

Exercise #4
Reference Interview Scenarios
Focus on Neutral Questioning

Part A

1. You inherited a set of china from your grandmother. You are pretty sure it is Spode but need to learn more about Spode and identifying and valuing china in particular.

Your opening line: Where are your books on China?

2. You have just acquired a pet tarantula, and would like to know what to feed it.

Your opening line: Can you show me some animal books?

3. You've been told by your teacher that the Black Panthers had a ten-point program, listed in any book about the Panthers and you were asked to bring a copy of ten-point program to class. You looked up the Black Panther Party in the library catalog but none of the books were in.

Your opening line: You don't have any books on the Black Panthers.

4. You need a copy of the Patients' Bill of Rights

Your opening line: What is the Bill of Rights?

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Part B

5. You share custody of a 3-year-old child with your ex-spouse. His/her new spouse seems like a "control freak" to you and you are worried about what impact this is likely to have on the child. You and your ex-spouse have been discussing early childhood education options. He is advocating a Montessori program. You want to find out more about the philosophy behind the Montessori method because you fear that it may be intended to contribute to the new spouse's campaign to exert control over the child.

Your opening line: I'm looking for information on nursery schools.

6. You want to have a quiz game as a way of getting things going during a party you are giving with the theme of "holidays." You vaguely remember that someone in Shakespeare was named Valentine and you want to formulate a question about him, but you have no idea what play he appears in.

Your opening line: Where are the Shakespeare plays?

7. You are a student studying the Avignon novels of Lawrence Durrell and are eager to find information about the region of France known as Languedoc. You are interested in determining the geographic limits of the area. And also would like a reasonably concise summary of the region's history.

Your opening line: Do you have a book on the history of France?

8. You are trying to find information on working parents comparing child-care and self-care (latch-key) for pre-teens. You've heard there's a great paper on this topic by Reva Polatnik (but you're not sure of the spelling).

Your opening line: What kind of magazine indexes do you have?