

What are HBL conversation worksheets?

The topics of the conversation worksheets are suggestions by the internationally followed **CEFR framework (The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)**.

We have developed these initial sets of worksheets on the 25 suggested CEFR A1 topics. The headwords and key vocabulary were optimised for Cantonese by a competent team of Cantonese linguists and teachers.



Source: [gostudylink](https://www.gostudylink.com/)

	Overall oral production
C2	Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured discourse with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
C1	Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on complex subjects, integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.
B2	Can give clear, systematically developed descriptions and presentations, with appropriate highlighting of significant points, and relevant supporting detail.
	Can give clear, detailed descriptions and presentations on a wide range of subjects related to their field of interest, expanding and supporting ideas with subsidiary points and relevant examples.
B1	Can reasonably fluently sustain a straightforward description of one of a variety of subjects within their field of interest, presenting it as a linear sequence of points.
A2	Can give a simple description or presentation of people, living or working conditions, daily routines, likes/dislikes, etc. as a short series of simple phrases and sentences linked into a list.
A1	Can produce simple, mainly isolated phrases about people and places.
Pre-A1	Can produce short phrases about themselves, giving basic personal information (e.g. name, address, family, nationality).

Source: [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment](https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/learning-teaching-assessment)

For more information on CEFR please visit

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/level-descriptions>

These conversation worksheets are designed for people living in Cantonese-speaking regions, especially in Hong Kong, who want to communicate with local native speakers. Thus, the language, sentence structures and grammar reflect everyday conversations in Hong Kong. Also, the topics conform with widely practised Cantonese teaching and learning practices in the region. The vocabulary and phrases provide a reference starting point so that learners can focus on what they need from a menu of options to find what is specific to their situation for this topic.

Content of the worksheets

1) Vocabulary and Phrases

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Basic Questions	What native speakers in Hong Kong would normally ask so that the learner can easily understand.																																
Basic Replies	The keywords and minimum sentence structure that are necessary for an answer to "Basic Questions". As the learner progresses, these replies will naturally become more detailed.																																
Affirmative Statements	A real conversation contains more than just an ongoing sequence of questions and answers. "Affirmative Statements" are phrases that acknowledge your understanding, and signal confirmation and empathy. These help smoothen the conversation and keep the dialogue flowing.																																
Basic Phrases and Vocabulary	These are supplementary topic-related vocabulary and phrases for learners. These help embellish and customise your conversations to fit different contexts and further elaborate your "Basic Replies". Learners are encouraged to customise this list to reflect vocabulary that fits their context.																																
General Replies	These are utterances which you can flexibly apply in any conversation. You will frequently see these same utterances across different topics.																																
Refusal / Deflection	Phrases to be used to signal unwillingness or a lack of interest in continuing the conversation.																																

Notes	This icon marks phrases that are used in formal situations or with those senior in age or position to the learner.
	This icon marks an aggressive reply or sentence. These allow the learner to detect and communicate antagonism.

2) Sample Dialogues

<p style="text-align: center;">Sample Dialogue A</p> <p>(B is the newcomer in the office, A and B meet in the pantry for the first time, A thought B is a fresh graduate.)</p> <p>A: Hello 你係阿Sam? Hello nei5 hai5 aa5 Sam B: 唔係呀 m4 hai5 aa5 我係Kenry ngo5 hai5 Kenry A: 我係Jason ngo5 hai5 Jason 你邊年出世呀? nei5 bin1 nin4 ceet1 sai5 aa5 我應該大過你 ngo5 jing1 goi1 daai5 gwo5 nei5 B: 一九九三 jat1 gau1 gau1 saam1 (Year) A: 原來你咁大喇喇! jyun4 loi4 nei5 gam5 daai5 gaa4 laa4</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Sample Dialogue B</p> <p>(A is a senior in a cocktail party and award ceremony. B is one of the candidates.)</p> <p>A: 你叫咩名呀? nei5 giu5 me1 meng2 aa5 B: Mark (Name) A: 你睇落好後生喇! nei5 tai2 loi5 hou2 hau5 saang1 wo5 你幾多歲呀? nei5 gei1 do1 seoi5 aa5 A: 廿九 jaa5 gau2 (Age)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"> Sample Dialogue C</p> <p>(A is doing a research interview with B.)</p> <p>A: 請問你點稱呼? ing2 man4 nei5 dim2 ing1 fu1 B: 我姓黃 ngo5 sing5 Wong4 C: 請問你邊年出世呀? ing2 man4 nei5 bin1 nin4 ceet1 sai5 aa5 B: 一九九三 jat1 gau1 gau1 saam1 (Year) A: 請問你結唔結婚未呀? ing2 man4 nei5 giu5 zo2 fan1 mei5 aa5 有冇小朋友呀? jau5 mous5 siu2 pang4 jau5 aa5 B: 結咗喇 giu5-zo2 laa5 我有個仔 ngo5 jau5 jgo5 zai2</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"> Sample Dialogue D</p> <p>(A comes to speak to B randomly in a cafe. They do not know each other.)</p> <p>A: 你幾多歲呀? nei5 gei1 do1 seoi5 aa5 B: 唔好意思, 我唔想講 m4 hou2 ji5 si1 ngo5 m4 soeng2 gong2 A: 廿九? jaa5 gau2 (Age) B: 唔係呀 m4 hai5 aa5 A: 你結唔結婚未呀? nei5 giu5 zo2 fan1 mei5 aa5 我仲係單身呀 ngo5 zung5 hai5 daan1 sam1 aa5 我應該大過你 ngo5 jing1 goi1 daai5 gwo5 nei5 B: 你乜水呀? nei5 mat1 seoi2 aa5 關你咩事呀? gwaan1 nei5 me1 si5 aa5?</p>

Dialogues built by suggested vocabulary and phrases. The use of the target phrases in different situations and contexts is demonstrated so that learners can understand the meaning and usage. These are helpful for roleplay activities and should be personalised to the learner's unique situation.

3) Talk about the pictures

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 佢哋去邊度食飯呀? keoi5 gei5 heoi5 bin5 dou5 sik5 faan5 aa5 2 佢哋食緊咩呀? keoi5 dei5 sik5 gan2 me1 aa5 3 你鍾唔鍾意飲茶呀? nei5 zung1 m4 zung1 ji5 jam2 caa5 aa5 4 你有冇食過點心呀? nei5 jau5 mous5 sik5 gwo5 dim2 sam1 aa5 5 你鍾意同屋企人去邊度食嘢呀? nei5 zung1 ji5 tung5 uk1 kei2 jan4 heoi5 bin5 dou5 sik5 jes 6 你鍾意食咩呀? nei5 zung1 ji5 sik5 me1 aa5? 	
	<small>Illustrator: DarkChildRed 41</small>

You can initiate and practise a conversation by using the visual images and suggested questions. This part is also a good assessment tool as the questions are listed in difficulty from easy (e.g. identifying objects/events, yes-no questions) to advanced (e.g. describing an experience, expressing opinion).

4) Suggested Graded Readers

Titles	L.S. Jyutman Level
00148 我大個仔嘍! Archie Can Climb	2
00021 恐龍樂園 Dinosaur Paradise	3
00028 生日 Happy Birthday	3
00047p 婆婆今年幾歲? How Old is Grandma?	5
00274 新同事 New Colleague	5

HBL Graded Readers related to the target topic are suggested for further input in listening and speaking. Url links are attached to the PDF worksheet.

How to use the HBL conversation worksheets?

1) Discuss and set up a learning goal

Discuss with your students their purposes in learning conversational Cantonese and help them set up their learning goals. A learning goal reflects each learner's target speaking range and fluency, which serve communicative purposes in their daily life. Learning goals will of course vary among different learners. Teachers are required to plan a learning agenda and expected learning outcomes according to learners' goals. Below are some case examples:

Purpose	Learning goal	Learning agenda and expected learning outcome
I am living in HK and I want to be able to communicate with local Cantonese speakers.	To build conversations freely with others in daily life.	All topics at CEFR A1 level should be involved. Fluency in building free-flowing conversations elaborating personal experiences and opinions is the expected learning outcome.
I want to travel to HK where Cantonese is spoken.	To understand essential questions and respond in basic replies during the trip.	Topics regarding Transportation, Accommodation, and Directions are prioritised. Fluency in understanding basic questions and giving basic replies are sufficient for short-term travelling.

2) Practice with different learning activities

There is a very important language learning goal in terms of fluency - speed. When we practise with learners, it is crucial to work on the speed at which they can produce and understand the language. Fluency activities have four important characteristics:

- 1 They involve familiar material that contains only known vocabulary and grammatical features.
- 2 They encourage timely speech.
- 3 They involve plenty of practice.
- 4 They focus on receiving or communicating messages. (*Nation, P. 2014*)

NOTE: Hong Kong natives are used to mixing and understanding English words in Cantonese conversations. We suggest the teacher focuses on helping the learner fully utilise their Cantonese vocabulary by allowing the learner to use English (or other languages) where they do not know the appropriate Cantonese words. These non-Cantonese words can then be studied in Cantonese where necessary. This motivates the learner to move beyond the limitations of their Cantonese vocabulary and helps the teacher customise these lessons to the speaking style of the learner.

Here are some learning activities suggested based on the above-listed characteristics, Teachers and learners are encouraged to use the worksheets for different speaking practices, including but not limited to:

Beginner Level 	Reading aloud	Read aloud the vocabulary, phrases and sample dialogues. The teacher is responsible for explaining their meaning, and uses in different contexts and to adapt them to fit the learner's day-to-day reality.
	Memorised sentences or dialogues <i>(Nation, P. 2014)</i>	Write the sentences you want to memorise on small cards with translations on the back. You should get some help with the pronunciation of these phrases and sentences from the teacher before working on memorising them. When memorising, look at the translation and try to recall the phrase or sentence in Cantonese. The phrases and sentences should be ones that you can use immediately.
	Role-play <i>(Nation, P. 2014)</i>	Role-play activities involve two or more people taking on a different role and acting out the situation by following the sample dialogues or creating their own conversation. The teacher is an ideal role-play partner too. At the end of each role-play, the players should comment on how to improve what they just did and immediately do the role-play again, adding in the improvements. The same role-play should be practised two or three times again in later sessions.
	Prepared talks <i>(Nation, P. 2014)</i>	Prepare short talks that you can write out, memorize, get checked, and then practice. The teacher is responsible for checking your language and pronunciation in your talks.
	4/3/2 <i>(Nation, P. 2014)</i>	In the 4/3/2 activity, you speak on a very easy topic to a listener, for 4 minutes. Then you speak on exactly the same topic again to a different listener for only 3 minutes. Finally, you speak on exactly the same topic again to a new listener, for only 2 minutes. Each listener does not interrupt or ask questions but simply listens carefully. In the early stages of proficiency, you might find it easier to do 3/2/1. The decreasing time in the activity most affects fluency, and the repetition has a greater effect on improving accuracy and complexity. The teacher acts as an ideal listener who can give useful feedback after the activity.

 Advanced Level	Questions & Answer	Answering a Basic Question with a Basic Reply, General Reply and affirmative statements. This helps you advance to having a natural conversation.
	Talk about the pictures	Use visual images to initiate a conversation. The visual association will also help recall vocabulary and phrases. You may make use of “ Talk about the picture ” on the worksheets or any illustration from the “ Suggested Graded Readers ”.
	Building free-flowing conversations	Aim at versatility by using the target or acquired vocabulary and phrases to freely converse with your teacher. Mark down your speaking needs during the practices and review with your teacher how to add new language items.
Note <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, learn the words or phrases that you will use most frequently. • You should be able to use what you have learnt fluently before you move on to learning new items. 		
<p>The above learning principles and activities are suggested and fully explained in <i>What do you need to know to learn a foreign language?</i> by Paul Nation, which is highly recommended for language teaching. To access the whole book, please go to https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/lals/resources/paul-nations-resources/paul-nations-publications/publications</p>		

3) Assessment

The purpose of having a speaking assessment is to identify the learner's spoken Cantonese level and learning outcome. By repeating this assessment periodically and comparing it with previous assessments, the teacher and learner can assess if the learning goals in conversation practice are being met.

Give your student a copy of 'Talk about the picture' and have them look at the pictures. Ask them questions about the pictures based on the suggested tasks and questions. Below is an example.

Talk about the pictures

- 1 佢哋去邊度食飯呀?
keoi5 gei5 heoi5 bin5 dou5 sik5 faan5 aa5
- 2 佢哋食緊咩呀?
keoi5 dei5 sik5 gan5 me5 aa5
- 3 你鍾唔鍾意飲茶呀?
nei5 zung1 m5 zung1 jis5 jam2 caa5 aa5
- 4 你有冇食過點心呀?
nei5 jau5 mous5 sik5 gwos5 dim2 sam1 aa5
- 5 你鍾意同屋企人去邊度食嘢呀?
nei5 zung1 jis5 tung5 uk1 kei1 jan5 heoi5 bin5 dou5 sik5 jes5
- 6 你鍾意食咩呀?
nei5 zung1 jis5 sik5 me5 aa5?

Illustrator: Sam

Illustrator: DarkChildRed 41

Task 1	Identifying Simple Objects & Forming Simple Sentences
<p>Ask the learner to identify several target objects or events.</p> <p>e.g. 邊個係嫲嫲? bin1 go3 hai6 maa4 maa 邊碟係菜? bin1 dip6 hai6 coi3 佢哋係唔係食緊嘢? keoi5 dei6 hai6 m4 hai6 sik6 gan2 je5</p> <p><u>Minimum Response:</u> The learner should point to the correct pictures and answer yes/no.</p>	
Task 2	Giving A Simple Description
<p>Give the learner a minute to look over the picture and then ask the learner to describe what is happening in the picture. Ask the suggested questions to help them describe the pictures if necessary.</p> <p>e.g. 佢哋去邊度食飯呀? keoi5 dei6 heoi3 bin1 dou6 sik6 faan6 aa3 佢哋食緊咩呀? keoi5 dei6 sik6 gan2 me1 aa3</p> <p><u>Minimum Response:</u> The learner should give a couple of target words or phrases to describe the pictures.</p>	
Task 3	Describing Past Events
<p>Ask several open-ended questions about learners' personal experiences of the target topic. The learner will be given 15 seconds to think about his/her response and 30 seconds to answer.</p> <p>e.g. 你食過咩點心呀? nei5 sik6 gwo3 me1 dim2 sam1 aa3 你鍾意同屋企人去邊度食嘢呀? nei5 zung1 ji3 tung4 uk1 kei2 jan4 heoi3 bin1 dou6 sik6 je5 aa3</p> <p><u>Minimum Response:</u> The learner should give a couple of target words or phrases to describe personal experiences that are shown outside the pictures.</p>	
Task 4	Expressing an Opinion
<p>Give a scenario about the target topic and ask open-ended questions about learners' personal opinions. The learner will be given 30 seconds to consider his/her answer and 60 seconds to explain his/her opinion after the question prompt.</p> <p>e.g. 如果你嘅尼泊爾朋友嚟香港, 你會帶佢去食咩呀? 點解呀? jyu4 gwo2 nei5 ge3 nei4 pok3 ji5 pang4 jau5 lai4 hoeng1 gong2, nei5 wui5 daai3 keoi5 heoi3 sik6 me1 aa3? dim1 gaa2 aa3?</p> <p><u>Minimum Response:</u> The learner should give descriptions in target words and phrases to explain his/her opinion. Advanced learners are able to integrate expressions in other topics to enrich the answer.</p>	

Note

- If the learner answered all the questions in a task without help, continue on to the next task. If the learner needed a good amount of help with a task, they are most likely at that level. You may stop the assessment here.
- If your student is a beginner, it may not be necessary to complete all of the tasks. Tasks 1-2 should give you a good indication of your student's proficiency. If your student is more advanced, you may want to skip Tasks 1-2 to focus on Tasks 3-4.

4) Review learning outcome

Basically, learners are considered to have successfully achieved their learning outcomes as long as they can fully apply what they have learned to accomplish their communicative purposes.

Assessment and review have to be conducted periodically so that teachers can evaluate learners' abilities and modify practices to improve their weaknesses in order to help learners reach their communicative purposes.

To evaluate the spoken performance of a language learner, we can review it from 4 qualitative aspects: Range, Accuracy, Fluency, Interaction and Coherence. The chart in this table was designed to assess the spoken performances of beginner learners.

	A1	A2
Range	Has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations.	Uses basic sentence patterns with memorised phrases, groups of a few words and formulae in order to communicate limited information in simple everyday situations.
Accuracy	Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a memorised repertoire.	Uses some simple structures correctly, but still systematically makes basic mistakes.
Fluency	Can manage very short, isolated, mainly pre-packaged utterances, with much pausing to search for expressions, to articulate less familiar words, and to repair communication.	Can make him/herself understood in very short utterances, even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident.
Interaction	Can ask and answer questions about personal details. Can interact in a simple way but communication is totally dependent on repetition, rephrasing and repairing.	Can answer questions and respond to simple statements. Can indicate when he/she is following but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord.
Coherence	Can link words or groups of words with very basic linear connectors like "and" or "then".	Can link groups of words with simple connectors like "and", "but" and "because".

Full chart for levels A1-C2: [Qualitative aspects of spoken language use - Table 3 \(CEFR 3.3\): Common Reference levels](#)

Important Principle for language learning *(Nation, P. 2014)*

Different learners have different learning styles, but there are also important learning principles that need to be adapted to whatever style of learning the learner prefers. As a teacher, upholding certain principles for language learning with your students is necessary to succeed in the learning journey.

1 Work out what your needs are and learn what is most useful for you, giving particular attention to items which occur frequently in the language.

2 Apply conditions that help learning, particularly spaced repetition, retrieval, varied meetings and varied use, elaboration, and deliberate attention, particularly by using effective language learning activities.

3 Keep motivated and work hard by setting short-term goals and spending a lot of time practising the language skills that you need to learn. Motivation can also be kept high if you develop a specialist interest that involves using the language.

4 Take every possibility to use and practise what you know. Although these opportunities may be limited outside the classroom, the Internet now provides a wealth of such opportunities.

(Nation, P. 2014)

NOTE: hambaanglaang.hk has a wealth of resources produced in written and spoken Cantonese that you can use to fill your learning gap. If you find this work useful and want it to continue, please donate to the project.

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