

# IELTS

## Speaking Tests

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**With Answers  
&  
Sample Interviews**

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## Item 1

Describe a TV commercial you like very much.

You should talk about:

Why TV commercials are important to us

What factory sponsors that

What it is about

Why you like it very much.

You know... Some people who watch TV quite often believe that TV commercials are better than the programs. In the past, we didn't have so many commercials on but now we have plenty of them before, in the middle and after each program. I think TV commercials add variety to the programs because sometimes the program becomes very monotonous and some TV commercials give you a chance for refreshment. You can see different people, characters and cartoons in a couple of minutes. I guess the commercial I like very much is sponsored by a factory making washing powder. It is about a product called "Darya" which in English means "the sea". A couple are asked how they spend the weekend and they say "beside Darya" which means "by the sea", then the husband is shown washing clothes with "Darya". I like it so much since it is clever and initiative. Generally I like the ads and commercials in which they make use of puns. I mean humorous use of words and phrases.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 2

Talk about your favourite writer (author).

Talk about:

Who he or she is

Who introduced him to you

What his or her best work is

What he or she usually writes about.

First of all, I believe that a good writer can change the world with his works, comments, words, creativity and even by his sense of humour. Writing makes the difference between civilized man and barbarians. In other words, writers were the real emperors of new civilization and culture. They conquered the hearts and minds of people. The writer I admire so much is Mark Twain. He was introduced to me by a teacher, I guess he was our Math teacher. He has written several masterpieces. I suppose his best work is "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" since it depicts the way a white boy and a Negro can live together in piece. This book, in my opinion, is against racism and discrimination. He wrote about social issues in a language that is understandable to everyone. Hemingway says Huckleberry Finn is the basis of western literature and I agree with him. This book impressed me a lot. It somehow affected my later life. I talk about that in different occasions and encourage people to read it. It's worth reading more than once.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 3

Describe a city you have visited which has impressed you.

You should say:

Where it is situated

Why you visited it

What you liked about it.

Well.... Let me see, as far as my memory helps, last year I visited Isfahan, a city situated in the center of the country. I guess it is 400 km far from Tehran, the capital. It's a city you never forget when you visit there even once. I went there on vacation during the spring. The weather was fantastic and the people were very hospitable and they keep their houses very clean. The accent of the people there is very nice and melodic. We stayed in a hotel named "King Abbas Hotel", the service was good and the price was reasonable. There is an expression in Persian, which says "Isfahan is half of the universe". This might seem an extravagant remark, but it's to some extent true, and you really enjoy being there especially during the spring and the New Year Feasts. The city is also very famous for its handicrafts. Most of them are exported to other countries. I guess the city attracts the largest number of tourists in Iran. By the way, I forgot to say that Isfahan has been once the capital of the country.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 4

Describe a memory of your childhood.

You should say:

What it was

When it happened

How it affected your later life

Whether you remember it as a pleasant or disgusting memory.

When you are a child everything is considered a memory. Most of them stay fresh in your mind even after some decades. A few of them aren't difficult to remember. I was a five-year old kid and I was in the market with my mother and I was playing around and watching the windows. Suddenly I found out that I got lost. I was kept in police station for one day till my family could find me at last. You know part of it isn't and can't be pleasant, being lost isn't a good memory but whenever I remember how warmly the policemen treated me and how happy I was when I saw everyone crying for me and caring about me, I consider it a pleasant memory. But believe me I'm still wary of markets. You think I'm kidding but I am really serious. The interesting point about this memory is that before that mishap, I was afraid of policemen and tried to hide behind my mother whenever I saw a policeman or a police patrol, but after that I liked them so much since they were very kind to me, I remember that one of them bought some sweets for me. Anyway, things may not look so bad if you reconsider them some other time.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 5

Talk about your favourite country.

Talk about:

Which country it is

In what continent it is situated

Whether you have been there. If yes, when

What is very fantastic about it.

I really like Canada. It is in North America. I think it's the second largest country in the world. A vast territory of the country is covered with ice most of the year. The interesting point is that you can find Eskimos in northern Quebec. I was there two years ago. I was in Montreal, a bilingual city where many people speak both languages, but most of them speak either English or French. It is a very nice country and the people are coming from different cultures, so it is a multi cultural country. That is why you don't encounter that much discrimination as in some European countries. The weather is very diverse in different parts of the country. I was in Montreal and it was very cold. The winter is rather long and somehow depressing. I also appreciate the shopping malls; most of them are under the ground in subway stations. I enjoyed watching skunks very much. Museums are also very attractive for tourists. Jazz festival fascinates many people during summer. The social security system and the health insurance were amazing as well.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 6

Talk about your favourite superhero.

You should mention:

Who he or she is (was)

What he or she did

Whether he or she is a national or an international hero.

Neil Armstrong is my superhero. I really admire him and I know I'm not the only one, so many people see him as a kind of modern-time legend. I wasn't even born yet when he set foot on moon but even now when you look back, it still amazes you. People of a hundred years ago couldn't even dream of that. Stepping on moon was mentioned in fictions and legends. I had always been so fascinated by what he did that I've read many books and watched movies and documentaries and everything I could to know him better. I don't know if all people feel the same way or not when hearing that famous expression "one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind" but it makes me energized and keyed up. Anyway, he was one of the three men who were sent to the moon in 1969 and one of the two who actually landed on the moon and the very first human being who walked on the moon. I think that's what makes him an international superhero! After all were all human beings and feel proud of massive achievements by other human beings.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 7

Describe a friend whom you admire very much.

Talk about:

How long you have known him or her

What is very admirable about him or her

How he or she has influenced your life

Whether your parents like him or her too.

Well, a friend who is really special to me is actually a classmate of mine. I've known him for 5 years and I have to say I really admire him for the qualities I've seen in him. I think most of the other guys in our class like him, even the ones who don't know him for a long time. He's that kind of person that... you know... acts very smartly! Although he becomes very naughty at times, he is absolutely disciplined and that's really admirable about him. He's somehow found a perfect balance between humour and order and it really works. One thing about him that influenced me is that I think we are mentally very much alike. I think to myself that I can be like him because I see we share, let's say, vision. That also has another advantage, and that's why my parents like him and we feel comfortable and close to each other. We are really good friends. He knows the value of friendship and has a high regard for it and others think highly of him. He is phenomenal.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 8

Describe one of the members of your family whom you respect very much.

You should mention:

Your relationship to him or her

How he or she looks

What he or she is like.

I should say the one in my family who I really look up to, of course besides my parents, is my elder sister. She's four years older than me. There is this gap between her and me as far as age is concerned but I think it works in my favour. You know I've had friends who were in more or less the same situation and they were always complaining that they can't get along well with their siblings, but that's not the case with me. Well... to be honest... I can't say we are always laughing with each other and things like that but... she does have a good sense of humour. One thing that is quite interesting to me is how we can convey what is going on in our minds by the way we look. Well I'm not sure if she understands it too... I hope I'm not too predictable (!) I think I can have an insight into her mind by her facial expressions. I always turn to her for advice on how to do my works or specially for book suggestions because she's really into books... and... she is often very friendly and patient. In a sense she's everything I want to be in future.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 9

Describe a film you have just watched.

You should mention:

What the title of the film was

What kind of film it was

Who played in it

What lesson you got from it.

The other day I had the chance to watch this movie called The Truman Show. I can't remember exactly when it was but couple of years ago when the movie was out in theatres... I mean in the United States and Europe... I remember it was tipped as a great movie so I was really keen on watching it. Jim Carrey stars in the movie, maybe you've heard his name because he is mostly known as a comedian. I think he deserves his reputation really but... well I can't say I'm a fan of him. Anyway... he played the role of a person who was chosen to be on TV screens round the clock! His 'show' started even before he was born. You know... when the baby is not yet born but you can see it in those black & white monitors in the hospital... That was the beginning of his show, The Truman Show. And he didn't know! He didn't know he's being watched by millions of people. Really amazing you know ... the way they had created a place for him to live ... a city in an island, identical to a real city with shops, people and everything! I strongly recommend it to you. I think the movie wanted to say... I mean what I got from it, that how important it is to be one's real self, living in a real world even if things are not always going to turn out the way we want them to... it's worth watching.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 10

Describe an invention that appeared before computer.

You should talk about:

What it was

How important it was

What disadvantages it had

How it affected the human community.

One invention that was introduced before computers were invented was Radio. I think in some ways it revolutionized means of communication that were available at the time and when it was mass-produced and it was affordable by all people it really brought something... let's say... interesting into lives. People would spend time together listening to radio programs... or people who were alone found a new companion. It also helped educating people a lot and managed to deliver information to different places and I think we can say it was the beginning of a new era. Still I think it had some disadvantages... but then again every new invention has its disadvantages you know... we see how people talk about internet addiction and disadvantages of the internet... well I can imagine at the time radio was introduced the same problems emerged. But anyway I think radio acted as stepping-stones for the age of technology and it brought people closer to each other and tried to make the world a better place to live.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 11

Describe your favourite day of the week.

Talk about:

How it is different from the other days

How you pass it

How the other members of your family think about it.

For me the favourite day of the week is definitely Thursday. I just love Thursdays. It's the beginning of the weekend and when I wake up I have the feeling that this is going to be an easy day and I'm not that busy and it seems like there's enough time for everything. Well it only seems to be like that because there's always work left undone for the weekend, you know I personally like Thursdays as we don't have a packed schedule like other days of the week. Usually there's work till noon and well honestly... it's not hard work at all. Maybe... I'm not sure but maybe I'm unconsciously thinking of Fridays that are public holiday and planning on what to do... where to go... whom to meet... these things. So Thursdays somehow pass easier with these thoughts. And also there's no early bedtime and no obligation to wake up early the day after. I usually stay up very late Thursday nights and well... enjoy the whole Friday morning in bed. I think everyone, I mean other members of family, also like Thursdays. By the way, I forgot to say that we eat lunch together, I mean the whole family, and enjoy talking about our problems, achievement, hopes and so on.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 12

Describe a teacher who has greatly influenced you in your education.

You should say:

Where and when you met him

What subject he taught

What was special about him

And explain why this person influenced you so much.

I think all my teachers whether at school or the university had great impacts on me. Whatever I know now is the outcome of their attempts, consideration and heed. However, a teacher who really had a great impression on me was my math teacher in the second grade of high school. He had a unique personality; he was well mannered, well dressed, punctual, articulate and well educated. Also, he had a special and good sense of humour, though he was very strict at times. All these characteristics made him a symbol in my life. Whenever we discuss the qualifications of a good teacher or professor I immediately remember him, you know... sometimes you can't explain why but some people have lasting impressions on you. Even one single sentence made by a person may be imprinted in your mind and that single remark may change your life. And one more point, he was always ready to listen to us about our problems of all kinds, he was a counsellor too. I think he worshiped his job otherwise he couldn't infuse that much love and spirit in his job. Teaching for him was not a profession but an obsession.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 13

Describe a TV program you like very much.

You should say:

When it is on

Why you like it

Whether the other members of your family like it or not

Well... er... to be honest, I seldom watch TV, because of its terrible programs. I prefer to read or spend time on searching through the net, but if I want to name a program which I admire so much I choose the serial speeches delivered by Dr. Elahi Ghomshei. We can watch it on Thursday evenings though I guess it is repeated once more on another day of the week. He is a good composition of human sciences. He knows art, music, literature and religions. He is very articulate and poetry is the spice of his lecture. People from all ages and from all social groups watch it and enjoy it, maybe everyone just gets a portion of the message but I haven't seen anyone not liking this program. He uses lots of puns, I mean play on words, in his language. As I said almost all people enjoy that in spite of the fact that he sometimes repeats the same issues in different sessions, my family members are not exceptions, they adore it. I have a feeling that his love for his ideas and attitudes gives flavour to his speeches and that's why people are so impressed with them.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 14

Describe a dream that you have had.

You should mention:

When you had it

What it was about

What you usually dream of when you sleep.

Well, usually I don't remember my dreams, unless they are either so important or they happen right before waking up, and you may wonder but sometimes my dreams come true. Anyway, a couple of nights ago I dreamed of being stolen by aliens, I was jogging in the park near our house in the early morning. Suddenly a bright light appeared over me and I was sucked up into the UFO and then I underwent a lot of strange tests, you see... I remember that the aliens had very different appearances and figures, quite opposite to what we see on films about aliens. As I said, I don't dream very often or maybe I don't retrieve them later, but if I do that is usually about very strange things. My dreams are sometimes exchanged as jokes in the family. However, I usually dream when I'm awake and fully conscious. I dream of a world at peace. A world in which all races are equal where people are not litigated or persecuted for their opinions and ideals.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 15

Talk about a photograph that affected your life.

You should mention:

When you saw it

What it was about

How it affected your life.

You know nearly everybody in the world has a goal for himself. Having a goal certainly affects one's manner, life and even his understanding. I was a very lazy student at the first grade of high school. I didn't use to study at all. I continued this way of studying till I saw a very nice, beautiful and meaningful picture. In the photograph, there was a classroom, a teacher and some students. The teacher was teaching and the students were listening... There was also a beggar, a very poor boy, behind the door watching the class. He was wearing dirty and worn out clothes. He had a dirty face, unkempt hair and torn shoes. I could read his lips; I imagined that he was wishing to be a student. That single picture changed my life. To be honest, I felt ashamed since I had almost everything, yet didn't study well. They say, "a picture is worth a thousand words". Pictures can be much more powerful than words.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 16

Describe a typical workday of your life.

Talk about:

When you start it

How you get to work

What you specifically do

Whether you like to have a different job or not.

If you want to be alive and live happily you must have income, no difference whether you have a white collar job or a blue collar job. You should earn a living. Anyway, I'm an English teacher and at the same time I'm continuing my studies. I wake up early in the morning, I take a shower and say my prayers then I go to the study room and review or preview something, usually the lessons I'm going to teach or the ones I need for my university classes. Then I go to work by bus, you see I've got a car but I prefer to use public transportation, you now the streets are so busy and whenever I take my own car I feel exhausted when I get to work. I usually work till noon and then I have my lunch either at home or in a fast food restaurant. After that I go home and take a short nap, I think it restores your energy, then I go to desk again and start doing my assignments, preparing quizzes for my classes and checking my emails. Then I stop work at about 5:00 pm and go for some refreshment.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 17

Describe a recent party that you liked very much.

You should mention:

Where and when it was

Who were the participants

What was special about it

And explain why it was so attractive to you.

Ok, it was a week ago, it was my niece's birthday party. The family members, relatives, neighbours and some of her friends were among the guests. The special thing about the party was that the guests were from almost all age groups, at least you could see three generations there, the grand parents, parents and children. What was very interesting to me was the topics they used, while speaking together, the elderly were talking about past experiences and how beautiful the world was when they were young and you know... they live more in the past. The middle aged ones were discussing inflation, politics, election and similar stuff, though women were mainly involved with shopping malls, sales and TV serials. Children were busy with presents and then they started nagging about heavy assignments and all that. The very exciting point about this party was the language of different generations and their interests. I really enjoy paying attention to topics of communication in social gatherings and parties.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 18

Talk about your favourite festival.

You should talk about:

When it is held

Whether it is national or international

How it is celebrated

Why you like it so much.

Well... if you ask me, I say the Iranian New Year Festival is the most interesting one in the whole world. It starts every year at the beginning of spring, though it starts informally a few days before that, when people go shopping and clean their houses to welcome the new year. It is to some extent international since it is celebrated in other countries too, especially those around Iran. Moreover, it is accepted by the UN as an international festival. On the eve of the New Year or the next day, the younger members of the family visit the elderly and exchange gifts and presents. Usually they have a formal dinner or lunch together and express the best wishes for each other for the coming year. I like it so much because people are happy and children are delighted. It wipes out the enmity and brings joy and friendship to all. The last day of the ceremony, that is the 13<sup>th</sup> of the New Year people go to the country to respect nature and to remove evil fate from their lives. I strongly recommend you to attend the ceremony in an Iranian family this year, I'm sure you enjoy it a lot.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 19

Describe the process of getting a driver's license in your country.

You should talk about:

At what age you are qualified to get it

How you get ready for that

What organization is the sponsor

What other qualifications you should have.

One should be 18 and older to apply for driver's license. First of all we should practice enough in one of the driving centres that are authorized by the Traffic and Driving Organization. We should practice driving under supervision for about 50 hours or so, later we should pass a written test on traffic rules and regulations. However, this is not enough. We have to pass an optical test, if we need eyeglasses we should provide them before the practical driving test, and then we have to take the driving test, and pass it successfully. Eventually we are granted the license. You know... In the past it wasn't that difficult but because of so many accidents and the large number of irresponsible drivers, the Organization has decided to take it seriously, and it is really what we need. Laxity and negligence can't be tolerated any more. I think mental maturity should be tested too.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 20

Describe your favourite time of day.

Try to talk about:

Why you like it

How it is different from the other times

What you specifically do during that.

Ok, it isn't an easy question; this is the first time I'm thinking about that. The most favourable time of day for me is evening. After a light dinner and a cup of tea, I go to the study room and join the Internet. First, I check my email and if there is a new message, I reply that and if I need to send an email, I do it. Then I enter my favourite web sites, Yahoo and Google. I like this time of the day since it is quite and peaceful, everybody is asleep and I can concentrate well. Of course, this is a personal choice, not all people like this time. I do different tasks. Sometimes I need to download something, or I may go to some News Services, mainly BBC and VOA. I learn about the latest news and events and I may also join my favourite Yahoo! Groups and exchange some messages. You know... it is an ocean of information, sometimes I get lost in it. However, I have some time limit for that, about 2 hours since it may cause addiction.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 21

Describe the differences between a camera and a video recorder.

Try to include:

How they are different

The advantages of each

Which one you like more.

Camera is an instrument which was invented before video recorder and the former is more prevalent and the latter is less customary and more expensive, of course we are talking about ordinary cameras and not very sophisticated ones. Some people are more interested in photographs; they say they are more artistic. But the certain privilege of camera is that you can carry a photograph in your wallet and purse or you may hang it anywhere. Films made by video recorders have their own advantages; you may want to record a ceremony or a wedding party or the voice and picture of a beloved one who is about to die. I like cameras more, as I said the artistic feature of them impresses me a lot. I carry my camera everywhere and I prefer to see my photographs rather than the films. You see... When you see a picture, you can talk about it with friends and relatives. The fact that you can carry a photograph and hang it anywhere you want is a very important privilege that makes it unique, accordingly I believe that camera can never be replaced by video recorder.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 22

Talk about your favourite actor or actress

Try to include:

What his or her best work is

What he or she looks like

Why you like him or her.

My favourite actor is Ezatolah Entezami, an Iranian actor. He has starred in many famous movies produced in Iran. To me, his best work was *Kamalolmolk*, the eminent Iranian painter. He is around sixty, heavily built, with a harsh and manly voice and grey hair. More important than anything else is his excellent sense of humour. I like him since he acts brilliantly and when you see him playing perfectly in all roles, you think that he's born for this job. I think he feels his roles by heart, his action is not superficial or fake. I heard from a film producer, whose name I don't remember now, that he plays only once and the directors are satisfied by his performance. Also he is very benevolent and contributes to different charities. I remember last year when we had an earthquake, he organized a charity walk in the market and he collected a large amount of money for the earth-quake stricken people, he's loved by people as a real human too.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 23

Are you saving money to buy something?

You should talk about:

What you are planning to buy

How much it will cost

How much longer you will need to save before you can buy it.

Well... e... I think nowadays everybody is setting aside some money for future to buy one or a couple of things. I am saving money to buy a better car, I mean I've got a car now, but I'm not so satisfied about it; it's a bit old and the maintenance is very high and it sometimes breaks down unexpectedly. The one I want to buy costs about 11 million Tomans. Of course, I can buy a cheaper one but I want to buy a car that is quite durable. I want a car, which can meet my needs for at least 5 years. I have started thinking about it some months ago and I have collected some money but still I need some more. I guess I have to economize my expenses for about one more year. During this period I have to stop squandering money on unnecessary goods though saving money these days with the rate of inflation we have isn't so easy. I hope I manage to put aside that much.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 24

Talk about a person from childhood whom you particularly admired.

You should mention:

Your relation to him or her

What he or she did

What you admired about this person.

(In this part and similar topics where people's names are to be mentioned, you can use the name you like, it can be a he or a she but be careful about the pronouns if you change the gender)

A person I really used to admire when I was a school student was the sports teacher – Mr. Popov. I think I admired him because he was a sort of hero to us all and also because he was very tall. He'd been an Olympic athlete in the Atlanta Olympics in 1996. As far as I remember, he was in the national water polo team - though I don't think he ever actually won a medal or anything like that. But for us just the fact that he'd been in the team, you know... representing our country ... was enough to consider him a hero. In fact, he was a good teacher and he always encouraged us to do our best in sport, even if we weren't very good at it. He used to say 'It doesn't matter if you win or not. The important thing is to do your best.' He also taught us a lot about... health... about staying healthy. Compared to the other teachers, he seemed to be more... more interested in us, though perhaps it's easier to admire an Olympic champion than... say... math teacher! Anyway, we all liked Mr. Popov.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 25

Describe a book you have just read.

You should mention:

What the title of the book was

Who was the writer

What the theme of the book was.

Recently I read Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain, of course the full title is The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. The story is about a white child, Huck, and other characters but I liked Jim more than other characters. He's a black slave and has a very good relationship with Huck. I suppose Twain in his work was trying to object to racism. Here Huck is the symbol of white race and Jim is the symbol of Negroes and the Mississippi River is the symbol of life or history. Whenever Jim and Huck are on the raft (or boat) on the river, they are very honest to each other, but when they go to the riverbank and meet other people, they are cheated and deceived. I think Twain depicted Utopia (the ideal city) on that boat where people of all races are equal and they aren't judged by their colour. In one of the episodes they are pursuing Jim because he's a runaway or escapee, but Huck is very worried and he says "they are chasing us" and not you. In my opinion, this is the masterpiece of Twain's works. No wonder that Hemingway believes that Huckleberry Finn is the basis of western novel writing.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 26

Describe a TV commercial you dislike.

You should mention:

What it is about

What is shown in that

Why you don't like it.

I really hate the commercials about junk foods, I mean the foods which are high in calories and low in nutritional value. Actually, I may like the clips but I don't like the contents since they destroy the nutritional habits of people and specially children. Children are the main consumers of these snack foods. You know... things such as chips and cornflakes and pop corns. In theses clips children are tempted to buy and consume more and more and this is done by different tricks. When I say they destroy their dietary habits, I mean that they don't enjoy eating real food after having the stuff like those. Also, they are very salty and they use a lot of chemical additives in producing them since they want to conserve them for a long time. In many cases prizes are offered for more and more consumption and I think this should really be banned. Parents shouldn't let the children replace good foods with junk foods, it is really harmful. This causes a lot of problems such as heart problems in later life. Nowadays we see high blood pressure even in young children. This is a disaster, I guess.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 27

Describe one of your neighbours.

Your answer should contain:

How long you know him or her

How often you see him or her

What he or she does.

My next-door neighbour is a real friend of mine. I know him for about five years. Actually, I got to know him since we moved to my present flat. He helped us on that day very much and right there I understood that he's gonna be one of my best friends. I see him almost every day when I get back home from work or I go shopping. We get together for some hours in the evening and we chat about almost every thing. He's always ready to help. Besides, he is a real benefactor. Those who work under him love him so much because he's very sympathetic to them. He treats them as his own relatives. He is a civil engineer and he makes buildings and bridges; he loves his job and this is something I admire about him very much. He always talks about the projects and the problems and I see his eyes glitter at the prospects of his job. To be honest, I learn a lot from him. He is both a real friend and a perfect neighbour. We have an Iranian expression, which says "a good neighbour is better than one's relatives".

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 28

Describe your favourite vacation.

You should talk about:

When you take it

What ceremonies it has

How old it is

Why it is very interesting to you.

My favourite vacation is the New Year vacation that starts with the advent of spring; I usually take a vacation from the first day till the end of the 13th day. The ceremonies begin some days before the New Year Eve and continue till the end of the 13th day, the Day of Nature. During the period people pay visits to each other and greet and salute each other and exchange gifts. We usually take a vacation to the north for some days, but we try to be in Tehran for the last day when we go out of the city all together, I mean the whole extended family. The whole festival is about 2500 years old; it goes back to the ancient Iranian dynasties. From that time onward this celebration has recurred annually and it has never stopped, even for a single year, even during devastating wars and disasters as if it had been infixed in the minds of people. It is extremely attractive and stimulating to me due to its vividness, it evokes bright and colourful images in my mind whenever I remember that. People are happy, children are playing around joyfully and even the objects can feel the freshness, I mean the clothes are new and the houses and furniture are clean, sparkling and immaculate. In my viewpoint, it contributes to the psychological health of the society. I mean it fuels the people for the next whole year.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 29

Describe a serious social problem in your country.

Try to include:

What it is

How it affects your society

What solutions you have in mind for that.

Well... e... as far as I'm concerned, the most important social problem in my country is addiction. It has afflicted people from all age groups, specially the youth. It has a lot of side effects in the society; it has led to a boom in the number divorces. It results in unemployment and unemployment gives rise to plenty of delinquencies (wrongdoings). In my language, Persian, it is called the father of all crimes. Addicts form the largest proportion of prisoners and this leads to many divergent mental illnesses. It even adversely affects the next generation. The children of divorce, as we call them in our country, are the main victims and a large number of them are destined to become future addicts and outlaws (criminals or wrong doers). The solution is easy to name but difficult to practice. I strongly believe that education and social welfare are the key factors; I don't exclude other factors but these two are the crucial ones, and they are the ones which are most ignored in my country. I think tomorrow will be too late, the government and the people should start doing something about that right now. Time is our enemy.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 30

Talk about a volunteer activity you have done in your life.

Talk about:

What and when it was

How you felt about it

How your parents or other family members thought about that.

Um... If I remember well, I was in the second grade of high school when we were offered a voluntary activity by the dean of school. We were supposed to help the residents of a nursing home in our neighbourhood. The residents were the elderly and the chronically ill. At first we took it as a fun, you know we were looking for a variety, but things may not appear as you expect. After putting out the trash bins and emptying the pool, we were invited by the dean of the nursing home to meet the elderly and the chronically ill and talk to them. This part of the activity was extraordinary; we enjoyed listening to their memories. They advised us on life and its difficulties, on the virtue of honesty and on the importance of education. Their recommendations were very valuable to every one of us, still I remember them and apply them in my career. When I reported the experience to my family, everybody admired that and they were very eager to know about those guys and finally I recommended them to go and visit them.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 31

Talk about your favourite season.

You should talk about:

How it is different from other seasons

Why you like it

What entertainments you have during it.

This is a very difficult question since every season has its own privileges; it's very hard to select one as your choice, but generally speaking summer is my favourite season. I adore it for several reasons. First of all, it is different from all other seasons in that the days are very long and we can enjoy the sunshine more. Summer is the season of cultivation when farmers work on the fields and I really take pleasure in watching the scene. All kinds of fruits are at hand and I take my longest vacation during summer. I usually take a trip to the north of Iran and enjoy the sea. Swimming is my favourite sport and I'm mad about swimming outdoors and this season provides the chance for me. It is also the best time for long walks in the country with or without friends. The most popular entertainment in this season is swimming, though some people admire that for the vacations and others get pleasure from staying out late or spending time in entertainment parks.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 32

Describe the first job that you have done.

You should say:

How you got the job

What the job involved

How long the job lasted

Describe how well you did the job.

The first experience in every thing is something that lives with us forever. The first job isn't an exception. The first time I had a paid job was 10 years ago when I started teaching a number of students in our neighbourhood, I was a freshman studying English. I was supposed to help them in their final exam of English. They were five kids, two boys and three girls. I taught them for three months, one session a week. Two of them were very weak at English and the others were mediocre. I did my best since it was my first experience and I wanted to try to make an impression in others and show my talent. I made a lesson plan first and I ran the classes based on the plan. I gave them quizzes regularly and corrected their compositions. Both the parents and the children were almost satisfied and I earned some money. The money was very precious to me because it was the first wage. Finally, all of them could pass the test and appreciated my effort. That first job provoked me to continue teaching as my career, and still I'm doing it.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 33

Describe an enjoyable event that you experienced when you were at school

You should say:

When it happened

What was good about it

Why you particularly remember this event.

You know, some experiences are hard to forget, they are with you all through your life. When I was at primary school, I was a boy scout (a member of a worldwide organization of young men and boys, founded in England in 1908, for character development and citizenship training). I enjoyed that very much. It was a voluntary activity and many students were members of the organization. The terrific point about it was that it was so vivid and lively that the kids were crazy about it. They were not forced to join the activity. The good points that we learnt from that were many. We learnt to be responsible and to act in different roles, as directors and subordinates. It taught us to care about others because we made food for other student, of course free and we used to clean the schoolyard. We planned the extra curricular activities and the teachers supervised us very gently. Still I remember that since, as I said before, it was full of life, you know it was real. It was some how different from the drab jobs we used to do at school. Maybe you think I'm kidding, but I still chat about it with some of my ex-classmates.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 34

Describe a competition (or contest) that you have entered.

You should say:

When the competition took place

What you had to do

How well you did it

Describe how you felt about the competition.

When I was a freshman around 4 years ago, I took part in a novel-reading contest at university. There were about 50 students participating in the contest. We were to read a couple of novels; I think four books, for two weeks. The novels were: Madam Bovary, The Old Man and The Sea, Pride and Prejudice, and Gone with the Wind. I failed the competition, I mean I was the sixth in the final list and only the first three guys were awarded. I should confess that I got a bit disappointed at first but later I thought about the benefits I gained. I mean I could read four good novels that were from among the best works of the world of literature. You see, in my opinion, mere participation in a competition or rivalry is an achievement in itself since in a competition you develop your self-confidence and self-esteem. You learn to be an unselfish winner and a patient loser. As a matter of fact, you gain knowledge of you weak points and strong points. Last but not least, taking part in the competition adds variety to your life.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 35

Describe a museum or art gallery that you have visited.

You should say:

Where it is

Why you went there

What you particularly remember about the place.

The museum I liked very much was Museum of Money in Tehran. It is located right above Vanak square. I visited there just by chance, actually I was waiting for a friend and he called me, I mean by mobile, to tell that he would be late for an hour. I looked around and incidentally I found the museum. At the gate there was an old car belonging to one of our kings, I guess it was the first car imported to Iran. In the main hall you could see old coins, bills and bank drafts dating back, to hundreds or even thousands of years ago. Some of them were illegible with naked eyes, of course there were printed notes under the items. In another saloon, you could visit old clothes and garments belonging to royal families and ordinary people. In another you could get pleasure from watching old carpets and rugs. Some of them were worn out, but this couldn't hide the value of the artifacts. I strongly recommend you to visit there, you won't waste your time.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 36

Describe your favourite Web site.

You should talk about:

Why you like it

How it is different from other Web sites

What you usually search for in it.

The web site that I am passionate about is Yahoo. I like it so much possibly because it was the first site that I was introduced to by my math teacher and first experiences may leave lifetime impacts in your mind, but apart from that the site has many advantages, at least as far as my knowledge about websites helps. It has the most commonplace and popular email service, nowadays everyone has a Yahoo ID, and of course hotmail is also very prevalent. The second positive point about that is Yahoo! Groups. Millions of people are connected to different Yahoo groups. This is a great boon to the world that is desperately in need of communication among civilizations and cultures. I usually search for the news and reliable news agencies. Another very useful usage of this site for me is that it provides the best resources for language learning and practice tests, though this is surely accessible through other sites, but I prefer this site since it is very user friendly and fast. It's also the most widespread site among my classmates and relatives.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 37

Talk about your favourite athlete.

Try to include:

Who he or she is

What his or her field of sport is

Whether he or she has broken a record. If yes, what and when

What his or her other good features are.

My favourite sportsman is Mr. RezaZade, the famous wrestler. He got a gold medal for wrestling, I mean he was the champion of the world in his field in the year 2002. Of course, he has been awarded several other times in national and international sports events. Moreover, he won a very important medal for sportsmanship that is, he had the characteristics of a real sportsman. You know, in my view point, being skilful in a field is not the whole issue having sportsmanlike behaviour is somewhat more important. In addition to his professional privileges, he enjoys good family relations and he takes pride in that. He is famous in his own city for his honesty and truthfulness. People love him not just because of his achievements, but also for his pleasant personality. For example, he doesn't like to show off, he seldom appears on TV and if he does he never tries to make an impression in others, he speaks and acts very naturally. High levels of expertise and adroitness may not be so difficult to achieve, but high standards of humanity are not readily attainable.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 38

Describe a critical environmental problem in your country.

Try to include:

What it is

How it affects your society

What solutions you have in mind for that.

I think the most hazardous environmental problem here is air pollution. It is having a large number of victims each year. It is one of the principal causes of many heart diseases. Many babies are born premature or with serious mental or physical defects (problems) and it is regarded as one of the causes of psychological problems, problems such as stress, depression and anxiety. That is why they are very prevalent in large cities and very rare in urban areas. Various solutions have been proposed by the scholars in the field, but as usual they are hard to carry out, I mean they need a vigorous management. Old cars should be replaced by new ones, public transportation should be extended and popularised, regular check up for cars have to be mandatory and a lot more, but as I said it isn't difficult to list the solutions the critical point is to find ways and methods to carry them out. The last point which I like to raise is that people should not put all the responsibility on the government they have to be active participants. They should start campaigns; they should open NGOs (Non Governmental Organizations). I mean every body must play some role in this regard.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 39

Describe one of your cousins whom you admire very much.

You should mention:

Your relationship to him or her

How he or she looks

What he or she is like.

You see, there are a couple of people who I admire very much in my rather extended family, but the one who I think highly of is my first cousin. I mean my uncle's son. He's my father's nephew. He looks rather tall, with white hair, dark eyes, healthy body at age 50, and he is a very tough man. He doesn't wear glasses and he wakes up at 5:00 o'clock in the morning and exercises for about half an hour. The interesting point about him is that he doesn't use an alarm clock to wake him up; he has a biological clock that never loses time. About his personality I should say that he has worked hard all his life in the army and his heavily built body indicates that. He usually goes to his doctor but not for treatment but for a friendly chat since they are old friends. He is very strict and appreciates discipline very much. Moreover, he adores his family, he still remembers and talks about his wife who passed away ten years ago. He hates films and serials and loves only documentaries.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*

## Item 40

Please talk about the effect of technology in your school.

You should mention:

What kind of technology it is

When it appeared in your school

Whether it can replace human teachers.

Well, you know... er... about two years ago we started using computers in our school and some teachers assigned some homework that had to be done by means of computer. For example, our English teacher asked us to find some reading and listening passages and texts in the Internet and share them with others. Our math teacher encouraged us to search for sites related to math problems. About the third question I think technology can never replace human teachers, at least at lower levels of education. Teaching isn't just sending and receiving messages. It goes much further. Teaching includes human relationship. The way a teacher looks, smiles or frowns at a student influences the process of learning. There are many people who chose to be a teacher just because they loved their teacher or they followed a career since their teacher recommended that. Nowadays they say computers are starting to have emotion and feeling, but I think they can never act like a human being. You may become very excited when you see your primary school teacher after twenty years, but it never happens that a person gets excited when visiting his or her old useless computer in the attic, or basement of his house. Of course technology is progressing so fast that we can't imagine what comes to the market in future. Maybe cloning gives us some new unprecedented outlooks.

*Write your reply here and then check it with your classmate or teacher.*