

# Talking About Everything

by Janet Carr  
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## **About this book**

Over the years some questions pop up frequently. I have been through my notes from the last ten years and have compiled the most common and interesting ones. They are in no particular order.

Enjoy!

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**1. Describing a process** involves using active verbs, the imperative and talking about stages or steps. To activate this type of vocabulary, describe how one is sick listed for a longer period in Sweden. Another valuable exercise would be to describe the process of public procurement. Or describe a process of elimination. Be consistent with the use of firstly/secondly/thirdly/finally. You can use step/stage/phase.

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**2. Make and Do** have a rule (if there is an end result use make. If you are performing an action use do) but it is about as useful as the en/ett rule is to new speakers of Swedish. The best way to get them right is to just learn the ones you need. **Do research. Make a mistake.** How many more can you think of?

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3. Swedish uses the term **benchmarking** a lot. Where does the term come from?

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4. What is the difference between a **fee**, a **fine** and a **tax**? Is the **arbetsgivareavgift** actually a tax? Is the congestion charge a tax or a fee? What are dagsböter? Have a look in your TAS book and choose which word best describes **arbetsgivareavgift**?

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5. **Words with two ts** one after the other are often difficult for non-native speakers of English to pronounce. Try these: negotiation, adaptation, competitive, competitiveness, administrative, statutory, deforestation, authoritative, exploitation; fluctuating

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6. Similarly, **words with th** are often hard to say because you do not have the sound in Swedish. Growth, threaten, strengthen, threat, strength, breathe, feather, thirty three and a third, eighth, twelfth

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7. **Important** is a word which is commonly overused. How many synonyms can you find? Remember that after someone has heard a word twice, they tend to ignore it. **Interesting** is another example of this but it is not that easy to find a good synonym. See if you can though!

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8. Can you **name the courts** in Sweden? What is to appeal/overtake/uphold a decision?

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9. What is an **underlag**? An **arbetspapper**? **Mandatperiod**? **Valkrets**?

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10. One thing that most people have to deal with is accommodation, either permanent or temporary. Describe the options of a visit to Sweden, from two nights to twenty years.

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11. There are 54 African countries. How many can you name?

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12. What is the difference between **sick** and **ill**?  
**Fever** and **temperature**? **Cold** and **flu**?

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13. Please explain the following acronyms: **FRA-**  
**lagen, VAB, VÅP, PUL, PIN, ATP, LVM, LVU, LAS,**  
**MBL, IPRED**

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14. What words would you use to describe losing  
your job because you did something wrong? Or

losing your job because there was not enough work? How many words can you think of which are related to the labour market?

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15. How would you describe the following very Swedish concepts: **sambo, särbo, Jantelagen, lagom, ansvarig utgivare, dygn, drygt**

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16. We have so many words in English with silent letters. Try the following: **receipt, bomb, comb, thumb, psychologist, pneumonia, and anaesthetist, debt**

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17. What is the opposite of **polite, secure, patient, faithful, safe, and flammable**?

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18. What is **värnplikt** called in English? Or **pendeltåg**?

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19. What is the difference between **racism** and **xenophobia**?

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20. Why do you think we talk about **Riksdag, Riksbank** and **krona** in English?

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21. What is the opposite of **disabled**?

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22. What should you say instead of **fat, Eskimo, handicapped, deaf, blind, wheelchair-bound, Red Indian, gypsy**?

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23. What is the plural of **criterion, phenomenon, forum, referendum**?

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24. Is there a difference between **war/conflict, alliance/coalition, wage/salary, income/revenue, GDP/GNP, journey/trip, allowance/benefit, agency/authority, technique/technology, file/folder**

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25. How many **authorities** can you name? What is usually the title of the person who heads them?

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26. Which countries are in: **Scandinavia, Britain, The United Kingdom, The EU, The EEA, and EFTA**

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27. What are more gender neutral ways of saying **policeman, fireman, chairman, postman and spokesman?**

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28. Did you know we obtained the following words from Swedish: **knife, husband, ombudsman, smorgasbord, tungsten and moped?**

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29. How many types of **industrial action** can you name?

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30. What is **whistleblower's protection** in Swedish?

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31 Why do you think so many **idioms and superstitions** are universal?

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32. What is the difference between **middle age** and **average age**?

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33. If someone says '**How do you do?**' how would you reply? If they say '**How are you?**' how would you reply?

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