Better questions than "how was school?"

Big questions at the door tend to get one-word answers. Smaller, more specific ones get further, especially when you're doing something together: in the car, on a walk, cooking tea.

Instead of...	Try...
How was school?	**What happened in English today?**
Did you do your homework?	**What's due this week, and which one's the biggest job?**
Did you revise?	**What are you revising tonight? Do you want me to test you?**
What did you get?	**What did your teacher say to work on next?**
How did the mock go?	**Which question would you like another go at?**
What's wrong?	**Do you want me to help, or do you just want me to listen?**
You need to work harder.	**What's getting in the way at the moment?**
Why didn't you tell me?	**Is there anything coming up that you'd like me to know about?**
When I was your age...	**What's different about it for you?**
What are you reading in English?	**Which character would you least like to share a house with?**

If the answer is "fine", that's allowed. Try again tomorrow.

With ideas from the Generationally Speaking podcast: Joe Rowntree (episode 32), Dr Stacy Moore (episode 23) and Lise Kaye-Bell (episode 14). The swaps are Between the Lines' own. Adapted with permission from Generationally Speaking, the research and podcast of Alastair Greener. generationallyspeaking.co.uk