

50 REVIEW GAMES **GAME 22**

Conversation Cards

A prompt, a response, and a real question back

Conversation Cards give students something worth talking about, so ASL practice becomes an actual exchange rather than a recited answer. One student responds to a prompt; the other has to ask a genuine follow-up — which means listening closely enough to have something to ask.

TIME NEEDED

15–30 minutes

GROUP SIZE

Pairs, groups, or whole class

GRADE LEVELS

Middle, High, College

01 Purpose & Objective

Build conversational fluency while reviewing vocabulary, grammar, and Deaf cultural communication. Most classroom practice ends when a student finishes their sentence; here the sentence is only the opening, and the conversation is what gets assessed.

Students use ASL to respond naturally to conversation prompts and ask meaningful follow-up questions.

02 Materials & Skills

Materials

- Conversation cards — print and cut the next page
- Timer (optional)

ASL Skills Practiced

- Expressive ASL
- Receptive ASL
- WH-questions
- Storytelling
- Turn-taking

03 Setup

1. **Print and cut apart the conversation cards.** Card stock holds up better if you plan to use the set all year.
2. **Place the cards face down or in a container.** Drawing blind matters — a student who picks their prompt picks the easy one.
3. **Pair students and set expectations.** The response is only half of it; the follow-up question is the other half and it is not optional.

Before You Start

Model a weak follow-up and a strong one. “Why?” technically counts, but a question that picks up a specific detail from the answer is what keeps a conversation alive — and students can hear the difference immediately when they see both.

04 Printable Conversation Cards

Print this page and cut along the lines. Fifteen prompts to start with — add your own from the current unit.

1 Introduce yourself to a new classmate.	2 What is your favorite food? Why?	3 Describe your perfect weekend.
4 Tell about your family.	5 What hobby do you enjoy most?	6 Describe your dream vacation.
7 What was the funniest thing that happened this week?	8 What is your favorite season? Explain.	9 If you could learn any new skill, what would it be?
10 Describe your ideal pet.	11 What is your favorite place to visit?	12 What goal do you have this year?
13 Tell about your favorite school subject.	14 Describe your morning routine.	15 Ask your partner three WH-questions.

ALSO SEE

Card 15 is a different kind of card — a task rather than a topic. Cards like it turn a free conversation into targeted grammar practice, the way **Game #20: Sign Simon Says** drills WH-questions on command.

05 Directions

1. Each student draws one card.
2. Student A responds to the prompt in ASL.
3. Student B asks at least one follow-up question.
4. Switch roles with a new card.
5. Continue for several rounds, changing partners along the way.

Challenge Mode

After finishing one card, students draw a second and connect both topics into a single conversation. Finding the bridge between a dream vacation and a morning routine is harder than either card alone, and it is exactly what unscripted conversation asks for.

06 Variations

Beginning

Vocabulary lists and sentence starters allowed.

Intermediate

Two follow-up questions required.

Advanced

Keep each conversation going two minutes without repeating a question.

07 Assessment Ideas

Observe students for:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Fluency | ☐ Quality of follow-up questions |
| ☐ Vocabulary usage | ☐ Eye contact and non-manual markers |
| ☐ Turn-taking and pacing | ☐ Participation with every partner |

The follow-up question is the most revealing thing on this list. A student who asks about a specific detail was reading their partner closely; a student who asks the same generic question every round was waiting for their turn.

Paul's Best Practice

Teach students that great conversations depend on thoughtful follow-up questions. Watching and responding matter as much as signing, and a partner who asks a real question is telling you they actually understood the answer.

Anyone can take a turn. A conversation needs someone who was paying attention.

Why It Works

Students practice authentic communication in a relaxed setting while building confidence and conversational skill. The prompts do the hardest part for them: deciding what to talk about. With that removed, attention goes to how the conversation is carried — holding a topic, taking turns, asking something back — which is the part of the language that classroom drills rarely reach. It is also low-stakes practice at a skill that feels high-stakes in the real world, since a card gives students permission to talk to a classmate they might not have approached otherwise.

Quick Tips

- ✓ Rotate partners often so students meet a range of signing styles.
- ✓ Create lesson-specific cards tied to the current unit.
- ✓ Let students write new conversation prompts for the deck.
- ✓ Keep prompts open-ended — a yes-or-no card ends in five seconds.
- ✓ Let a good conversation run long rather than cutting it for the next card.

Continue Exploring

Next in the collection:

▶ **Game #23: ASL Pictionary**

▶ **Game #24: Silent Telephone**

▶ **Game #25: Vocabulary Bingo**

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Extend the Activity

Have students draw a card, hold the conversation, and then retell their partner's answer to a third student in ASL. Reporting what someone else said requires role shift and indirect reference, and it proves they were watching rather than rehearsing.