Have you done any travelling?”



This encourages your new friend to share travel experiences and memories of different places they've been. A great follow-up question could be “What was the most interesting place you've ever visited?”

“Do you have a favourite job during your working years?”

Encourages a chance to talk about their professional life and achievements. You could also talk about dream jobs or jobs that exist now that did not when they were growing up!



“What kind of music did you enjoy listening to when you were growing up?”



Asking older people about their favourite music is a wonderful conversation starter because music is often closely tied to significant life events and emotions, serving as a powerful conduit for memory and storytelling. You may even find some common interests!





Queensland
Community Care
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Conversation Starters



“Did you have any pets when you were younger?”



Unfortunately a lot of older people have to leave their pets behind when they enter an aged care home, but talking about pets can evoke warm memories and interesting stories about their animal companions.

“What kind of foods or meals did you enjoy growing up?”



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“What was school like for you?”



School years are often filled with formative moments, lifelong friendships, and significant personal growth. Some follow up questions to this could include asking if they enjoyed school, what their favourite subjects were and what their neighbourhood was like.

“What is one of your most cherished memories?”

This question allows your new friend to share a special moment from their life that they hold dear. Being an open-ended question it allows your friend to choose the direction of the conversation, but may be difficult for them to answer.



“Do you have a favourite holiday or family tradition?”



Family traditions and how we celebrate holidays has changed dramatically over the years and starting a conversation about these differences can lead to heartwarming stories.





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“Have you seen any changes in technology that you find fascinating or surprising?”



The answer to this question often surprises Volunteer Visitors. When we think of fascinating technology, we often think of computers or mobile phones. For someone who grew up many years ago, it can mean simple appliances like dishwashers, washing machines or dryers!

“Did you play sports or participate in any clubs when you were younger?”

Sports can be an excellent conversation starter! Many older people have fond memories of playing sports in their youth, whether in school, community leagues, or informally with friends.



“What changes in the world have surprised you the most?”



This question is a compelling conversation starter because it prompts people to reflect on the vast and often astonishing transformations they have witnessed over their lifetimes. Keep in mind, this is a very open-ended question and some older people may not have a definitive answer.

“Have you ever participated in any community or volunteer activities?”

As a volunteer visitor yourself, this question can highlight similarities between both of your life experiences!



“What is a piece of advice you would give to younger generations?”

Often older people can feel left behind and that their wisdom/experience is no longer cherished. This invites them to share valuable insights and lessons as well as making them feel valued.

