Outline for Improving a Conversation

1. When starting a conversation
2. Introduce yourself
3. Listen carefully
4. Avoid speaking at the same time as the other person
5. Establish eye contact
6. When continuing a conversation
7. Maintain polite behavior
8. Smile and use non-verbal responses
9. Link your comments to the comments of your partner
10. Paraphrase what they have said
11. Share opinions when appropriate
12. When finishing a conversation
13. Mention something that you have learned from the visit
14. If you must leave, give a polite reason for leaving
15. Say good-bye and that you enjoyed the visit

\* Remember that conversations are a two-way street!

Questions asked by Leo, Maya, Hannah and Claire

* When did you serve?
* Where did you serve?
* What did you do?
* What type of training is needed?
* What branch of the military were you in?
* What type of things did you do?

They focused on questions that asked the 5 W’s – who, what, where, when and why. They also avoided using yes/no questions.

In addition to asking questions, they paraphrased what had been said and offered their own opinions in a respectful way. Both people involved in the conversation seemed to have enjoyed their visit.