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IELTS Speaking & Vocabulary

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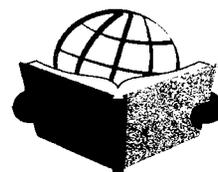
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IELTS SPEAKING GUIDE

Audioscript

Chapter 1

Understanding the Test

L1 Listen to a candidate talking about the IELTS test

1. Fill in the gaps as you listen to answer Questions 1-6. What is different about the 3 parts of the test? How many expressions with 'end' do you hear?

Although I'd practised for hours on end, I was still quite nervous before my speaking test because I didn't know what to expect. In the end it was really not as bad as I thought it would be. In Parts 1 and 2 the topics were much more personal and I mostly spoke about myself, my family, friends and experiences I'd had. I did notice the test changed in Part 3; the questions seemed more formal to me and I had to speak more about local/global and local/global issues. I suppose at the end of the day it was like any interview, I had to listen carefully to the questions and make sure my answers were clear.

Chapter 2

2 L2 Listen to three candidates answering Part 1 questions below. Which responses logically answer the questions (A) and which ones go off-topic (O)? Write an A or O next to each speaker.

Speaker 1: Q 1 Was it difficult to get accepted on this course?

Um in some parts you just getting so much difficulty, because you're just dealing with the Mathematics..it was so hard...you know, just er solving all the problems, and you should thinking about it was so hard, but totally it was not so hard you know. It was easy-peasy...

Q 2 Will you have to study more before you start working?

I think I shouldn't go to the factory or some operation work you know, just to get used to the work, get used to it, I can solve a lotta things, then I can do things much more better.

Speaker 2: Q 1 Was it difficult to get accepted on this course?

Um..getting to university is a little bit hard in my country. There's er.. so much competition and we have to go through an entrance exam, but ultimately it was fine. I could get through...and um...yes it all worked out for me in the end.

Q 2 Will you have to study more before you start working?

Yes, I have to gain some experience if I want to work, um because what we learn in the university is a little bit impractical and theoretical you know. We have to - gain some experience by working in factories and places like that.

Speaker 3: Q 1 Was it difficult to get accepted on this course? Um..I think it's a little easy to...get a course in university.

Q 2 Will you have to study more before you start working? No, unfortunately I don't have any course.

Chapter 2

Explaining your likes and dislikes

1 L3 Listen to 2 candidates answering the Part 1 question below. Make notes in the table as you listen.

- Do you like keeping flowers in your house?

Speaker 1: If I'm honest, I don't care that much for flowers. My wife is the one who usually buys them...of course I buy them for her birthday and our wedding anniversary, but apart from that, I don't pay much attention to them if they're in our home and I certainly wouldn't buy them unless I had to. Flowers are really not the be- all and end -all of my life. If they're there, then they're there, but really, I could quite happily live without them.

Speaker 2: Absolutely, I can't imagine my life without them. I try and have fresh flowers in the house each week just because to me, they are incredibly beautiful and they have such a good smell. I also love the vibrant colours- the reds, the pinks, the yellows. When you look at a bunch of flowers, you can't help but feel happy...(laughs)... Well that's what happens to me anyway!

Chapter 3

2 L4 Listen to a candidate answering the following Part 2 topic card and answer the questions.

- I'd like you to describe a vehicle you would like to own.

Yes, I would like one day to have a kind of vehicle...I don't know what's the name...it's a type of imaginary vehicle and I've had it in my mind about the past ten years or more...I'm an architect so designer is part of my life...It's a kind of chair you sit on it and you can fly with it... it just sits one person...and er...er...I hope someday... it will be invented and we can use it...very ... (mumble something)...I haven't seen this up to now...but if I was an engineer I would work on this issue and maybe I could invent a kind of private vehicle...a one-person vehicle... maybe a kind of armchair... very relaxed and sit on it ...Of course it's not available right now...so it's not easy to have this vehicle, but I think it's possible and someday it will be available...of course with this kind of traffic and...er.. so many problems we have on the streets with the cars...so we need something like this to use the air and...er... not the streets.

Chapter 3

1 L5 Look at the words below. Fill in the gaps to make the words then put them in the correct place in the table according to their final consonant sound. Listen and check your answers.

/s/	/z/	/d/	/k/	/n/	/l/
importance	changes	moved	public	solution	essential
targets	policies	household	electronic	insane	futile
convenience	recycles			explain	fundamental
	propose				sociable
	knows				multiple
					bicycle

Chapter 3

2 L6 Read the following Part 2 topic card and the candidate's answer. Practise reading it aloud and make sure the final consonants in the underlined words are pronounced. Add any new words to the table above. You can listen to the candidate's answer on the Audio CD.

– I'd like you to describe a conversation you had recently that changed your way of Thinking

I remember one conversation in particular that changed my whole way of thinking about teaching children. It was a seminar I attended on the importance of teaching reading at kindergarten level. I spoke to a professor afterwards who said he thought it was essential children were taught to read as early as possible. He moved on to say that teachers should not be frightened of using electronic books. At first I thought this sounded insane, but then he said that children were extremely social at this age and enjoyed working together. Sometimes trying to force them to read books was futile. An easy solution was to allow them to use computers and he said every primary school teacher today knows the convenience of using these in the class. I liked his suggestion that a long-term solution required an expansion in the e-book market. He finished by explaining that the government needs to start making changes in education policies. I think a fundamental problem is that we don't talk enough to each other today, so changes are difficult to make.

Chapter 4

1 L7 Listen to a candidate answering the following Part 3 question and answer the questions.

- Do you think the telephone is a popular form of communication?

...yes...er...as you know we live in an... information age and the communication is...er we think people is so fast...and there are so many... things that...er...speed up your ...communicate...communicating with other people like...er... internet, like the phones, like so many things. But phone is...I think phone is more popular.. between them..because..er...the other people cannot use the internet for communicating and they...er... they prefer to use the phones for communicate with other people...er like emails and... er.. writing...er writing...er mail...they prefer to use phones and in my country... they use it a lot because..er especially women would like to use it...yes.. I think women like to use it the most.

2 L8 Read a candidate's answer to the following Part 3 question and divide the sentences into logical chunks.

Listen and check your answer.

- Do men and women like to read different types of books?

Yes, I think / it's in this way / because the nature of women and men are very different / so I think / they choose different subjects / and they have different tastes in reading. / Yes for example I think /women are very interested in reading novels that are based on / love and affection. / On the other hand I think men are very interested to / read books for example the adventures/and for example/ stories that are based on the travel of the person / I mean biography for example/ and things like that.

3 L9 Listen to the candidate's answer again and answer the following questions.

1 L10 Listen to a candidate answering the following Part 3 question and answer the questions.

- Should boys and girls be given the same toys to play with?

Speaker 1: Well yeah...I think they should really because they can play with toys just to have... fun and therefore if they just have.... any toy they can have fun. It's about their imagination really I suppose.... They...they can use anything as long as they have an imagination, it could be for girls or boys as..as you know they have fun and use their imagination and have fun.

2 L11 Now listen to another candidate answering the same question.

- Should boys and girls be given the same toys to play with?

Speaker 2: Yeah absolutely...yeah of course they should. Er..I think parents should make sure that all children have the opportunity at least to yeah...the boys can play with the dolls or the...the girls could play with the guns and the cars and things like that. But, I think what most parents will find is that the boys will go for the cars and the guns. And the girls are going to end up going for the dolls because there is so much pressure from society and so much influence from society... So yes, they should get-have the option of those toys, but I don't think they should be surprised if their kids go for the traditional gender-based toys.

1 L12 Listen to a candidate answering the question from the box above. Fill in the gaps as you listen.

- Do you think travelling will still be necessary in the future?

Well, I think there is every chance that people will still need to travel in the future, especially people like business men and politicians. Of course, video-conferencing will most probably mean that lots of meetings can be done from the office. Having said that, I'm totally convinced that no future developments in technology will ever take away people's need to see new places first-hand and meet people face-to-face. The other thing is that families are also much further apart geographically today than they used to be. Different family members live and work abroad and I think this trend will most likely continue in the future, which means people will have to travel to go and visit their families.

5 L13 Listen to a candidate talking about his future study plans. What expressions does he use? Write Y for Yes or N for No for Questions 1-8

Talking about future plans

Well, next year I intend to start Business studies course at college here in London. The course is two years so I hope it will help me to get a good job after I graduate. That's the main purpose in fact. But also, I hope to develop contacts in International Business and English is a big part of the course so that's another benefit.

Chapter 5

8 L14 Listen to a candidate answering the following Part 1 question and answer the questions.

- Do you like the place where you're living at the moment?

No. It is located in very boring..no fun place. Not near beach enough. Too older people. No cafes. Personally I believe, as time passes, er... locating in beach more better. And in my opinion, it is very fun in beach.

2 L15 Listen to a candidate talking about films and answer the following questions.

I'm now going to ask you some questions about you. Let's talk about films.

How often do you watch films?

I don't actually watch films very often. Most of the films that I like to watch are independent films, but I would say that I watch films...er maybe one film a month.

Do you prefer to watch films on video or in a cinema?

Most definitely I like to watch movies at the cinema more. I think most people watch films ...er on video because it's a lot easier to watch them in the comfort of your own home. But for me the cinema is the way to go...because of the sound...just the whole atmosphere. You can have popcorn, coke and the cinema is just much better for me to watch a film.

Do you think parents should control the kind of films their children watch?

Yes, I definitely think this needs to be done. Um I think it's very important for it to be the parents decision and not just rely on the ratings that they give the films nowadays, but for the parents to know exactly what the film is about. Because it might have to do with their morals or their beliefs and so... I think it's the parent's responsibility to be sure that their children are watching something that would fit with the beliefs and morals that they are trying to instill in their children.

4 L16 Listen to a candidate talking about a song he enjoys listening to. Answer the following questions:

I'd like you to speak about this topic for 1 to 2 minutes. First you have time to make notes and think about what you're going to say.

I want you to describe a song that you enjoy listening to.

You may now start speaking. I will tell you when the time is up.

I guess **one** of the many songs that I like to listen to is a song called 'Thunder Road' ...er...it's a rock and roll song by an artist from America named Bruce Springsteen. I enjoy listening to this song, especially when I'm driving. Er...it's kind of got one of those beats that you like to listen to when you're driving/ Um...it's got a good rock and roll feel to it...it's a guitar song. It's really the type of music that I like to listen to. And one of the reasons I like the song as I said before...the guitars.

It's a rock-and-roll beat to the song, but it's also a... you know, it's a coming-of-age song. It's about young love. It reminds me of my working-class upbringing. It's about cars and the highway and young peoples' dreams. I think most people enjoy music for pretty much the same reasons as I do. Because music or songs usually tell a story or they inspire people or sometimes they bring back memories... or bring up dreams that you once had or dreams that you might still have. And I think that's very important to people. It kind of lightens the load....And it's...it's what music is all about, as far as I'm concerned.

5 L17 Read part of the candidate's answer and divide the sentences into logical chunks. Underline the main words that are stressed. Listen and check your answer.

And one of the reasons I like this song / is as I said before.../the guitars. / It has a rock-and-roll beat to the song, /but it also has a... /you know, /it's a coming-of-age song./ It's about young love./ It reminds me of my working-class upbringing./ It's about cars /and the highway/ and young peoples' dreams/. I think most people enjoy music /for pretty much the same reasons as I do./ Because music or songs / usually tell a story / or they inspire people / or sometimes they bring back memories /... or bring up dreams that you once had /or dreams that you might still have./ And I think that's very important / to people./ It kind of lightens the load./....And it's...it's what music is all about /, as far as I'm concerned./

The main stress is mostly on nouns. These nouns carry the focus or ideas of the speaker.

6 L18 Listen to a candidate answering a Part 3 question on music.

Now I'd like you to ask you a few general questions about the topic you've just been speaking about. Do people in your country prefer to listen to local or international music?

Without a doubt I believe that people in my country prefer local music over international music. One of the reasons is many people play music here. Also live music is...er..easily available- I mean there's a lot of live music playing anytime you want to see it. We have many different cultures so we do listen to different types, but it's all from our region, for the most part. And we do listen to international music, but I think by far we prefer local music.

Chapter 6

3 L19 Listen to the following candidate answering the Part 2 topic below. Match the mistakes to the advice given in exercise 1.

I would like you to describe a famous sports person who is not from your country who you really admire.

Right I'd like to talk about er...about when I used to play football 'cos ..um..you know ...um just when I was a child I'd just be always playing football with my friends. And um..we just really enjoyed it. We really had a good time. It was a good way to keep fit and..um.. all we needed was a football and we'd just find anywhere to play. And we'd just play all the time...and then you know we didn't even need goals, we just needed jumpers and we'd just play for hours and hours non-stop you know. And it was really good 'cos you know because we felt healthy, we weren't getting into any trouble and um..um..and we just played for hours. We'd be really muddy for example. And by the by we used to do this and that. But mainly we just played football. Um...um..Nowadays still play football as well. And yeah, I think it's a good way to spend your leisure time and you know...it's just..it's just something that I really enjoy doing ..you know with my friends. It's good to build for example team-spirit. Help each other out and things like that. I don't know..well..you know...it's um just good fun for everyone really..and yeah you know generally speaking, I personally believe, in my opinion um that football is good to be outside, ...er you know be outside in the weather, enjoy the weather with your friends and sometimes you know the weather is bad and um..stuff like that. And you get mud everywhere. And um..I remember in the past...um... I went home. My mum saw me and said - "Why you... why you full of mud?" I'd fallen over again playing football. You know and as time passes, it was fine...it was good fun and good exercise and good fun...and stuff like that. Football I just think is good...for people.

Chapter 7

L 20 2 Now listen to the practice test and make a note of any new expressions, idioms, collocations or sentence starters you hear.

L 20 3 Listen to the final two sections of Part 3 again and underline the key words that the speaker stresses.

TEST PRACTICE

PART 1

I'm now going to ask you some questions about yourself. Let's talk about week-ends. What did you do last week-end?

Well, let's see last week-end. Oh it was very exciting actually. Um..it was the beginning of the international rugby tournament, The Six Nations. Have you heard of that one? It's really good. It's got all the nations – England, Ireland, Wales, Scotland, Italy, France and um it's just such a good competition because it brings everyone together. Everyone goes to the pub and watch the game. It's kind of a battleground inside the pub and on the pitch for everybody... supporting your own-nation really.

Do you prefer to spend the week-ends with your family or friends?

I would say definitely my friends. Um you know you can't choose your family, but you can choose your friends can't you? So ..um..you just have more in common with your friends I suppose so I just think , hanging out with my friends is probably what I prefer to do.

What things do you like to do on the week-end?

Um well generally relax you know. We work hard enough during the week 9 to 5, Monday to Friday so generally go for walks, perhaps a Sunday lunch on Sunday clearly and yeah, relaxing, bit of a drinking-culture in England and so a few drinks with friends, something like that.

Now let's talk about mobiles or cell phones. How often do you use a mobile or cell phone?

Every day. It's become part of our staple diet hasn't it really? We use it all the time so several times a day easily.

Have you had any problems using a mobile or cell phone?

Um not so much using it. I've had problems with them. Mainly not getting reception, things like that. It's sometimes a problem, Dropping them into water has been a problem as well. It didn't work very well after that.

Do you think you will use a mobile phone or cell phone more or less in the future?

I would say it would have to be more. Um..the phone's progressing now, the i-phones and things like that. They're becoming... so important to people. They need it for Google maps and things like that...and getting around. People don't read maps anymore. They just use their GPS on their phone. Book tickets for the cinema It's going to be...you can't live without them basically. In the future it'll be even worse.

Now let's move on to talk about presents. Do you like receiving presents?

Who doesn't! Um..it's all about receiving presents. Giving, it's no good at all. The bigger the better of course. I'm still a child in that way. Um, I don't even read the card on the present. I just rip those open at Christmas and see what I've got.

Who was the last person you gave a present to?

Um..probably my mother and father for Christmas. Yep, I got them some books. They're retired at the moment so they're really into their reading so I got them a couple of books that they wanted.

Is it better to give someone money rather than buy them a present?

Um I think sometimes yeah. Instead of getting them something they don't want or they're just going to throw away. Some tacky bit of plastic that they don't really need or want. It's better to give them some money so they can buy what they actually want.

PART 2

Now I'm going to give you a topic and I'd like you to talk about it for 1 to 2 minutes. I'd like you to describe a business leader you respect and admire.

Well, there's actually quite a few ranging from Alan Sugar to Steve Jobs, the famous Apple guy to Anita Roddick who was the founder and owner of BodyShop which is...um still going to this day. It started off as a very small company and it grew enormously and expanded internationally in so many different countries. But the reason I admire this lady. She had such strong business ethics, ethos. All her products were not tested on animals and she was one of the first ladies who really..you know insisted upon this so therefore nothing at all was tested on animals. She was heavily-involved in fair trade. She did such a lot for the developing countries. All her products were natural..um she have a lot of work to the developing countries people. Even to the point at Christmas time, if products arrived late or the packaging was late..she would still insist on using it and waiting for it. She was an inspiration to many. In fact she made so much money. She was an international success. One very very rich lady, but she's admired because it wasn't about the money. I think that's the main point here.

Again..it's just her ethics, her business ethos, her help to the fair trade, the developing countries. She was globally successful, extremely rich and wealthy. She had outstanding morals and inspired women across the world to go for their dreams, to believe in something and to achieve success. People follow and still follow in her footsteps today. Her business ideals, her ethical beliefs and that is what is so great about this woman.**Thank you.**

PART 3

I'm now going to ask you some general questions about the topic you've just discussed. Let's talk about leaders.

What qualities make someone a good leader?

Well, a leader basically has to have that magical quality charisma. They've just... It's difficult to define, but basically it's something that makes other people want to follow them. They instinctively have a kind of trust in that person. Not easy to say why. I think we all recognize it when we see it, but people will be happy to put their life in that person's hands. Charisma, I think we call that quality.

Is there any difference between men and women as leaders?

No, I don't really think there is. Some people say maybe women are a bit more empathetic. Perhaps they're more keen to try and get in agreement with other people before they make a decision, maybe build a consensus. Possibly men are a bit more likely to work in a more risky way. Bit more cut and thrust, but ultimately I think the kind of qualities that make you want to be a leader are in some ways maybe quite masculine qualities anyway. I mean if you look at real examples from the world, political, business leaders who are women. ...I wouldn't say Margaret Thatcher... I wouldn't say there are particularly different qualities to them that make them different from male leaders. So no, I don't really think there is a difference.

Do leaders have a responsibility to behave in a certain way in public?

Um I don't really think they have a responsibility to behave in a certain way, but I think they should behave in a certain way. Um because they have an immense platform on which they can sort of spread influence and so on and so many people look up to these people especially you know business leaders and so on. They're heroes to so many people. They should try and consider their position when they make decisions and you know understand that they are a role model for others, but I don't... I don't really think they should feel too much pressure to do that.

Are people born leaders or is this something they learn how to become?

I think a lot of people would like to learn how to become leaders. Um I'm sure there's lots of people who do sort of business classes and things like that, wanting to be the next great business leader, but ultimately I think it is something you're born with unfortunately. You only have to look at a... a school playground, you'll see the natural leaders there riding around there from a very young age. Again it's difficult to see what it is that's making those people leaders, but I think you can inspire respect as you get older maybe by becoming an expert in a particular field, but whether that's the same as being a leader – I don't really think so I pretty much think it's something you're born with.

Thank you. That is the end of the speaking test.

T 20 3 Listen to the final two sections of Part 3 again and underline the key words that the speaker stresses.

Audioscript for Units: 2, 3, 6, 7

Unit 2 - Life in the 21st Century

(B): You will hear five extracts. Each extract relates to one of the items pictured above. Match the extracts to the pictures. Write the correct picture (i-v) in the space provided.

Extract 1:

Male: This basically replaced the home PC over the last ten years or so and most households now have one instead. One of the main advantages it has over the technology it replaced, is its portability; it is far lighter, smaller and tidier. That said, it will soon be out of date itself; another new machine, this one even smaller and more portable, known as the tablet, is slowly taking its place. At the moment, tablets aren't quite powerful enough, nor do they have enough storage, but soon the technology will be there to make them the preferred choice. The other thing preventing more people from buying tablets at the moment is the expense, but prices look set to fall over the coming years.

Extract 2:

Female: These will never go out of fashion; let's face it, there is something about the smell of the paper and the feel of it in your hands that people prefer. Sure, most literature is available online now, or by using portable digital readers, but it just isn't the same.

Extract 3:

Male: I don't think we'll need one of these anymore soon. A lot of young people use the internet to watch the films and programmes, so it isn't really that necessary these days. In the future, it'll probably be replaced by a big screen connected to the web instead. There'll be no need to have a satellite box to get your channels; just a wi-fi connection will do. That said, we shouldn't forget how massively important it was when it was first introduced. It changed the world and brought people images of places and things they would perhaps otherwise never have seen.

Extract 4:

Female: I doubt people will wear them very much in years to come; after all, we carry other technology around with us all the time that can perform the same functions. If people decide to keep them, it will be a fashion decision; maybe they look good, you know...

Extract 5:

Male: These are going to be around for a while; they are almost as complex as computers now, so it's like walking around carrying a little one in your pocket with you basically. The most attractive thing about them is the fact that they have so many uses beyond what they were

first made for. I mean, you can surf the net on the go with them, listen to music, play games, check your emails – almost anything you want. Funny thing though, isn't it; unlike most technology, they seem to be getting bigger again these days. I guess it's because people prefer to have a large touchscreen than the tiny little displays they used to have.

(E): Listen to the recording of a teenager talking about her life, and fill in the gaps in the transcript below using the words that you hear. Write no more than three words in each gap.

Female: I was really excited today when I heard the news my parents had; you'll never guess what; I'm going to Ireland on holiday!! Isn't that so cool? I mean, I've never been to another country before in my life and neither have any of my friends. And we're taking the ferry over from Pembroke port in Wales. It's a four-hour journey, I think. Can you believe it? The ferry! None of my friends have been on one of those yet either. I'm going to write a letter to my aunt in Dublin to tell her I'm coming over to see her. I wonder what she'll look like in person; I've only ever seen the photos of her she's sent in the post. We don't even get to talk that much really; well, every Sunday night on the telephone, but that's only for about five minutes – phone calls are so expensive, you know... Anyway, now we'll finally get to meet. I'm going to bring my camera and take as many shots as I can. I bought five rolls of film yesterday; my camera will be click, click, click!

Unit 3 - Art and Culture

(D): Listen carefully to the recording and decide whether each statement is true or false.

Examiner (female): Why are some art forms more popular than others, do you think?

Student (male): In my view, it's to do with how easy they are to understand and relate to. Take music, for example; this is an art form that enjoys wide appeal. I believe that is because the process of getting to the point where you enjoy the music, on a basic level, is fairly simple; you just listen to it - then it's easy enough to decide whether or not you like it. Other art forms, though, such as theatre, require a little more attention; sometimes the plot of a play can be hard to follow, or sometimes the language can be very complex; this demands a lot more of our attention and some people might not be prepared to put in the time in order to get to the point where they can understand and appreciate what's going on. Plus, there's also the money factor; theatre tickets can be rather expensive.

Examiner: 'Art is for the educated.' Do you agree with that statement?

Student: Yes and No. I think many kinds of art are associated with the so-called 'educated class'; you know, the academics, in one way or another. I mean, I think some people are under the mistaken impression that liking art sort of validates them as intellectuals. As a consequence, art gets talked about in very high-level language and you have these 'experts' who read all sorts of things into paintings and so on. But do you have to be super intelligent to appreciate art? Of course not! Art stimulates the visual senses and we can all decide for ourselves what we find appealing to look at, on whatever level that may be. The opinion of a person who just likes a painting because it looks nice is no less valid than some art critic who goes around finding hidden meanings and symbolism that the artist himself might not ever have intended.

Examiner: Which art forms do you think will be popular with the public in the future?

Student: Well, I cannot imagine that people will ever get tired of reading books, so I think literature is a certainty to be very popular. It's doubtful whether film will remain as popular as it is now though, if you ask me; specifically, I mean cinema; I think with large television screens getting more and more affordable, the trend will be towards home cinema rather than traditional film theatres, which will likely see a slump in attendance figures, and this will have an impact on the types and quality of films made. Similarly, I think theatre will operate in a small niche; already places like the West End price most people out of the equation anyway – theatre tickets are very expensive. I think in the future most people will look more and more towards the internet as a source of entertainment, so while I'm not ruling out virtual theatre, I don't see a big future for the traditional form. I feel quite certain that music will remain forever one of the most popular art forms, and dance is also attractive to people as a way to socialise and have fun – with the added bonus that it keeps us fit and healthy, too – so it probably has a bright future.

(E): Cover the questions below and listen to the recording. Once the recording is finished, look at the questions and answer them in your own words.

Examiner (male): What is the best way to encourage people to become interested in Art and get them to visit more art galleries and exhibition centres?

Student (female): To my way of thinking, you have to get people interested in art from a young age; that's the best strategy, so I would be in favour of there being more time and resources dedicated to both doing and learning about art at school. It's important to foster the idea in children that art is both fun and interesting, so let them play about and experiment and make their own works of art, but don't make it too competitive or critique what they create for goodness' sake; the point is that they enjoy it, not that they become the next Da Vinci. And when I say they should learn about art, I don't mean just from books; the experience has to be made interactive. After all, art is competing against all sorts of cool new technologies and resources on the internet for their attention, so the learning process must be fun if it is to stand any chance. When kids go to museums on school tours, don't just take them around and show them the pictures; organise for them to meet real artists, learn about how to paint, try it out for themselves, do workshops and so on...

(I): Listen to the recording. Which question (i-v) from section (H) is the student answering? How do you know?

Male: I think the benefits are fairly obvious; the way I see it, the more you are around people of different cultures, races and nationalities, the more tolerant you become of different ways of life. Tolerance is key to stamping out racism and discrimination. We must accept that people can lead different lifestyles and allow them, within reason, to do so. Another huge benefit is that prejudice is removed – somewhat, at least; the mere fact that in diverse areas people from different backgrounds have to intermingle means that they will grow to understand and appreciate each other and look on each other as people, rather than merely labels such as 'Asian' or 'White British'. This will help to remove

negative stereotypes as well. Not a social benefit in the same sense, but a huge one nonetheless is the effect diversity can have on our diets; I mean, take London for example; the choice you have when it comes to dining out is phenomenal – Thai, Chinese, Korean, Jamaican, African, British, Irish, Polish, Russian, Jewish ... the list goes on. And you also get fusion foods; blends of styles from different cultures; I mean, Britain's favourite dish is the curry! That's a fine example – Indians would barely recognise it in their home country because it's been 'Anglicised' so much, but isn't that lovely? A case of how one culture has incorporated something from another culture into its own.

Unit 6 - Education

(D). Listen to the recording and answer the questions in your own words based on the information that you hear. The recording will be played twice for you. [Play the recording twice.]

Male: A report released today claims that hikes in third-level fees are having a very divisive effect on society. The average yearly fees for a degree course now stand at over £6,000, and this figure is steadily rising year-on-year. Elite institutes such as the top-ranking universities of Cambridge and Oxford charge even more. All this is achieving, according to the report, is to marginalise segments of society and put a third-level education out of the reach of students from poor and deprived areas. Students whose parents cannot cover the cost have few options available to them; there is insufficient grant funding for college places and not enough information in circulation about what types of assistance are actually out there. Scholarships tend to be results-based, and with the fee-paying and grammar schools monopolising the league tables in terms of results, few ever get given to students who really need them, with most going to those who can well-afford the fees already. The only other option open to poor would-be college-goers is to take out a student loan, thereby burdening themselves with huge debts of up to £20,000 for years to come after they graduate. Of course, universities argue that they are under-resourced and under-funded and that they have little option but to raise course fees. But however much they try to justify it, the fact is their policy of increasing fees substantially each year is creating a two-tier society – a super-educated wealthy upper class and an ignorant, impoverished underclass whose hopes of escaping their situation are slim.

(G). Listen to the recording and find an example in what you hear to show that the teacher exhibited each characteristic (i-vi) below.

Write the example beside the characteristic. (i) has been done for you. You will hear the recording twice.

Female: I'm really pleased this topic came up because there are a lot of things I want to say; I'm going to talk about Mr. Whelan. Mr. Whelan is by far and away the best teacher I've ever had. He was my fifth class teacher in primary school. Every morning, as we came into class, he would greet us with a huge smile on his face, so we always looked forward to coming in. And he had this way of making everything – even the most ordinary things – sound exciting and interesting. When he would tell us a story, the class would fall silent – it was amazing. He had such a good sense of humour, too. But he wasn't just great fun; Mr. Whelan also had my respect as a knowledgeable teacher. He explained things to us in an easy-to-understand way. He never went too fast and he always gave us lots of praise and encouragement. With Mr. Whelan, you just knew he loved his job; he put so much energy and passion into it. He even got a class of 10-year-olds interested in poetry – now how do you do that? I think what I liked most about him though is that he never had favourites; he treated all of us equally as students. He was in a different class as far as I am concerned – the best teacher I've ever had.

(H). Listen to the recording and find an example in what you hear to show that the teacher exhibited each characteristic (i-v) below.

Write the example beside the characteristic. (i) has been done for you. You will hear the recording twice.

Male: The moment I read the instructions, I knew what I was going to say; I want to tell you about Ms. Doorley. Ms. Doorley was our P.E. teacher in secondary school. I had her in first, second and third year, I think – the fact that I can't quite remember probably says it all... She was really good-looking, but acted a bit like a princess if you ask me. She was always the centre of attention; it was like she wanted all the students to notice her and that's all she cared about. She didn't care about teaching us or doing her job properly at all. She would arrive late most lessons and she would have nothing planned; she'd just throw a ball down and let us organize ourselves. And she used to have favourite students and ones she'd kind of pick on. Luckily, I wasn't one of the latter, but, if you ask me, a teacher who picks on students is a bully and a coward; part of the teacher's job is to make her students feel safe and build up their confidence. But nope; Ms. Doorley did none of that; she gets a big fat zero out of ten from me.

Unit 7 - Planet Earth

D. Listen to the recording and put the notes in the box in the right order (the exact order that they are heard).

You will hear the recording twice.

Female: If you are in an earthquake prone area, then you may also be at risk from Tsunamis. Assess your risk by doing the following:

- (1)** Examine where you are located. Are you at sea level or in a low-lying area? Are you located close to the coast, or a large body of water like a lake? Does your area have any history of Tsunamis? Have the local authorities erected any signs or issued any information leaflets warning residents about the risks?
- (2)** If you decide that you are in a vulnerable location, then you must prepare in advance for the worst. Have an emergency pack containing food, water, clothing and a first-aid kit in case you need to leave at a short notice. And, most important of all, have a plan. Know what you will do and where you will go in the event of an emergency. Think about how you will get there, too, as roads may be closed.
- (3)** Look out for warning signs. If there is an earthquake, this should make you very wary. Also watch out for a rapid rise or fall in water levels – if the sea suddenly recedes, this is a tell-tale sign of an imminent Tsunami. Of course, if official Tsunami warning sirens and alarms are sounded, you would do well not to ignore them.
- (4)** If there is an imminent threat of a Tsunami, head inland as quickly as possible for as high ground as possible. If you are trapped, then make your way quickly to the top of a sturdy building. As a last resort, climb a strong tree if there is nowhere else to go.

6 Well, I've been doing the same job now for about 10 years. I'm a doctor and I work in a general hospital, but I also run my own private clinic.

Instead of starting with what the job is, another way is to start with how long you've been doing the job. – 'for about 10 years' / 'I haven't been in this job for very long'...

Part 2: 1, 5

When I think about old buildings, one particular building springs to mind. It is in the north of my country and I went there with my family last year.

I'm going to talk about the friend I spend most time with. I've known her since I was a child. In fact, our mothers were close friends, so we probably saw each other most weekends.

Note the different expressions used to introduce Topic 2. [Instead of -'The topic I'm going to talk about' ...]

Part 3: 2, 3

Note how the language here is more formal. In Part 3 the language is more similar to written English. Like in writing Task 2, there is a main idea which is then supported with an explanation, personal or global evidence, example or reason.

2 The way I see it, music and culture cannot be separated [Main idea], but then again, it does also depend on other factors like age and how you were brought up.[Support]

3 Teachers need to be more aware of how their behaviour can affect the way their students learn. [Main idea] My own personal experiences and those of my friends certainly proved that this was the case. [Personal evidence/support] Like many others, we had teachers whose methods actually made us not want to learn.[Reason/explanation]

Chapter 2

Give relevant answers

1 | c 2 a 3 d

2 Speaker 1

Question 1: O – He misunderstood the question and spoke about the difficulty of the course itself and not why it was difficult to be accepted on the course.

Question 2: A – He answers the question logically, but does not explain enough, possibly because he does not have the vocabulary. He is trying to explain that he doesn't need to study more, but instead needs to get work experience in a factory and that work experience is therefore part of his learning before he starts work.

Speaker 2

Question 1: A – Good answer with a reason why it was difficult.

Question 2: A – Answers the questions and gives reasons. Makes a comparison between university learning and work experience.

Speaker 3

Question 1: O – Answer is too short and vague to really judge if the speaker has understood or if he is just guessing. It is not clear from his answer if he is talking about the course or being accepted on it.

Question 2: A – Answers the question, but there is no support for the answer. He will get a low mark if he continued to give such short, unsupported answers throughout the test.

Talking about different topics

Topic 1: Jobs Suggested answers:

-Why did you choose this kind of work?

-Did you need to study for a long time to do this job?

Topic 2: Neighbours Suggested answers:

-What kind of problems do people sometimes have with their neighbours?

-Is there any difference between having young people or old people as neighbours?

Topic 3: Time Suggested answers:

-How do you feel when people are late?

-Should parents teach their children how to be on time? Why/Why not?

Explaining your likes and dislikes

1 Question: Do you like keeping flowers in your house?

Speaker 1 A Likes/Dislikes I don't care that much for...

Speaker 2 A Likes/Dislikes Absolutely. I can't imagine my life without them
I also love...

Speaker 1 **B Reasons**

I don't pay much attention to them.
I could quite happily live without them.

Speaker 2 **B Reasons**

-Because they are incredibly beautiful and they have such a good smell.
-The vibrant colours.
-When you look at beautiful flowers, you can't help but feel happy.

c) What tenses does Speaker 1 use? Present and Conditional because Speaker 1 has no personal experience of keeping flowers as he does not really like them. But he still answers the question, by describing flowers he buys for his wife or flowers she buys for the house. It does not matter if you have no personal knowledge or experience as long as you answer the question directly.

You may have to use conditional tenses – 'would', 'could' – to speculate or describe a possible or unreal situation.

Note how Speaker 1 starts his answer – 'If I'm honest'

Also note the idiom **-the be- all and end- all-** This means the most important thing and it is often used with a negative meaning. E.g. I can't understand why shopping is the be-all and end-all of my sister's life. It makes no sense to me to spend all that money on a pair of shoes.

1. I've always wanted to play the piano. If I had time, I'd like to learn how to play it.
2. One of the nicest things about the area I live in is the mountains around it.
- 3 For me nothing is better than being with my friends because we always have fun together.

Chapter 3

Talking about a topic

2 Suggested Answers:

- 1 Does the candidate use the prompts to help him? Yes
- 2 Does he keep to the topic? *Although he has made up an imaginary vehicle, he still keeps to the topic.*
- 3 Is his answer long enough? Yes
- 4 What did he do well? *His grammar is quite good – he uses the conditionals accurately. (If I was a kind of engineer, I would...)* However, he does have repetitive mistakes.

-so designer... (word formation) – design/designing

-it just sits one person – (verb form) – it just seats one person / only one person can sit in it

-very relaxed and sit on it – unfinished sentence – It would be very relaxed and we/people could sit on it.

His pronunciation is clear and his vocabulary use is good. He knows how to use collocations and natural sentence/ not available right now... He explains his ideas really well. He does sometimes repeat 'vehicle'. He could have used synonyms/parallel expressions to show more flexibility in his vocabulary use – E.g. car/means of transport/machine

5 How could he have improved his answer? His stress and intonation are good, but **sometimes he sounds hesitant..** He also sometimes mumbles so the beginnings of his sentences are not always clear. However, overall, this is an adequate Part 2 answer.

4 1 B 2 A 3 A 4 B

Pronunciation: Final consonants

- | | | | | |
|----------------|-------------|--------------|---------------|------------|
| 1 importance | 2 essential | 3 solution | 4 targets | |
| 5 public | 6 multiple | 7 moved | 8 convenience | |
| 9 policies | 10 recycles | 11 futile | 12 propose | |
| 13 fundamental | 14 explain | 15 bicycle | 16 electronic | |
| 17 sociable | 18 knows | 19 household | 20 insane | 21 changes |

/s/	/z/	/d/	/k/	/n/	/l/
importance	changes	moved	public	solution	essential
targets	policies	household	electronic	insane	futile
convenience	recycles			explain	fundamental
	propose				sociable
	knows				multiple
					bicycle

Chapter 4

Pronunciation: Pausing and Chunking

- 1 1 Does he pause in the right places? *Not always. He is more fluent at the beginning than at the end.*
2 Is his answer easy to follow? *At first, but then his answer becomes more hesitant, which breaks the flow of his ideas.*
3 Does he sound like he knows exactly what he is talking about? *No – he loses confidence in the middle of his answer. He begins strong and ends weak. He rushes his answer at the end.*
4 Does he sound natural? *No, because he relies too much on words such as 'like'...to keep going.*
5 Would this candidate get a good mark for fluency? *No, he is not consistent enough. He tries to keep going, but he does not have sufficient vocabulary. He repeats words like 'phone'.*
6 Would this candidate get a good mark for pronunciation? *No, he is not consistent enough. His chunking also makes him sound hesitant and unnatural.*

2 Yes, I think / it's in this way / because the nature of women and men are very different / so I think / they choose different subjects / and they have different tastes in reading./ Yes for example I think /women are very interested in reading novels that are based on / love and affection./ On the other hand I think men are very interested to/ read books for example the adventures/and for example/ stories that are based on the travel of the person / I mean biography for example/ and things like that.

Note: The candidate has good stress and natural-sounding chunking, but her pausing is affected by her over-use of certain words - 'For example..'

- 3 1 Does she pause in the right places? *Yes*
2 Is her answer easy to follow? *Yes*
3 Does she sound like she knows exactly what she is talking about? *Yes*
4 Does she sound natural? *Yes, she also stresses the right words – She stresses her nouns, which is important to get her message across*
5 Would this candidate get a good mark for fluency? *Yes, she would get an adequate mark because she is quite fluent. However, she relies too much on certain expressions to help her keep going.*
6 Would this candidate get a good mark for pronunciation? *Yes*
7 What could the candidate do to improve her answer? *She repeats the same linking words to help her keep going – 'For example' / 'I think' She also repeats words – 'very interested' / different.*

Predicting the future

- 1 1 there is every chance 2 most probably 3 totally convinced 4 most likely

2 I am sure

There's no doubt in my mind that... I would most definitely say that...
I am absolutely convinced that... I truly believe that...

I am fairly sure

There is a good chance that...
There is a very real possibility that...
It could be/might be said that...

I am not sure

I'm not actually sure if/whether... It's impossible to say if/whether...
No-one really knows if... I don't really know if...

- 5 1 I aim to.... N
2 I intend to... Y
3 What I hope to develop from this is.. Y
4 My main goal is to.... N
5 The main focus is to... N
6 I hope it'll help me to... Y
7 The main purpose is to... Y
8 What I hope to achieve from this is... N

Chapter 5

Using Idiomatic language

1 Example 1 is better. The candidate has used idiomatic language appropriately, unlike Example 2, which shows the candidate has not understood how to use the idioms accurately and in context. 'The early bird catches the worm' only relates to the student getting up early, but not to working at night.

'Every coin has two sides' is used to mean that situations/ circumstances/ people have both positive and negative sides so the idiom does not logically fit the context.

- 2 1 G 2 O (wears her heart on her sleeve) 3 Q 4 J 5 H 6 N (throwing in the towel) 7 C 8 L
9 E 10 F 11 I (going round in circles) 12 B (are on the same wavelength)
13 D ('strike' in this context means 'to think about something') 14 A (is part and parcel of)
15 M (N is also possible here) 16 K 17 P (calling the shots)

Using collocation

- 5 1 a) healthy b) expensive + lifestyle
2 a) relaxed b) negative + attitude
3 a) disruptive b) anti-social + behaviour
KEY: 1 a) relaxed b) expensive 2 a) healthy b) negative 3 a) disruptive b) anti-social

- 6 1 **make** + c) an influence - **have** an influence
2 **save** + b) habits - **break** habits
3 **keep** + a) attention - **pay** attention
4 **come** + c) to a schedule - **keep** to a schedule
5 **go** + a) cooking - **do** the cooking
6 **take** + b) a fine - **pay** a fine

7 First of all, the most important thing for people nowadays is time. They don't want to actually waste their time so the public transport should be very quick and run without any delays. I mean it's a real problem for me as a business man when trains don't run on time. Public transport should also be easy to access. The other point is expenses. I feel it should be cheap because if we are expected to use it, then it should be cheap. Maybe governments should pay some kind of subsidy to reduce the charges for the general public.

8

- 1 Does she use collocations? No
2 Is her answer easy to follow? Yes
3 Does her English sound natural? No
4 Would this candidate get a good mark for fluency? She would get a satisfactory mark because she can keep going, but she does not use a variety of discourse markers. She also uses discourse markers in an unnatural way – *Personally, I believe, as time passes*. She has memorized discourse markers, but not learnt how to use them appropriately.
5 Would this candidate get a good mark for vocabulary? No. She would get a higher mark if she used collocations accurately and appropriately.

Further Practice: Parts 1,2 and 3

2 Films:

1. Sentence starters: I guess .../ It's about.../ It reminds me of... / And I think that's very important to people / As far as I'm concerned
2. Likes/Dislikes: And one of the reasons I like.../ I enjoy listening to.

4 Song: Collocations : coming-of-age song, working-class upbringing, to bring back memories, young love, rock-and-roll beat, tell a story, inspire people, lightens the load (to make something easier – in this context the speaker means it makes life easier.)

5 And one of the reasons I like this song / is as I said before.../the guitars. / It's a rock-and-roll beat to the song, /but it's also a... /you know, /it's a coming-of-age song./ It's about young love./ It reminds me of my working-class upbringing./ It's about cars /and the highway/ and young peoples' dreams/. I think most people enjoy music /for pretty much the same reasons as I do./ Because music or songs / usually tell a story / or they inspire people / or sometimes they bring back memories./... or bring up dreams that you once had /or dreams that you might still have./ And I think that's very important / to people./ It kind of lightens the load./....And it's...it's what music is all about /, as far as I'm concerned./

The main stress is mostly on nouns. These nouns carry the focus or ideas of the speaker.

Chapter 6

PARTS 1, 2 and 3

Test Advice

2 Examiner: *Do you like shopping?*

Mistake 6 = over-using words/expressions to show opinion. Only one expression is necessary.

Examiner: *Do you think a shortage of water will be a bigger problem than a shortage of oil in the future?* Mistake 4+6 = the answer is circular and repetitive. It does not really get to the point so it is difficult to understand what the speaker's main ideas are. The speaker also over-uses – 'For example'

Examiner: *What course would you like to do?* Mistake 1 and 3 = the answer goes off-topic and the candidate does not keep to the question. The question was about studies and education, not about family aims or work.

Examiner: *Should high-school teachers help their students set specific goals so that they can study better?* Mistake 7 = the speaker is confusing Parts 2 and 3. The speaker is still talking personally about their family instead of answering a general question about teaching and learning.

Examiner: *Do you like swimming?* Mistake 4 +5 = the answer is circular and does not get to the point. The candidate has also learnt language that they do not know how to use correctly. 'glorious' / 'magical' / 'hilarious' are used inappropriately, making the speaker sound unnatural.

Mistakes 1, 4, 5, 6 and 9. He does not answer the question. He speaks about a sport he plays, not a sports person he admires.

His answer is very repetitive and circular. He keeps saying the same things over again, he repeats vocabulary (play football/ good fun) and over-uses expressions – 'you know'. He uses some expressions like - as time passes – in an unnatural way.

Chapter 7

PARTS 1, 2 and 3

Test Practice

2 Examples of Sentence Starters: Well actually... / I think that's the main point here. / It's difficult to define, but... / I pretty much think...

Examples of collocation: developing countries / business ethos / international success / achieve success

Examples of idioms: work 9 to 5 / the bigger the better/ cut and thrust

Examples of fixed expressions: from time to time / at the end of the day / when push comes to shove

3 The speaker stresses all the words that are important to the message he is trying to put across. Word that show his likes, preferences, attitudes are also stressed – should / don't

Do leaders have a responsibility to behave in a certain way in public?

Um I don't really think they have a responsibility to behave in a certain way, but I think they should behave in a certain way. Um because they have an immense platform on which they can sort of spread influence and so on and so many people look up to these people especially you know business leaders and so on. They're heroes to so many people. They should try and consider their position when they make decisions and you know understand that they are a role model for others, but I don't..I don't really think they should feel too much pressure to do that.

Are people born leaders or is this something they learn how to become?

I think a lot of people would like to learn how to become leaders. Um I'm sure there's lots of people who do sort of business classes and things like that, wanting to be the next great business leader, but ultimately I think it is something you're born with unfortunately. You only have to look at a..a school playground, you'll see the natural leaders there riding around there from a very young age. Again it's difficult to see what it is that's making those people leaders, but I think you can inspire respect as you get older maybe by becoming an expert in a particular field, but whether that's the same as being a leader – I don't really think so I pretty much think it's something you're born with.

ANSWER KEY for UNITS 1-10

UNIT 1 - Travel

A. Cruise Holiday, Activity Holiday, Working Holiday, Ski Holiday, Family Holiday, Holiday in the Countryside, Pamper Holiday, Adventure Holiday, Foreign Holiday, Domestic Holiday, Camping Holiday, Budget Holiday

C. Beach Holiday (i), Ski Holiday (vi), Budget Holiday (v), Pamper Holiday (iii), Adventure Holiday (ii), Holiday in the Countryside (iv), City Break (vii)

G. 1. season 2. destination 3. cuisine 4. fortnight 5. dip 6. sightseeing 7. delicacies 8. refreshments

H. 1, 6, 3, 4, 2, 5

K. 1. For eight years. 2. Yes, they do. 3. Yes, it is very interesting 4. Until I was 15, I studied French. 5. Go to a class.

L. a./ b.2 c./ d.3 e./ f.5 g./ h.1 i./ j.4

UNIT 2 - Life in the 21st Century

B. Extract 1: laptop (iv) Extract 2: book (iii) Extract 3: T.V. (v) Extract 4: watch (ii) Extract 5: mobile phone (i)

E. Ireland on holiday, another country, the ferry, write a letter, in the post, on the telephone, so expensive, rolls of film

F. A (1980s)

- many stay-at-home mothers
- families play board games at night
- domestic holidays dominate
- most school-leavers go straight into the workplace
- discipline in schools is very good
- it is cool to smoke
- televisions are expensive and there is only one in every house
- houses are affordable for first-time buyers
- most people are married by age 25
- few people are computer literate
- telephone boxes are used very regularly

B (today)

- young children text each other
- the number of college graduates is very high
- people do their banking online
- young people are very confident and loud
- the TV listings give 400 different channels
- most music sales are downloads
- international flights are very cheap
- cigarette advertising is banned
- most people go on foreign holidays
- distance learning courses are very popular
- there are many jobs in I.T.

Note: If students have different answers, that's fine; there are some, such as the one about smoking being cool, which could arguably be placed in either box, but they should be able to justify their decisions.

UNIT 3 - Art and Culture

B. 1. In my view 2. As far as I am concerned 3. I completely agree with the idea that 4. The way I see it / As I see it
5. From my point of view 6. I absolutely agree that 7. To my way of thinking 8. Let me explain the reasons for my opinion

C. 1. I cannot imagine that... 2. I highly doubt that... 3. I am not at all convinced that... 4. I have total confidence that...
5. I am fairly certain that... 6. It seems likely to me that... 7. It seems highly improbable that...
8. I am very sceptical about whether... 9. I am quite sure that... 10. I would say that...

A (Confident):

I have total confidence that...

I am fairly certain that...

It seems likely to me that...

I am quite sure that...

I would say that...

B (Not confident):

I highly doubt that...

I am not at all convinced that...

It seems highly improbable that...

I am very sceptical about whether...

D. 1.T 2.F 3.F 4.F 5.T 6.F 7.F 8.F 9.T 10.T

E. 1. Teach people about art from a very young age, starting at school, and make the learning process fun; it shouldn't be about reading books and learning lots of theory; art class should be practical and students should be encouraged to experiment with art for their enjoyment. The whole learning process should become more interactive.

G. a) diverse b) inhabitants c) originate d) roots e) minority f) cosmopolitan

J. tolerance (i), discrimination (v), prejudice (iv), stereotype (iii), fusion (ii)

K. 1. national 2. festival 3. venues 4. parade 5. fancy dress(es) 6. floats 7. fireworks 8. celebrations

UNIT 4 - The Animal Kingdom

B. For: a) educate b) appreciate c) respect d) research e) conservation f) endangered g) extinct h) companions
i) cures j) humane

Against: i) cruelty ii) pleasure iii) enclosures iv) cages v) spirit vi) put down vii) tests viii) cosmetics ix) haven
x) unstimulated xi) companionship xii) abandon/neglect xiii) neglect/abandon

F. (a) Dog: 1, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15 (b) Cat: 2, 4, 6 (c) Rabbit: 7, 8, 14

UNIT 5 - Home

C.

Revision (i)	Part 1	Part 2	Part 3
Time	4-5 minutes	3-4 minutes	4-5 minutes
Description	you must answer questions about everyday topics	you must present a short talk based on a topic given to you	you must take part in a discussion of general and abstract ideas related to...
Register	informal	informal/neutral	neutral/formal
Testing	your ability to talk about your personal experiences and interests	your ability to organise ideas and speak fluently	your ability to analyse and discuss ideas in detail

Revision (ii)

Part 1: 1-2 sentence answer

Part 2: answer follow-up questions

talk for about 2 minutes

given prompt-card

about one minute to write notes

must cover all Qs on the card

Part 3: give reasons and use examples

topic relates to previous part

more detailed answers

UNIT 6 - Education

A. 1. discipline 2. teaching standards 3. interactive 4. curriculum 5. applied 6. practical 7. rote-learning

8. independent thinkers 9. state 10. funding 11. resources 12. partnerships 13. holistic

C. 2.vi 3.iii 4.i 5.vii 6.v 7.iv

D. i) *Example Answer:* They are rising steadily each year; the average tuition fees are now £6,000, and it is even more expensive to study in universities like Cambridge and Oxford.

ii) *Example Answer:* The only other option for them is to take out a student loan. This can be a big problem as by the time students graduate they can already have debts of up to £20,000 to pay off.

iii) *Example Answer:* It is creating a class-based society and widening the gap between the rich and the poor. It is ensuring that only rich people by and large are well-educated, whereas the poor are not given the same educational opportunities and so do not have a chance to better themselves.

F. Good Qualities: *Examples:* good listener, patient, even-tempered, well-mannered, caring, meticulous, conscientious, fair, punctual, creative, articulate, a lively speaker, charismatic, confident, calm, knowledgeable, a good story teller, strict, approachable, kind, open-minded, optimistic, cheery

Teacher's Note: ASK STUDENTS TO JUSTIFY THEIR ANSWERS

Bad Qualities: *Examples:* lazy, careless, incompetent, moody, rude, speaks in the same tone all the time, shy and uncertain, distant, intolerant, impatient, unreliable, a poor speaker, tardy, closed-minded, pessimistic, self-obsessed, overly chatty, unpredictable, unprofessional, overly strict, overly lenient

Teacher's Note: ASK STUDENTS TO JUSTIFY THEIR ANSWERS

G. ii) students would fall silent when they listened to his stories

iii) explained things in easy-to-understand way, never went too fast, gave praise and encouragement

iv) got a class of 10-year-olds interested in poetry

vi) never had favourites and treated all of the students equally

H. ii) wanted the students to notice her or arrived late for lessons most of the time

iii) she had nothing planned and just threw the ball down and let the students organize themselves

iv) used to have favourites and would pick on some of the kids

I. knowledgeable: uninformed, approachable: withdrawn, humorous: dull, compassionate: mean-spirited, enthusiastic: disinterested, composed: high-strung, creative: unimaginative, meticulous: sloppy

J: Good Teacher: level-headed engaging committed alert charismatic tolerant dependable witty

Bad Teacher: condescending conceited dismissive absent-minded arrogant monotonous moody edgy

Teacher's note: words like 'lenient', 'strict', 'demanding' etc. are open to debate - ask students to justify their choices

L. 1. Despite 2. However 3. After all 4. even though 5. Naturally 6. Clearly 7. In fact 8. So 9. really
10. What's more 11. For example 12. So long as 13. That said 14. As for 15. Besides

UNIT 7 - Planet Earth

A. Hurricane - Tornado - Flood - Flash flood - Forest fire - Lightning storm - Earthquake - Tsunami - Mudslide - Volcano - Drought etc.

D. Check your risk level: Look into your area's history
Check for signs erected in the area...
Prepare: Get an emergency pack ready
Develop an escape plan
Be Alert: Be very aware of heightened threat-level...
Watch out for sudden sea-level changes
Listen out for warning sirens

If Tsunami is about to strike: Head away from coast to high ground
Head to the top of a well-built structure
Climb a tree

E. Shelter: Must be on bottom floor of house
Supplies: - Enough to last at least two weeks
- Buy canned food - Purchase bottled water
- Get together your flashlights, first-aid kit, clothing and battery supplies

Home and Garden: - Board up all windows and glass doors
- Put loose objects left outside away properly
- Build a sturdy outdoor shelter for your pet
- Or, take it into the house with you

G. oil slick/oil spill: fish suffocate and birds cannot fly
global warming: ice in the polar regions melts leading to higher sea levels
deforestation: the soil becomes weak and dry and turns to desert
smog and pollution: acid rain forms in the atmosphere
poaching: endangered species of animals are hunted and killed illegally
war: huge areas of land are carpet-bombed
nuclear fallout: radiation exposure kills some and other animals are born deformed

H. - more droughts
- desertification happens more quickly
- animals in polar regions, like the polar bear who hunts on ice, are becoming endangered
- more extreme temperatures
- parts of the world may become uninhabitable due to extreme heat
- there may be a shortage of fresh water

I. Notes on the Amur Leopard

Habitat - not so usual:

Most leopards live in warm parts of Africa - Amur lives in Russian forests - very cold in winter

Characteristics and Features

Thick winter coat - widely-spaced circles on fur - long legs for walking in snow - strong legs for big leaps

Current Population and Threats

only about 30 left because...

logging - trees cut down too fast

forest fires - started by campers

land conversion - wild land turned into farms

poaching - for valuable Amur fur

Notes on the Iberian Lynx

Population - Past and present:

Lives in Southern France, Spain and Portugal - quite common until recently - now only 200

Habitat and Prey:

Likes covered ground for shelter and open ground for hunting - mainly eats rabbits - other small animals - good senses of smell and sight

Challenges Faced by the Iberian Lynx

Starvation - fewer rabbits (main food source) - loss of 80% of habitat - road deaths

Efforts to help it:

protect natural habitat - increase rabbit population

L. (i)

Where and who with:

At home during Christmas holidays

With mum, dad, brother and sister

What the weather was like:

Started snowing lightly at noon - so cold snow stayed on ground

Snow got much heavier in afternoon

Snowed heavily all night - half a metre of snow

Still snowing next day

What the speaker did:

Cleared away the snow to get the car out

Went shopping for Christmas presents

Made snowman in the snow

Played with rest of family - took photos

How the speaker felt:

Excited - first time so much snow

felt like an adventure

Special and relaxed atmosphere

Really great Christmas

N. recycle paper, glass, tin, metal, plastic etc., car pool, cycle more, use public transport, use energy-saving light bulbs, have a compost bin, use reusable shopping bags instead of plastic bags, buy items with less packaging, plant trees, clean up dirty riverbanks and areas of land, better insulate the home, put solar panels on our roof, drive an electric car etc.

O. Society/Government:

(ii) replant areas of forest that have been cut down

(v) give people tax incentives to buy electric cars

(vi) tax factories based on how much they pollute

(viii) give people grants to put up solar panels and better insulate their homes

(xiii) make it easier to recycle by providing more recycling depots

(xiv) penalize households that do not separate their waste into recyclable and non-recyclable goods

(xv) improve the public transport system so as to encourage more people to use it

Individuals:

(iii) car pool when we go to work

(iv) cut down on the number of plane journeys we take each year

(vii) put all our food waste in the compost

(ix) plant trees and shrubs in our gardens

(x) volunteer to help with clean-up projects in the neighbourhood

(xi) only use hot water when we really need to such as for washing ourselves

(xii) only put on the washing machine or dish washer when there is a full load

(xvi) collect rainwater for watering plants

Examples:

- heavily fine people who litter

- switch from petrol and diesel buses to electric buses

- make people have to pay for plastic bags

- give factories and businesses rewards for turning 'green' etc.

P. (i)

What it is: Recycling

How often you do it: Mostly once a week - sometimes twice

UNIT 9 - Crime

A. (i) Greed (the desire to have lots more money than you need)

- poverty, mental illness, unemployment, drink and drug addiction, lack of education, jealousy, troubled upbringing, religious intolerance, lack of education, racism

D. The next exercise will focus on the definitions of different types of crime, so don't explain too much here. Give a few common examples such as murder, theft etc.

E. (i) 1.G 2.B 3.A 4.L 5.J 6.C 7.K 8.H 9.I 10.M 11.F 12.E 13.D

G. (ii) - That said / However / Nonetheless / Nevertheless / Despite this

(iii) - That said / However / Nonetheless / Nevertheless / Despite this

(iv) Although / Even though / While

(v) - That said / However / Nonetheless / Nevertheless / Despite this

(vi) - Despite / In spite of

H. community service: (i), prison sentence (iv) sending the criminal to jail, life sentence: (viii), fine: (v), suspended sentence: (vi), asset forfeiture: (vii), probation: (iii), the death penalty (ii)

UNIT 10 - Health

A. - Most homes have two working parents and they have no time to cook

- Fast food is easy to prepare

- People don't get a lot of exercise in their day-to-day lives (at the office they sit behind a desk)

- many children like playing computer games and watching T.V.; these are hardly active hobbies

- lots of fast food products are advertised on T.V. and we are influenced by this

- fresh food, such as fresh fish and fresh fruit and vegetables, is expensive, whereas fast food is much cheaper - fewer and fewer people know how to cook, so healthy home-cooked food is less common and people opt for convenience foods instead

C. 1. a doner kebab 2. a medium pizza 3. a large cola fizzy drink 4. a Big Mac 5. 6 chicken wings

E. (i) 1. 165,000 new young smokers every year

2. 450 each day

3. more young people smoke than any other age group

4. 10% of 11- to 15-year-olds smoke

5. 20% of 15-year-olds smoke

6. 25% of all 19-year-olds smoke

7. it is easy to get cigarettes in shops

8. more 20- to 25-year-olds smoke than any other group

G. (i)

1. parents or siblings smoke ☞ need to get parents and siblings to quit

2. shopkeepers sell to underage kids ☞ fine shopkeepers who break law

3. cigarettes too cheap ☞ raise the price of cigarettes

4. health problems not known ☞ run school education programmes

5. friends smoke so they do too ☞ run a campaign to show that smoking is not cool

H. List of Health Problems:

many types of cancer, including lung, oral and stomach

heart attack, stroke, miscarriage, impotency, eye damage

I. (i) drug addiction, gambling, alcohol addiction, etc.

J. sprain: to cause stress and strain to a joint without dislocating it

consultant: a doctor who is an expert in a specific area

fracture: a small break in the bone

cut: an open, injured area of skin

scan: a test or examination of part of the body using technology

epidemic: a disease that has spread across a large area and affected many people

treatment: the method a doctor will use to try to help a patient recover to full health

check-up: when you go to the doctor to make sure that you are still healthy

inpatient: someone who must remain in hospital for treatment for at least one night

outpatient: someone who receives treatment and leaves hospital the same day

theatre: the place where a surgeon operates on patients

K. 1. consciousness 2. ambulance 3. Accident and Emergency 4. broken leg 5. stretcher 6. theatre 7. operated

8. anaesthetic 9. dislocated 10. amputate 11. health insurance 12. private 13. observation 14. plaster 15. crutches

16. prescription 17. painkillers 18. steroids 19. antibiotics 20. asthma 21. inhaler

N. Do: karate, gymnastics, athletics, P.E., fencing, aerobics, weights, press-ups

Play: badminton, rounders, tennis, tag, rugby Go: cycling, hill walking, sky diving, snorkelling, swimming, jogging

IELTS Speaking Tests

Model Answers

IELTS Speaking Test 1

PART 1

Let's talk about travel.

How often do you go on holiday?

I'd say typically once or twice a year - always during the summer (for about two weeks), and sometimes, if I'm lucky, I get to go away another time as well. But, unfortunately, that doesn't happen as often as I'd like it to... As my old gran used to say, 'money doesn't grow on trees'!!

Where did you go most recently?

Last time I went on holidays, I went to Paris for a week with the rest of my family. It was last March and we had such a wonderful time visiting all the city's famous sites and attractions. It blew me away!

Who do you normally go on holiday with?

Most of the time, I go with my family, but, as I get older, I am more inclined to go with my friends instead sometimes as that gives me a little bit more independence to do my own thing. As time goes on, I guess I'll probably want to do that more and more.

Do you have a favourite place to go on holiday?

You bet! I love Barcelona; it's a beautiful city with a great nightlife and a real good buzz. Plus it's not far from the sea or the mountains, so you've got the best of both worlds really.

What do you normally pack in your suitcase when you go away?

Oh, you know, all the essentials: togs and a towel for the beach; some shorts and T-shirts; my toiletries, of course - toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, shaving cream, a razor; and also some sunglasses; my camera - I'm always click-click-clicking (it drives everyone mad!); that kind of thing. But I try to travel light - unlike some people I know who seem to take all their worldly belongings away with them!

Now let's talk about your family.

Do you come from a big or small family?

I would say an average-sized family, I guess. There's me, mum and dad, of course, and also my little sis' Jane. Jane's twelve years old - five younger than me. She's the baby of the family and I'm 'big brother'.

What do your parents do for a living?

Well, Dad's an engineer or something. I don't really understand what he does to tell you the truth, but he says it's important! Something to do with building bridges I think. As for mum, she's a doctor - a GP. She has a local practice so just about everyone in town knows her.

How do you get along with the rest of your family?

Hmmm ... I guess, for the most part, quite well. I mean, it's tough being a family and even if you are really close, you're going to fight sometimes. My mum and dad are fair parents though and I respect them, so we don't have lots of arguments or anything like that. As for my sis', well, sometimes I get annoyed at how everyone spoils her - I guess a little jealous even! - but that's not her fault. Besides, I'm 'big brother' so I love her to bits - just don't tell her I said that!

Do you share the same interests as the other members of your family?

Not really to be honest with you. I'm not into anything my mum and dad like - parents ... they're so old fashioned and boring! I love music, especially rock and metal, which everyone else in my family seems to hate. My sister likes pop - I never could stand it myself though; just cheap noise to me.

Is it good being the eldest child?

Yes and no. Yes because I get to be 'big brother' and protect my little sis' and teach her things. That's cool. No because I never get spoiled like she does and I have to be the 'responsible one' all the time. Yeah, great...

...middle child?

Not so much. I get all the hand-me-downs from my older sister, so I rarely get new stuff that's just for me. I don't get much attention either; that usually goes to Ella, my younger sister.

...youngest child?

Yes and no. Yes because I do get a lot of attention and I have two older sisters who buy me lots of nice presents and lend me their clothes. No because all the rest of my family are overprotective of me. It's a bit suffocating...

...an only child?

Sometimes yes, sometimes no. I mean, I guess it would be nice to

have some brothers or sisters around to talk to and spend time with. Luckily, though, I have a lot of good friends living close by. Besides, I get all the attention - I guess my parents spoil me a bit because I'm the only kid they have. Mind you, I'm not complaining!

PART 2

Describe your perfect holiday.

You should say:

- where you would go and who you would go with
- where you would stay
- what you would do

and explain why it would be the perfect holiday.

Well, my perfect holiday ... hmm ... let me see. There's really only one place it could be and that's Iceland. I've always wanted to go there ever since I saw a documentary about it on T.V. when I was a young kid. The landscape looks amazing. My dream visit would take place in April, just when it is getting warm enough for the lowlands' snow to melt and the animals and plants to start to come to life again after the winter. I'd take my best friend, Anna, with me. We are both nature lovers, you see, and like the same things so wouldn't really fight about what to do and where to go. I wouldn't like to stay in one place, though, so definitely not a hotel. Besides, I couldn't afford one anyway. We'd probably stay in youth hostels or something - a different one each night as we would explore the island. As for what we'd do, that's easy; we'd go hiking in the countryside to see all the spectacular features of the island up close - the volcanoes, the lava rock, the geysers, the glaciers, you know... And it would be the best holiday ever for the simple reason that I would be with my favourite company - Anna - in my favourite place - the Icelandic wilderness - and it doesn't get any better than sharing your love of nature with your best friend. Not to mention the fact that I would be living out a childhood dream...

Do you prefer active holidays or holidays where you get to relax?

It's active holidays for me every time. I like to get out and about and explore the places I visit and really get to know them. I'll never understand people who sit by the pool sunbathing for the whole week. I mean, they never get to experience anything. If I had my way, I'd be hiking in the mountains or doing a city walking tour - anything interesting like that rather than being stuck at my hotel for seven days - boring!

Are there any countries you would not like to visit?

A few I can think of. Iran maybe, because it's unsafe - or so I've heard. And that's such a shame as it's supposed to be a beautiful country, full of, for the most part, friendly little village communities. Singapore as well because it's just too hot and humid there - I would die of heat exhaustion! Anywhere else? Hmm ... yes, well, I'm not too sure about South Korea and China either; I don't think the food would really agree with me.

What was your worst holiday experience?

Uh, I'm shaking just thinking about it! My worst holiday experience ever was undoubtedly when I was six and I got lost in a market area in a rural town in Bavaria. I kept screaming and shouting out my mum's name but I couldn't see her anywhere. Next thing I knew, a policeman had picked me up and I didn't know where he was taking me. Of course, he took me to the station and eventually everything worked out in the end and my parents came and picked me up, but that was the most scared I've ever been in my life.

PART 3

What are the benefits of holidaying in a foreign country?

First of all, it's a complete change of scene, which people need sometimes to help them unwind and relax. Secondly, it's a chance to experience another culture and way of life. This is good in the sense that it broadens your horizons - and maybe you will pick up some good tips you can take back home with you. Thirdly, you get to meet the locals. I think it's important to meet all sorts of different people in life; it promotes tolerance and peace. If we meet people who look different, or speak or behave differently to the way we do, then we will not be afraid of them or distrust them. Fourthly, you get to see things you might never otherwise be able to appreciate, like, for example, unique landscapes and areas of beauty, or different styles of architecture. Then there is also the fact that you'll get the chance to try out the local cuisine, and this might influence the way you cook and improve your cooking. For language learners, going to a country where they get to practice the language is probably the best way to learn, so that's another major plus point of holidaying abroad. I think the point I'm trying to get across is that, really, the list is endless. There's so much to get out of a foreign holiday.

What sorts of problems can people experience when they are abroad?

Well, I think the most obvious and common one is the language barrier. Communication can be really hard if you don't speak the same

language, not to mention the fact that there can also be embarrassing misunderstandings when things get lost in translation. Another issue that often crops up is culture shock. For example, in some countries, they are not used to queuing and tourists can get very angry and upset at being passed out in the line. If you have a sensitive palate, you may not find the local cuisine agreeable either, which can make life very difficult by limiting your options for places to eat. Weather can also be an issue; it may be that tourists have to adapt to a hotter or colder climate than they are used to. Another major concern is often driving. If you are used to driving on the left and you have to drive on the right side of the road during your holiday (or vice versa), this can be very trying. Crime can ruin a foreign holiday, as can the loss of your bags or wallet. Another big spoiler is the tendency some locals have to try to take advantage of tourists and overcharge them. The list of potential problems is very, very long...

Do you think foreign holidays are affordable to everyone these days?
Not exactly. They are definitely more affordable than ever. I mean, flights within Europe have gone very cheap over the last ten years, and now, with the internet cutting out the middle man, you can book entire packages of flights, hotels and activities for bargain-basement prices. That said though, it is still expensive to go abroad for those on lower-than-average salaries, which is a shame because foreign travel can be such an enlightening experience. Besides, long-haul flights remain pricey. I mean, it certainly isn't cheap to fly to America or Australia yet. All in all, I'd say that it's definitely getting cheaper by the year to holiday abroad, but I think there's a long way to go yet before we can all afford to.

Is flying a safe way to travel?
Nowadays, yes, I would have to say that it is. After all, great strides have been made in aviation and air travel is safer than ever before. The evidence of this is in the fact that there are fewer and fewer cases of accidents. Of course, even though the risk is small, if it goes wrong, then you are still in big trouble, but I would definitely consider flying to be a very safe form of travel today. You are far more likely to be run over by a car as a pedestrian or cyclist, or involved in a car crash as a driver than to have an accident on a plane – that's how far aircraft safety has come.

Do you think people have enough time off work?
Not at all. I think the opposite is the case. Research has shown that most people are working longer and longer hours than ever before. There is huge pressure on employees to perform, so competitive is the workplace today, and this forces them to sometimes even forego their holidays in order to get things done at work. I think people in general deserve more time off work, both to spend with their families and to allow them to have the time to relax and unwind. Workplace stress is a big problem that leads to many, many forms of illness, some of which are very serious. We need to look after our health more, and the only way to do that is to be allowed to take more time off work. If I were in government, I would shorten the working week. Not only would that create extra jobs, it would benefit all the employees who are overworked and overstressed and badly in need of a break.

Why do some people come back from holidays more stressed than when they left?
Well, I think it's easy to understand why that happens. Holidays can be stressful – dealing with a different culture or language etc. is never easy. Then there's also the matter of having to spend a lot more time than usual with your family or friends. This can lead to arguments and it's often hard for everyone to stay calm. Another common problem is that people try to do and see too many things – try to pack too much into one week away in a country. They end up coming home more tired and worn out than when they left...

What safety issues do you have to think about when you go away on holiday?
Well, first of all, you need to consider how safe the place you are going on holiday to is. Some destinations are safer than others... I mean, in some countries, there are dictatorships and the leaders are a law unto themselves. Other places have very strict laws to do with culture or religion and you can get in big trouble for breaking them, even by accident. Besides, if you go to very religious countries, they may not be very tolerant towards foreigners, and may even be 'anti' them. It may be a good idea to know the local police and emergency numbers in advance in case anything goes wrong, and also to have the contact details for your local consulate to hand in the event of something really awful happening that you need help with. Another thing is the fact that tourists often get targeted by criminals no matter where they go, so you have to be really careful with valuables like cameras and phones, not to mention your wallet, credit cards, cash and so on, and try not to stand out too much – try not to look like a 'tourist'. You've got to check out your accommodation in

advance, too, to make sure the area is a good one and that the owners are legit. Weather factors can also affect safety – it's important to find out if the place you are going to is prone to violent storms, earthquakes and so on. And then there are health issues; do you need vaccinations; are certain deadly diseases a problem there and so on...

IELTS Speaking Test 2

PART 1

Let's talk about your home town.

Where do you come from?

I come from a small village in the middle of the English countryside. It is so small that we do not even have a village shop! There are quite a few houses in the village – it is mostly families, farmers and retired people living there.

What is it like where you live?

It is a very peaceful village, with lots of flat farmland. There are always tractors on the road and cows in the fields! A lot of my neighbours have horses, so there is often the clip-clop of horses' hooves on the road. Everyone is very friendly in the village – it is a real community.

Do you like living there?

Most of the time I love it – I enjoy the peace and quiet of village life and I have a really lovely view from my bedroom. The only downside to village life is the lack of facilities – we have to cycle or drive to the nearest shop which can be a bit annoying. I hate having to reply on my Dad to drive me places, but I am learning to drive at the moment so I should have more freedom soon!

Have you always lived in the same place?

We moved to this house when I was three years old, so it is the only place I have ever known as home. We lived much closer to the city when I was born, but I am glad that we moved when I was so young. I really enjoyed growing up in the countryside – I spent a lot more time outdoors than I would have done if we had stayed living in the city.

What is there to do near where you live?

We might not have any facilities like shops where I live, but there is still plenty to do! The beautiful surroundings are perfect for going on long walks or cycle rides – I like to take a picnic and make a day of it! There is also a riding school nearby where I go horse riding – I have lessons and sometimes go on hacks in the countryside. Where I live, the best things to do are outdoor activities, making the most of the quiet open spaces.

Now let's talk about learning languages.

How long have you been learning English?

I started learning English at a very young age – about six years old. But it was only a little bit at school and I wasn't practicing regularly. When I got to high school, we had more regular lessons so I quickly learned all the basics, and for the past two years, it has been one of the main subjects which I have studied, so now I am able to speak, read and write English quite confidently.

Do most people in your country learn English?

Yes, everyone has to learn at the least the basics of English at school, although you can choose to learn a different language when you get a bit older. So not everyone in my country speaks English, but most people understand at least a little bit.

Have you studied any other languages?

Which language do you find easiest?

I studied Spanish for a year at school. I really enjoyed learning it, but I found it difficult to learn two languages at once, so I gave it up to focus on English. Now I am a bit more confident with my English, I think I will go back to Spanish. I found it a lot harder, but I like a challenge!

Do you think it is important to learn English?

I think that learning English is an important part of my education, and it is beneficial for everyone to know at least a little bit of English. When you travel anywhere, or if you meet people from other countries, then English is one of the most common languages that people will speak.

What advice would you give someone who wants to start learning a foreign language?

The best way to learn any language is to be immersed in it – so I would recommend spending some time in the country so that you are surrounded by the language. Summer schools can be a great way of doing this. You have lessons so you learn the basics of the language and you stay with a host family who will mostly speak in their native language to you, so you get plenty of practice.

PART 2

Describe a website you like to visit a lot.

You should say:

- The name of the website and how often you visit it
- What the website is for/about
- What you do/look at on the website

And explain why you like it.

My favourite website is probably Facebook; it's the website that I visit the most. I go on Facebook most days, often several times a day. Facebook is a social-networking site and its purpose is connecting people, helping them to share important life events and keep up-to-date with each other's daily activities. I use the website to keep in touch with my friends, especially the people who live far away, and share photos of holidays and special occasions. Facebook is a great way to stay involved in the day-to-day lives of your friends and family, especially if you don't get to see them regularly, as most people go on the website every day. One of my friends has a baby, so it is lovely to see pictures of him growing up as I don't see them very often. I really like Facebook, although I probably spend a bit too much time on it, because it means I can still feel close to the people who I live far away from.

Do you spend a lot of time online?

I go online everyday, especially now that I have a smartphone with internet access. Most days it is just a quick check of my emails a couple of times per day, and a bit longer looking on Facebook to find out any news and chat to friends. Some days, however, I spend a lot of time online reading newspaper articles and blogs, or browsing online shops.

Apart from looking at websites, what else do you do online?

I do quite a lot of shopping online, in particular books. I like buying books online as there are usually a lot of reviews, so you can get a good idea of whether it is worth buying or not. You can also get recommended books that are by the same author, written in a similar style or about the same subject matter. I find this really helpful as I never know where to start on my own!

Do you think the internet is very useful, or not really?

I think that the internet is an incredibly useful tool for communicating with people and finding out information about anything and everything! Sometimes I think we rely on it too much, a phone call can be much more efficient than an email, but overall I think that we are better off with the internet. People have much better and easier access to information and this can only be a good thing.

PART 3

Is surfing the internet more or less popular today than it used to be in your opinion?

I think that surfing the internet is more popular than ever before because nowadays, most people have smartphones and so they can access the internet at all times. Also, nowadays almost everything has a website and sometimes this is the only way of accessing information. So as well as being easy and convenient, sometimes there is no other option.

What would you say are the main reasons people use the internet?

I think that most people use the internet to communicate with other people – via email and social networking. I also think that shopping is a very popular thing to do online – you can get everything that you need without having to leave the house!

Do you agree with people who say the internet is addictive?

I think that certain aspects of the internet can be addictive, especially social networking sites as they are constantly updating and there is always someone who has always posted something new to look at. So it can take over your life a bit if you are constantly checking the website. I think that online games are more addictive, people can become completely obsessed with them. Because they are playing with people from all over the world, there are people playing 24/7 and so it can be hard for some to stop themselves from playing constantly.

Do you think it is healthy when people spend a lot of time online?

No, I do not think that it is very healthy for anyone to spend a lot of time online. It is physically unhealthy to look at a screen for long periods of time, as it can damage your eyes. Equally importantly, I think, is the social and emotional impact of spending a lot of time online. People forget how to communicate and socialise in person when they spend all of their time online, but these are important skills in life and I think it is important that they are not lost.

What are the dangers people using the internet face?

Using the internet can be dangerous because you cannot always trust the information that you are given, in particular if you are meeting people online. It is really important to never give out personal information like your address, phone number or date of birth. People can claim to be anything or anyone, so you should also be wary of meeting someone in person if you have met them online. Always arrange a

meeting place somewhere that is very public and tell someone where you are going – or better yet, bring a friend with you.

The internet is very important to the way we live in the 21st century. Do you agree?

The internet has become an essential part of 21st century living – it is how we communicate both with friends and at work; how we research school projects; we use it to buy clothes, food and items for our homes; it is how we research and book our holidays; and the internet is how we keep up-to-date with what is going on in the world. I think we probably rely on it too much. If the internet breaks, we tend to be a bit lost, but there is no denying the central role that it plays in our modern lives.

Are we influenced by what we read and see on the internet?

I think that people are often influenced by what they read online because it is one of the main sources of information for most people, so if they see something, they assume it to be true.

Do you think the internet is a reliable source of information?

Unfortunately, I do not think that internet is a particularly reliable source of information. Although there are some reliable websites, the problem with the internet is that anyone can write anything and they can even make it look official so it seems trustworthy. You have to be careful about what information you take from the internet, but as long as you double check your facts then the internet is a very useful resource.

IELTS Speaking Test 3

PART 1

Let's talk about your hobbies and interests.

What do you like to do in your free time?

My favourite thing to do in my free time is read a good book – you can't beat it! When the weather is hot and sunny it is a great way to relax outdoors and enjoy the sunshine, then when it is cold and rainy I love being snuggled up on the sofa with my book, a blanket and a hot chocolate. Perfection!

Do you enjoy playing sports?

My favourite sport is horse riding. Although I have never ridden in a competitive setting, I think that it is a great way to keep fit and healthy, as well as being a lot of fun. There is always a new challenge, even if you ride the same horse every time, no two rides are ever the same. Horses can have a mind of their own which can make things interesting!

What types of music do you like?

I like all sorts of music – I listen to the radio a lot, so I quite enjoy the music in the charts, especially if it has a rock or indie sound (I'm not a fan of dance music). But my favourite band has to be Queen – no-one nowadays can compete with their music!

Do you play any musical instruments?

I don't play any musical instruments but I wish I did. I would love to be able to play the piano! I think piano music is beautiful and I love listening to people play. I used to play a little bit when I was younger; my grandparents had a piano so my Grandma would try to teach me when I went round to their house. I was never very good though!

What sport or hobby do you think you might like to try in the future?

Well, obviously I would love to be able to play the piano! So I might try it again in the future, but I remember always finding it frustrating that I couldn't play how I wanted to – it just doesn't come naturally to me. However, a hobby which I would like to try and which is more realistic for me is running. I have never been much of a runner, but I would really like to get better as it is a simple way of getting fit. I think I would find it very rewarding to improve my running and eventually I would like to take part in a 10 kilometre run to raise money for charity.

Now let's talk about your likes and dislikes.

Do you like to eat food from other countries?

Oh yes! I love all sorts of foods and most of them seem to come from other countries! I love classic Italian meals and for something a bit more exotic, I often eat Thai food. There are so many different flavours to explore and I really enjoy food which has a bit of a kick to it, so anything with a bit of chilli in it is a winner for me!

What's your favourite foreign dish?

Hmm, where to start? There are so many! If I had to pick just one foreign dish I think it would have to be prawn nasi goreng – it is a really tasty Thai dish of prawns with vegetables and rice, quite a lot of chilli and topped off with a good squeeze of fresh lime. Delicious!

Which do you prefer; holidays in foreign countries or holidays in your own country?

I enjoy holidays abroad and 'at home'. The most important thing is

having a chance to relax and enjoy an interesting place with family or friends. Having said that, I must admit that foreign holidays tend to be the best as you are experiencing somewhere completely new and you can just forget about normal, everyday life. I love the feeling of having no responsibilities – to wake up in the morning with nothing that you absolutely have to do. You can just take each day as it comes and enjoy yourself to the full.

What do you like most about your country?

My favourite thing about my country is the beautiful countryside and the variety of places which you can visit. We have forests, hills, lakes, beaches and flat open spaces. I love going on long walks in the country and it is great fun to get a little bit lost and discover somewhere new.

Do you prefer going to the theatre to see a play or watching movies at the cinema?

I do really enjoy going to the cinema but I definitely prefer going to the theatre. There is something so magical and special about watching a live performance. It makes me feel like I'm part of the action!

PART 2

Describe a traditional celebration you like.

You should say:

- what the celebration is
 - who you normally celebrate with and where you normally celebrate
 - what you do during the celebration
- and explain why you like it.**

My favourite traditional celebration has to be Christmas; it's my favourite time of year. I always celebrate it with my family – my Dad, brother, sister, niece and nephew – and we usually see my grandparents too. We usually spend the day at my Dad's house and everyone comes round for presents, games and a big roast dinner. We have lots of little traditions, like the music that we listen to and the food that we eat, so it feels very special every year. I also have a tradition with my friends – every year we have our own mini-Christmas on Christmas Eve, when we have mince pies and exchange presents.

Do you prefer to celebrate important occasions with small or large groups of people?

I definitely prefer celebrating important occasions with small groups of people and having lots of these small celebrations! The problem with a big group of people is that you can never talk to everyone, and often it can be so hectic getting everyone together that you don't have the time to enjoy yourself. That's why having several small celebrations is better; it is much nicer to have a chance to relax and properly talk to everyone.

Are you familiar with any celebrations from other countries?

I'm aware of the celebrations that occur in other countries, such as Thanksgiving in America and Diwali for Hindus, but I have never had an opportunity to experience these celebrations so I don't know a lot about them. I think it would be really interesting to learn about the different celebrations and how people celebrate them.

What sorts of food do you normally find at celebrations you've been to?

Well, celebrations can involve all sorts of food! But I think the most common food found at a celebration is cake. Whether it is a birthday, a wedding, Christmas or Easter, all celebrations seem to involve having a big, special cake.

PART 3

Why are national celebrations important?

I think that national celebrations are important because they bring people together. They encourage community spirit and a feeling of having a common purpose; They remind people that we have a common culture and we are all celebrating together.

Do you think celebrations like Christmas are too commercial?

Yes, I do think that Christmas has become a bit too commercial and it can be hard to remember what it's all about, if you are Christian, it is about celebrating the birth of Jesus. A lot of people celebrate Christmas even though they aren't religious and I think that this is fine as long as it is about spending quality time with family and friends. However, there is a lot of pressure at Christmas time to spend a lot of money on presents and I don't think that this is right or necessary.

Is it important to learn about the culture and customs of other countries? Why / why not?

I think that it is really good to learn about other cultures and their customs. If you travel to these countries, it is useful to understand how people live their lives so that you can respect their beliefs and customs. I think people can also be scared or intimidated by other people that they feel are 'different'; if they learn about these other cultures then they will understand them, and no longer be wary or afraid.

Do you think everyone will end up celebrating the same things eventually?

I think that celebrations like Christmas could be celebrated by everyone eventually, as they are very dominant in popular culture. A lot of people already celebrate Christmas even if they have no religious beliefs, and some people will celebrate Christmas even though they are part of a different religion because they don't want to feel left out. However, I don't think that big celebrations like Christmas will replace other celebrations – I think that more and more people will celebrate it as well as their own traditional celebrations.

Are some celebrations better than others? Explain.

I don't think anyone can judge whether a celebration is 'better' than others; it depends on the individual and how they mark the occasion. However, I think that some celebrations have more meaning than others – for example, Valentine's Day. For me, this celebration is just an invention of shops who want to make money by encouraging people to buy expensive cards and gifts. Restaurants also increase their prices on Valentine's Day and offer expensive set menus. I don't think there is anything romantic about the day. It is just a fake, commercial celebration.

What do you think accounts for the popularity of celebrations like Christmas and Halloween?

I think Christmas is a very popular celebration because there is a lot of advertising in the media. For the three months leading up to Christmas there are adverts, TV specials, special offers in shops and decorations everywhere – you can't escape it! I think it has grown in popularity and size because it has become so commercial.

Why do you think food plays a big role in most celebrations?

I think food is important for most celebrations because it brings people together. Food is something that everyone can share and enjoy, and cooking or baking shows that you have spent a lot of time and care to treat your friends and family. Food is the focal point of most celebrations, and there are often a lot of traditions involving food which is another reason why it is so important.

Is it important to preserve tradition or should we move with the times more?

I think that traditions are very important as they remind us of our past and are part of what makes special occasions important. For me at least, the traditions that my family have at Christmas time are one of the main reasons that I look forward to Christmas every year. However, I do think that it is important to develop new traditions as and when circumstances change (for example, as children get older you might not have the same traditions like stocking presents from Father Christmas). Traditions are great and so is making new ones!

IELTS Speaking Test 4

PART 1

Let's talk about pets.

Do you have any pets?

Sadly I don't have any pets any more. When I was younger, we had a cat called April, who then had three kittens. I loved having cats; they lived outdoors and were very independent, but they knew where their home was and they would usually be waiting on the doorstep for me when I got home from school.

Do you like animals?

Yes. I've always been an animal lover! I used to be a bit scared of dogs, but I think that's because when I was little they all just seemed so big! Now, though, I love dogs; I really want to get a puppy but they are a lot of hard work and I don't think I have enough time at the moment!

What pet would you get if you could choose any?

Well, I would really like a dog. I think that they make really good companions and I really enjoy going on long walks, so having a dog would be perfect for me. Unfortunately, I live in a flat with no garden at the moment, so I don't think it would be very fair on a dog to live there. One day!

How does the rest of your family feel about pets?

My family aren't very keen on pets (so I don't know where my love of animals comes from!). That's why when we had cats, they weren't allowed in the house. Well, my Dad does kind of have pets – he keeps chickens! But they aren't really pets, as he only keeps them for their eggs.

Have you ever had a bad experience with an animal?

I did have one experience which freaked me out a bit and put me off cats for a while. I was sat at a friend's house watching TV, with their cat sat on my lap. We were sat there for ages and I was stroking him, and he was very quiet and content. Then suddenly – out of nowhere – he started wriggling around trying to scratch me! It scared me how quickly he turned from a gentle pet to an aggressive animal. I've never fully trusted cats since.

Now let's talk about food.

What's your favourite food?

My favourite food has to be pasta because it can be used in so many delicious meals. But my absolute favourite pasta dish is probably macaroni cheese – especially the way my Dad makes it, with a crispy breadcrumb topping and a hint of mustard...delicious!

Do you eat out at restaurants often?

Yes, I eat out at restaurants at least two or three times a month. I like going to Japanese restaurants best because it is really tasty food that I would never be able to make at home (especially sushi!).

Do you eat a lot of fast food?

I try not to eat too much fast food. I think it is much nicer to save it for a treat (if you have it too often, it becomes boring). I like getting takeaway pizza best – just a simple margarita is my favourite!

Do you like food from other countries?

Oh yes, I love food from other countries – I eat a lot of Italian, Japanese, Thai and Indian food. I've started to enjoy spicy foods a lot more, so I'm enjoying exploring the different types of curries and stir fries that can be found in other countries.

What sorts of food do you and your friends eat when you go out together?

When I go out for meals with my friends, we often go to restaurants where we can share our food and try lots of different dishes – so we often go for Spanish tapas or sushi.

PART 2

Describe your favourite animal.

You should say:

- what it is and what it looks like
- where it is found
- how it behaves

and explain why you like it.

My favourite animal is the penguin – they are so cute! They are quite small, between 40 centimetres and one metre tall, and they are black with a white chest. They only have very small wings, so although they are a bird they cannot actually fly. Penguins are mostly found in the Southern hemisphere in cold seas and rocky environments. They live in big groups – there can be as many as 50,000 of them – and they spend most of their time hunting for food in the sea. They are actually quite unusual because when a female has an egg, the male penguins will look after the egg and keep it warm before it hatches, whilst the females go off and hunt for food.

Do you ever watch nature documentaries on television?

I really enjoy nature documentaries because I find the natural world fascinating! There is so much out there that we don't know about yet, especially in the sea. So I really enjoy learning about nature, and it is usually visually impressive too.

Would you like to work with animals?

I already have! I used to volunteer at a horse riding school, feeding the horses, brushing them and getting them ready for lessons. Working with animals is always interesting because you never know what might happen next – they have a mind of their own! But it is also rewarding, as you build up a bond with the animals over time.

Would you ever think of becoming a vegetarian?

Well, I already am vegetarian – kind of. I still eat fish, so I'm actually a pescatarian. I have never really enjoyed the taste or texture of meat, so that is the main reason why I don't eat it. I think if I was ever going to eat meat, it would be really important to me that it was good quality and locally produced. I don't like how much meat is imported as I don't think we need to eat so much of it.

PART 3

Do you think being cruel to an animal is the same as being cruel to a human?

Yes, I think that any cruelty is bad – whether it is cruelty to animals or humans. To be aggressive, abusive or neglectful to either an animal or a human is an equal offense. It demonstrates an inner cruelty within that person, if they hurt others. Animals can feel pain too and so I don't think that deliberately hurting them can ever be justified.

Should people be allowed to hunt animals for their own entertainment?

Quite simply, no: hunting animals should never be a sport. Sometimes it is necessary for farmers to hunt animals like foxes because they can be a major nuisance, but this should be practical and humane. Death and cruelty is not entertainment.

How can we help protect endangered species of animals?

I think the best way to protect endangered animals is to protect their environment. All too often, natural habitats are torn down to make room for roads or houses, or to create flat farmland. We need to ensure that we are aware of the needs of endangered animals and respect their right to life, instead of sacrificing their needs for human benefits.

What sorts of human activities make it more difficult for wild animals to survive?

Well, destroying the natural environment of wild animals is a key way that we make it more difficult for them to survive; we are taking away their homes. Also, the chemicals which farmers use, such as pesticides, can also make life difficult for wild animals. Bugs are poisoned by the chemicals, then the animals or birds that eat the bugs can also be poisoned and die or pass on disease to their offspring.

Is it fair to make pets out of wild animals?

I don't think that is very fair to capture a wild animal and try to tame it and make it a pet. You are taking away that animal's freedom and independence for your own pleasure and I don't think that this is a good enough reason.

If a shark kills a human in the sea, should it be hunted down?

I think that if I shark killed a human in the sea, it would be wrong to then hunt the shark down. The human was in the shark's natural habitat, in the shark's territory. It is a wild animal and so it cannot be expected to respect human life – it is a natural predator and its instincts will have told it to attack. The shark should not be punished for this.

'There are no intelligent animals - except humans...' Do you agree?

I think that there are a lot of very intelligent animals, not just humans. There are many animals, such as chimpanzees and dolphins, who have demonstrated a very high level of intelligence. For example: they have good memories, can solve problems, form strong social bonds and use tools. Chimpanzees can even learn sign language to communicate with humans – so they're not exactly stupid!

IELTS Speaking Test 5

PART 1

Let's talk about your neighbourhood.

What is the area where you live like?

I live in a quiet residential area, but it is only a ten minute walk into town so it is the perfect location really – close to all the shops and restaurants, but without all of the noise of a busy road.

What is there to do?

Well, there isn't a lot to do in the immediate area – there is a nice park, and a coffee shop or two – but it's only a short walk into town where there is everything you could ever want! My favourite place to go is this one street which is full of interesting little shops, selling things like books, vintage clothes or antiques. I love these shops because you never know what you might find!

What is the house you live in like?

I live in a terraced house, which means there are houses attached to ours on both sides. The house has three floors – the ground floor has our living room and a kitchen with doors to the garden, and the top two floors have all the bedrooms and bathrooms.

Who do you live with?

I live with my Dad and his partner – I have an older brother and sister who also used to live with, but they have both moved out into their own homes now. I quiet enjoy the peace and quiet now I'm the only kid still at home!

Would you prefer to live somewhere else?

I love my home, but I must admit I've always wanted to live out in the middle of the countryside. It would be weird to get used to the quiet – and the darkness at night, without any streetlights! – but I think that I would really enjoy the space and the slower pace of life. Living in town means that there are always places to go and life can be very hectic. I imagine living in the countryside to be much more relaxing.

Now let's talk about music.

What's your favourite type of music?

I'm not sure that I have a favourite type of music - I enjoy all sorts - but I suppose I listen to acoustic music a lot. I've always enjoyed guitar and piano music, so anything with a person singing and playing an instrument suits me.

Do you play any musical instruments?

No. I wish I could play the piano but I've never had the opportunity to learn. Maybe one day I will finally get round to having some lessons!

Do you have a favourite band?

My favourite band of all time is Turin Brakes - I listen to their albums all the time, and I've seen them perform live three times. I think they're brilliant!

Are you a good singer?

Hmm, I'm not sure good is the right word to describe my singing! I'm not completely out of tune, but I think the best place for my voice is in the shower!

Do you like to perform in public?

The thought of performing in public fills me with fear! I would just be so self-conscious and nervous, worrying about embarrassing myself. So no, I don't think performing is for me!

PART 2

Describe your favourite place.

You should say:

- where it is located
 - what it is like
 - what activities can you do there
- and explain why you like it so much.*

My favourite place to visit is Cornwall - it is such a beautiful part of England! It is located in the south west of the country - as far south and as far west as you can get really! It is the warmest part of England and it has lots of beautiful beaches. It is very popular with surfers! There are also lots of stunning cliff top walks - that's my favourite thing to do - as well as pretty little villages. I like going to Cornwall because it is a very relaxed and friendly place, with lovely warm weather and lots of outdoor activities to do.

Do you think you will live where you are now for the rest of your life?

I'm not sure if I will always live exactly where I am now, but I can't imagine moving too far away. It is really important for me that I stay close to my family so I definitely wouldn't want to live in another country or anything like that!

Where would you like to live if you could move home?

If I could move anywhere it would have to be Cornwall - it is such a pretty area and I love living by the sea. The people there are all really friendly so I think it would be nice to become part of the community.

What kind of house would you like to own?

My ideal house would be an old cottage with a big garden, somewhere nice and quiet but not too far away from the neighbours. Maybe on the outskirts of a village! I love original features like wooden beams and fireplaces and I think the most important room of the house is the kitchen, so I'd want a nice big room with space for a table and chairs, and maybe even a sofa.

PART 3

Do you think it is better to own or rent your home?

I think that it is always better to own your home - the only problem is finding the money! It is really good to invest your money in property and you feel more secure in your home knowing that you own it - if you're renting, you could get thrown out at any time! Plus if it's your own home, you can decorate it however you like.

Is owning a holiday home a good idea?

Owning a holiday home is a good idea as you can rent it out when you aren't there to earn some extra money. You are more likely to go on regular holidays if you have your own holiday home and it is nice to get to know an area well - you are more likely to make friends with the locals if you visit a lot.

Should we let people build houses in the countryside?

I think that it is very important to protect the countryside and keep as much open space as possible, so people shouldn't be allowed to build a lot of houses. However, the occasional house which isn't too imposing should be allowed - it is nice for people to be able to live in the countryside and enjoy it.

What problems are caused by large numbers of people living together in cities?

There are many problems faced by large numbers of people living in cities. Firstly, transport is a major issue. A lot of people use their own private car, because public transport is either too expensive or too unreliable, and so the roads become very busy and congested. This makes accidents more likely. Another problem is the cost of living. There are too many people and not enough houses, so prices rise because there is high demand. This makes life very unaffordable for normal people. Finally, there is more pollution in these build up areas which is bad for the environment.

What sorts of issues do people, who live in remote areas, have to deal with?

One of the main problems faced by people living in remote areas is access - often the roads are old and badly build, or even non-existent. In bad weather this can be dangerous as they can flood or become very icy. If people live in remote areas then it can be hard for them to access health care, or for emergency services to reach them if an ambulance or fire engine is needed.

Why do some people want to live as far away from towns and cities as possible, do you think?

I think some people want to live far away from towns and cities because they don't like how busy and crowded they are. Living in the countryside is a much quieter and slower pace of life. People also tend to be more friendly and helpful away from big cities and there is often a real community spirit. In big towns and cities, people tend to just look out for themselves.

IELTS Speaking Test 6

PART 1

Let's talk about your schooling.

Where did you go to primary school?

I went to a small village primary school in Milan, Italy. There were only one hundred children in the whole school - I think there were about fifteen children in my year.

Did/do you enjoy school?

Yes and no! I have always quite enjoyed school. I'm quite academic and I like learning, but I don't like tests and exams (and I hate having deadlines) so often I found school very stressful! There is just so much pressure!

What was/is your favourite school subject?

My favourite subject at school has always been English - I love reading and it is so interesting to learn more about what books mean, and to discuss different interpretations. I also really enjoy History, learning about the past really helps us to understand the present.

What was/is your least favourite school subject?

Well I've never been very keen on Science; it just doesn't hold my attention. I wish I enjoyed it more, because I do think that it is interesting and important to understand how the world works. I'm just better suited to creative subjects!

What did you study/do you want to study/are you studying at university?

I'm hoping to study English Literature at university; it has always been my best subject at school and I really enjoy it. My favourite author is Jane Austen so I am hoping to specialise in studying her work!

Now let's talk about keeping fit.

Do you try to keep fit? How?

I do my best to keep fit, although I can be a bit lazy! But I walk most places instead of getting a bus, so I do walk two or three miles most days. I enjoy swimming and it's a great way to exercise, but I don't go as often as I should. I should be going at least once a week, not once a month!

Do you think it is important for young people to stay fit?

I think that it is really important to stay fit when you are young because you are less likely to have health problems. It also means that you have good exercise habits for when you are older and keeping fit is even more important for your health.

Do you play any sports? Which do you like best?

I don't play a lot of sports. I prefer activities like swimming, but I do enjoy the occasional game of squash. It is a really fast and energetic game and I always have fun playing it with one of my friends (we are as bad as each other at playing!).

Do you prefer team or individual sports?

Team games can be a lot of fun, especially if you are just playing for fun and not a competition. I don't really enjoy serious competition - I don't think it is in my nature to be competitive - but a lighthearted team game is a great way to spend time with friends.

Do you prefer watching sport or taking part?

Most of the time I prefer to play sports. I think watching other people play can be a bit boring! The only time I prefer to watch sport is when there are big competitions like the Olympics - the athletes are just incredible to watch.

Have you ever been to a live sports event?

I've only been to a live sports event once - I was dragged along to a football game when I was younger and I hated it! It was so boring! Neither side scored any goals, or even came close, so it wasn't a very exciting match.

PART 2

Describe a teacher who you really did not like.

You should say:

- who the teacher was
 - what kind of person they were
 - what their lessons were like
- and explain why you didn't like them.*

I've been lucky to have a lot of really great teachers, but there was one who I did not like at all. He was my science teacher when I was 14 and he was useless! All of our lessons were really boring and we spent most of the time copying out of a text book. He wasn't very good at explaining things so it felt like we were just teaching ourselves most of the time. Also, because the lessons were so dull, some of my classmates would misbehave a lot and be very noisy and rude. He wasn't very good at controlling the class, which made it even harder to learn anything.

Do you think anyone can be a good teacher with practice?

I think practice can make teachers better, but I don't think anyone can be a good teacher with enough practice - personality is really important. Teachers need to be really enthusiastic and passionate about what they teach, to make it fun and interesting for students. Not everyone can do this. Also, teachers need to have a lot of patience and understanding; with some teachers, it feels like they don't even like children!

What qualities do you think a good teacher should have?

I think that a good teacher should be passionate about both their subject and educating young people; wanting to help children to learn, not just pass exams, should be their priority. A good teacher is also fair, listens to their students and recognises what learning techniques best suit those students.

Would you like to be a teacher? Why / why not?

Although I think education is really important, I wouldn't want to be a teacher. I just don't think I have it in me! You have to be very confident to stand up in front of a class of children and gain their respect and I just think I would be too nervous to be able to do it.

PART 3

Do you think the majority of teachers are good at their job?

To be honest, I think it is really hard to judge the majority of teachers when I've only experienced a few! From what I've seen, though, it is a bit hit and miss - there doesn't seem to be a general standard of teaching ability.

Teachers often complain about being overworked. Do you agree?

Oh yes. I think that teachers have a massive amount of work to do! There is so much paperwork involved nowadays, and that's before you even get to marking and lesson plans! I think that teaching is a very full-on job and perhaps a bit too much is expected of teachers; reducing classes sizes, or having more teachers responsible for a smaller number of classes, might make their workload more reasonable.

What can be done to improve the quality of teaching in schools?

I think that teachers need regular training to ensure a better, and more consistent, quality of teaching in schools. Teacher's performance needs to be checked more regularly, with lessons being observed and student feedback taken into account so that underperforming teachers can be given more support. It is not just about what results their pupils get; a good teacher needs to be engaging their students in the subject.

Should teachers be allowed to hit students who misbehave very badly?

No, teachers should not be allowed to use violence against students. Discipline should not be physical because it sends the wrong message to students; it implies that violence is acceptable. I think that it is actually a very irresponsible form of punishment and could have dangerous consequences.

What do you think can be done to improve discipline in schools?

I think that the way to improve discipline in schools is to treat the students more like adults - you have to develop a mutual respect. Rules should be clear, and the consequences of breaking rules should be explicit. Idle threats should not be made. But discipline should also be fair - students' need to feel like they are being listened to.

What would you do to improve the education system if you were the Minister for Education?

I think the main improvement that I would make to the education system would be reducing the numbers of exams. I would introduce more coursework-based assessment, so that the emphasis was on students really learning and understanding a subject; not just memorising facts to repeat in an exam. I would also introduce more life skills education, to teach children about the responsibilities that they will face as adults.

IELTS Speaking Test 7

PART 1

Let's talk about the environment around where you live.

Is pollution a problem in your area?

I'm lucky - pollution isn't too much of a problem where I live. I mean there is always going to be pollution - cars give off a lot - but there isn't a significant amount and we are being encouraged by the government to reduce the pollution that we do produce. For example, we are being encouraged to use more public transport instead of driving everywhere.

What do you do to help protect your local environment?

Well I walk a lot, instead of using the car unnecessarily for short journeys, and I'm very aware of not wasting resources at home by leaving the lights turned on or having the heating on when it isn't needed. Plus I try to recycle as much as possible.

What kinds of things do you recycle?

As much as I can really! Glass bottles, plastic containers and cardboard are the main items that get recycled. But I also try to avoid throwing clothes and shoes away; I take them to charity shops or clothes banks instead.

How often do you recycle?

Well, I put things to one side to be recycled every day pretty much, then when the box is full I take it to the recycling bank down the road. That's about every two weeks.

Do you ever throw rubbish on the ground?

Never! I hate it when people throw their rubbish on the ground - it's so unfair on everyone else! And someone will have to pick it up eventually. It isn't that hard to find a bin - I don't think there are any excuses!

Now let's talk about Art and Culture.

Do you like to visit museums and art galleries?

Yes, I really enjoy visiting museums and art galleries, especially when on holiday, as it is often a great way to learn about the local history, culture and traditions.

Are you any good at painting or making things with your hands?

I'm alright at making things with my hands. I often make Christmas and birthday cards for my family, using stencils or cutting out pictures. But I'm useless at painting! It never looks how I want it to!

Would you like to be an artist?

I would love to be more artistic. I can visualise how I want something to look in my head, but I just can't seem to make it happen. I think I have an artist's vision without the artistic skills!

Are there any national celebrations in your country?

We do have some national celebrations in my country, such as Bonfire Night on 5th November. It is to commemorate the failed attempt in 1605 to blow up the Houses of Parliament and King James I.

What is your favourite celebration?

Bonfire Night is my favourite celebration! There are always lots of community events, with big bonfires and lots of amazing fireworks. I also have some great memories of the Bonfire Night celebrations that we had at home when I was little. My Dad would set fireworks off in the garden and we ate my Grandma's special homemade toffee.

Do you know of any celebrations from other cultures?

I've heard of other countries' celebrations, but I don't really know much about why they happen. I would love to go to the Rio Carnival in Brazil one year. It looks really colourful and exciting!

PART 2

Describe a time you saw a rare or endangered animal

You should say:

- what type of animal you saw
 - where you saw the animal
 - what the animal looked like and how it behaved
- and explain how seeing this animal made you feel.*

I've never seen an endangered animal in the wild, but I have seen tigers that are kept and bred in captivity. They are such beautiful and elegant creatures! It makes me so sad that there are so few of them left in the wild. The tigers I saw were stretched out sunning themselves, and they didn't seem very bothered by all the people watching them.

Have you ever volunteered to help protect wild animals or do something for the environment? (Would you like to?)

No, I haven't ever volunteered to help protect wild animals or the environment, but I would like to in the future. Protecting the environment is really important to me. We only have one Earth and once things are destroyed or extinct, we can't get them back.

What very endangered species of animals can you think of? (Do you know why they are endangered?)

Well, I know that tigers are very endangered - three types of tiger are already extinct. They are endangered for several reasons - their habitats have been destroyed due to human population growth and expansion, and they are also hunted by humans. Their body parts are used in traditional Asian medicine and their fur is sold on the black market.

Would you like to work with wild animals?

I think working with wild animals would be really interesting and exciting, although a little bit intimidating perhaps. But I'd love to have the opportunity!

Would you like to be a conservationist (someone whose job involves trying to protect the environment)?

I think that being a conservationist would be a very rewarding job. The environment needs to be protected, to ensure a healthy planet with enough resources for future generations.

PART 3

How do human activities cause problems for wild animals?

Human activities affect wild animals in several ways. One of the main problems is the loss of natural habitats for wild animals. For example, humans cut down rainforests to make room for farmland and expand the cities into the countryside. This can either reduce the amount of prey which an animal would normally hunt, or make that animal more vulnerable to attack.

Why do some humans continue to illegally hunt rare and endangered wild animals?

I think that rare and endangered animals are still hunted by humans because it is tradition and there can be a lot of money in it; there more rare something is, the more money it is worth. These people aren't thinking about what the future implications will be if these animals become extinct; they are just thinking about their immediate need.

What problems can global warming cause for wild animals?

Global warming can cause many problems for wild animals. The warmer climate is affecting polar bears, for example, as their habitat is being reduced since the ice is thinner and melting, making it harder for them to find food. The warmer climate is changing the habitat of many wild animals, from the arctic to the mountains and to the sea. It is reducing their food or forcing them to move and adapt to a new environment.

Are humans to blame for global warming?

Although the temperature of the earth is naturally rising, I think that humans must be contributing to global warming as the temperature is rising so quickly. Burning fossil fuels and the emissions from cars are our main contributing factors, and something needs to be done to improve the situation.

Do people today care about protecting the environment or are they not really worried?

I think that a lot of people care about the environment, but the majority of people don't consider protecting the environment as their responsibility. There is a debate amongst scientists about what is actually happening to the environment (some claim that humans are causing global warming whilst others deny that global warming actually exists) and so some people probably just don't know what information to trust.

What measures can governments take to try to reduce the effects of global warming and help protect the environment?

One thing that governments can do to help protect the environment is to fund research into renewable sources of energy and promote them as alternatives to fossil fuels (which are limited and emit carbon dioxide, contributing to global warming). Governments can also encourage recycling and make it clear to the general public why it is essential that they all do their bit to help the environment. Another thing which all governments need to join together to discuss is reducing the amount of carbon emissions by regulating industry.

PART 1

Let's talk about Computers.

Do you have your own computer at home? What do you use it for?

Yes, I have a computer at home. Well, we have a family computer which I use. I have to use it for my coursework a lot. I research things online and type up my essays. But I also use the computer to chat to my friends - I spent quite a lot of time on Instant Messenger chatting with my friends.

How often do you use a/your computer?

Most days! I have a lot of coursework so that's the main reason at the moment. But even if I'm not doing coursework I still go on the computer almost every day, to catch up with my friends.

Do you have a separate games console? What sort of games do you play?

Kind of - my brother has an Xbox so I play on that sometimes. I like racing games best - we have a really cool game where you can rewind in slow motion if you have a crash then keep going. It looks amazing and helps me out as I'm not very good so I crash a lot!

Are you good with technology?

I would say that I'm quite good with technology - I'm confident using computers and smartphones - but I'm not very technical so I don't understand how or why these things work!

What is your favourite piece of technology?

What do you use it for?

My favourite piece of technology is my iPod. I use it all the time to listen to the radio and my music. I can even watch films on it, although the screen is quite small so I only do this if I'm really bored on a long train journey.

Now let's talk about your friends

What does your best friend look like?

My best friend is very tall and slim, with short brown hair. She is a really happy person so she's always got a big smile on her face!

How long have you known them?

We have been friends for four years now - we met when she moved in next door to me.

How does your best friend behave?

She's a really happy person, always in a good mood. We have such a giggle when we're together - she's always doing funny voices and impressions!

Would you confide in a friend if you had a problem?

Yes, I'm lucky to have quite a few really good friends who I can talk to about just about anything. There's always someone who can listen to my problems and offer me advice - a problem shared really is a problem halved!

Do you and your friends share the same interests?

Yes, me and my friends have quite a few shared interests. We watch a lot of the same television programmes, so we talk about them. We also all enjoy reading and we're always recommending and lending books to each other.

What do you and your friends do together?

When my friends and I meet up, it usually involves food! Either we will go out to a restaurant or going round someone's house and cook up a feast. Our favourite thing to do is have long and lazy barbecues in the summer sunshine - those are the best days!

PART 2

Describe the most expensive piece of technology you own

You should say:

- what the piece of technology is
 - how much it cost and where you bought it
 - what you use it for and how often you use it
- and whether or not you think it was good value for money.**

The most expensive piece of technology that I own is my iPod - it cost £120 and I bought it online. It's actually an iPod Nano so it's quite small, and I got it in purple which looks really good. Whenever I have to walk somewhere, or get public transport, I always use it to listen to music or the radio - it makes the journey go much faster. I think that it was worth the money that I spent on it because I use it a lot and I really enjoy being able to listen to music on the go.

Would you describe yourself as a 'tech person' - someone who is very interested in technology?

I wouldn't say that I'm really a 'tech person'. Although I use quite a lot of modern technology - and I really appreciate how it makes life easier - I'm not that interested in it. I guess I just take it for granted that these technologies exist and I'm lucky enough to have access to them!

If you could buy any technological gadget, what would it be?

I would love to have an Xbox Kinect - the one that you can play games using your body as the controller. So when you move your arms, for example, the character on screen moves too! There are some really fun sports games which are great fun to play with a big group of friends.

Do you think CD players are old-fashioned?

A little bit. I mean don't get me wrong, I do love CDs and listening to albums. It's just so much easier to have all of your music on one small MP3 player, which you can then plug into speakers to listen to your music at home. The main place that I listen to CDs nowadays is in the car.

Do your parents know much about computers, smartphones and so on?

My parents both use computers quite a lot for online shopping and sending emails, so I wouldn't say that they know any less than me. Smartphones are another matter though! Neither of my parents can get the hang of them. They both have quite old-fashioned phones that they just use for phone calls and the occasional text. I'm sure they'll learn one day!

PART 3

Why do people often want to be one of the first to buy the latest gadgets?

I think that one of the main reasons for people wanting to be the first to have a new gadget is clever marketing - there is always something new and exciting. If you don't have it then you aren't up-to-date. Technology is moving so fast it can be easy to feel like you are 'behind the times' and so I think that this creates a pressure on people to always buy the latest gadgets straight away.

Would a world without mobile phones be a better or worse place?

To be honest, I think that without mobile phones the world would probably be a worse place. They are just so convenient! However, it might be better to go back to the very first phones, where you could only make calls. I think that texting can be a bit impersonal and people often read into texts too much, which is unhealthy. And I think that having constant access to the internet is also unhealthy because it makes it harder for people to switch off and just appreciate what is happening in the real world around them (as they are constantly distracted by the online virtual world).

To what extent have computers become an important part of our lives?

Computers - and in particular the internet - have become essential to our lives. Being able to type documents and edit things on the computer is much quicker and easier than writing everything by hand, for one thing. And the internet is the source of so much information and communication - I just don't think it is possible to get by in life without using computers.

What sorts of technological advances do you think we might see in the next 100 years?

It's so hard to say - it feels like anything is possible! I think hologram technology will probably improve and become accessible for all - I can imagine being able to communicate with people using holograms instead on video technology like Skype in the not-too-distant future.

Could we survive without modern technology, the way our great-grandparents, for example, did?

I think that if we suddenly didn't have any of our modern technology we could still survive. But it would be a long process adapting to such a different (and more difficult) way of life, without all of our modern conveniences like telephones, washing machines, fridges and aeroplanes. It is definitely possible to survive, but it would be hard work!

How has modern technology improved our lives?

Modern technology has improved our lives by making us better connected with the rest of the world. Thanks to our technology we can communicate with and visit far away places very easily.

How has it made our lives worse?

Although in many ways modern technology makes it easier for us to communicate with people, I actually think that this is one of the things that is worse about our lives nowadays. It is so easy to send someone a text or an email, or follow them on a social networking site, that we forget to make the time to actually see our friends and families in person. We feel like we are talking more than ever, but we are actually forgetting the basics of how to spend time together.

PART 1

Let's talk about money.

Where do you get the money you need to buy things?

I have a part-time job in a local restaurant, so that's where most of my money comes from. I usually work one evening a week but during the summer holidays there are usually extra shifts so I work at least two or three days a week.

What do you do when you need more money?

I try to be careful with my money and save as much as I can, but if I really need some money for something important (or I don't quite have enough money to do something) then I usually ask my Dad if I can borrow the money. He's happy to lend it to me as long as I remember to pay him back!

What sorts of things do you buy for yourself?

I buy quite a lot of books and DVDs. I love reading and I always end up buying books instead of borrowing them. I should probably go to the library more to save money! I also buy clothes quite regularly - there always seems to be something new that I need!

Do you think you are good with money?

I think that I'm quite good with money. I try to save and budget so that I am living within my means. But I can be a bit of a reckless spender - if I really want something then I will buy it without thinking about the consequences!

What is the most expensive thing you ever bought?

My most expensive purchase was probably my coat. It's the most money that I have ever spent on an item of clothing, but it is so beautiful and so warm and cosy that I know I will get a lot of use out of it.

Now let's talk about your possessions.

What is your most important possession?

My phone is my most important possession because I live quite far away from all of my friends, so it is how I keep in touch with them and make plans to meet up. I'd be lost without my phone!

What is your most valuable possession?

My most valuable possession is my camera. It is waterproof, which is really cool, but it meant that it cost quite a lot of money. It's worth it though - it takes really good photos and makes going to the beach and to water parks a lot more fun as I can take my camera into the water!

What sorts of presents do you like to receive?

I really like being given books, especially if they are not ones that I have heard of before. If I buy books for myself I tend to go for the same authors every time. When I get books as presents, they are usually completely new to me.

What is the best present you ever got?

My best present ever was the charm bracelet that my friends bought me for my last birthday. They got me a little suitcase charm, because I enjoy travel, which was really thoughtful. It's a great present because now I am often given charms for special occasions. It is a very meaningful and special bracelet.

Have you ever taken anything that was not yours?

No, I've never stolen anything (except perhaps when I ate some of my brother's chocolate without asking, when I was a young child). I don't think I ever could take something that wasn't mine - I'd feel too guilty.

Have any of your possessions ever been lost or stolen?

I've never had anything stolen, but I have lost my bag before. It was really stressful! Luckily it didn't have my phone in it at the time, but I did lose my purse. I had to cancel my debit card and buy a new ID card which was a lot of hassle, and I had at least £20 in cash which was lost too.

PART 2

Describe a time when you got in trouble for something

You should say:

- where you were and what you did wrong
- why you did it
- how you were punished

and whether or not you think the punishment was fair.

I don't get in trouble very often, but there is one time that sticks in my mind. I had gone to a friend's house after school and when my parents came to collect me, they were early so I didn't have time to eat the meal that my friend's mum was preparing for us. When I got into the car I had a real strop (even though I was fifteen and should have been too old for tantrums!). My parents got really angry, because they had gone out of their way to collect me and I was being really ungrateful,

so they grounded me and didn't let me go to a party at the weekend. I'm not really sure why I got so angry about it. I think part of me felt guilty that my friend's mum had gone to the effort of cooking for me and I hadn't been able to eat it. It was fair enough that my parents punished me because I was really rude to them, but it wasn't a very good punishment because even though they stopped me from going to the party, they did let me go to the same friend's house after school on another night later that week!

Do you think you would ever commit a crime?

No, I can't imagine ever committing a crime - I'm too scared of getting into trouble! I hate feeling like I have done something wrong or let someone down, so I don't think committing a crime could ever be worth it.

Have you ever been the victim of a crime (or known someone who has been)?

My Dad had his car stolen last year which was really annoying. It was a group of teenagers that took the car - they went for a joy ride and completely wrecked it - and we found the remains a few days later. It was a lot of stress and hassle for my Dad as he relies on his car to get to work every day. It made me really angry because for them, it was just a bit of fun.

Have you ever been in a fight? Was it serious? Why were you fighting?

I've never been in a physical fight, although I have been in a verbal fight before. It was horrible as it was someone that I used to be friends with, but they had completely turned against me. They said a lot of really hurtful things and it was so petty - they were angry at me because I had been spending time with other friends. I wasn't ignoring her in favour of these friends, and she had other friends of her own, but this didn't seem to matter to her - she decided that I was two-faced and that was that.

PART 3

Do you think murderers deserve the death penalty?

I don't agree with the death penalty, but it is difficult to know what to do with murderers. Keeping someone in prison costs a lot of money and it can be a relatively easy life - they might not have their freedom, but nor do they have to work and worry about money. But I'm wary of the death penalty for two reasons: firstly, because if someone has been wrongly accused then the death penalty is irreversible; and secondly, because it feels like you are lowering yourself to their level. It makes murder an acceptable form of punishment - and that is a dangerous precedent to set.

How can we help reduce the level of crime?

To reduce the level of crime, I think that we need to provide young people with a better education about the consequences of crime - for both the person committing the crime and any victims - to try to encourage a more responsible attitude from a younger age. It needs to be clear to people that there are alternatives to crime and that crime is never the solution to a problem. We need to offer people more support, so that they do not feel like they have no choice but to commit a crime.

Is the statement, 'Once a criminal, always a criminal', true?

Not necessarily. I think that sometimes, a person just makes a mistake and commits a crime, but redemption is possible. However, once someone has committed one crime it can definitely be a downwards spiral and they are often more likely to commit more crimes. But you cannot label everyone as a criminal for life; I believe that people can change.

Is there a link between crime and poverty?

I think that there is definitely a link between crime and poverty. People who have grown up in poverty have a lot less to lose by committing a crime (or at least, that's how they feel). They are less likely to have the support which they need to make the right decisions. Crime is the obvious and easy path for their life and they don't have anything better to hope for.

What is wrong with sending a young offender to prison, if anything?

It completely depends on the situation, but sending a young offender to prison could be a bad decision as it has the potential to set them up for a life of crime. It is much more important that young offenders receive rehabilitation, to try to change their behaviour and provide them with the hope of having a more positive future. If they are sent to prison, they will be much less employable after they leave and their time there will be spent with hardened criminals; both of these factors would make a young offender more likely to reoffend.

Are there good alternatives to prison?

There are several alternatives to prison - fines, house arrest, community service - and I think that for minor offences, these are often better

than prison. In particular, I think it is effective to sentence someone to community service, so that they are actually giving back to the community where they committed their crime. Hopefully they will do something which benefits others and which they can get satisfaction from - this would give them a positive community experience and therefore discourage future offences.

Do you think the same rules of law apply for rich people as for poor people?

I think it is not so much the rules of law, but the application of the law, which is unequal for rich and poor people. Poor people, sadly, do not have the same access to legal support which puts them at a significant disadvantage - and the rich often have the advantage of knowing powerful people who can help them to get around the law, or help them to win complicated cases. If a poor person has a complicated case, they might not be able to get any help because a lot of legal aid has been cut. There is definitely inequality when it comes to the rules of law.

IELTS Speaking Test 10

PART 1

Let's talk about your eating habits.

How often do you eat fast food?

I eat fast food quite often actually - we usually get a takeaway about once a week. I eat pizza quite regularly, but I never really go to fast food restaurants like McDonalds.

What's your favourite type of fast food?

I love pizza! My favourite topping is tuna and jalapenos, and I love the garlic and herb dip that comes free with a lot of takeaway pizzas. It can be a bit greasy, but I love it - pizza is definitely a guilty pleasure!

Do you snack a lot? What kinds of snacks do you eat?

I snack quite regularly as I prefer to just eat little and often throughout the day, then have a main meal in the evening. I often have toast and marmite for a snack, or yogurt. I try not to eat crisps or chocolate bars too often.

Do you have breakfast everyday? Why / why not?

I don't have breakfast everyday; in fact, I hardly ever eat in the mornings. I know that breakfast is supposed to be the most important meal of the day, but I just don't feel hungry when I first wake up. If I do have breakfast it is usually something nice and light, like a yogurt and some fruit.

What time do you usually eat dinner at?

I eat dinner between 7pm and 8pm most evenings. I don't like eating too late as it feels like the food just sits on your stomach when you go to bed. But if I eat too early then I end up snacking before bed!

What do you eat for lunch when you are at school?

I have a sandwich for lunch most days - cheese and tomato, or tuna and cucumber. I do get a bit bored of sandwiches though, so sometimes I make pasta or rice salad which makes a nice change.

Now let's talk about your health.

What kinds of exercise do you do regularly?

I do a lot of walking and cycling - I love going out on my bicycle and it is really good exercise. It depends on the weather though - if it's raining then I prefer to go swimming. I try to do one or the other at least twice a week, and I walk every day for at least half an hour.

When and how often do you brush your teeth?

I brush my teeth twice a day - once in the morning after I have had a shower, then again just before I go to bed. I usually use mouthwash twice a day too as I find it makes my teeth feel a lot cleaner.

Do you play any sports competitively?

No, I'm not really good enough to play sports competitively! But I do enjoy playing basketball when I get a chance - it is one of the only sports where I get competitive and feel that real desire to win!

When was the last time you went for a check-up at the doctor's?

I hardly ever go to the doctor's. I think the last time I went was probably six months ago. I don't go for regular check-ups, I just make an appointment whenever something is wrong or if I think that it has been a bit too long since my last check-up!

Did you have any health problems?

No. I was the picture of health! Since then, I have developed hayfever, but I don't think that it's bad enough for me to need to go to the doctor's.

What time do you get to sleep at most nights?

How many hours of sleep do you get each night?

I try to be in bed by 11pm every night, but sometimes it is closer to midnight by the time I get to bed. I usually get about seven or eight hours of sleep each night, which is probably enough but I still feel tired every morning. I think I need to start going to bed earlier!

PART 2

Describe a time when you had to go to the doctor's/hospital

You should say:

- what was wrong with you
- how you felt at the time
- what happened at the doctor's/hospital

and explain what treatment you were given to help you get better.

I've only had to go to hospital once and that was when I fell off a horse. It kicked me in the face when I fell, so I have quite a deep cut near my eye. I was quite shaken up by the whole experience, and scared that the horse had done more damage than just a cut. I had to have an x-ray to check that I hadn't broken any bones in my face, and luckily I was fine - it was such a relief! The doctor stitched up the cut and gave me some drops to put on it, to make sure it didn't get infected.

Do you tend to get sick often?

No, I don't tend to get ill very often. I get a cold once or twice a year, but that's about it - I don't often have symptoms other than a cough and runny nose, and they usually go after a few days, or maybe a week. I think I'm very lucky!

Have you ever been very seriously ill?

I haven't ever had a serious illness, but I can remember being very ill when I was younger. I had terrible fever and I was hallucinating a lot - my parents were really worried about me. Fortunately it wasn't too long before I recovered.

Do you like going to the dentist's?

Not really - I find it really uncomfortable having my mouth open for so long and I don't like having someone else's face that close to mine! But I don't mind the dentist - I'm not scared, like some people!

How regularly do you go for a check-up at the doctor's and dentist's?

I go to the dentist every three to six months for a check up. It is easy to go quite regularly because we have family appointments, so my Dad takes me, my brother and my sister and we all get check-ups at the same time. It just makes life easier! I hardly ever go to the doctor for a check-up - once or twice a year at the most.

PART 3

Why is obesity such a big problem today?

I think that obesity has become such a huge problem because there are now more processed foods than ever and these can have all sorts of hidden, fattening ingredients. Fast food is also a big part of a lot of people's diets, which is very fattening. People don't feel like they have enough time to cook a healthy meal from scratch, so they rely on pre-prepared food and takeaways.

What needs to be done to stop obesity levels growing?

Children need to be better educated about food and cooking - we need to create a new generation of people who care about healthy home cooking, and who can appreciate healthier foods. The problem is that a lot of the fast food is marketed towards children and the appeal of processed foods will stay with them into adulthood.

This country's health system is very good - do you agree?

Our health system has its flaws, but on the whole I do think that it is a good system as it provides everyone with free healthcare. However, the health professionals are often completely overworked, with very long and stressful shifts, and because of this patient care can suffer. This is a definite issue which needs to be addressed.

What could be done to improve the nation's health system?

One of the main improvements would be to reduce the waiting time for appointments - we need a more efficient system with more doctors and nurses. This would also improve the quality of the care given to patients, as doctors and nurses would have a more reasonable workload. The health system needs to meet the demand which exists - and the health of the individual has to be the priority.

Does everyone have a right to free healthcare?

Yes. I do think that healthcare is a right and everyone should have access to a free health service. If people have to pay for any and every medical need it would be completely unfair as those in poverty would

not be able to receive the help that they need. In an emergency, health professionals would either have to refuse to help an ill or injured person because they could not afford it (which would go against the Hippocratic Oath) or the person would be treated but end up in enormous debt. The health of the individual has to be the priority.

Do you think rich people get a better quality of healthcare than poor?

Rich people have the option of paying for private healthcare and this can be of a better quality than the free service that everyone else uses. Private healthcare tends to be of a much higher quality because the staff have much more time for each individual patient.

How can eating healthily and exercising regularly benefit your life?

Regular exercise and eating healthily can benefit your life by making you much fitter, healthier and happier. If you have an active and healthy lifestyle then you are less likely to become ill and more likely to feel content and happy with your life. This is because exercise releases endorphins, which make you feel happy, and overall you should feel like you have more energy. Also, if you eat healthy foods then you are much less likely to feel uncomfortable and full after meals. It seems simple and logical to me - a healthy lifestyle is a happy lifestyle.