



Building Rapport: Cultural Synchronization Questions

What questions might you ask your focal student in an informal "One-to-One"?
(Several questions or action could meet several of the points – the goal is to design a series of questions that would allow you and the student to deepen understanding in support of his/her learning or behavior)

Questions:

- What types of activities and/or traditions do you do with your family?
- Do you have any special family meals over the weekend? If so, what do you eat?
- Who are some family members that you are close with that don't live with you? When do you see them and what kinds of things do you do?
- What are the various kinds of music your family plays at home? Which is your favorite?
- What radio stations do you listen to?
- What are 2-3 of your favorite songs right now?
- What chores or responsibilities do you have at home?
- What's your favorite family tradition?
- What are important holidays that you celebrate?
- Do you play video or online games? If so, what are your favorites?
- What sports do you enjoy watching or playing?
- What do you like to watch on TV? What do you like about that show?
- What do you like to read?
- When you are having a bad day, what friends or staff do you turn to?
- When was the last time you felt listened to?
- What embarrasses you? What frightens you? What makes you mad or angry?
- What is your favorite color? How does this color show-up in your life? (e.g., clothes, shoes, accessories, binder, etc.)
- Who do you want to be like in life? (who do you look up to?)
- Who's that on your shirt/notebook/binder/etc.?
- What do you see yourself doing when you are a grown-up?
- What is something that you are you proud of?
- What is your most prized possession?
- What do you like to do over three day weekends and holiday breaks? On the weekends?
- What do you like to eat for lunch? Where do you eat lunch during the school day? With who?
- Who from this school do you hang out with outside of school?
- Which teachers/staff did you connect with most at school last year? Why? (who gets you?)
- Which teachers/staff do you connect with this year?
- Who is the funniest teacher you've ever had? How were they funny?
- Who was the meanest teacher you've even had? What did they do?
- Which teacher (going back to Kindergarten) helped you learn and grow the most? What kinds of things did they do? What was your best memory of elementary school?

Considerations

- Don't make assumptions about students' background knowledge or students' interests, parents' intentions. Put aside preconceived ideas, and refrain from passing judgment.
- Ask follow up questions.
- Find ways to make connections to your own personal experiences.
- Paraphrase—restate in your own words—what you think the student has said (show you're listening).