



IELTS SPEAKING



Pines Talking

This book introduces IELTS Speaking to students who are first takers of the module. It focuses on teaching students how to answer the questions properly by providing sample answers and guiding them to make their own.

BASIC

IELTS SPEAKING

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PRELIMINARIES

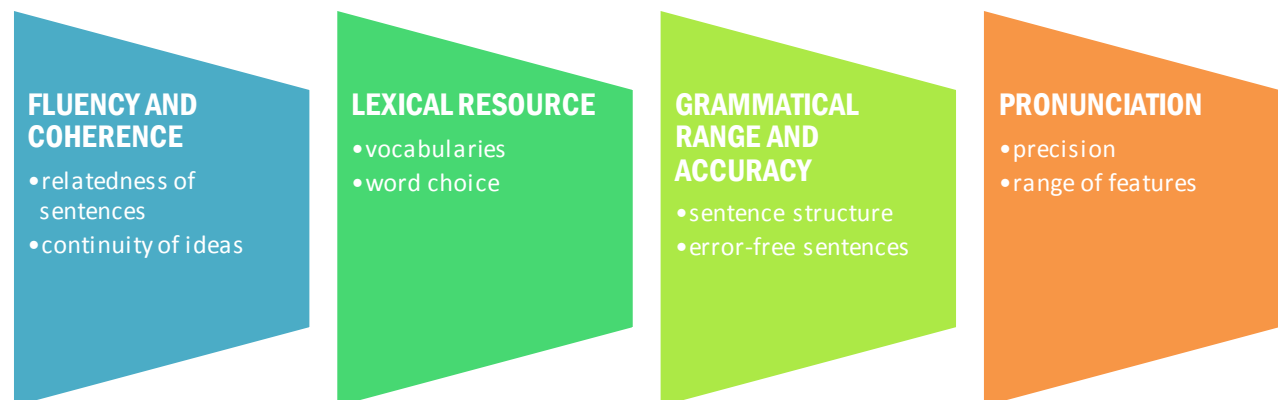
IELTS speaking test has three parts. Within 11 to 14 minutes, the examinee will answer the examiner's questions in a room. The interview will be recorded. The examinee is allowed to use paper and pen in Part 2 only.

PARTS

PARTS	TIME	TASKS	QUESTION TYPES
Part 1	4-5 minutes	Introduction Identify self Answer questions	Wh-questions Yes/No questions
Part 2	3-4 minutes: Preparation: 1 minute Delivery: 1-2 minutes Follow-up: 1 minute	Talk about a topic on a task card	Wh-questions Yes/No questions
Part 3	4-5 minutes	Discuss the issues related to the topic on task 2 with the examiner	Wh-questions Yes/No questions

BAND DESCRIPTORS

The following are the descriptors the examiners use in assessing the performance of the examinee:



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PART 1

Describing Yourself

There are three ways to describe yourself. Observe the following examples.

FACTUAL My name is Maria Lee. My first name is spelled M-A-R-I-A. I'm a 28-year-old lady living in 22 Naguilian Road, Baguio City with my family.

PHYSICAL My height is 6 feet. I have brown hair which has the same color with my eyes.

EMOTIONAL My friends say I'm cool. This is because I like laughing a lot. I'm a joyful person who doesn't want to wallow in negative situations of life.

TEST TIP

In saying a string of numbers, use the single digit number. For instance, for C-1234-567, don't say C-one thousand two hundred thirty-four, five hundred sixty-seven. Say C one two three four five six seven.

USEFUL VOCABULARIES

FACTUAL

- First name
- Last name / Surname
- live in
- ends with
- begins with

PHYSICAL

- tall
- feet/meters
- inches/centimeters
- chubby
- blonde
- skinny
- slender
- well-built

EMOTIONAL

- adaptable
- adventurous
- affectionate
- friendly
- bright
- brave
- cheerful
- considerate

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Personal Information Sheet

Factual

First Name _____

Middle Name _____

Last Name _____

Age _____

Nationality _____

Native Language _____

Occupation _____

Physical

Height _____

Weight _____

Eye color _____

Hair:

Color _____

Length: _____ long _____ short

Emotional

(encircle all that apply)

optimistic	pessimistic	easygoing	serious	fun	loving	studious	
nervous	calm	friendly	outgoing	quiet	cheerful	talkative	shy

Using the data on the information sheet, write three sentences about yourself. Then without looking at the form or sentences, describe yourself out loud. Speak about the topic in different ways. Vary the vocabulary that you use and the order that you present the information. You only get one chance during the exam. This is your time to practice.

Factual

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Physical

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Emotional

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

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Describing your Family

TEST TIP

You don't have to say everything about your family to the examiner. Just provide some basic information. If you are not comfortable talking about your family, talk about someone else's family.

Example 1:

I have a big family composed of 8 members: my father, mother, two older brothers, one older sister, me and two younger sisters. My two older brothers got married already and they are living separately from us. My older sister is studying abroad, and my two younger sisters are staying in their university dormitory.

Example 2:

My father died when I was ten. I was brought up by my mother and my grandparents. My mother, two sisters and I still live with my grandfather.

Useful Words

parents relations youngest/ oldest child middle child only child	married single divorced widowed	live with die/ passed away moved out raised by
--	--	---

Useful Phrases/Sentences

Types of family

nuclear family = mother, father and children

single-parent / one-parent family = a family which only has one parent

immediate family = your closest relatives

extended family = your entire family

close-knit family = a family where the members have close relationships with each other

dysfunctional family = a family where the members have serious problems with each other

blood relative = a relative connected to you by "blood" rather than through marriage

Expressions with family

family gathering = a meeting / celebration of family members

family resemblance = where members of the family look / act similar

to start a family = to start having children

to run in the family = a characteristic that is common among family members

to bring up / raise a family = to have and look after children

a family car = a car big enough to transport a family

family-size = large quantity item

family-friendly = a policy that favours families

family doctor = a doctor who looks after general medical needs

family man = a man who prefers to spend his time with his family

family values = traditional ideas about what a family should be

family name = surname

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PRACTICE 1

Complete this from about your family. This will help you organize your personal information.

Family Information Form

	Relationship to You	Name	Age	Marital Status	Occupation	Other Information
Parents	mother					
	father					
Siblings						
Other Relatives						

PRACTICE 2

Write three sentences about your family. Use the above as a model. Then without looking at the form or sentences, describe your family out loud. Record your description and listen to it. Record it over and over until you are satisfied with your presentation.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

PRACTICE 3

Now, connect the three sentences to form a paragraph. Use linking words or conjunctions. Add details to your answer.

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Describing your House or Neighbourhood

You may be asked to talk about your house or your neighbourhood. You can talk generally about either one, or you can talk more personally. General description talks about the general features of the house or neighbourhood. Personal description includes personal information of the examinee. Try to have a lot of specific details prepared. This will help your answers to be more cohesive and fluent.

TEST TIP

If you don't understand the task, ask for clarification. This will give you time to think a bit. These phrases will be helpful:

Do you mean the house I live in or my hometown?

Would you like me to describe the house generally or in great detail?

Useful Words for House

Type	Relation	Description
balcony	across from	large/ small
one-bedroom	along	spacious
kitchen	behind	airy
section/ area	beside	narrow
grocery store	corner	old/ new
park	end	lots
post office	facing	a lot of
department store	in back/ front/ middle of	big
taxi stand/ rank	left- hand/ right- hand side	
clothing store	near	
dry cleaner	next to	
park	overlooking	

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Useful Words for Neighbourhood

Areas	Example Sentences
residential area	We live in a <i>residential area</i> on the outskirts of the city.
housing estate	There's a shortage of accommodation so they're building some new <i>housing estates</i> .
industrial zone	Fortunately, the <i>industrial zones</i> are outside the city limits so the pollution isn't too bad.
suburbs	Most people choose to live in the <i>suburbs</i> as it's much quieter there.
outskirts	Most of the superstores are some way from the city centre on the <i>outskirts</i> of the city.
inner city	It's quite a safe place but some of the <i>inner-city</i> areas can be dangerous late at night.
heart of the city	I suppose the <i>heart of the city</i> is the main square in the city centre.

Adjectives	Example Sentences
quiet/peaceful	It's a fairly <i>quiet</i> place.
lively/bustling/vibrant	The centre of town is really <i>lively</i> at night.
industrial	Of course, it's quite <i>industrial</i> like most modern cities.
provincial	It's one of the largest <i>provincial</i> cities in the country.
cosmopolitan	There's a really <i>cosmopolitan</i> atmosphere.
green	While some parts of it are industrial, it's still a <i>green</i> city.
historic	It's a fascinating <i>historic</i> old town.
sleepy/relaxed/dull	Some people might call it <i>sleepy</i> ; I find it rather dull.

PRACTICE 1

Complete these forms about your house and neighbourhood. This will help you organize your personal information.

House Information Form	Neighbourhood Information Form
Size _____ Age _____ Number of bedrooms _____ Other rooms _____ Garden/ yard _____ Special features _____ My bedroom: Size _____ Furniture _____ Colors _____ Art _____ Other _____	Name _____ Style of houses _____ Shops/ businesses _____ Schools _____ Religious buildings _____ Other buildings _____ Transportation _____ Parks/ gardens _____ Special characteristics _____

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PRACTICE 2

Read the sample answers. Then write four sentences about your house. Use the above as models. Don't forget to connect your sentences. After that, describe your house and neighbourhood out loud. Record your description and listen to it. Record it over and over until you are satisfied with your presentation.

House: General Description

We live in a flat in the old section of the city. It was once a large house that was converted to several flats. Now, five families live in this house. We have two bedrooms: one for me and one for my parents. There is a large living room and a kitchen with a small balcony overlooking the street. The streets are very narrow, and there are no trees.

House: General Description

House: Personal Description

My house is a small house in a new development. It was built by my father. The house has three bedrooms: a large one for my parents and two smaller bedrooms for my brother and me. In my bedroom, I have a bed, a desk, and a chair. I also have a lot of books in bookshelves along two walls. I have a window in my room that looks out over our garden. It's a small garden, but we can grow all our own vegetables.

House: Personal Description

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Neighbourhood: General Description

I was born in Beijing. Even though it is a very large city and the capital, we live in a part that is like a small village. We know everyone here on the corner of my street. There is a small grocery store. Across from that, there is a dry cleaner. Next to the dry cleaner is a big clothing store. On the corner opposite the grocery store, there is a bus stop so we can easily go anywhere in the city.

Neighbourhood: General Description

Neighbourhood: Personal Description

My mother and father live in my hometown, Burdur. In fact, my entire family- aunts, uncles, grandparents, everyone- live in Burdur. We've lived there for over six generations. We know everyone in the area so when we sit outside, it is like being in our living room with our very large family. We live across the street from a park. My family spends a lot of time sitting in this park talking to neighbours and relatives.

Neighbourhood: Personal Description

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Describing Your Occupation or School

You may be asked to discuss how you spend your day. Do you work or study? Be prepared with specific details about your occupation or your school life.

Occupation

I'm an engineer. I've worked for the same company for three years. My specific job is working with the senior engineer and helping her prepare presentations for contractors and their clients. I'd like to get an advanced degree. That's why I'm applying to study at an engineering school in Australia.

School

I'm a third- year student at National University. I'm studying psychology. I'm in class most of the day, and when I'm not in class I have to spend a lot of time working on my assignments. My goal is to become a research psychologist, so I'll have to get a doctorate degree. I have a lot of years of studying ahead of me.

Useful Words

boss	duties	qualified
co- workers	assignments	goal
clients	position	advanced degree
classmates	schedule	master's degree
instructors	salary	doctorate degree

Useful Phrases

I'm a salesman.
I'm in sales.
I'm in the toy business.
I'm a contractor at JBX.
I'm a consultant for YXL.
I work for Bellwest.
I work at Wellbest.
I'm with Westbell.
I'm a software engineer.
I work in the sales department.
I'm in customer service.
I work as an instructor.
I build houses.
I clean the restrooms.

We usually take a break.
I was rather inexperienced.
I have a lot of experience.
I am sufficiently qualified.
I try to be hardworking.
I'm quite competent.
I try to work efficiently.
A lot of people do voluntary work.
I was promoted.
It is a demanding job.
I fill in for / stand in for / cover for
I was employed.
I do casual work.
I've got a temporary job
This factory has 200 employees.

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PRACTICE 1

Complete this form about your occupation or studies. This will help you organize your personal information.

Job Information Form	
Company name	_____
Job title	_____
Length of time at this job	_____
Duties	_____
Training required for this job	_____
Skills required for this job	_____
Things I like about this job	_____
Things I don't like about this job	_____
Future career goals	_____

Education Information Form	
Name of college/ university	_____
Major/ subject	_____
Classes I am taking now	_____
Hours per week in class	_____
Years to complete degree/ certificate	_____
Educational goals	_____
Future career goals	_____

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PRACTICE 2

Write four sentences about your occupation or your studies (choose only one). Use the above as models. Then without looking at the form or sentences, describe your job or school out loud. Record your discussion and listen to it. Record it over and over until you are satisfied with your presentation.

My occupation _____ or My studies _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

PRACTICE 3

Combine your sentences above to form a paragraph. Be sure to connect your sentences with each other.

Describing Your Hobbies or General Interests

The examiner may ask about your hobbies, the activities you enjoy doing during your free time. In this case, consider the following:

1. Think about question words: what, when, where, why, who.

One of my hobbies is photography. I've got two digital cameras: one small pocket-sized camera that I carry around with me and one bigger, more expensive camera that I use on special occasions. I take photos so that I have a record of the things I've seen or done. Most of my photos are of friends and family, but I also take pictures of interesting things that I see.

2. Describe opinions and feelings.

I like photography because it's a creative hobby and it makes you notice the world around you. I love capturing special moments or unusual or beautiful images, and it's a great feeling to be able to look back through my pictures and relive different experiences.

3. Tell a story related to the topic.

The last time I took photos on a special occasion was at my friend's wedding a few weeks ago. I got some great pictures of the bride and groom and their guests celebrating. After the wedding, I made an album of all the best pictures and sent it to my friend as a present.

Note:

They say that you don't need to tell the truth in your answers, but it's usually easier to tell a story if it's real. You don't need to invent details for your story.

Hobby (EXAMPLE 1)

I enjoy bird watching. I often go to a park near my house in the early morning to watch the birds. I also belong to a bird watching club. Several times a year we take trips to other places. We try to find birds that we've never seen before. You don't need much equipment for bird watching, just a pair of binoculars and a pair of strong legs for walking. I enjoy this hobby because I like to be outside, and I'm fascinated by the natural world.

Hobby (EXAMPLE 2)

I like to play the guitar. I took lessons when I was a child. Some friends and I had a rock band once, a long time ago. We played at parties. Now I mostly play on my own at home, and sometimes I get together with friends to play. I'm thinking about taking lessons again, I'd like to learn how to play jazz guitar. I have a large collection of jazz CDs.

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Useful Words and Expressions

fascinating	relaxing	practical	different	cheap	unusual	enjoyable
I relax by (watching TV)						
I'm interested in + (noun / gerund)						
I'm keen on + (noun / gerund)						
I'm into + (noun / gerund)						
I enjoy + (noun / gerund)						
I really enjoy going to the gym because						
...it keeps me fit.						
...it gets me out of the house, you know!						
...it's sociable. I've met lots of new people.						
...it gives me something interesting to do with my time.						
...it's not very expensive, and anyone can do it!						

PRACTICE 1

Complete this form about your hobbies or general interests. This will help you organize your personal information.

Hobby/ Free- Time Activity Information Form	
Hobby/ Activity #1 _____	
How often do you do this hobby/ activity?	_____
Do you do it on your own or with other people?	_____
Do you belong to a club related to this hobby/ activity?	_____
How did you learn how to do this hobby/ activity?	_____
Do you need special equipment for it?	_____
What do you like most about it?	_____
Hobby/ Activity #2 _____	
How often do you do this hobby/ activity?	_____
Do you do it on your own or with other people?	_____
Do you belong to a club related to this hobby/ activity?	_____
How did you learn how to do this hobby/ activity?	_____
Do you need special equipment for it?	_____
What do you like most about it?	_____

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PRACTICE 2

Write five sentences about your occupation or your studies using the data above. Try to connect your sentences with each other. Then describe your job or school out loud.

Hobby/ Activity #1 _____

Hobby/ Activity #2 _____

Part 2- Long Turn

The examiner will give you a card with a topic and some questions to guide your discussion. You will have one minute to prepare your answer. You can make notes on a piece of paper provided by the examiner. In answering, connect your sentences with each other using transition signals. Below are some expressions to help you.

1. *I'm going to talk about ...*
Use this expression to introduce your answer.
2. *Like I said ...*
Use this expression if you want to repeat something in your answer.
3. *What else?*
While thinking for the next thing to say, use this expression rather than pausing for a long time.
4. *Let me give you an example.*
This expression comes handy if you are running out of something to say. Moreover, it adds details to your answer.
5. In paraphrasing statements, the following are useful:
What I'm trying to say is...
In other words...
To put it another way...
What I mean is...
Perhaps I should make that clearer by saying...
6. *That's all I have to say.*
This is a signal that you have finished your answer.

EXAMPLE 1

Describe a major decision you have taken in your life.

You should say:

- what the decision was
- what other choices were available to you
- why you made the decision you did

and explain if you think the decision was a good one.

Sample Answer:

A really important decision I've made recently is to study abroad. No-one from my family has ever had the chance to do this before, and my parents were actually hoping I'd start working for the family textile business. I think it's too soon to join the business though. I really want to study marketing – especially e-marketing – so I can contribute more to my parent's firm in the future. If I study e-marketing in the UK, I can

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learn how to use the internet to sell our clothes all over the world. As for whether it was the right decision, I'm pretty confident it was and I can't change my mind now anyway because my parents have borrowed money from my uncle to pay for my tuition. I really can't wait to come back with new ideas that will help expand our business. All I need now is to get a good score in IELTS. So, anyway, that's an important decision in my life.

This IELTS candidate scores highly by:

- Getting straight to the point and saying what the decision was in the very first sentence
- Paraphrasing the topic: *A really important decision*
- Using a range of tenses – past simple, present simple and present perfect – with great accuracy
- Using a wide range of grammatical forms such as a conditional sentence (*If I...*) and a cleft sentence (*All I need now is...*)
- Answering all parts of the question
- Signaling one part of the question: *As for whether it was the right decision...*
- Avoiding over-formality and using expressions such as *actually* and *pretty* that are appropriate to conversational style
- Providing a summarizing sentence to wrap up the response

EXAMPLE 2

Describe someone in your family who you really admire.

You should say:

- what relationship this person has with you
- what your first memories of this person are
- how often you see this person

and explain why you admire this person.

Possible Answer:

I've got a small family with only 5 members and all of us are very close to each other and we love each other very much. Among them, I love my mother more than anyone else in the whole world. I adore my mother for her caring, loving, adorable behaviors and wit. She is the person I can share everything with and that's the reason I worship her so much.

Possibly, she was the first human I saw when I opened my eyes in this world. A relationship with a mother is divine and all of my childhood memories are either related to my mom or my school. I can still remember a day I was late to come back home after school and that's because there was a ceremony at the school I did not know about. All of a certain, I found that my mother was entering through the school-gate to find me. I was so frightened that my mother would rebuke me for being late unnoticed and she must be mad at me. But to my best surprise, when my mother saw me she had a warm smile in her face that I'll never forget till my last breath in this earth. Then she hugged me and gave me a kiss. I felt then that I love my mother more than me. She attended the program at the school and afterward we came back home together.

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I spent my 19 years or so with my father and mother but I stay at a metropolitan city now for my education. Whenever I get vacation, I meet my mother at my village home. On an average I spend 2/3 months with my mother each year but I talk to her over phone almost twice a day.

The reasons why I admire her are endless. She is caring, tender, she has got a big heart and she possesses love for everyone. She had been an ideal mother to raise 3 kids and establish our education and moral values. She had made a lot of sacrifices all of her life and had never complained about anything to my best knowledge. She is the person who reminds me the power of love and caring.

Useful Words for Establishing a Sequence

after	during	previously
as a teenager	earlier	prior to
at the same time as	in the 1990s	simultaneously
before	later	when

PRACTICE 1

Make notes about these topics then give your answers. Remember to connect your sentences with each other.

Topic 1

Talk about a pet that you or someone you know once had.

You should say:
what kind of animal it was
what kind of care it needed
what you liked/didn't like about it

and explain why this is or is not a popular type of pet to own.

Answer:

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Topic 2

Describe a lake, a river or a sea you have visited.

You should say:
where the lake is
how often you have visited it
what activities you do there

explain why you like this particular place.

Answer:

Topic 3

Describe a TV show that you enjoy.

You should say:
what type of show it is
how often it is on
how popular it is with other people in your country

Explain why you like it.

Answer:

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Topic 4

Talk about a friend you had as a child or teenager.

You should say:

when and how you first met this friend

what things you liked to do together

what things you had in common

Explain why this friendship was important to you.

Answer:

Topic 5

Describe a trip you have taken recently.

You should say:

where you went

who went with you

why you went there

Describe some things you saw and did on your trip.

Answer:

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Part 3 – Follow-up Questions

In this part of the test, the examiner will ask questions about the topic on the task card in Part 2. In answering the questions, try to connect your sentences with each other. You may use the following:

Agreeing with an opinion	<i>Yes, I agree...</i> <i>That's my view exactly.</i> <i>I would tend to agree with that.</i> <i>I couldn't agree more.</i>
Disagreeing with an opinion	<i>No, I disagree.</i> <i>I'm afraid I disagree.</i> <i>I see things rather differently myself.</i> <i>I wouldn't say that is necessarily true.</i> <i>I tend to disagree.</i> <i>I'm not so sure about that.</i>
Partially agreeing with an opinion	<i>I don't entirely agree. It is true that.....however...</i> <i>That is partly true, but...</i> <i>I agree with that to an extent. However...</i>
Getting asked an opinion (by the examiner)	<i>What do you think?</i> <i>What's your view / opinion?</i> <i>What are your views on...?</i> <i>How do you feel about...?</i>
Saying your opinion could vary according to the situation	<i>That depends...</i> <i>I think it really depends...</i> <i>That depends on how you look at it.</i>
Asking for clarification (part 3 only)	<i>Could you please explain what ... (word)... means?</i> <i>Sorry, I don't understand the question. Could you explain?</i> <i>Sorry, I'm afraid I didn't understand the question.</i> <i>Sorry, can I just clarify what you mean. Are you asking me ... (say what you believe you have been asked)...</i>
Asking for repetition	<i>Sorry, would you mind repeating the question?</i> <i>Sorry, I didn't quite catch that. Could you repeat the question?</i>
Summing up	<i>So all in all...</i> <i>To sum up...</i> <i>To conclude...</i>

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Other Useful Expressions

According to my point of view	I believe	I'm in favor of __ because __
As far as I'm concerned	I don't know if	It seems to me
I agree with/ disagree with	I don't know whether	Personally, I think
I'm certain/ positive/ sure that	I think it's a good idea because __	The advantage of __ is that
I assume	I'm against __	The disadvantage of __ is that

PRACTICE 1

Write your answers to these follow-up questions then read them aloud.

Topic 1

What are some advantages and disadvantages of owning pets?

Is it important to have pets? Why or why not?

Topic 2

Where is the best river or sea in your country?

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Are bodies of water advantageous to a society? Why or why not?

Topic 3

What are some subjects discussed in TV shows that you like?

Do you think it's better to have educational topics on TV shows and not entertainment?

Topic 4

What memorable experience did you have with your friend as a child?

Is it beneficial to have a friend who is older than you? Why or why not?

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Topic 5

Where is a good place to visit in your country?

Is traveling helpful to young people's learning about the facts of life?

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Discussing an Issue in Depth

It is important to remember that you need to provide supporting details to your answer in the last part of the test. Don't forget to use some expressions. Notice the type of questions asked and how they can be answered.

Issues from example topic asking for definition:

Why do people visit museums?

What role do museums play in a society?

Issues from example topic asking for comparison and contrast:

What do museums offer in terms of education that books or other sources don't?

How will museums be different in the future?

Useful Words for Definitions

characteristic	in explanation	to paraphrase
condition	in other words	
define	to explain	

Useful Words for Comparison

alike	in the same way	resemblance
almost the same as	just as	similar to
common characteristics	like	similarity
correspond to	likewise	to have in common

Useful Words for Contrast

although	however	nevertheless
different from	in contrast to	on the other hand
even so	less than	still
(larger) than	more / more than	unlike

Main Sections of the IELTS Speaking Test

Part 1: Introduction and interview

- Remember that the examiner is just like your teacher. In fact, examiners are usually teachers, so they are aware of how you feel, because their own students feel the same!
- The examiner has a set of questions. Answer the questions without trying to repeat the whole question in your answer:

What's the most interesting building in your home town?

Do not reply: ~~The most interesting place in ... is ...~~

Say: *It's...*

- State your answer and then expand, if possible.
I/ Many people find it fascinating, because...
- Try to use synonyms of the words used by the examiner. If you can't, don't interrupt your fluency, just say what you can.
- The topics are usually familiar topics and the examiner asks you about yourself. Try to give examples and create ideas. Do not say: *I don't know.*
- You might asked about:
 - a place or a hobby
 - your daily routine
 - your interests
 - places in your country
 - special foods/ events in your country

The questions are designed to encourage you to talk. They are not new or unpredictable.

Typical IELTS Speaking Part One Questions

The statements below are very approximate in order by the most likely topic and the most likely questions within each topic. That will mean that topics low in the list and questions low in each list are fairly unlikely, but they are given anyway to give some ideas of the potential variability of IELTS questions. As the IELTS questions changed all the time and are no longer published, there will certainly be questions in the exam that are not in the list below, as well as some that are similar but stated differently and maybe some topics that are not here.

Admin questions

1. Can I see your (photo) ID please? / Can I have your scorecard please? / Please show me your passport. / Can I see some identification?

Name

2. Could you tell me your (full) name please? How do you pronounce/ spell your name?
3. Would you prefer me to use your first name or your family name?

Work and studies

4. Are you working or are you a student?
5. Do you enjoy your studies/ work? (What makes you say that/ Why?)/ What is the most interesting aspect/ part of your studies/ work?
6. Is there anything you dislike about your work/ studies?
7. What job would you like to do in the future? / What job do you hope to be doing in ten years' time?
8. Do you want to study anything in the future? / Is there anything you'd like to study in the future?
9. Why did you choose this subject/ job?
10. Is it a difficult job/ subject?
11. What was your favorite subject at school? What did you like about that?
12. What are/ were the best things about your job/ studies?
13. Are you working at the moment?
14. Is there anything you want to study in the future?
15. What is your typical day like at work/ at school/ in college?

Hometown

16. Where were you born?

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17. Where did you grow up? / Where did you live when you were a child?
18. What kind of place is your hometown? / Tell me a little about where you come from.
(Would you rather live here or there/ in ___ or in ___? Why?)
19. Are you from the country or the city?
20. What's the most interesting part of your town/ village/ city?
21. What kind of jobs do people in your town/ village do/ city?
22. Would you say your hometown is a good place to live in? (Why?)
23. Can you tell me something about your hometown?
24. Do you think ___ is a good place to live in?
25. How is your hometown changing?
26. What changes would you like to make to your hometown?
27. Would you like to live in your hometown when you retire/ get older?
28. When are you going back to your hometown?
29. Where is your family from?
30. Is your hometown famous for anything?
31. What kind of transport do people usually use in your hometown?

Hobbies and free time

32. What do you like doing in your free time?
33. What are your hobbies? / Do you have any hobbies? / Have you got any interests or hobbies?
34. Are there any new leisure activities you would like to take up?
35. Do you prefer to go out or stay at home in the evenings? (Why?)
36. How do you usually spend your weekends/ days off?
37. What do you usually do in the evening?
38. Do you prefer going out or staying at home? Why?
39. What did you do last weekend?
40. Do you enjoy playing sports? (What sports do you like?)
41. What type of music do you enjoy most?
42. What type of films do you like?
43. What do you do when you meet your friends? Do you prefer going out with a large or small group of friends? Why?
44. Do you play any musical instruments? Did you learn to play as a child?

Family and friends

45. How many brothers and sisters do you have?
46. How many brothers and sisters do you have? What do they like doing in their free time?
47. Can you tell me about your family?
48. Did you get on well with your parents/ brothers or sisters when you were a child?
49. Do you get on well with your family? How/ Why?
50. Which of your parents do you most resemble/ take after? Why do you say that?
51. What do your parents do?

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- 52. When was the last time you met your extended family? What was the occasion?
- 53. Would you like to have a large family?

Language studies and IELTS

- 54. Do you speak any other languages aside from ENGLISH? / How many languages do you speak?
- 55. Why are you taking the IELTS exam?
- 56. How long have you been studying English?
- 57. Why is it important for you to learn English?
- 58. Did you enjoy English at school?
- 59. What do you find most difficult about learning English?
- 60. What activities do you find most useful for learning English? / What do you think is the best way to study a language?
- 61. How much time do you spend studying English every week?

Festivals and celebrations

- 62. How do you usually spend your birthday?
- 63. How did you celebrate your last birthday?
- 64. What is the most important day of the year for you? (Why?)
- 65. What is the next big celebration in your family? (What are you going to do?)
- 66. What is the most important festival in your hometown/ country?
- 67. When did you last go to a festival?
- 68. Does your hometown have any famous festivals?

Accommodation

- 69. Do you live in a house or a flat? / What sort of home do you live in? What kind of accommodation do you live in?
- 70. Where do you live now? How long have you been living there?
- 71. What do you like about your home? Is there anything you would like to change/ improve about your home?
- 72. What would your dream house be like?
- 73. What is your local area like?
- 74. Do you still live in your family home?
- 75. Would you like to move house? Why/ why not?
- 76. What is your favorite room in your house? Why?
- 77. How long do you think you will continue living in your present accommodation?
- 78. Who do you live with? / Do you live on your own?

Future plans

- 79. What are your plans for your next holiday? / Do you have any plans for your next holiday?

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- 80. What are you going to do at the weekend/ on your next days off?
- 81. What do you think you will be doing in ten years' time?
- 82. Do you have any plans to travel or live abroad?

Transport and travel

- 83. Have you visited many foreign countries? What was your favorite place? Why?
- 84. What countries would you like to visit (in the future)?
- 85. Would you like to live abroad? Why/ Why not?
- 86. What things would you recommend a foreign tourist to do in your country?
- 87. Have you ever had any problems while you were traveling?
- 88. What part of the world would you most like to travel in?
- 89. If you could live in any country/ travel anywhere, where would you choose?

Food and drink

- 90. Can you cook?
- 91. What is the most famous dish from your country? Can you describe it?
- 92. What is your favorite dish?
- 93. Who does the cooking in your family/ house?
- 94. Do you prefer eating at home or in a restaurant?
- 95. On what occasions do you eat special meals?

Part 2: Individual Long Turn

- The topics on the task card are about a book, film, television program, clothes, piece of music, object, place you like, special journey, special day, people you like or who have influenced you or a skill you have learned, etc.
- Use the time to plan. A common criticism of candidates is that they do not plan. You do not impress the examiner if you start immediately without planning, whatever your level is. Make a brief written plan, as it helps to keep you on the subject and stops you from wandering away from the points you are asked about.
- If your talk is not organized, you will lose marks.
- Remember you are being checked on your fluency and coherence. Coherence involves following a logical and clear argument.
- Remember that being relevant is as important being fluent.
- When candidates do not plan, they tend to describe the general aspect of the question rather than the specific parts.
- Be aware how much you can say in two minutes maximum. You will probably only be able to say between 200- 250 words.
- Make sure what you say is natural and do not sound as if you have learnt something by heart. It will affect your score.
- Remember the Examiner will know if you are doing the task properly or not.

Planning and Making Notes

- Write notes, not sentences. The task card asks you to describe a place, etc. and then give reasons for your choice. For each point, write only one or two words for each prompt. In total, you should have no more than 10- 20 words.
- Write the points in a vertical list and in order. It is easier to see them this way.
- Draw a line between the words relating to the description and the explanation. It will make it clearer for you as you speak.
- As you speak, refer to the list to organize your answer. This should ensure that you answer all parts of the task.
- Use nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives on your notes.
- Do not learn your notes or full answers by heart and then repeat them word for word in the exam quickly. This sounds artificial and affects your score.
- Think about connecting words/ phrases that will guide you as you speak; don't write them in the notes.

Organization

- Like the other parts of the test, the Speaking tests your ability to organize what you say. Good organization improves your fluency and coherence and reduces your mistakes.
- Practice making notes and using them to help you speak.
- Learn to build what you say around the prompts on the card and your notes.
- Record yourself: even write your answer down to see how much you need to say.
- Do not learn what you have written by heart, but do learn words and phrases that prompt and guide you.

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Prompt Words for Part 2

- Use prompt words to guide you rather than learning whole topics.
- Here are some introductory prompt phrases:
 - *I'd like to talk about...*
 - *I'm going to talk about/ describe how to...*
 - *I want to talk about...*
 - *What I'd like to talk about is...*
- Here are some phrases to talk about background detail:
 - Place: *It is near...*
 - Name: *A ___ called/ which is called*
 - Location: *___ is situated ... on the shores of/ on the edge of...*
 - Time: *It took place.../ It happened*
 - Recent time: *It has been going on.../ I have known*
 - How: *First of all, you prepare...; then... is prepared...*
- Here are some words and phrases to help develop your theme:
 - *First of all, .../ Secondly*
 - *and also/ as well as/ what's more/ moreover*
 - *Another thing is.../ Another reason I.../ Another reason why I.../ Another reason behind my decision to...*
 - *because/ since/ as*
 - *And why do I like it so much? Well, it...*
- Here are some words and phrases to talk about things you like:
 - *I like/ enjoy something/ doing something.*
 - *I like... more than anything else.*
 - *I like... the most.*
 - *I love something/ doing something...*
 - *... appeals to me, because...*
 - *I take/ get (a lot of) pleasure out of...*
 - *I am fond of...*
- Here are some words and phrases to state that something made an impression on you:
 - *... made an impression on me.*
 - *... influenced me.*
 - *... had an (enormous) impact on me.*

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- ... affected me.
 - ... had an effect on me.
 - ...seems to have a lasting effect on me.
 - ... brought home to me...
 - ... changed the way I look at things.
 - ... moved me.
 - ...impressed me.
 - ... touched me deeply.
 - ... disturbed me.
-
- Use synonyms of words in the task card.
 - **Benefits:** advantages, positive aspect
 - **Ways:** measures, steps, courses of action, solutions
 - **Causes:** reasons behind
 - **Effects:** consequences, repercussions, results
 - **Developments:** changes
 - **Example:** instance, good example, best example
 - Collect your own examples of synonyms.
 - As you think about and give your talk, be prepared for questions to connect what you have said in Part 2 to lead into Part 3.

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Part 3: Two- way Discussion

- Listen carefully to the Examiner's questions.
- Try to be fluent and only correct yourself if it is easy to do so. Don't focus on your mistakes.
- Concentrate on the organization and being coherent.
- Remember the Examiner asks you a range of questions to encourage you to speak.
- You need to go into greater depth to explain your opinion, give reasons and speculate about the future.
- To stop yourself from panicking about Part 3, think how long it lasts; how many questions the Examiner can ask you (six to eight); and the nature of the questions.
- The questions will be open questions, for example:
 - *What kind(s)/ sort(s)/ type(s)/ benefit(s)/ effect(s) of... are there?*
 - *What kinds of things...?*
 - *What changes/ advantages/ disadvantages/ differences/ ways...?*
 - *Why do you think...?*
 - *How important/ useful/ beneficial/ essential...?*
 - *How does...?*
 - *(A statement) Why do you think this is?*
 - *What will happen in the future?*
 - *Can you give me some examples?*
 - *Do you think...? Why?*
 - *What is the role of...?*
- The Examiner can invite you to comment by asking: *What about...?*
- Keep to the topic. Think of your answer as the Examiner is speaking.

Prompts to Help You Begin and Develop your Answers

- If you don't understand the Examiner's question, tell him/ her or ask him/ her to repeat it. There is no point answering a question you do not understand.
- Make sure that your answer fits the Examiner's question.
- A memorized response to something similar you have learnt is not suitable. However, prepare some prompts for yourself so that you can get yourself talking. These prompts give you a few seconds to think and organize what you want to say.
- Remember that the Examiners are not checking whether you are telling the truth, but your ability to speak English
- The Examiner introduces a general topic and then asks you a question about a specific aspect.
- When the examiner asks you a question, listen for words you can build your answer around: *What do you think the benefits of being able to speak more than one language are?* Obviously, you need to speak about the benefits. When you answer, use a paraphrased version: *advantages/ positive aspects or... is beneficial.*
- Put your list into an order: *The main advantage, I think, is...* and give one or more reasons: *...because... and it...*
- You are taking part in a two-way conversation. Allow space for the examiner to ask you questions. Don't talk over the examiner. However, if the examiner doesn't interrupt you, continue speaking.
- Don't speak fast or slowly, but clearly.
- Organize what you are saying. Don't make just the beginning relevant, but also your supporting evidence. Bear in mind the principles of writing a paragraph.
- Concentrate on the message and the organization rather than your grammar and it will help you to be fluent.
- The examiner might ask a question that changes direction slightly. Follow his/ her lead.

Developing Ideas

- When you state something, try to qualify it and expand to support your opinion/ reason:
 - *The main way/ step/ measure I think is to...*
 - *... because this will/ can lead to... and also...*
 - *For example, ...*
 - *And another way is... I also think/ feel/ believe.../ In my opinion/ From my point of view...*
- Use, but don't overuse, adding words: *Moreover/ What is more*
- If you have time, draw a conclusion: *... and therefore...*
- You can vary the response in any way you like as long as it fits and is relevant.
- The examiner might ask an unexpected question for you to comment on: *What about...? Agree or disagree: That is possible, but I think... and give your reasons.*
- Use words and phrases to state different sides of an argument:
 - *To some people... is a downside/ drawback/ disadvantage, but on balance I think...*
 - *... but/ however/ nevertheless I...*
- Talk about possible results or consequences: *... and so/ therefore...*
- When you are asked to speculate about the future, use: *will/ going to/ might/ could/ should.*

IELTS SPEAKING

Part 2 Topic Card

1. Describe a museum.

- 1) How often do you visit the museum?
- 2) Which type of museum is popular in your country?
- 3) Why do you want to visit the museum?

Follow-up:

- ❖ What do you think of the importance of museums in history?
- ❖ How do you think of the heritage of a country?
- ❖ Compare the museums nowadays and in the past.

2. Describe your favorite photograph.

- 1) Where was the photo taken?
- 2) Who took the photo?
- 3) What can be seen from the photo?
- 4) Explain why it is the favorite photograph for you.

Follow-up:

- ❖ How to take good photo?
- ❖ When do people use camera?
- ❖ How can the new technology put cinema's skill advanced?

3. The important historic place

- 1) What is the place?
- 2) Where is it located?
- 3) Why do you think it is important?

Follow-up:

- ❖ What do you think of the historic place in the future?
- ❖ Will the government increase or decrease the safety guard?
- ❖ What are the changes to the local people and economy?
- ❖ What is the impact on the historic place by tourists?

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4. Describe a party.

- 1) What is the party?
- 2) Why was the party held?
- 3) Who attended the party?
- 4) What did you do for that party?

Follow-up:

- ❖ What's the difference between serious party and friendly party?
- ❖ Why are some people late for parties intentionally?
- ❖ Why do some people like party while others hate it?
- ❖ What would you do if the guests feel bored?
- ❖ Will there be more and more people to attend parties?

5. Describe a subject taught in your school.

- 1) Who teaches it?
- 2) How is it taught?
- 3) What do you learn from the class?

Follow-up:

- ❖ Is there any difference between the traditional and modern educational systems?
- ❖ What are the pros and cons of the current educational system in your country?
- ❖ Do you think it is necessary to give comment or criticism to teachers?

6. What is the important invention before the age of computer?

- 1) What is the invention?
- 2) Why do you think it is very important?
- 3) What are the advantages and disadvantages of the invention?

Follow-up:

- ❖ What is the significant impact of modern inventions on life?
- ❖ Which skills do you want to study in the future?
- ❖ Do you think it's necessary to develop modern invention in the countryside?

IELTS SPEAKING

7. Describe a foreign country you have never been to.

- 1) Where is the country?
- 2) When will you go there?
- 3) Why would you like to go there?

Follow-up:

- ❖ Say something about the tourism development in China, facility, services and the effect on environment.
- ❖ What is the importance of travel and tourism industry?
- ❖ What do you think is the function of tourist guides?

8. Describe your favorite movie.

- 1) What's the name of the film?
- 2) What's the theme of the film?
- 3) Why do you like it?

Follow-up:

- ❖ Describe a type of movie you like.
- ❖ What's the difference between Chinese and American movies?
- ❖ What do you think of the violent films (Hollywood films)?
- ❖ Why do movies need computer techniques? Any example of movie using computer techniques?
- ❖ Which parts of cinema are the most important and how to improve it?

9. Describe a newspaper or magazine.

- 1) What's your habit for reading?
- 2) What are the benefits of reading?
- 3) What's the main difference between newspaper and magazine?

Follow-up:

- ❖ What do you think are the important qualities for a news reporter?
- ❖ What's the function of a report to the society?
- ❖ What kinds of books/ newspapers/ magazine do Chinese adolescents read?
- ❖ With the popularity of Internet, do you think newspapers and magazines will disappear?

IELTS SPEAKING

10. Describe a children's game (sports not suggested).

- 1) How is it played?
- 2) What can you learn from the game?
- 3) What impact does it bring on your growth?

Follow- up:

- ❖ What do you think of the benefits of children's games?
- ❖ Nowadays children have less and less time for game, what do you think about it?
- ❖ What do you think is the difference between games nowadays and in the past?
- ❖ What's the negative aspect of games?

11. Describe a happy event in your life.

- 1) When did it happen?
- 2) Where did it happen?
- 3) What was it?

Follow- up:

- ❖ Tell me how you organize your study time.
- ❖ What do you think is important in achieving happiness?
- ❖ How do Chinese celebrate some happy events?
- ❖ What is the role of the camera and video in celebrations?

12. Describe a thing which is important to you.

- 1) Who gave it to you?
- 2) What is the thing?
- 3) What does the thing mean to you?

Follow- up:

- ❖ What are the changes in cities between now and the past?
- ❖ Does money represent happiness and why?
- ❖ How do you regard the things people want to earn?

IELTS SPEAKING

13. Describe one of your neighbors.

- 1) When did you become neighbors?
- 2) Do you often meet?
- 3) State whether your neighbor is a good one.

Follow-up:

- ❖ What is the difference between neighbors and friends?
- ❖ Why do people like to watch TV series in their houses?
- ❖ What do you think about the relationship of neighbors in the city?
- ❖ How do we improve the neighborhood?

14. Describe one of the shopping centers you often go to.

- 1) Where is the shopping center?
- 2) How often do you go to the center?
- 3) Why do you often go to it and what are its characteristics?

Follow-up:

- ❖ Will smaller shops survive in the current business system?
- ❖ What are the similarities and differences of shopping malls and smaller shops?
- ❖ What is the trend of future shopping centers?
- ❖ Talk about Internet shopping.

15. Describe your favorite animal

- 1) What kind of animal is it?
- 2) Describe it briefly.
- 3) Why do you like the animal?

Follow-up:

- ❖ What do you need to do to take care of it?
- ❖ What's the future trend of the animal?
- ❖ How do you think of the poaching of some precious animals such as pandas?

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16. Describe a historical place.

- 1) What is the place?
- 2) Where is it located?
- 3) What is the historical meaning of the place?

Follow- up:

- ❖ What do you think of the future trend of historic places?
- ❖ Will government strengthen its protection toward historic places?
- ❖ What are the changes brought about by historic places in the local economy, people, etc.?
- ❖ What is the effect of tourists on the place?

17. Advertisement

- 1) What are the forms of advertisement?
- 2) What are the functions of advertisement?
- 3) What is the effect of advertisement to people?

Follow- up:

- ❖ Do you feel bored and disgusted about advertisement?
- ❖ What do you think are the criteria of assessing a good piece of advertisement?
- ❖ What will happen if unauthorized advertisements prevail in the market?

18. Describe an important letter.

- 1) When did you receive the letter?
- 2) From whom did you receive the letter?
- 3) Explain the reasons why it is important.

Follow- up:

- ❖ What is the significance of handwriting?
- ❖ Does your country have handwriting lesson now?
- ❖ Compare handwriting now and the past.
- ❖ With the popularity of computers and Internet, will people lose their ability to write letters?

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19. Describe the best present you have received.

- 1) Who sent it to you?
- 2) When did you receive it?
- 3) Give detailed information about the present.

Follow- up:

- ❖ Do you think that giving presents will play an important role in Chinese daily life? Why?
- ❖ Do you think that brand name is very important for sales?
- ❖ In terms of media, which do you think will play the main role in giving presents, television, newspaper or Internet?

20. Describe your holidays.

- 1) Where do you go for the holidays and how long do they last?
- 2) Who do you go with?
- 3) Talk about any interesting things happening during your holidays.

Follow- up:

- ❖ What do the Chinese people mostly do in their leisure time?
- ❖ What's the difference between holidays today and 5 years ago? What are the reasons for the change?
- ❖ Do you think people will spend more time on leisure or working in the future?

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