

Asking for a description (Grammar)

- Description:** A walk-around exercise to practice asking for descriptions
- Use with or after:** *English Network 1 (New Edition)*, Unit 5, Step 2.
- Skill:** Grammar
- Focus:** Formulating questions of the type *What ... like?* depending on the tense and person.
- Time:** 10 minutes
- Preparation:**
- Print out the second and third pages of this file (on stiff paper if possible) and cut along the dotted lines. This will give you 16 different prompt cards.
 - If you have more than 16 students in your class, make an extra copy of one of the pages and use some of the questions twice.
 - If you have fewer than 16 students, make a selection of the cards, taking care that all four sentence types (present/singular, present/plural, past/singular and past/plural) are more or less equally represented.
- Procedure:**
- Remind the students of the ways to ask for a description using "What ... like?" as in exercise 4 on page 79 of *English Network 1 New Edition*.
 - Write on the board: "*Really? What ____ ____ like?*" (Leave this on the board during the activity.) Explain that they will be expected to ask for descriptions using this form.
 - Demonstrate with one of the better students. You say: "*I stayed at a hotel in New York.*" Point to the sentence on the board and get the student to say: "*Really? What was it like?*" You say: "*It was quite expensive, actually.*"
 - If necessary, demonstrate again using another example. You say: "*In New York I met some American students.*" Point to the sentence on the board and get one of the students to say: "*Really? What were they like?*" You say: "*They were very polite and helpful.*"
 - Give each student one of the prompt cards. Ask them to stand up, walk around and talk to one person at a time. At each encounter, each student should read out the first sentence and check that the other person asks for a description using the proper formulation, as listed on the card, and then read out the response. They should not look at the other person's card.
 - Take a card yourself and do the exercise with them, so you can be available to help or make corrections.

I know a man called Elvis.

< *Really? What's he like?* > *

He's very friendly.

* The other person should say this!

I used to know a man called
Elvis.

< *Really? What was he like?* > *

He was quite big.

* The other person should say this!

I know a Chinese woman called
Guo.

< *Really? What's she like?* > *

She's beautiful.

* The other person should say this!

When I was a child I knew a girl
called Abigail.

< *Really? What was she like?* > *

She wasn't very nice.

* The other person should say this!

There's an opera house in Chicago.

< *Really? What's it like?* > *

It's very big.

* The other person should say this!

I went to an opera in Chicago.

< *Really? What was it like?* > *

It was fantastic.

* The other person should say this!

I know three Scottish dancers.

< *Really? What are they like?* > *

They're quite friendly.

* The other person should say this!

I used to know some American
country singers.

< *Really? What were they like?* > *

They were quite interesting.

* The other person should say this!

I know a man from Chicago.

< *Really? What's he like?* > *

He's quite interesting.

* The other person should say this!

I used to know a Brazilian woman.

< *Really? What was she like?* > *

She was very attractive.

* The other person should say this!

My neighbour has got two big dogs.

< *Really? What are they like?* > *

They're terrible!

* The other person should say this!

We stayed at several hotels in Australia.

< *Really? What were they like?* > *

They were wonderful.

* The other person should say this!

I often go to Chicago.

< *Really? What's it like?* > *

It's fantastic.

* The other person should say this!

I stayed in Chicago for a week.

< *Really? What was it like?* > *

It was very windy.

* The other person should say this!

There are two restaurants near my home.

< *Really? What are they like?* > *

They're quite expensive .

* The other person should say this!

We stayed at several motels in America.

< *Really? What were they like?* > *

They were really cheap.

* The other person should say this!