

Be prepared to be amazed...

## 10 ways to have a good conversation by Celeste Headlee



**BEFORE WATCHING**      Check the following words and expressions? How can you use them in a sentence?

- **to pontificate about something** – to speak or express opinions in a pompous or dogmatic way
- **a pundit** – a person who gives opinions in an authoritative manner usually through the mass media
- **to equate** – to treat as equivalent, or comparable
- **condescending** – characterized by a patronizing or superior attitude toward others
- **weeds** – here: useless details

Why do we sometimes fail to have good conversations? Suggest as many reasons as you can think of!

**WHILE OR AFTER WATCHING**      Listen to the beginning of the talk and answer the questions.

- *According to Celeste, why do we have problems when having conversations? Play the video up to 3:00*
  - seemingly trivial issues can be risky (like the weather or health)*
  - we're not listening to each other*
  - we're polarised – we have different opinions about many topics*
  - we seem to have lost the balance between speaking and listening*
  - we tend to communicate by phone more often than face to face*
- *What's the problem about teaching children and teenagers?*
  - they lack conversational competence*
  - they engage with each other through screens*
  - they don't have opportunities to improve their interpersonal skills*
- *According to Celeste, which advice about conversations shouldn't we accept? Play the video up to 4:26*
  - look the person in the eye*
  - think of interesting topics to discuss in advance*
  - look, nod and smile to show that you're paying attention*
  - repeat back what you just heard or summarize it*

Listen to Celeste's tips and explain what she means by saying:

1. Don't multitask.
2. Don't pontificate.
3. Use open-ended questions
4. Go with the flow.
5. If you don't know, say that you don't know.
6. Don't equate your experience with theirs.
7. Don't repeat yourself.
8. Stay out of the weeds.
9. Listen.
10. Be brief.

[Check the script for details.](#)

**AFTER WATCHING**      Answer the questions. – Students' own answers