

Small Scale ESL Programs for Your Library

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The past, present and future

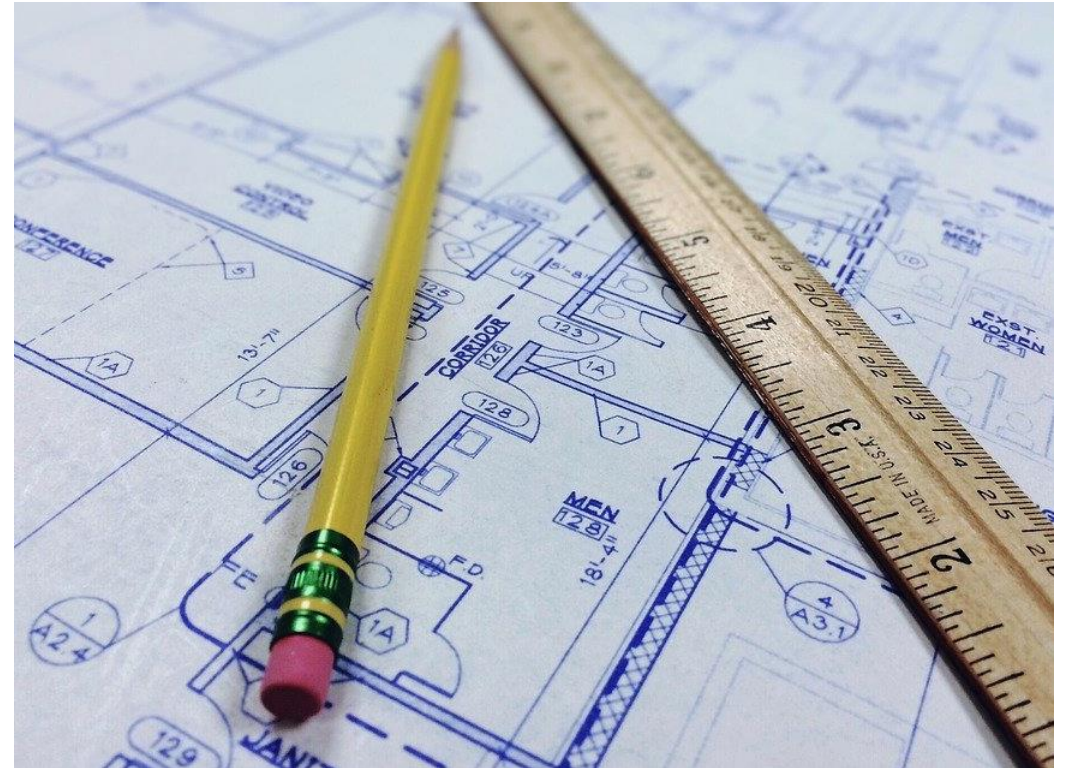
Walk into a bar.

It was tense.



Here's the plan for today

Formats and types of ESL programs
The South Holiday Library program
Compare and contrast the possibilities
One-on-one vs. conversation group
Running a conversation group
My advice for success



If you have only 2 hours per week for ESL...

Decisions..decisions..

In Person?



Virtual?



Hybrid?



Decisions...decisions...

Traditional group class*

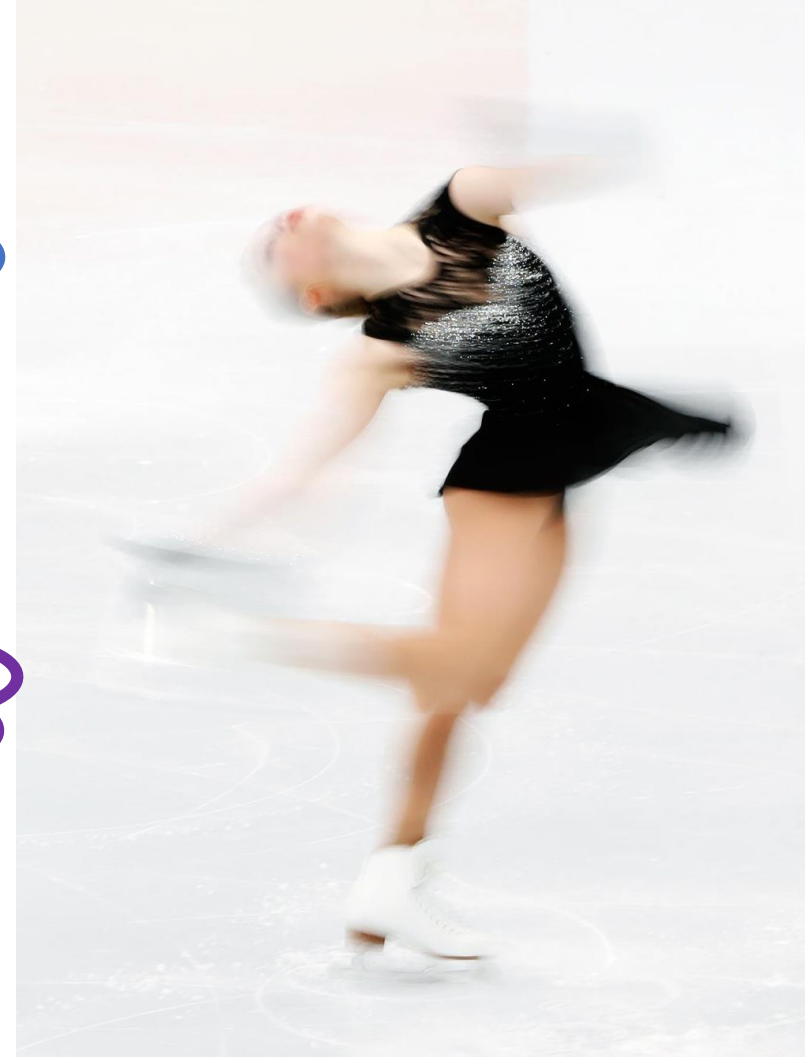
One-on-one lessons*

Conversation group*

Book Club/Reading group

Writing Workshop

Now that your head is spinning...



Past

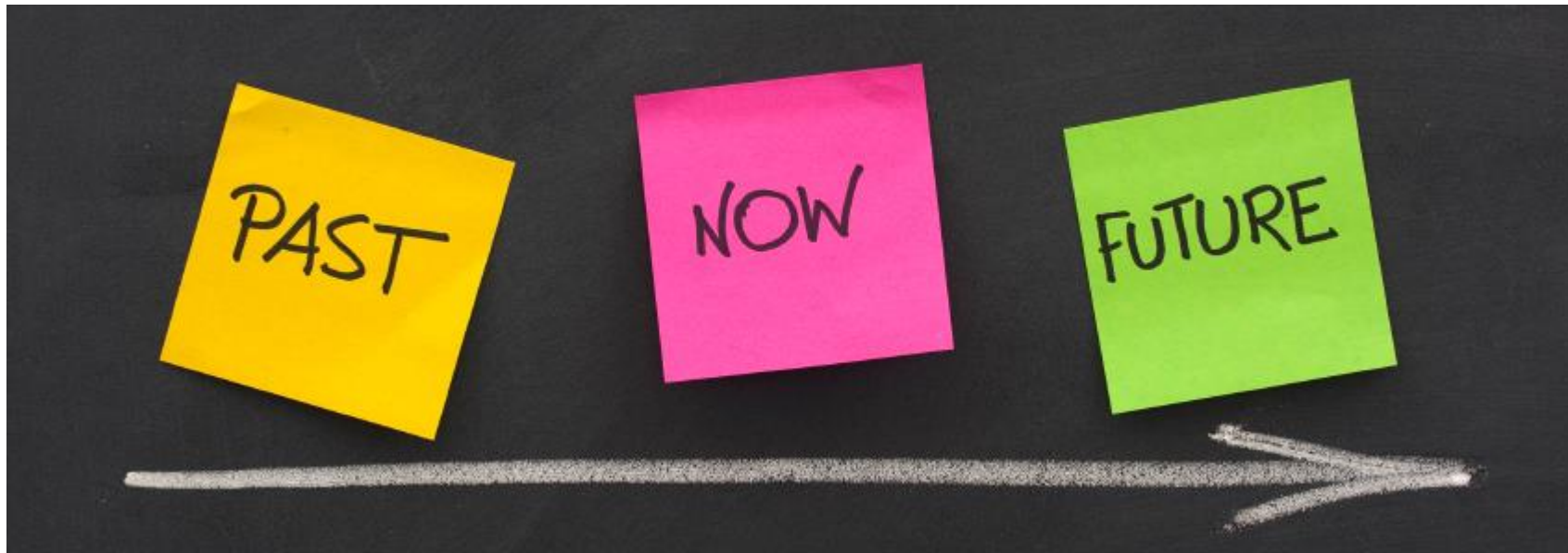
1. In person traditional group class including conversation
2. In person one-on-one lessons

Present

1. Virtual one-on-one lessons
2. Virtual conversation group

Future

1. Virtual and/or in person beginner group class
2. Virtual reading group



The ESL Balancing Act

Baseball is
90% mental and
the other half
is physical.
— Yogi Berra



In Person

People who can physically access the library when the class is offered.

Commutable, immediate community

Need not be computer literate

Internet/ device not required

COVID may limit participation



Virtual

People who are available when the class is offered.

Potentially worldwide

Some computer literacy required

Access to internet/ device required

No COVID concerns



Weekdays, Daytime

Retired

Unemployed

College students

Homemakers, Stay-at-home parents

People who work nontraditional hours

Everyone except the 9 to 5 crowd



Evenings and/or weekends

Everyone in the first column

Plus the 9-5 crowd



"If I had to do it all over again,
I would do it all over again."

— Yogi Berra



Compare and Contrast



One-on-One Tutoring



Conversation Group

Advantages of One-on-One Lessons

In person or virtual

Personalized instruction

Students of all levels

Relationship between teacher and student

Relatively rare, intensely desirable



Disadvantages of One-on-One Lessons

Requires (a lot of) preparation

Requires (a high level of) subject knowledge

Teaching experience is very helpful

Only teaching 1 person (or maybe 2) at a time

Must manage a waiting list

Must deal with attendance issues

Significant behind the scenes program management



Advantages of Conversation Group: Staffing

Low investment way to get started

Minimal human resources and physical supplies

Requires little or no preparation

Experienced teacher not required

Train staff & qualified volunteers to facilitate

Easy to shop the competition

Social and fun



Advantages of Conversation Group: Attendance

Can be in person or virtual (or hybrid)

Theoretically unlimited attendance

Potentially worldwide audience

No registration, wait list, or attendance issues

Social and fun



Advantages of Conversation Group:

Part of a larger program

Test the waters for interest in an expanded ESL program

Can be part of a larger program or lesson plan

Serves the wait list, gets people involved

Students need speaking practice

Social and fun



Disadvantages of Conversation Group:

Limited personalized attention

Less accessible to beginners

Difficult for students who lack confidence

Conversations can come off the rails (or fizzle and die)

Not really a “class”



Let's Crunch Some Numbers

Return on time investment

You have 2 hours per week to dedicate to ESL...

How to invest your time?

One-on-one lessons

or

Conversation group



Let's Crunch Some Numbers

Return on time investment

Option 1.

Three individual lessons

@ 30-minutes each.

30 minutes prep & management

Attendance total = 3

Option 2.

Two conversation groups

@ 1 hour each.

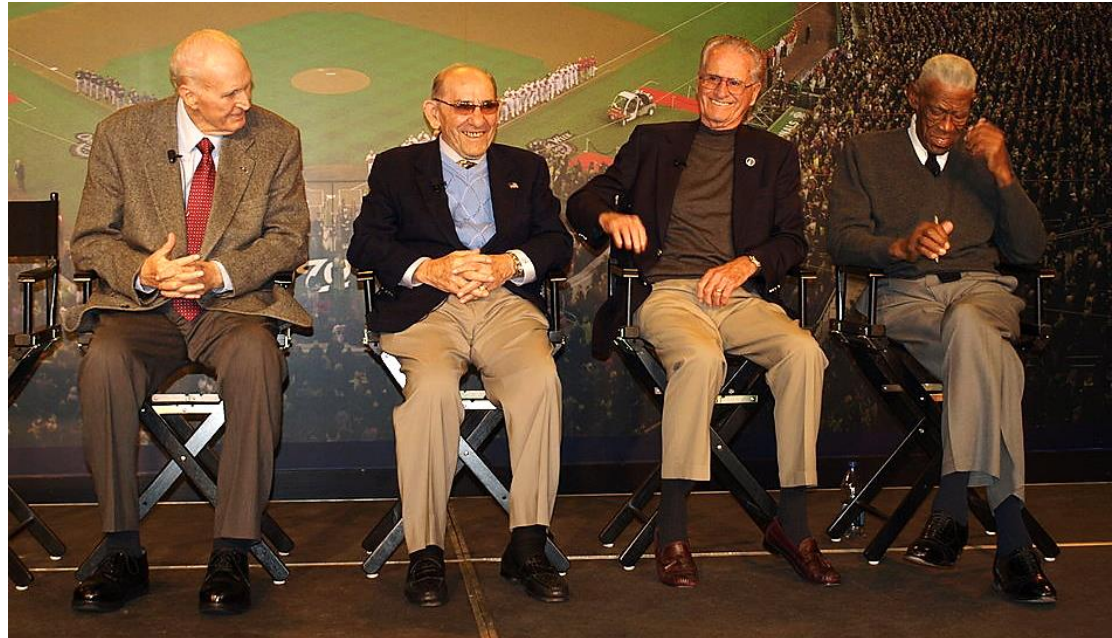
Negligible preparation time

Attendance total = 20+



It was impossible to get a conversation going, everybody was talking too much.

— Yogi Berra



Getting Started with Conversation

Who's the facilitator?

Conversation group does not necessarily need a “teacher”.

Native or fluent speaker

Can answer grammar questions
or refer students to relevant resources.



Getting Started with Conversation

The role of the facilitator

Leads the discussion

Keeps students on topic

Diffuses confrontations

Identifies a teachable moment



What are we going to talk about?

Tried and True Conversation Topics

Heroes

Favorite books and authors

Foods from your culture

Favorite television shows

Stress management

Favorite movies

Hobbies
How to spend free time

Qualities you look for in friends

What are we going to talk about?

Conversation Topics to Avoid



Politics

Sex

Religion

What are we going to talk about?

Conversation Topics to Avoid



How a conversation comes off the rails.

What are we going to talk about?

Get the conversation rolling.

Confidence!

A positive spin

Who's first? Maybe you are!

Participation can develop.



What are we going to talk about?

Filling dead air

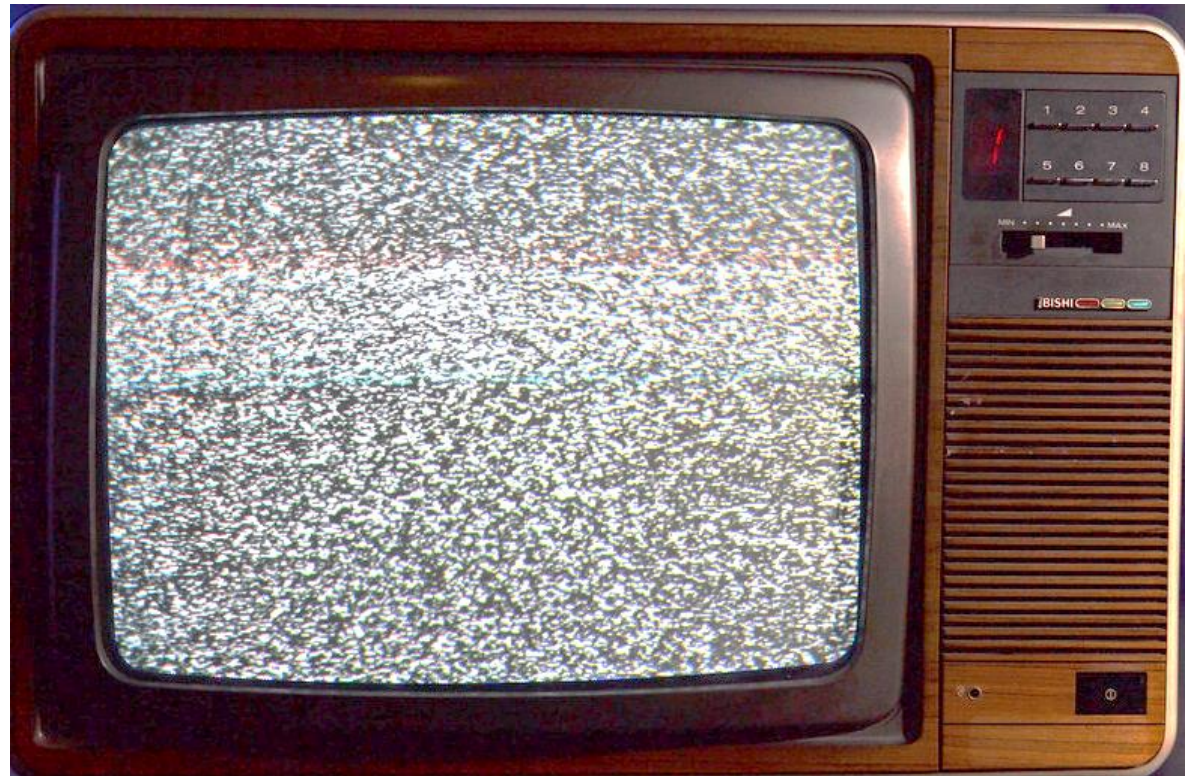
Ask open ended questions.

Summarize what the speaker said.

Discuss new vocabulary.

Introduce idioms.

Share your own experience.



A great conversation begins with you!



Get your students invested.

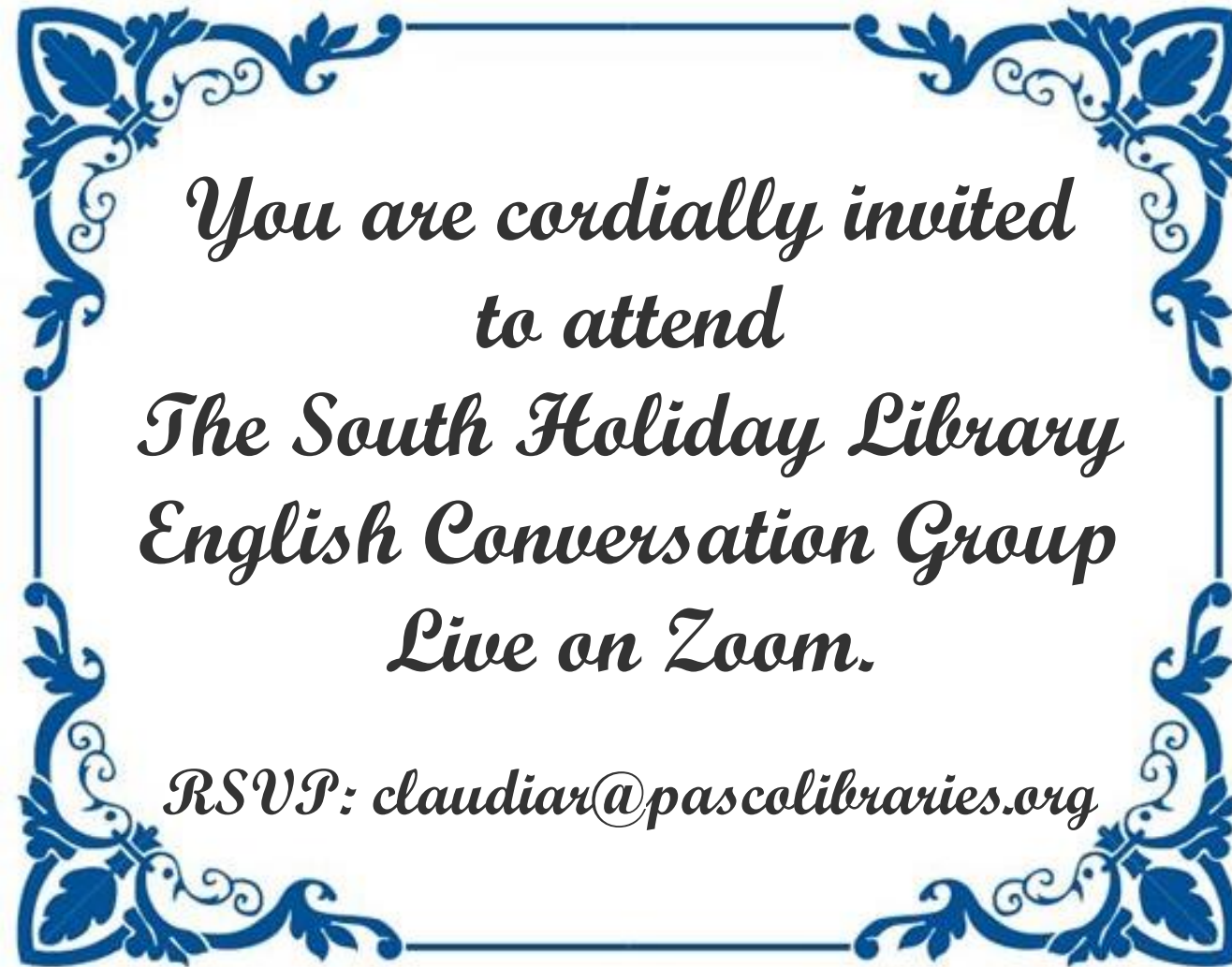


Keep typing.



Do a little research.

Shop the competition



*You are cordially invited
to attend
The South Holiday Library
English Conversation Group
Live on Zoom.*

RSVP: claudiar@pascolibraries.org

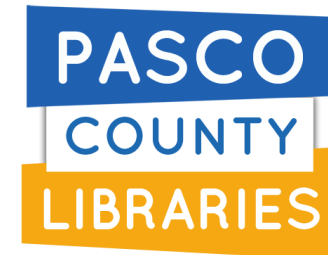
Let's have a conversation.



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Questions?

If you ask me anything I don't know,
I'm not going to answer.

— Yogi Berra



Appendix: Conversation Group Resource

<http://iteslj.org/questions/>

Conversation Questions for the ESL/EFL Classroom

A Project of The Internet TESL Journal

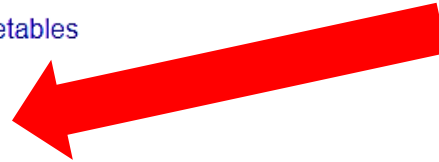
If this is your first time here, then read the [Teacher's Guide to Using These Pages](#)
If you can think of a good question for any list, please [send it to us](#).

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- Have You Ever ...
- Health
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- Hobbies



- Plagiarism
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- Poverty
- Prejudices
- Privacy
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- Restaurants & Eating Out
- Nursing Homes & Retirement Communities
- Retirement
- Russia & the World
- Safety Inside & Outside of Home
- School
- Science & Technology
- Secrets
- Self-employment
- Service Industry

Appendix: Conversation Group Resource

<http://iteslj.org/questions/>

Conversation Questions Garage sale

A Part of Conversation Questions for the ESL Classroom.

- What is a garage sale?
- Do you have garage sales in your country?
- Have ever stopped at a garage sale in this country?
- Do you know how to haggle or negotiate a lower price?
- What are some things that you need, that you might find at a garage sale?
- When you stop at a garage sale do you always buy something.
- What are some reasons that people have garage sales?
- What season are there the most garage sales?
- Do you enjoy shopping at garage sales?
- What have you bought at a garage sale?

If you can think of another good question for this list, please [add it](#).
