33 What … like?

1 Look at this question and answer:
A: What’s Julie like?
B: She’s very pretty and she’s very kind, but she’s not very clever.

We use What … like? to ask about a person’s physical appearance (tall, short, pretty, etc.) or character (interesting, boring, friendly, unfriendly, etc).

We can also use What … like? to ask about places, books, films and events (e.g. a party, a football match):
A: What’s Rio de Janeiro like?
B: Well, the beaches are wonderful but the traffic is awful.
A: What’s Spielberg’s latest film like?
B: It’s excellent.

2 We use look like? to talk about someone’s appearance:
A: What does Julie look like?
B: She’s tall with brown hair.

We can also use like with taste, feel, sound, and smell:
A: What does that taste like?
B: It tastes like cheese.

3 We can also use like, with the question word Who and in statements, to mean ‘similar to’:
A: Who’s Julie like – her father or her mother?
B: She’s like her mother. (= She is similar to her mother.)

Rio de Janeiro is like Buenos Aires. (= Rio is similar to Buenos Aires.)

4 The word like in What’s she like? is a preposition; it is not the verb like. Here is an example of like used as a verb:
A: What music does Julie like?
B: She likes rock music.

5 We usually use How?, not What … like?, when we ask about someone’s health or temporary state:
A: How’s your brother today?
B: He’s feeling much better.
A: How was your boss today?
B: He was very friendly today!

Practice

A Use the words in brackets ( ) to make a question that goes with the answer.
Use is/are or look. Sometimes more than one answer is possible.

1 (What/Sally/like)
A: ......................................................... ?
~ B: She’s clever, but she’s a bit boring.

2 (What/Jane/like)
A: ......................................................... ?
~ B: She’s quite short and has dark hair.

3 (What/Peter/like)
A: ......................................................... ?
~ B: He’s not a very interesting person.

4 (What/Anna’s parents/like)
A: ......................................................... ?
~ B: They’re very generous.

5 (What/Tom/like)
A: ......................................................... ?
~ B: He’s very tall, and he has blond hair.

6 (What/Eva/like)
A: ......................................................... ?
~ B: She’s tall and strong.

5 (What/Bob and Tom/like)
A: ......................................................... ?
~ B: They’re very amusing.

6 (What/Susan/like)
A: ......................................................... ?
~ B: She’s tall and slim, and she wears glasses.
B Read the following descriptions.

Kiwis are a round, brown fruit with a rough skin. They have almost no smell, but they are sweet, with a flavour similar to strawberries.

A double bass is a musical instrument. It is the largest member of the violin family. It has a deep sound.

Now for each of the answers, write a question about kiwis or a double bass, using look/sound/taste/smell/feel + like.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>ANSWER</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do kiwis look like?</td>
<td>They’re round and brown.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 ?</td>
<td>It has a deep sound.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 ?</td>
<td>They don’t really have a smell.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 ?</td>
<td>They have a flavour like strawberries.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 ?</td>
<td>Like a very big violin.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 ?</td>
<td>They are rough to the touch.</td>
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C Use the words in brackets ( ) to write a question with the preposition like or the verb like. Add any other necessary words.

2 (What/Julie/like) A: ? ~ B: She is very amusing.
3 (Who/your sister/like) A: ? ~ B: She likes a boy in her class.
4 (What/Paul’s brothers/like) A: ? ~ B: They think they’re clever, but I don’t.
6 (Who/you/like) A: ? ~ B: I’m like my mother.
7 (What/Mary’s husband/like) A: ? ~ B: He is rather boring. He’s not like her.

D Write questions with What ... like? (for things that are permanent) or How ... ? (for health or temporary situations). Use a form of be and the other words in brackets ( ).

1 (be/Atlanta) What is Atlanta like? ~ It’s a very modern city.
2 (be/Mike/yesterday) How was Mike yesterday? ~ He felt a lot better.
3 (be/John’s flat) ......................... ? ~ It’s very big, and it has a wonderful view over the city.
4 (be/your boss/yesterday) ......................... ? ~ He was tired but friendly.
5 (be/a squash racquet) ......................... ? ~ It’s similar to a tennis racquet, but lighter.
6 (be/your sister) ......................... ? ~ She’s very well, thank you.
7 (be/Portugal) ......................... ? ~ It’s very interesting. There are lots of things to see.